In the following pages, you will find two items that bear a word of explanation:

First, a collection of selected important documents pertaining to the history of the Jefferson Society. These documents constitute the core of documentary record of the Society, and should provide an excellent, accessible resource for future scholars seeking to research the history of the Jefferson Society or the University of Virginia. They come from a variety of locations and span the entire history of the Jefferson Society. We have transcribed them all from the closest source to the original document, in most cases the original document itself, and each has been edited for correctness.

Second, a narrative history of the founding years of the Jefferson Society, spanning 1825-1830. This narrative details the inception of the Jefferson Society and its early activities, including the membership of Edgar Allan Poe. It is a modification of what will ultimately become first chapter of a book from the same authors.

This project will eventually form the basis for a book detailing the full history of the Jefferson Society, entitled Society Ties, a History of the Jefferson Society. This book should be released in early 2013.

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Sincerely,

Thomas L. Howard III and Owen W. Gallogly
The Founding of the Jefferson Literary Society--A Narrative

The Sage of Monticello settled back in his chair and gazed out over the Lawn. It was the last of June 1826. In the waning days of his life, Thomas Jefferson often journeyed the three miles from his mountaintop home at Monticello to the University he fathered to check in on the newly opened institution. On this particular occasion, he sat for over an hour in the doorway of the Rotunda, in chair a student had provided for him. The scene he observed was a fever pitch of activity. Workmen were lifting the first of marble Corinthian capitals that had just arrived from Italy. Students crisscrossed the lawn from their dormitories to their classes in the ten Pavilions that dotted the colonnade.  

Jefferson’s lifelong dream had finally become a reality. That dream, to build a University of Virginia, had begun almost a half-century earlier in the fertile valleys of Jefferson’s mind. In 1778, a much younger Jefferson introduced his “Bill for the More General Diffusion of Knowledge,” a plan to create several free public schools across the Commonwealth, into the Virginia General Assembly. Though the bill failed to pass, it offers us an early glimpse into Jefferson’s belief in the importance of public education. After his retirement from politics in 1809, Jefferson turned to this project in greater earnest. Over the next decade, Jefferson, aided by his close friend and legislative ally Joseph C. Cabell, would set to the arduous task of convincing the Virginia Legislature to fund a new public University in Virginia.

Jefferson had grand goals for this new University. First and foremost, he believed it would become “the most eminent” institution of higher learning in the United States, and would “draw to it the youth of every state.” He was convinced that such an institution would be invaluable to promote and develop the “natural aristocracy” of future
political leaders. Beyond simply the desire to educate young Americans however, Jefferson hoped that the University of Virginia would serve as a Southern counterweight to Northern schools such as Harvard and Yale. He feared that “If our legislature does not heartily push our University, we must send our children for education to Kentucky or Cambridge. The latter will return them to us fanatics and tories, the former will keep them to add to their population. If however we are to go a begging any where for our education, I would rather it should be to Kentucky than any other state, because she has more of the flavor of the old cask than any other.”

Jefferson’s design for the University of Virginia was just as grandiose as his goals for its success. Instead of constructing one large building to house students, dining facilities, and classrooms as did most schools of the time, Jefferson imagined a different configuration. His vision was of an Academical Village, two long rows of student dormitory rooms interspaced with ten pavilions, which would serve as faculty residences and lecture halls. These buildings would face onto a central, grassy Lawn, at the head of which would be the Rotunda, a large, classically designed building which would serve as the library. Unlike almost all colleges and universities of the age, Jefferson insisted on having a library, not a church or chapel, be the focal point of the University of Virginia.

Jefferson and Cabell made their first great stride towards establishing the University in 1816 when the Virginia Assembly granted legal status to Jefferson’s Central College in Charlottesville, Virginia. The State Legislature then passed a bill funding a University of Virginia in February 1818 and established what came to be known as the Rockfish Gap Commission to select a location for the school. Jefferson, one of the twenty-one commissioners on the panel, was able both to convince the
Commission to locate the University at his Central College, and to adopt his educational philosophy for the new school. Unlike most contemporary institutions of higher education, “[t]he new University would award as much emphasis to the modern sciences and modern languages as it did to the ancient languages, and as much to useful information derived from their study as to reasoning faculties developed from such studies.”9 With this innovative philosophy, design, and with Thomas Jefferson as Rector, the University officially opened its doors to students in March 1825.

