

THE HISTORICAL TIMES

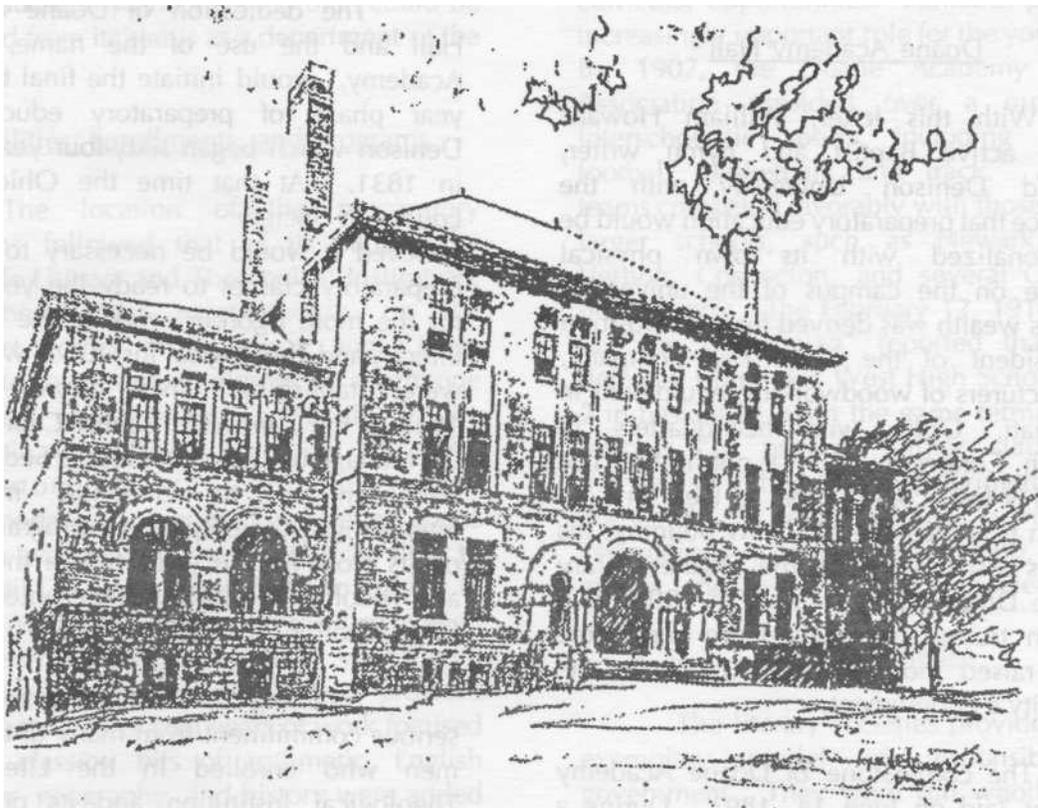
NEWSLETTER OF THE GRANVILLE, OHIO, HISTORICAL SOCIETY

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PREPIES ON THE HILL

DOANE ACADEMY AND ITS PREDECESSORS



*The editors of **The Historical Times** are pleased to present this abridged version of Thomas Gallant's excellent study on Granville's preparatory school for young men, the Doane Academy. Professor Gallant undertook his study on Doane Academy, which appeared in 1993, as a sabbatical research project. He kindly agreed to write this shortened version for the Historical Society's quarterly. For the interested person seeking a more detailed narrative, the editors recommend reading Professor Gallant's book which is available at the Historical Society Museum.*

The drawing of the Doane Academy Building, which now serves as the Denison University Administration building, is by Lyn McKenna.

To the Board of Trustees of Denison University,

Gentlemen:

Impressed with the importance and necessity of increased educational facilities for our Denominational work at Granville, I will give Twenty-five Thousand (\$25,000) for the erection of an Academy building. The gift to be accepted and a committee appointed to prepare plans and proceed with the work within ninety days from date--the amount to be paid as may be needed and required.

