

Notes re. "Gems from Flora Illustrated"

This autograph album was owned by Viola *Stow* Dufour (1841–1912) of Switzerland County, Indiana. Judging from a dedicatory page near the front of the volume she may have acquired the book in September 1853. Viola was then almost 12 years old, living at Stowtown with her parents Uzziel and Catharine Stow. Her oldest sibling, Hiram, was about to depart for Indiana Asbury University while she and her younger brothers would soon be resuming their common school studies at the nearby Greenwood schoolhouse.

However, most of the book's entries date from the late 1850s when Viola was herself a student away from home. From 1856–1860 she attended the Elizabethtown (Ohio) Female Seminary, near present-day North Bend. Faintly marked on the front page of the volume, under her own signature, is

"E. Town Fem. Sem.
Hamilton County
Ohio"

commemorating this important juncture in her life.

From the early 1860s until the early 1890s, the volume was seemingly unattended. Then suddenly, the signatures of Jule and William Thiebaud appear to demark the book's abrupt return from its safe seclusion: an event boldly accentuated (on four separate pages) by Viola's 10-year-old daughter Belle in November 1893. These seem to be the last entries and incursions.

Not every entry in the book was signed, and several signatures are difficult to decipher. Here follows as complete a list of the legible signatures as I could muster, in the order of their appearance in the album. The identifications are tentative, to varying degrees. Note also the inscription on the reverse side of the front cover: "the Florence folk" mentioned probably included Julia *Stow* Bledsoe and her husband Lemuel, the unsigned entry commemorating an occasion at Stowtown in the early 1860s.

(E. Stepleton, 2019)

R. H. Beswick (Stowtown Ia. Sept. 15 '53)

(A "Robert H. Beswick" appears in the minutes of the "Annual Conferences of the Methodist Episcopal Church" during the 1850s for the Southeastern Indiana Conference. He served as a preacher in the Jeffersonville and Connersville districts, and perhaps in others as well. Methodist ministers were frequent guests of the Stows.)

Cora

(probably Cornelia Livia Lewis, b. about 1840. She was an Elizabethtown student from the Smithfield/Selma area of Delaware County, Indiana and a daughter of William Lewis, 1810–1910, a prosperous merchant.)

Lizzie Shaw (Walnut Ridge June 23^d 1855)

(Elizabeth Shaw, b. 1839, was a daughter of William and Linda Rous Shaw of Switzerland County, Indiana and a sister of William C. Shaw, 1833–1874. See below.)

Joanna Hopkins (Indianapolis, Indiana)

(unidentified)

Lizzie (North Madison)
(Most likely Mary Elizabeth "Lizzie" Stow Roe, (1830-1857), a daughter of Viola's uncle, Horace Stow (1805-1898).)

Olive Hyde
(unidentified)

H.S. (Switzerland Co., Ind.)
(We know that this is Hiram Stow, from William Shaw's comments on another page further in the album. Hiram, Viola's oldest brother, died in December 1853 while attending Indiana Asbury University. William Shaw had been his roommate at the time.)

Bill
(possibly William C. Shaw)

Jennie Hopkins
(unidentified)

Mollie
(possibly Mary "Mollie" Lewis, an Elizabethtown student, b. about 1842 and Cornelia Lewis's sister; or possibly Mary "Mollie" S. Hunt, an Elizabethtown student from Lawrenceburg, Indiana.)

Belle (Nov. 10, '93)
(Belle Dufour, 1883-1979; Viola's daughter)

Jule Thiebaud, Wm. A. Thiebaud
(William A. Thiebaud (1865-1907) was the son of Charles Alfred and Eleanor Dufour Thiebaud of Switzerland County, Indiana. Eleanor was Viola's sister-in-law. Julia Eldred was William's wife; they were married in Paola, Miami County, Kansas in 1888. Thus, theirs is a late inscription into Viola's album.)

Sallie Moore (E. Town 1859)
(Sallie E. Moore was an Elizabethtown student from Allensville, Switzerland County, Indiana.)

C. L. Lewis (E. Town May 15th /58)
(Cornelia Livia Lewis, b. about 1840. She was an Elizabethtown student from the Smithfield/Selma area of Delaware County, Indiana and a daughter of William Lewis, 1810-1910, a prosperous merchant.)

Clara H.
(Clara P. Hunt was an Elizabethtown student from Lawrenceburg, Indiana.)

T Manwaring
(Thomas Manwaring was an itinerant book peddler from who stayed with the Stow family during the autumn of 1856. He was then suffering from tuberculosis. He died in March 1857 after returning to his Waterford, Connecticut home.)