The students who fell under Jefferson’s watchful gaze in June of 1826 as he sat in the doorway of the Rotunda were a small, rowdy bunch. There were only about one hundred of them, all but a handful of which lived in the rooms on the Lawn and Ranges. In the early days of the University of Virginia, violence and misbehavior amongst the students were common. On one notable occasion for example, a student threw a brick at professor John P. Emmet, an Irishman, during a small riot over the presence of foreign professors.10 Almost immediately after the University opened its doors in 1825, a major student revolt, complete with armed students and terrorism of faculty property and persons, erupted in quiet Charlottesville.11 The Faculty responded by instituting strict rules for conduct, requiring students to keep to a 9:00 PM curfew and which forbade drinking, gambling, and smoking. They also required students to wear a drab grey uniform on school days.12 One of the reasons for this early disorder was there was not much to speak of in the way of student activities in the years immediately after the University opened its doors, leaving young, brash Southern gentlemen with little to do but cause trouble.
One of the early activities that did emerge were student initiated literary societies, which followed the example of their counterparts at the other major universities across the country. Among the notable examples followed by students at Virginia were American Whig and Cliosophic Societies, founded at the College of New Jersey (Princeton) in 1769 and 1770, respectively and the Dialectic and Philanthropic societies at the University of North Carolina, both founded in 1795. \(^{13}\) Whig and Clio were both modeled after representative legislative bodies, and members partook in debate to pass “legislation” reflective of the aggregate view of the body. This process was meant to provide political training to their members, giving students the tools to enter public life after graduating.

The Dialectic and Philanthropic societies promoted debate enthusiastically, recognizing its importance as an important tool to learn about and discuss the salient issues of the day. In England, the Oxford Union, perhaps the most famous collegiate literary society, was founded in 1823. \(^{14}\) Given this strong trend, it is not surprising that the students at the University of Virginia, the sons of the leading political and business families in the Commonwealth and across the antebellum South, would want to follow any example they felt would provide them advantages later in life.

Likely the first literary society at the University of Virginia was the Patrick Henry Society, which was founded only days after students arrived. Very little is known about this short-lived organization other than its reputation for boisterous, disorganized meetings, which were reflective of student conduct of the period. A very large part of the student body took part in the proceedings of the Patrick Henry Society, whose meetings were open to the public and frequently visited by curious residents of Charlottesville.
Soon, however, some members of the Patrick Henry Society became dissatisfied with the chaotic conduct of the organization. These young southern gentlemen sought a model similar to the formal, prescribed meetings of the Whig and Clio Societies at the College of New Jersey. They also hoped to keep out the local Charlottesville rabble by restricting attendance at meetings to the members only. On July 14, 1825, sixteen members of the Patrick Henry Society met in Room 7, West Lawn, to form a new literary society for the University of Virginia, one they would name after the University’s founder—The Jefferson Society. The Society would prosper over the next two centuries, becoming one of the most notable and important student organizations at the University of Virginia, a position it still occupies today.\(^{15}\)

The identities of several of the sixteen founders are lost to history, but the names of nine of the faction that split from Patrick Henry Society are recorded for posterity. Edgar Mason, John W. Brockenbrough, Mann A. Page, John H. Lee, J. N. Tazewell, William G. Minor, Robert A. Thompson, Robert Saunders Jr., and Thomas Barclay were all among those who met in Room 7 on July 14.\(^{16}\)

In the following months, the original sixteen would do much to define the Jefferson Society as a young but promising organization, setting it on the course that would carry it through almost 200 years of existence thus far. Much of what they decided and many of their actions beat still at the heart of the Jefferson Society in its meetings, identity, and lore. They chose mottos, designed emblems, selected colors, adopted Greek letters, and elected honorary members, all of which helped capture and mold the spirit of the organization they were striving to create. They drew upon what they knew, following
the example of other literary societies, colleges, and political leaders across the country and the world.

Four days after the first meeting, on July 19, a committee consisting of Mason, Lee, and Minor met next door in Room 5 and drafted the Society’s first constitution, a document that unfortunately does not survive. Presumably, that document laid out basic structure for the Society’s meetings, qualifications for membership, and a statement of purpose for Jefferson Society. Meetings followed accepted rules of order (Robert’s Rules of Order would not be published until 1876) and likely followed a strict agenda. The president would call the meeting to order and invite the secretary to call the roll and read the minutes of the last meeting. Applicants for membership would learn of their fate early in the meeting, as voting on new members seems to have been one of the first orders of business. Debaters would then discuss a pre-determined question, debates that quickly gained a reputation for being hotly contested, divisive, and theatrical. They would often go on for hours as members fought to voice their opinion over the roar of the crowd. Before the meeting adjourned, the Society would take care of any administrative business and select a question for debate at the next meeting. All of the decisions made by the members were governed by painstakingly selected processes allowing for speakers on any question and voting ratios depending on the question being considered.

