

This is an imaginative skit with two characters and a choir of heavenly host. It supposedly takes place in Heaven between the Keeper of the Stars and a Heavenly Clerk. The only properties needed are a card table covered with a white cloth, two chairs, a heralding trumpet, and seven candlesticks holding seven lighted candles. All other lights should be out during the performance, and the script may be read by candlelight. Two notebooks are needed: one bearing the title ETERNAL ENTRIES and the other EARTHLY ACCOUNTS. These are to be on the card table and are to be referred to by the clerk in such a manner that the audience can read the book titles. The two characters are dressed as angels with white gowns, wings, and halos. There should be a nameplate on the table in front of the Keeper of the Stars and the Heavenly Clerk.. Both characters may remain seated. The Heavenly Host Angel Choir, wearing white robes and carrying feather dusters, remains in the background until the close of the skit.

Keeper: I trust you have all your records up to date and close at hand so that once and for all we can get to the bottom of this strange business.

Clerk: I do believe I'm ready with all the pertinent facts, Sister.

Keeper: Now, just what exactly did the counter of Stars report this time.

Clerk: I have it right here. Quote, "I, the Counter of Stars do positively state that I have ascertained beyond a doubt that there really is a new star shedding its light from afar." End of quote.

Keeper: Ah, yes. Again and again we've been told that the counting angels have discovered an extra star. I guess we must investigate the matter thoroughly at this time.

Clerk: Sister, I do go along with you on that. It tends to be most disconcerting to the star dusters and everyone on that detail to always find a star no one can account for.

Keeper: Yes, yes. Well, let's proceed. Now when was the extra star first noticed?

Clerk: (Looking in the book marked Earthly Accounts, and then referring to a page in Eternal Entries also) Well, by Earthly time ____ years ago, but by Time Eternal -- less than two weeks ago.

Keeper: (With a puzzled look) Hmmmm, and you say no one has dusted it in all that time? Isn't it getting a bit dull by now?

Clerk: Curious you should ask that. No one here dusts it, but it is steadily getting brighter. Surely somehow it gets dusted; but we can't explain it.

Keeper: Getting brighter all the time, eh? Well, surely there's a logical explanation for all of this... Let's get on with the case. Where in relation to Earth did the star first locate?

Clerk: It chose the North American Continent. By Earthly counting it was in the year 1869 over Iowa.

Keeper: Since it chose one particular location, I presume this star is associated with a person, or persons... or at least an event?

Clerk: Quite right! ...(Pointing to a place in the Earthly Accounts record) My record here points to no other conclusion. Something did happen at that time, I am sure.

Keeper: Do go on. Surely your records are up to date and fully posted? How many persons were involved?

Clerk: Seven.

Keeper: Now what did seven men do so revolutionary that a star was projected to shed its light?

Clerk: I beg your pardon, Sister It was seven WOMEN.

Keeper: I do not know why I jumped to such a conclusion..., because of the Star of Bethlehem, I guess.

Clerk: Very understandable mistake.

Keeper: Let us check over their Earthly Accounts first so that we get a true picture of the order of the events and the character of these women.

Clerk: (Now using the book titled Earth Accounts) Let me assure you. We have not been remiss in our recordings... We simply have not known how to interpret what we were putting into the record book. We did record the meeting held in a music room at Iowa Wesleyan College in January 1869. We did record the women's names also...but it did not seem worth sounding our trumpet about, if you will permit my personal opinion.

Keeper: So often that is the case. Some quiet little happening later turns out to change things for all time. Do go on.

Clerk: Well, on the 21st of January, 1869, our records show that an oath was written and administered, and also that a constitution was drawn up. Rather trivial data, if you ask me. Certainly no connection to that star.

Keeper: Please... I would like to have all the recorded facts before we do any minimizing. Do you have Eternal Entries on the Seven Women involved?

Clerk: Yes, right here, sister, the entry reads Alice Bird Babb-- A brilliant, literary student; a woman of strength, dignity and substance. She taught Greek and Latin at Iowa Wesleyan after she graduated, and loved to write under the pen name of Avis. Alice wrote the pledge and was the first to take it on that January day. She also created a constitution, which became something the earthling's call "the Objects and Aims".

Alice had a ready wit - so helpful for the earthly life - and it's no surprise to see that the girls made her their first president.

Keeper: Admirable entry, admirable, indeed.