Wm C. Shaw (Walnut Hills. July 3^d 1855)
(William C. Shaw, 1833-1874, was the son of William Shaw, Sr., a merchant in Switzerland County. William C. Shaw roomed with Hiram Stow at Indiana Asbury in the autumn of 1853.)

Amanda L. Sparks (Muscatine, Iowa)
(An Elizabethtown student)

C. G. H.
(unidentified)

Mary A. K. (September 3^d 1858)
(unidentified, but possibly Viola's cousin, Mary Adelia Manser Keckeler (1832-1923))

Clara E. Dufour (Vevay) **Belle Dufour** (East Enterprise, Ind.)
(Clara Dufour, 1867–1944, and Belle Dufour, 1883–1979, were daughters of Viola.)

G. M. C? (April 14th 1854)
(unidentified)

Maggie Brown
(Margaret "Maggie" Ray Brown, an Elizabethtown student, was from Indianapolis.)

"Lieut"
(unidentified)

L. O. B.
(Almost certainly Lemuel Bledsoe, 1832–1906. He married Viola's cousin Julia Stow in 1860.)

C. Dufour (Vevay)
(Possibly Clara Dufour, Viola's daughter.)

C. C. G.
(Probably Charles Conway Godden, 1836–1915, one of Viola's classmates at the Greenwood schoolhouse at Stowtown, Switzerland County, Indiana.)

C. C. Hyde
(Calvin Clarke Hyde, 1832–1874, was a first cousin to Viola's mother, Catharine Manser Stow. Arriving from his home in Steuben County, New York, C.C. stayed at Stowtown for several weeks in 1854, and then moved to nearby Allensville for the winter of 1854–1855, where he taught school. Having thus gathered sufficient funds, he travelled on to Kansas in 1855 to participate as a militantly active free-soiler.)

Martha Ann Robinson Hughes
(Martha Hughes was an Elizabethtown student from Cleves, Ohio.)

Mag F. Wheeler (Aurora)
(Maggie F. Wheeler, 1840–1902, was an Elizabethtown student from Aurora, Indiana. Her parents were John Wheeler and Martha Miller Wheeler.)

Maggie Wheeler (Etown. Fem. Sem. Decem. 4th/58)
(see above)

Eliza B. Harrington (Paxton, Mass.) (Elizabethtown. July. 21st/58)
(Eliza Harrington was the principal of the Elizabethtown Female Seminary in 1859–1860.)

Olive E. Bonham (Rising Sun Indiana) (Elizabethtown. July. 21st/58)

Kittie H. Bonham (Elizabethtown Ohio) (July 21st 1858)
(Kittie is perhaps the "Keturah" Bonham, daughter of Rev. John H. and Charlotte Bonham, who appears in the 1850 census of Whitewater, Hamilton County, Ohio. If so, she was the sister of Loring Stow's college roommate, Thomas Bonham. Rev. John H. Bonham and his son Aaron Elijah Bonham served on the Board of Trustees for the Elizabethtown Female Seminary.)

Belle Dufour (East Enterprise Ind Nov 9th 1893)
(Belle Dufour, 1883–1979, was Viola's daughter.)

C__lie Ch Defour [sic]
(It appears that someone thought that "C__lie" was the signature of Charles Dufour. The misspelling is odd; also Charles A. Dufour, 1864–1943, Viola's nephew, does not seem a likely signer, given his birth year.)

Mary A. K. (September 8th 1858)
(unidentified, but possibly *Viola's* cousin, *Mary Adelia Manser Keckeler (1832-1923)*)

Belle Dufour (Vevay Indiana)
(*Belle Dufour, 1883-1979; Viola's* daughter)

M. Greenwood (E_town July 13th 1857)
(*Mary A. Greenwood was an Elizabethtown student and, according to the seminary's 1859-1860 catalog, she was a resident of Elizabethtown, Ohio.*)

Clara Hunt (Lawrenceburgh, Indiana)
(*Clara P. Hunt, 1843-1871 was an Elizabethtown student and the daughter of a Lawrenceburg, Indiana merchant, John Hunt. Mary "Mollie" S. Hunt was her younger sister. See below.*)

[first name illegible, perhaps *Kattie* or *Hattie*] **Brown**
(unidentified)

L.O.B.
(Almost certainly *Lemuel Bledsoe, 1832-1906. He married Viola's* cousin *Julia Stow* in 1860.)