The young aspiring statesmen of the Jefferson Society showed such an obsession the mechanics of the constitution in the formative days that meetings became bogged down in discussion proposed amendments. Eventually, members who proposed an amendment that ultimately failed to pass would be fined one dollar for wasting the Society’s time.
Because of the desire to rectify the disorder the founders perceived in the Patrick Henry Society and the student body, rules for meeting procedure and behavior were instituted in the Jefferson Society. In February 1827, a strict policy of secrecy was imposed upon the membership, with expulsion as the penalty for violation. When they were inducted, members were placed under “the most solemn injunction not to divulge any of its proceedings, or, anything which may occur within its walls.”

This would remain the policy of the Society for many years. The rowdy spirit of the student body could not be quelled however, and the Society took still more efforts to regulate meetings, convening a regular court after each meeting, presided over by two judges, which heard all appeals and fines, a custom which continued until 1838.

At the meeting on July 19, the members chose their first officers. Edgar Mason was elected Moderator, John H. Lee Vice-Moderator, Mann A. Page Secretarius, and J. N. Tazewell Bibliothecarius. These names for officers fell out of use at some point in the following ten to fifteen years, when they became known by their present, more conventional names of President and Secretary, as they appear in the constitution drafted in 1837, the oldest surviving version. It is worth noting that the Bibliothecarius, or Librarian, a position that no longer exists, would have been charged with maintaining the Society’s library. Building a library for the use of its members was a major function of any early college literary society because of the prohibitively high price of books, as well as their rarity. Most college libraries had strict rules regulating the use and accessibility of books, and separate libraries maintained by literary societies provided a more convenient alternative for students. By the middle of the nineteenth century, the Jefferson Society’s library would have been one of the largest academic libraries not directly
associated with a university on the East Coast. The Jefferson Society donated its library to the University of Virginia in the 1850’s, after which it was housed in the Rotunda. Unfortunately, the entire library, burned in the Rotunda fire of 1895, along with most of the Society’s records at the time.\textsuperscript{24}

Edgar Mason called the first meetings to order every Monday evening “at candlelight.” This soon changed to every fortnight, as the Society adjusted to how much business it would need to conduct. The place and time of early meetings varied widely, adapting to the availability of University buildings. The first meetings were held in Pavilion I on the west side of the Lawn. Later they moved to Pavilion IV, which was not in use as a residence, and Pavilion VII, the modern-day Colonnade Club. The Jefferson Society continued to grapple with other societies and classes for a more permanent place to meet, frequently petitioning both the Faculty and the Board of Visitors for a meeting room. Such a space was finally granted in 1837, when the Society was allowed to meet in Hotel C on the West Range, the building it has occupied ever since.\textsuperscript{25}

As did most literary societies of the day, these early members designed a “badge,” or a seal, that could be used on official documents of the Society and to represent the Society publicly. It would also have been worn on certain occasions to denote membership. The Jefferson Society’s original badge “[consisted of] a scroll, on which appeared the Declaration of independence transversed by a spear, surmounted with the cap of Liberty; on the reverse shall be the name of the Society, its date of birth, encircled by a wreath of laurel.”\textsuperscript{26} On the front of the badge appeared the first motto of the Society: “\textit{Pro Patria, Pro Libertate, atque Pro Litteris},” roughly translated as “For Country, for Liberty, and for Literature.”\textsuperscript{27}
In the first half-century at the University of Virginia, other organizations used a variety of different ways to signal membership, including pins, ribbons, and colored clothing. Ribbons were by far the most popular devices, and a number of early student organizations became known as “ribbon societies,” the most notable of which were Eli Bannana and T.I.L.K.A. While the Jefferson Society was never known as a ribbon society proper, members often wore a “bunch of ribbons, the colors of which [were] to be Blue, White, and Pink, to be worn on the left Lapelie [sic] of the coat,” probably simply because of the popularity and recognition of ribbons among the student body.28

Like many of the institutions at the newly formed and evolving University, all of these symbols adopted by the Society would eventually change. The colors of the Society were changed to only blue in 1834, by which time the Washington Society had adopted white as its color and another society had taken pink.29 The badge and motto were changed in 1848 to their current forms.30 The seal now features a silhouette of Jefferson with two quills crossed behind it and the Greek letters of the Society, all enclosed in a triangle.

