

**A EULOGY ON THE LATE
CHANCELLOR
JOSEPH GIBSON HOYT OF
WASHINGTON UNIVERSITY**

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A Eulogy on the Late Chancellor Joseph Gibson Hoyt of Washington University by S. Waterhouse

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S. WATERHOUSE

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OF

WASHINGTON UNIVERSITY.

BY

PROF. S. WATERHOUSE.

Delivered at the Hall of the University, St. Louis, Jan. 20, 1863.

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1863.

EXTRACT FROM THE MINUTES OF THE FACULTY.

Washington University, Nov. 26, 1862.

Resolved, That PROF. S. WATERHOUSE be requested to prepare a eulogy on the late CHANCELLOR HOYT, to be delivered at the earliest day convenient to himself.

EULOGY.

—♦♦♦—
*Τοῦ μὲν γὰρ οὐδὲν ἄλγος ἀφεται ποτε
Πολλῶν δὲ μόχθων ἐύκλεης ἐπαύσατο.*

JOSEPH GIBSON HOYT was born in Dunbarton, New Hampshire, January 19th, 1815. He was the son of Joshua F. and Olive R. Hoyt. His father was a plain farmer, who, by prudent husbandry, had acquired a competency. Of limited education, ingenuous nature, good talents, and sound judgment, he thought more of an honest life and material success than of liberal culture. That his children should lead lives of simple virtue and humble prosperity satisfied his highest aspirations. From his low estimate of the value of education, the result of his own want of culture, he was unwilling to send his son to college. He did not deem education a profitable investment. But at last the father's pride was gratified by the son's success, and help came when the youth had proved his ability to succeed without it.

But the mother was a woman of brilliant powers and marked traits of character. She was distinguished for facility of composition and a quaint originality of expression. Gifted, aspiring, energetic, and pious, she was nobly ambitious that her children

should be conspicuous for learning and public usefulness. She taught them to hate meanness and vice, to love purity and frankness, and to aspire to honorable and virtuous distinction. She impressed her own qualities upon the plastic and susceptible nature of her most gifted son, and exercised a decisive influence in the formation of his character.

The subject of this memoir was the second of nine children. In childhood, the charms of personal beauty rendered his artless manners still more attractive. His complexion was fair, his features finely chiseled, curling locks fell in golden masses around his brow, and his deep-blue eye had a sweet and tender beauty that is still remembered.

In his earliest years, Joseph Gibson was noted for quickness of apprehension. Nothing pleased him more than the printed page. He would gaze with astonished delight upon the mysterious characters, and try to decipher their hidden meaning. He seemed to regard a book as something sacred, and nothing more quickly stirred his youthful indignation than the mutilation of one of his idols. After he had learned to read, such was his unremitting devotion to his studies that his father was often obliged to hide his books away from him. His ability gave him an easy pre-eminence in scholarship. In the district school which he attended, no boy equaled his readiness in mastering his lessons, or his fearlessness in venturing upon dangerous enterprises. His intrepidity amounted to temerity. But his perilous adventures were never prompted by a spirit of wild and vicious daring. His nature was rich and exuberant,

full of buoyant and elastic life. His enthusiasm, bravery, and kindness toward all made him a natural leader. His little mates loved to acknowledge his supremacy. In school, he was obedient and studious; out of doors, he was full of all kinds of innocent frolic and daring. The first scholar was also the best wrestler. Throughout life he retained his early fondness for active sports. The dignified chancellor, like the Roman senator, thought it not beneath his position to participate in the pastimes of youth. Though impulsive and capable of anger, he was full of exuberant and irrepressible good nature. Even in his sports, he was careful not to wound the feelings of his playmates. He often walked to church with poor boys to avoid any appearance of superiority. He used to commit to memory long passages of Scripture for the Sabbath school, but was unwilling to recite all he had learned for fear of mortifying the feelings of his young classmates.

In early youth, his opportunities for obtaining an education were limited. Till he was sixteen, he was able to attend the public school only three months out of the year; the rest of the time he worked on his father's farm. In his seventeenth year, he attended the academy at Hopkinton, New Hampshire, and taught school the following winter in Concord, New Hampshire. This was the commencement of his remarkable career as a teacher. In his eighteenth year, he bade a final adieu to the farm, and entered the Teachers' Seminary, Andover, Massachusetts, to study mathematics. The succeeding winter he was engaged, at the suggestion of Samuel R. Hall, the

Principal of the Teachers' Seminary, to teach school at West Newbury.

The circumstances which attended this selection were highly creditable to Mr. Hoyt. The school was large and difficult to manage. The pupils took a vicious pride in resisting the authority of the instructor. They had ejected several teachers from the school-house with rude violence. But Mr. Hoyt soon taught the insurgents a lesson of loyal obedience to the constituted authorities. Under his discipline the school was eminently successful.

At this period of his life, the Rev. J. Q. A. Egell, impressed with his display of talents, urged him to go to college. Persuaded by his friendly arguments, Mr. Hoyt returned to the academy at Hopkinton, and went through the preparatory course. He afterward reviewed his academic studies at Andover.

The officers of the Normal School, and of the Hopkinton and Andover Academies, soon detected Mr. Hoyt's varied and extraordinary capacities for instruction, and employed him as an assistant teacher. During his preparatory pupilage he was both student and instructor in these three institutions. At Andover, during the temporary absence of Professor Barton—who was employed by the Government in the survey of the Northeastern Boundary—the youthful student took charge of three classes in mathematics. For four months Mr. Hoyt discharged the duties of professor, and at the same time kept up his own studies. In the twofold and thrice sustained relation of pupil and teacher, neither the arduous duties of instruction prevented him from attaining the fore-

most rank in his class, nor did the familiarity with which scholars are wont to regard a fellow-student defeat his prosperity as teacher.

Before going to college, Mr. Hoyt taught school five winters, exclusive of his academic tuition. In all of these schools he exhibited those higher qualities of the successful teacher for which he was so distinguished in later life.

In 1836 he entered Yale College without conditions. Notwithstanding the difficulties which had beset his academic course, his preparation was thorough. He was distinguished at Yale for superior scholarship, forensic ability, originality of thought and expression, the strength of his friendships, and his magnetic power over his associates. During his collegiate course he took prizes for excellence in mathematical studies and in English composition. He was graduated with high honors. His part at Commencement was an oration. He was sixth scholar in a class of one hundred. Of his high scholarship, Jeremiah Day, who was President of Yale while Mr. Hoyt was a member of that institution, bears the following honorable testimony: "Mr. Hoyt," writes the venerable ex-president, "was a distinguished scholar, being appointed an orator for the Commencement day when he was graduated. I do not recollect for what department of literature and science he was particularly partial, for he made himself master of all. He was earnestly devoted to thorough investigation."

While in college, he was chosen one of the editors of the *Yale Literary Magazine*, and was elected, by an almost unanimous vote, President of the Brothers in