Clerk: Shall I proceed? Mary Allen Stafford....Now her entry makes fine listening too. A woman whose faith was the anchor of her life, she believed in the riches of virtue, the essence of sharing, and the solemnity of truth. Her warm heartedness and insight were a great help to her minister husband, and she believed that Christianity was a practical solution to life's problems. It was in her home that the seven held their first meeting. She treasured her friends but stressed the importance of conducting business meetings properly and urged, I quote "We are but undisciplined if we cannot endure the quiet restraint of listening." End quote. The entry shows she stayed at the college for a good long time while her husband served as its president. Here is a smudged portion....(squint to read from book),,, I think I can read it though.... it says, "Adored by all who knew her",

Keeper: This is turning into a most pleasant task, Sister. Do go on.

Clerk: Alice Coffin. (Puzzled) I do not know how to interpret this entry. It says she is directly associated with the star, choosing this symbol for its five cardinal virtues. She was gracious and hospitable with that southern hospitality, you know. Her life too seems above reproach. She was a teacher, well more than a teacher, if you will permit my observations. She inspired talent and encouraged youth throughout her life.

Keeper: She truly was more than a teacher.

Clerk: To get on, there is Franc Rhodes Elliott, who entered college at 14 and graduated at age 17. She was a spirited crusader of vision, a champion of many causes including equal rights for women. Franc believed that it was a woman's destiny to shape the world. She gave her friends the vision that justice was an important goal to strive for as they reached for the star.

Keeper: I happened to see her entry once myself. Splendid woman.

Clerk: Next entry is Suela Pearson Penfield. Ah, what a beauty she was. Our records show she could always be found right in the heart of things. She was the youngest of the group, a sophomore among six seniors. She loved music, drama, and society with all its beauty and cultural aspects. She gave her friends a new tradition, which judges others only by soul and character, not the usual outward signs of age, class, or circumstance. Suela left Mt. Pleasant shortly after the birth of the P.E.O. dream, but she surely did light her corner of the world, as did the others.

Keeper: (Musing, as if thinking to herself) Perhaps that is the answer to it all.

Clerk: I'm sorry. I do not follow what you mean..

Keeper: Oh... I was only doing some reflecting. Sister, please continue.

Clerk: Ella Stewart....She was the daughter of a Methodist minister, who lived her life exemplifying maternal love and compassion for others. Ella chose the group's colors of yellow and white and taught them to forgive each other's faults. She did not graduate due to family responsibility after the death of her father, nor did she ever marry, but devoted her life to guiding a group of lost boys back to right thinking and a better way. She found her life's work and she did it well.

Keeper: (Shaking head with affirmation) It is fitting into place... that is surely it!.

Clerk: Last, but with no reflection, there is Hattie Briggs Bousquet (pronounced Busket). I gather she was the first to dream of P.E.O. When other groups in college were forming sororities and choosing Greek symbols for their names, Hattie chose the English letters P.E.O for their sisterhood and gave them their secret meaning. Confident in the enduring strength of their founding principles, she and the other six college women took their organization off campus, desiring a broader field of service. Hattie had the gift of wit and gaiety knowing how to make everyone feel welcome and comfortable. Her special contribution to P.E.O was joyous friendship.

(Pause)

These seven women were a star bound group. If you can make heads or halos out of all this, you are a better angel than I.

Keeper: I do believe I can. Tell me... Surely our records go beyond those first few meetings at the college?

Clerk: Yes, but does it really matter?

Keeper: That is part of the story. What is recorded?

Clerk: Well, these seven women soon included others in their sisterhood, and in time other such groups met in places far removed from Iowa. They even assumed the responsibility of a college for women in some place in Missouri. Our records show that today they loan money to women who want to go to college, offer grants of money to women who need education to help support their families, and offer scholarship monies to women all over the world who come to the country of the USA to study and then return home to their native land. Oh my... Do I dare to tell you...

Keeper: What is it, Sister?

Clerk: It is astounding! The last entry on this matter states, "The P.E.O. Sisterhood with the Star as its emblem has grown until now over 250,000 women strive to live by its ideals." (Reacts with wonder) Isn't that a bit awesome.... all those women??? And what about the letters P.E.O.? Do you suppose it is dangerous - some mysterious formula or something?

Keeper: I am sure it is a formula. A Wonderful Formula!

Clerk: But surely, Sister...

Keeper: Now don't get excited. Perhaps when you have been here as long as I have you will become more astute in your definitions. I think my report on this matter will quiet all your fears. (Clerk pretends to write in Eternal Entries.) The matter of this new star has been fully investigated. The results have proven that this new star is truly deserving of its right to shine ever so bright in Heaven. The Seven Women directly associated with the first light of this star have been found to be of the caliber for which stars must surely shine. While I cannot positively identify the particular initials P.E.O., I am extremely confident that they stand for a wonderful formula, written in a universal language. I know as surely as I am Keeper of the Stars that this star stands for Purity, Justice, Faith, Truth, and Love.
HEAVENLY HOST CHOIR SINGS "Stars are for Those Who Lift Their Eyes"

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