

The Ingham University Story Continues

by Lynne Belluscio

Several months ago, Karl Kabelac, a retired librarian from the University of Rochester contacted me to tell me about a diary written by an Ingham University student that was for sale.

So I called the owner, who is in Canada. The price was a little high, but I was able to negotiate the price down a little and so I sent a deposit. But time is running out, and I approached the Board of Trustees of the Historical Society to see if they would approve sending the remainder, even though I had not been able to raise the rest of the money. The diary was written in 1881 by Anna Reed and it is full of great accounts of living at Ingham and the problems - - not unlike the problems of students today.

In the meantime, we were contacted by an art dealer in Florida who has a portrait of Emily Ingham's twin sister, Julia. The story of the twin sisters is interesting. They were born in Saybrook, CT in 1811. When they were born, they became the tenth and eleventh children of Amasa and Mary Ingham. The

two babies were almost more than their mother could bare, so they became the "children" of their two older sisters. Emily was given to her fourteen-year old sister Marietta. (They became the founders of Ingham University.) And Julia was given to her sister Anna who was eleven.

In 1823, Anna married Benjamin Franklin Hays, but Anna died less than three years later in 1826, leaving fifteen-year-old Julia in the care of her step father. A year later, Julia married her stepfather. They had one child, Julius Augustus Hays, who was born in 1830.

In 1847, Benjamin Hays died. (This next part gets confusing.) Julia's son, Julius married, in 1852. His bride, Amelia, was the sister of his Aunt Emily's husband, Phineas Staunton - who coincidentally painted this



Julia Ingham, Emily Ingham's twin sister.



Painting by Cornelia Chase - 1868 Ingham graduate.

portrait. Julius and Amelia had a daughter, who was born in 1859, but Amelia died and the three-year old child was motherless. Her grandmother, Julia and twin sister, Emily, decided to raise the little girl and they all lived in the Staunton Cottage on Wolcott Street, on the Ingham University campus.

The story doesn't get any clearer from this point, but the portrait of Julia Ingham passed through the hands of the descendents, until, it was sold out of the family. The woman who bought it, knew of the lineage of the family and had stayed in contact with other descendents. She wants the portrait to come back to LeRoy. And so it will be bought by the Historical Society -when I raise a few thousand dollars and it will hang in LeRoy House.

The third story doesn't involve money. In fact it was an outright gift. Last week I received a phone call from a woman who had a painting done by Cornelia B. Chase. She graduated in 1868, and with the portrait, would come the diploma and a genealogy.

Less than a week after the phone call, the haunting painting of the man - perhaps a monk - arrived. I offered to pay for shipping, but it was an outright donation.

Cornelia was born in 1845 and died in 1935. We have very little information about her, other than her granddaughter, Miss Cornelia Crisey, was very proud of her grandmother's artwork, and wanted to make sure it came back to LeRoy, the home of her alma mater. The diploma reads: "Miss Cornelia B. Chase, of Buffalo, NY, having completed the course of art study and practice in painting, prescribed by this University as a condition of graduation and having by her esthetic proficiencies and good moral and deportment, given assurance of her fitness to exert a happy influence in the world, as a teacher in this department and otherwise . . . and do assure her of the deep personal interest we shall ever feel in her future progress, not only in technical art but in the most desirable result of a life ennobled and beautified thereby - - ."