June 16th 1892 W. H. Doane

Doane Academy Hall

With this letter, William Howard Doane, active Baptist and hymn writer, provided Denison University with the assurance that preparatory education would be institutionalized with its own physical structure on the campus of the university. Doane's wealth was derived from his position as president of the J. A. Fay Company, manufacturers of woodworking equipment in Cincinnati, Ohio, with headquarters in Norwich, Connecticut. It was not his first, nor was it his last, contribution to Denison. In addition to the Doane Academy building, his name is associated with the Doane Library and the Doane Gymnasium. In 1900, as a Denison trustee, he chaired the committee which raised more than \$250,000 for the university's endowment.

The cornerstone of Doane Academy hall was laid on June 14, 1893. During a program of speeches and music, a metal box was placed within the confines of that cornerstone. Its contents included copies of Denison's yearbook, The Adytum, and copies of "The Granville Times," "The Denison Collegian," "Exponent," commencement programs, and a number of songs written by Dr. Doane. The building's basement and three stories above would contain offices, classrooms, society halls, and a chapel. It would be built of "buff pressed brick with Amherst stone trimmings." The May 24, 1894 "Collegian" described the interior walls as "

finished in yellow fresco work. In lamplight they will look like a temple of the sun. Bring in the sunlight and you have a chamber glittering with many colors of silver and gold. Bring in the Preps and you have Hades."

On June 10, 1895, Dr. Doane reported to the trustees that the academy building was completed. On June 12, the trustees took official action to affix his name to the building and to the academy which it would house.

Early Beginnings

The dedication of Doane Academy Hall and the use of the name, "Doane Academy," would initiate the final thirty-two year phase of preparatory education at Denison which began sixty-four years earlier in 1831. At that time the Ohio Baptist Education Society believed it would be necessary to conduct preparatory classes to ready the young men for the more rigorous work of the Granville Literary and Theological Institution which they were establishing. These classes began in 1830 in the Zanesville Baptist Church under the tutelage of its pastor, George Sedwick, but were moved to Granville in 1831. Interestingly, the preparatory program carried on its work for ten years before the Literary and Theological Institution presented anyone for graduation in 1840.

Attaining an education required a serious commitment from many of the young men who enrolled in the Literary and Theological Institution and its preparatory program in those early days. Samuel Gorman was a student of meager resources in 1837-38 who resided in Stark County (Akron, Ohio area). His third wife related the following vignette:

At the end of the first term, in March, he went back to his old home to make arrangements to have his crop of wheat taken care of in his absence when harvest came on. The night before he started the snow began to fall and before he had walked half way it was knee deep. When he returned to Granville he

walked back the hundred miles through the mud. On his arrival at Granville again, he, with three other young men of like fibre, all struggling with poverty, rented a room in a log hut. The room was not plastered. They made beds of rails, corn husks and straw and many cold nights of that first hard winter they were compelled to sleep in their clothing to keep warm. They also made their table and some chairs.

From 1887 until 1895 the preparatory program carried the name, "Granville Academy." The university's trustees had given the program that distinction to provide it with greater autonomy and visibility than could be achieved from its status as a department of the college.

Facilities, Enrollments, and Programs

The location of the preparatory programs followed that of its parent, the Granville Literary and Theological Institution, from the Baptist meetinghouse on the northeast corner of Broadway and Cherry streets, to some frame buildings on a farm one mile west of Granville, and finally to the hilltop in the village beginning in 1856. Preparatory classes and dormitory accommodations occupied whatever space became available on the "Hill" from time to time until Dr. Doane's gift came to fruition in 1895. At the conclusion of the first eleven week term in 1831, thirty-seven young men had enrolled in the preparatory program which consisted of two years of work focused on the classics; bits of arithmetic, English grammar, geography, and history were added to provide some practical and contemporary emphasis. The curriculum changed very little during the remainder of the 19th Century, though the duration of studies lengthened from two years to three years and, finally in 1908, to four years. The enrollments fluctuated wildly during the 1800's, ranging from the initial thirty-seven to one hundred fifty-six in 1895-96. For most of those intervening years, the enrollments in the preparatory program exceeded those of its parent institution.

The students were of diverse backgrounds and ages. Some attended full-time while others found it necessary to mix education with earning a livelihood. They came and went as dictated by their individual circumstances. In 1834, tuition for one year's study of two, twenty-one week terms was \$16.00. That figure had risen to \$34.00 by 1895. These costs seem relatively insignificant to us, but they translated into economic self-discipline and hardship for many students of those years.

