

**AN ACCOUNT OF THE
CELEBRATION OF THE FIRST
SEMI-CENTENNIAL
ANNIVERSARY WITH THE
ORATION AND POEM**

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An Account of the Celebration of the First Semi-centennial Anniversary with the oration and poem by Various

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VARIOUS

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THE ORATION AND POEM**

AN ACCOUNT
OF THE
CELEBRATION
OF THE
FIRST SEMI-CENTENNIAL ANNIVERSARY
OF THE INCORPORATION OF
COLUMBIA COLLEGE,
BY THE LEGISLATURE OF NEW-YORK;
WITH THE
ORATION AND POEM
DELIVERED ON THE OCCASION.

—————
"Antiquae exquisitae Matres."
—————

NEW-YORK :
G. & C. CARVILL & CO.

1837.

AN ACCOUNT, &c.

ON the thirty-first of October, 1754, a royal charter passed the great seal of England for incorporating "King's College in the city of New-York;" from which period the existence of the present College is properly to be dated. But in the course of the revolutionary war, the institution was almost entirely broken up, and it was several years subsequent to the peace before it was fully restored.

In May, 1784, all the public seminaries of learning in the state were, by an act of the legislature, placed under the government of a corporate body, styled "the Regents of the University," who immediately proceeded to regulate the affairs of this, the only College then existing in the state, the name of which was, by the same act, changed to "Columbia College."

This arrangement, however, was merely temporary, the College continuing under the immediate superintendence of the Regents no longer than until the thirteenth of April, 1787, on which day the legislature passed an act, restoring and confirming the original charter, with such alterations as the change of govern-

ment, and other intervening circumstances, had rendered necessary and proper. It was the fiftieth Anniversary of this event that was celebrated on the thirteenth of April, 1837, in pursuance of the proceedings and resolutions which follow, viz. :

At a meeting of the students of Columbia College, held on Saturday, October 29th, 1836, in the chapel of that institution, to take into consideration the propriety of celebrating the semi-centennial Anniversary of *Alma Mater*, Jesse A. Spencer was elected President, John I. Tucker and Benjamin T. Kissam, Vice-Presidents, and Samuel Blatchford, Secretary.

The object of the meeting being duly stated, it was moved that a committee of eight be appointed, (consisting of two from each class,) to draw up and bring before this meeting such resolutions, as may best express its sentiments with regard to the proposed measure.

Whereupon the following gentlemen were appointed :

<i>Senior Class.</i>	<i>Sophomore Class.</i>
Nathaniel W. Chittenden,	G. Anthon,
Henry P. Fessenden.	W. Green.
<i>Junior Class.</i>	<i>Freshman Class.</i>
Mancer M. Backus,	L. Hoyt,
George T. Strong.	W. Romaine.

The committee, having retired, returned, and offered the following preamble and resolutions, which were unanimously adopted.

Whereas, on the thirteenth day of April next, fifty years will have elapsed since the state of New-York conferred on this College the title and privileges of a free and literary institution—privileges which can only be enjoyed under a liberal and enlightened govern-

ment, and which can be merited only so long as the recipient of them continues to repay with commensurate benefits :

Whereas, during that short period, this institution has included among her foster-children those, whose intellectual attainments, sustained by a high moral tone of character, have been made the ardent promoters of the public weal and of national respect :

And whereas, the measure is due to the talents, the efficiency, and the reputation of the Trustees and Faculty of this College, as well as to our own feelings of veneration and attachment to *Alma Mater* :

Resolved, That in a semi-centennial Anniversary of Columbia College we see a measure due alike to the sacred cause of literature and of freedom ; since she has ever been among the foremost in developing the intellect of our country—fostering its early days, and strengthening its maturer years ; thus intimately blending her own history with the progress of the liberal principles and sound knowledge of the land.

