

**ANNIVERSARY ADDRESS
DELIVERED BEFORE THE GEORGIA
HISTORICAL SOCIETY, IN
HODGSON HALL, ON THE 14TH
OF FEBRUARY, 1881**

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Anniversary address delivered before the Georgia historical society, in Hodgson hall, on the 14th of February, 1881 by Charles C. Jones

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CHARLES C. JONES

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GEORGIA HISTORICAL SOCIETY,

Savannah, March 9th, 1881.

COL. CHARLES C. JONES, JR.,

AUGUSTA, GEORGIA.

Dear Sir—I take great pleasure in informing you that at the Regular Monthly Meeting of the Georgia Historical Society, held last Monday evening, the following Resolutions were unanimously adopted :

“Resolved that our thanks are due and are hereby cordially tendered to Col. Charles C. Jones, Jr., for his very able and eloquent address,—eminently discriminating and truly historical,—delivered before the Georgia Historical Society at its Anniversary on February 14th, 1881.

Resolved that Col Jones be requested to furnish a copy of this address for publication by the Society, and that we will preserve with pride and satisfaction this well merited tribute to the valuable labors and exalted character of our founders and predecessors.”

I remain very respectfully yours,

W. GRAYSON MANN,

Cor. Sec. Geo. Hist. Society.

ANNIVERSARY ADDRESS.

Mr. President, Ladies, and Gentlemen :

As children of the past and parents of the future, it appears eminently proper that we should, at stated intervals, pause for a brief hour in the hurrying march of time which will soon bear us hence, that we may call to remembrance our peculiar inheritance, carefully estimate our present belongings, and form at least a proximate conception of what our legacies will be.

In responding to the invitation which brings me into your gracious presence this evening, it has occurred to me that I cannot better fulfill the expectations of this Anniversary occasion than by reminding you of those who were the founders, patrons, and special friends of this Society, and by reviewing what has already been accomplished by our Institution in the exercise of its legitimate functions. Thus will we the more surely comprehend the position we now occupy, understand the meed to which we are entitled, and gather fresh courage for the discharge of the duties which lie before us.

Forty-two years have elapsed since the organization, in our midst, of the Georgia Historical Society. Have you forgotten the officers selected to give nascent tone, character, and impulse to the Institution? Let me name them.

JOHN MCPHERSON BERRIEN,—President,—born before the independence of these United States had been acknowledged,—a graduate of Princeton College when only a lad of fifteen,—then a pupil of the honorable Joseph Clay,—

called to the Bar while still a minor,—at an early age Solicitor of the Eastern Circuit,—when not thirty years old Judge of the Superior Courts of the Eastern District,—a Major of Cavalry in the war of 1812-15,—State Senator in 1822,—occupying a seat in the Senate of the United States in 1825,—four years afterwards Attorney General of the United States,—again a Senator from Georgia in 1841 and 1847,—filling other prominent positions within the gift of his fellow-citizens proud of his culture, probity, attainments, and ability,—the most accomplished lawyer Georgia ever gave to a court-room State or Federal,—thoroughly versed in the “nice, sharp quilllets of the law,” yet demonstrating at all times, by act and argument, that law was indeed, as my Lord Coke would have it, “the perfection of reason,”—acquainted with the traditions of his people local and national,—a type of the exact scholar and thorough gentleman;

JAMES MOORE WAYNE,—Vice President,—another son of Nassau Hall,—a favorite pupil of John Y. Noel, Judge Chauncey, and of Richard M. Stites,—in turn Judge of the Superior Courts of the Eastern District, member of Congress, and an Associate Justice of the Supreme Court of the United States,—a model of manly beauty, and a Chesterfield in deportment;

MATTHEW HALL McALLISTER,—Vice President,—a genial companion,—a famous advocate,—and, toward the evening of his life, elevated to the Bench as Federal Judge for the District of California;

ISRAEL K. TEFFT,—Corresponding Secretary,—an ardent devotee of the past,—a famous collector of autograph-letters and historical documents, especially of such as illustrated our Revolutionary period,—looking upon the time-stained paper whereon some famous hand had writ