During the academy years especially, students were treated to a variety of co-curricular opportunities. Athletics played an increasingly important role for the young men. By 1907, the Doane Academy Athletic Association presided over a number of interscholastic sports, including baseball, football, basketball, and track. Academy teams competed favorably with those of much larger schools, such as Newark, Mount Vernon, Coshocton, and several Columbus high schools. The February 17, 1910 edition of "The Denisonian" reported that Doane defeated Columbus West High School 117 to 2 in basketball, with the game terminated by officials "to prevent further slaughter of innocents." Other activities during the 1900's consisted of debate teams, a ministerial association, a mathematics club, musical groups, and above all, literary societies.

Literary Societies

The literary societies provided a truly exemplary model of responsible self-government. They were run wholly by the students and served as important intellectual and social outlets. When no longer granted membership in the college societies, the "preps" struck out on their own in 1860 and founded the Ciceronian Society whose avowed object was "the improvement of its members in Elocution and Literary Productions." Twenty-three years later (1883) nine Ciceronians withdrew from the organization and established the Irving Society. Both of these societies held weekly meetings which adhered strictly to lengthy agendas specified in their constitutions and

bylaws. The meetings were centered around declamations, essays, debates, and other literary exercises. The boys were fined and otherwise disciplined for poor attendance, non performance of assigned tasks, and disruptions. The Ciceronian prosecuting attorney's book for the years 1876-1888 reveals a few of the specific infractions which required disciplinary action: overdue books (from the Society's library), head against the wall, feet on chair, whispering, spitting in stove, leaving seat without permission, and "stuffing a bug down Donner's back." The societies had their own songs, yells, and traditions, and a lively rivalry flourished between them in their literary endeavors, athletics, and other facets of campus life. The annual Cicero-Irving Contest pitted these two groups against each other in four categories of literary jousting: oration, essay, declamation, and debate. The site of these contests was packed with students, faculty, and townspeople; excitement was always in the air. Prizes were awarded, and bets were collected on which society would emerge the winner. Both societies also held a number of social events during the academic year.

In 1909 the Adelphian Literary Society for young women was formed. Since the late 1800's Granville Academy and its successor, Doane Academy, had opened its classes on occasion to females who resided in the local area or who needed a course which was not available in the preparatory program of Shepardson College for Women. Shepardson, a "sister" institution located on what is now Denison's lower campus, consolidated with Denison in 1900 and merged with the university in 1927, but in 1911 had closed its preparatory program. This closure further prompted Doane Academy to welcome females and include them as regular matriculants, offering them some of the same intellectual and social opportunities as those enjoyed by the males, including participation in a literary society. The Adelphian Literary Society resembled in purpose, organization, and deed its "big brothers," the Ciceronians and the Irvings. Together, these three societies sparked a vigorous extra-curricular intellectual and social life on the Hill among

the "preps." They demonstrated with convincing clarity that these two aspects of student development could co-exist and nurture each other in student-run organizations.

The preparatory programs and the academies had long been important "feeders" to the Literary and Theological Institution and to Denison University. But as free public education became more widespread in America and the quality of public high schools improved, academies played a progressively less important role on college campuses. Doane Academy was no exception. Of one hundred twenty-six Denison graduates in the Class of 1926, only fourteen, ten men and four women, had Doane Academy backgrounds. Denison trustees saw important resources being consumed by the academy which the university needed to support its major mission of higher education. Priorities had to be set. At its April, 1927, meeting, the Board of Trustees announced that Doane Academy's operations would be suspended the following fall. They never resumed. Denison's preparatory education era had come to a close after a remarkably long tenure of ninety-six years!

Note: The material for this article was taken from Doane Academy: A Story of Preparatory Education, 1831-1927, authored by Dr. Thomas Gallant, Professor Emeritus of Education at Denison University. The seventy page publication was printed by the university during the summer of 1993. Its contents were compiled with the assistance of Florence Hoffman, archivist for the university and for the Granville Historical Society.

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EDITORS' NOTE: Production problems have delayed publication of The Historical Times. We hope to be back on schedule by the end of summer. Our thanks to Marilyn Sundin for typing the computer copy of this article.