Resolved, That we deem this celebration due to the high character of this institution itself, which has numbered among its sons a Hamilton, a Jay, and a Clinton—men the most conspicuous for moral and intellectual elevation ; that we perceive in the contemplated measure one that will tend directly to make our *Alma Mater* more widely known, and establish more fixedly her claims to the profound respect and veneration of all ; that will give increased action, if possible, to her every movement, cause her to be fully and rightly appreciated, and finally place her more firmly upon that lofty station, to which her long standing, and the wisdom, talents, and learning of her President and Professors so eminently entitle her.

Resolved, That we consider the proposed Anniversary as an event having peculiar reference to the numerous and distinguished body of *Alumni* of this College ; in that it will draw them together from afar and near, and awaken in their bosoms all the better feelings of our nature ; and that, closely united by the electric chain of a common love, they will surround their venerable *Alma Mater*, and do her such honour as the highest merit can deserve, or the warmest feelings of gratitude prompt.

Resolved, therefore, and in conclusion, That we will, by and with the approval and co-operation of the Faculty, hold, on the thirteenth day of April, in the year of our Lord one thousand eight hundred and thirty-seven, the first semi-centennial Anniversary of Columbia College.

It was then moved that a standing committee of twelve be appointed, consisting of three from each class ; upon which committee shall devolve the general management of the necessary steps in the proposed celebration, and who shall be instructed by the present meeting to convene an assembly of all the students at such time or times as the progress of affairs may require, and then and there to make such a report of proceedings as the circumstances of the case shall dictate.

The following gentlemen were accordingly appointed :

<i>Senior Class.</i>	<i>Junior Class.</i>
Nathaniel W. Chittenden,	Mancer M. Backus,
J. McMullen, Jr.,	George T. Strong,
H. P. Fessenden.	E. Anthony.

<i>Sophomore Class.</i>	<i>Freshman Class.</i>
W. Green,	L. Hoyt,
J. R. Brown,	O. Hoffman, Jr.,
P. K. Paulding.	J. W. Depeyster.

The meeting then adjourned.

JESSE A. SPENCER, *President.*

JOHN I. TUCKER, }
 BENJ'N. T. KISSAM, } *Vice-Presidents.*

SAMUEL BLATCHFORD, *Secretary.*

New-York, November 4th, 1836.

TO THE FACULTY OF COLUMBIA COLLEGE:—

GENTLEMEN,—Enclosed is a copy of the resolutions unanimously adopted by the students belonging to this institution, at a full meeting, held on Saturday, October 29th, 1836, to take into consideration the propriety of celebrating the semi-centennial Anniversary of *Alma Mater.*

These resolutions are herewith respectfully submitted for your approval; and, that due speed may be had, it is earnestly solicited that your decision be made known at as early a day as possible.

N. W. CHITTENDEN,
Chairman of the Standing Committee.

Col. Coll., November 5th, 1836.

SIR,

Your communication, as chairman of the standing committee, appointed at a general meeting of the

students of this College, held to take into consideration the propriety of holding a semi-centennial Anniversary of the College, has, in compliance with your request, been laid before the Faculty, together with the resolutions which it enclosed.

It gives me great pleasure to inform you, that those resolutions have met the entire approbation of the Faculty, and that I am authorized to assure you of their prompt and cheerful co-operation in carrying them into effect. Permit me, also, to add my personal assurance of the satisfaction it will afford me to assist you, from time to time, with my advice, upon such points as you may require it.

I remain,
Your obedient serv't.,
W. A. DUER,
Pres't. Col. Coll.

Mr. N. W. CHITTENDEN, *Chairman, &c.*

At a stated meeting of the Board of Columbia College, held on the 5th day of November, 1836, Present—the President; Professors McVickar, Anthon, Renwick, and Anderson. A communication was received from a committee appointed by a meeting of the students, held, by permission of the President, in the chapel, on Saturday last, enclosing certain resolutions relating to the celebration of the semi-centennial Anniversary of the incorporation of the College, and submitted to the board for their approbation—whereupon,

Resolved, That the board approve of the object of