W. W. Bailey (May 4th, 1854)
(unidentified)

Loring (Sept. 12th 58)
(*Loring Stow, 1838-1860; Viola's* brother)

Mattie Chidlaw
(*Martha "Mattie" Chidlaw, 1843-1873, an Elizabethtown student, was from Cleves, Ohio and was the daughter of an Elizabethtown Female Seminary trustee, Rev. Benjamin Williams Chidlaw.*)

Mollie S. Hunt (Lawrenceburgh Ind.)
(*Mary "Mollie" S. Hunt was an Elizabethtown student and the sister of Clara P. Hunt, above.*)

Jennie T. Cleland (Greenwood Ind.)
(*Jennie, b. 1843, was the daughter of Rev. Phillip Sydney Cleland, 1811-1885, a Presbyterian minister.*)

Anna Sheppard (Elizabethtown Fem Sem July 18, 1859)
(*According to the 1859-1860 catalog for Elizabethtown Female Seminary, Anna hailed from "Venice, Ohio". In this context, "Venice" may refer to a township in Butler County, Ohio -one no longer existing- and not the township in Seneca County. In any event, we have been unable to trace Anna. There is an "Anna E. Sheppard, d. 1861" recorded for Spring Grove Cemetery in Cincinnati.*)

M. Phelps (Winsted Ct.)
(*Mary J. Phelps, b. 1836, was an 1856 graduate of Mt. Holyoke Seminary, and taught Viola at Elizabethtown through spring 1859. She was the daughter of Henry Phelps, 1800-1868, and Louisa Cowles Lewis Phelps, 1802-1889, of Litchfield County, Ct.*)

Cora
(*Cornelia Livia Lewis, b. about 1840. She was an Elizabethtown student from the Smithfield/Selma area of Delaware County, Indiana and a daughter of William Lewis, 1810-1910, a prosperous merchant.*)

Frank M. Wheeler (Rooms No. 11)
(unidentified, but possibly a relative of *Elizabethtown student Maggie Wheeler.*)

Ella Dufour (Vevay)

(Eleanor "Ella" Dufour, 1838-1900, was a daughter of Jean David Dufour of Switzerland County and the sister of Francis Rudolph Dufour, and thus Viola's sister-in-law.)

F. R. Dufour (Vevay)

(Francis "Frank" Rudolph Dufour, 1836-1907, was a son of Jean David Dufour of Switzerland County. In 1862 he married Viola Stow.)

Mollie

(possibly Mary "Mollie" Lewis, an Elizabethtown student, b. about 1842 and Cornelia Lewis's sister; or possibly Mary "Mollie" S. Hunt, an Elizabethtown student from Lawrenceburg, Indiana.)

Cora Lewis (Selma Ind.) (Elizabethtown. Fem. Sem. July. 15th. /58)

(Cornelia Livia Lewis, b. about 1840. She was an Elizabethtown student from the Smithfield/Selma area of Delaware County, Indiana and a daughter of William Lewis, 1810-1910, a prosperous merchant.)

M. L. Shaw (Walnut Ridge June 14th 1855)

(possibly Margaret Shaw, b. 1836, a daughter of William and Linda Shaw, and sister of William C. Shaw.)

G. E. M.

(unidentified)

Wm. B. K. Mary Krutz

(William B. Krutz, Sr., 1820-1899, was a merchant and miller at Florence, Switzerland County, Indiana. He had a daughter, Mary L. Krutz, 1845-1870, who married Charles Hedges in 1867 and appears to have moved to Iowa and then Illinois shortly thereafter. If these are correct identifications, then the inscription in Viola's album seemingly pre-dates 1867. Mr. Krutz would have been an associate of Lemuel Bledsoe, also a Florence merchant.

William B. Krutz, Jr. was born in 1858 and seems a less-likely candidate for authorship of the inscription, since in 1867 he would have been but 9 years old.)

Clara

(Probably Clara P. Hunt, 1843-1871, an Elizabethtown student and the daughter of a Lawrenceburg, Indiana merchant, John Hunt.)

Anna Dill

(an Elizabethtown student from Cincinnati)

Jennine

(unidentified)

Margarette Shaw (Walnut Ridge July 6th/55)

(presumably Margaret Shaw, b. 1836, a daughter of William and Linda Shaw, and sister of William C. Shaw.)

L. L. K.

(unidentified)

Loring

(Loring Stow, 1838-1860; Viola's brother)

"Chatterbox"

(possibly Belle Dufour, 1883-1979; Viola's daughter)