"With greater love than the self-lov'd Narcissus
Did on his beauty,"—

the *fons et origo* of the Society ;

GEORGE W. HUNTER,—Treasurer,—managing with care
the slender finances of the Institution ;

HENRY K. PRESTON,—Librarian,—acquainted with books
and of scholarly tastes ;

WILLIAM THORNE WILLIAMS, always active in measures
which had for their object the promotion of education
and the amelioration of the intellectual status of the
community,—a Captain of the Chatham Artillery in the
war of 1812,—and, during a long life, a lover and pub-
lisher of books ;

CHARLES S. HENRY,—lawyer, Judge, and urbane gen-
tleman ;

JOHN C. NICOLL, of Roman virtue, exact habit, and most
retentive memory,—careful in noting the passing event,—
a walking encyclopædia,—full of calm thought,—much
given to patient investigation, and executing his office of
District Judge with a firmness, ability, and erudition
worthy of all commendation ;

WILLIAM LAW,—than whom no more courteous gentle-
man, eloquent advocate, profound jurist, and fair-minded
Judge ever adorned Society and maintained the standard
of true excellency in this beautiful City of Oglethorpe ;

ROBERT M. CHARLTON,—counsellor, advocate, Judge, poet,
essayist, friend,—the mention of whose name revivifies
the electric chain which binds us to all that is pure in
life, sweet in companionship, and undefiled in thought and
act ;

ALEXANDER A. SMETS,—successful merchant, citizen of
public spirit, and bibliophile of unusual knowledge,—in
constant communion with books, and surrounding him-

self with much that was choice and rare in the world of letters ;

WILLIAM BACON STEVENS,—energetic and earnest,—eager to familiarize himself with the men and events reflecting distinction upon his adopted State,—a professor of belles lettres and history in the University of Georgia,—and, at a later period, Episcopal Bishop of Pennsylvania ;

and last, but not least, RICHARD D. ARNOLD, whose name and fame and loves are intimately associated with the annals of this City and Society,—the skillful physician,—the generous friend,—given to profuse and refined hospitality,—the honored Mayor and trusted legislator,—foremost in every good work which could enure to the material benefit and civilization of Savannah,—the life and soul of every public convocation,—a Luttrell among wits,—a ministering angel when the shadows of want and pestilence darkened these streets,—of excellent literary taste,—and possessing a memory as tenacious of incidents, characters, and letters, as though they had been graven with a diamond's point upon a tablet of agate:—these were they who, in 1839, were selected as the first officers of the Georgia Historical Society. Surely, from out the entire circuit of this community none more competent or trustworthy could have been chosen.

Fifty years have not yet elapsed and, with a single exception, all are numbered with the dead. So like to a short summer is human life.

Of the original Resident Members of the Society one may not enumerate more than fourteen now in being, and most of them are rapidly hastening onward to that extreme verge beyond which it is not permitted the children of men to linger.

Such is the sad side of the retrospect which the recurrence of this Anniversary suggests. And yet, apart from the sorrow which the demise of the good, the useful, and the loved always causes, there is nothing unusual in the fact that upon the flight of these two score years and more we should be forcibly reminded of the operation of that inexorable law

"All that lives must die,
Passing through nature to eternity."

Although these founders of our Society have been gathered to their fathers, the temple which they planned survives, and subsequent years have strengthened its walls and enriched its porches. The purpose they conceived found encouragement at the hands of those who came after them. The charities of the benevolent and the intellectual gravitated hitherward, and thus has it come to pass that within the fair borders of this charming City there exists no more attractive edifice, no retreat more seductive, no more cultured resort than HODGSON HALL. Long may this institution remain the pride of Savannah and the honor of Georgia.

At the date of the inception of the Georgia Historical Society,—aside from tracts encouraging the foundation of the Colony and furnishing accounts of its development under the guidance of the Trustees and during the early years of its existence,—but two histories of Georgia had been published.

There appeared in London, in 1779, anonymously, but, as we now know, from the pen of the Reverend Alexander Hewatt,—a Presbyterian Clergyman and a former resident of Charleston,—who had departed thence when he perceived that an open rupture between the Crown and