The Society’s new motto, “Haec olim meminisse iuvabit,” was probably reflective of the college culture of the day as well as many students’ feelings about their time at the University and in the Society. This famous quote, taken from Virgil’s Aeneid, is commonly translated as “In the future it will be pleasing to remember these things.”31 At the time, many college students felt that they were “[p]oised on the brink of adult responsibilities and tribulations,” and “they sadly felt that the joys they experienced as students would be gone forever.”32 In these early days, University students rarely stayed longer than two years, with many leaving after one or two sessions. As a result, they saw
their college days as brief but blissful respites before entering into the long, difficult battle that was adult life. This new motto reflected contemporary feelings of the ephemerally of college life and future longing to return to the “sunny hours of youth” after leaving the University.  

The Greek letters adopted by the Jefferson Society in the 1820’s are the only original identifiers still popularly in use today. It is unclear exactly when they were adopted, but the following letters were doubtless embraced with in the first three years of the Society. They are: Phi, for philoi, meaning brotherhood; Pi, for patris, meaning fatherland; and Theta, for theos, meaning divinity. In the early nineteenth century, it was quite rare for an organization to adopt Greek letters; such a convention did not become widely practiced until the middle of the century. When the Jefferson Society was founded, only one notable organization had done so: Phi Beta Kappa, founded in 1776 at the College of William and Mary. The first social fraternities followed soon after the Jefferson Society, likewise adopting Greek letters. Most were founded in the north, such as the Kappa Alpha Society, (November 1825) and Sigma Phi (1827), both of which were founded at Union College in Schenectady, New York.  

HONORARY MEMBERS

The expectation of political and oratorical training would bring students to the sessions of the Jefferson Society, but the only way the young organization could retain membership and operate effectively was to build credibility for itself both in the eyes of the students and of the community. The first members employed a powerful tool to enhance the prestige of the Society and to begin to define it as an organization—the election of prominent public figures to honorary membership. This was a common
practice for nineteenth century literary societies. It served, in a manner of speaking, to stake out intellectual and political territory and to lend credibility to societies as they made a name for themselves.\textsuperscript{36} Once elected to honorary membership, notable individuals who accepted would often come in person to one or more meetings of the organization. They were required to accept honorary membership, and when they did, they also often shared their thoughts on the value of literary associations with the student members either in person or in a letter. This both gave young students an invaluable opportunity to associate with the political elite of the day and bolstered the reputation of the society who counted them as members.

The Jefferson Society was no exception to this tradition. The Society’s earliest members appreciated the political training they would receive in the Society and at the University, and they sought to enhance it by association with elite Virginia figures. “From the beginning the founders of the University of Virginia focused on the specific task of educating Virginia’s youth to take charge of Virginia’s political destiny,” efforts that were reinforced by a close relationship between the University’s Board of Visitors and the Jefferson Society.\textsuperscript{37} Three of the first individuals elected to honorary membership in the Jefferson Society—Jefferson himself, James Madison, and James Monroe—were members of the Board of Visitors and arguably the most important members of the Virginia national political dynasty of the period.

The first Jefferson Society members were the sons of wealthy planters, so naturally they wanted to “[model] themselves after the [Visitors],” who were almost all prominent Virginians. To foment these relationships, “they wrote letters to the them, commemorated their achievements as a body, and practiced their statesmanship on the
friendly confines of the university campus.” Electing these prominent men to honorary membership was a strong expression of a desire to build ties with them and emulate them in public life. Jefferson was the first elected, on the motion of Robert A. Thompson, one of the original sixteen. On August 11, 1825, a committee of three drafted a letter to express the good news to Jefferson:

University of Va, Aug. 11 1825

We, a committee of the Jefferson Society of the University of Virginia, appointed for that purpose, have the honour to inform you of your election as an honorary member of that Society; And in doing so, permit us to express, in the name of that Society, of which we are the organ, and for ourselves individually, the sincere respect which we entertain for your character as a man, and the profound gratitude with which we are impressed for your imminent services as a patron of science, a politician and a philanthropist. We are, with sentiments of the highest esteem and veneration, Your obedient servants,

Committee-
Edgar Mason
John W. Brockenbrough
Robt. Saunders Jr.

The Society received Mr. Jefferson’s reply they next day. He declined honorary membership appealing to the responsibilities he held to all the students at his university, not wanting to show favor, preference, or undue support to any one group or segment of students. He wrote in handwriting cramped by his old age:

Monticello, Aug. 12, 1825

I am very thankful, gentlemen, for the honor done me by the society of which you are a committee, in electing me one of its honorary members. I could decline no distinction conferred by the them, nor service I could render them, but on reasons of still higher importance to themselves, on maturely weighing the general relation in which the law of the University and the appointment by its visitors have placed me as to every member of the institution, I believe it my duty to make no change in those relations by entering into additional and different ties with different associations of its members. The duties with which I am charged require
that in all cases which may arise, I shall stand in an equal position as to every person concerned, not only that I may preserve the inestimable consciousness of impartiality to all, but the equally inestimable exemption from all suspicion of partialities. Your kind expressions towards myself ensure to me, I hope, an equally kind acceptance of the reasons on which I act, and I can add with truth on behalf of my colleagues of the visitation, that the highest reward they can receive from their joint cares and exertions on behalf of this institution, is the anticipated hope and relief that they are rearing up in science and in virtue those on whom the hopes of their country rest for future government and prosperity. For myself, I pray you to accept assurances of my sincere affections and best wishes,

Th. Jefferson

Despite feeling constrained by his position as Rector of the Board of Visitors, Jefferson was likely very pleased to see the development on a budding literary society at the University, believing strongly as he did in the ideals of self-improvement and democracy they promote. This sentiment is confirmed by Jefferson’s service as the President of the American Philosophical Society, a position that he occupied for no less than eighteen years.

Neither James Madison nor James Monroe felt no such constraint, and both accepted their offers of honorary membership. Madison was notified (perhaps for a second time) of his election on May 5, 1827, in a letter similar to the one Jefferson received:

University of Virginia, May 5th 182[7]

Dear Sir,
The documents of our society having been misplaced and we not being able to ascertain whether you have been informed that you were elected an honorary member of the Jefferson society as a committee have the honour to announce to you your appointment, and that we shall feel ourselves much gratified whenever you visit the University to be honoured with your attendance—We are Sir with respect and esteem Your Obt. Sevts.  

John Willis
Thos. S. Gholson
Both Madison and Monroe would serve longer on the Board of Visitors than Jefferson, who died in 1826, and both would attempt to support the Society, along with the rest of the Board of Visitors. On July 17, 1827, for example, the Board of Visitors responded to the Society’s request for a meeting place by allowing, “while the board cannot permanently appropriate to their use, the room which they now occupy, they will not be unnecessarily disturbed in the use of it, but will be permitted to occupy it as heretofore, till it shall be required for some other purposes of the University.” Both Madison and Monroe sat on that iteration of the Board of visitors, with Madison as Rector.

A more endearing offer of honorary membership was extended to the Marquis de Lafayette, by this time a celebrity in the United States for his assistance in the American Revolution. During his visit to the United States, Lafayette was invited to visit the University of Virginia; his visit culminated with a public dinner in the Rotunda on August 20, 1825. Before the dinner, John H. Lee, one of original sixteen who was then serving as President, approached Lafayette on the Lawn and informed him of his election to honorary membership. In good humor, Lafayette replied,

While under the auspices of a name equally cherished and venerated by all of us, gentlemen, I am initiated to the honour of a fellowship in your institution, I find myself under an additional obligation to your juvenile kindness. I am happy, my dear sir, in those testimonies of affection, to recognize your feelings towards us, the soldiers of independence and freedom--and your attachment to the republican principles for which we have had the honor to fight and bleed. With the most lively gratitude, I accept, and shall ever keep the favour you have been pleased to confer upon me, and while I most cordially reciprocate your friendly wishes on my behalf, I beg you to accept my affectionate acknowledgements.
After dinner, Lafayette toasted the University, saying “The University of Virginia: May it more and more diffuse through every part of mankind, the principles, the feelings, and the benefits of true knowledge, general philanthropy and unalloyed republicanism.”

The Jefferson Society further defined itself politically by who it did not select as an honorary member. We know of at least one more early American statesman who was considered for honorary membership in the Jefferson Society, John Randolph of Roanoke. When his name was brought up, the Society denied him membership out of deference to both Jefferson and Monroe. Randolph had earlier split with Jefferson and formed his own faction of the Democratic-Republican Party and opposed the candidacy of Monroe for President. Randolph went so far as to refer to Jefferson as “St. Thomas of Canterbury,” a reference to St. Thomas of Canterbury bemoaning the indiscriminate manner with which he felt Americans followed Jefferson’s overly idealistic view of democracy. The Society displayed its political loyalty to Jefferson and Monroe fairly clearly by rejecting Randolph.

Madison, Monroe, and Jefferson occupied a fairly well defined political niche, particularly by 1825. At first pass, the Jefferson Society cast its lot in favor of the Democratic Republican philosophy of these three men and their emphasis on the role states were meant to play in their conception of Union. While the political make up and leanings of the Jefferson Society would be quite fluid by nature because of high student turnover from year to year, Jeffersonian ideals of democracy would remain central to the political socialization that occurred in the Jefferson Society, even as the political stances of its members changed with each coming session.
One of the young men who joined the Jefferson Society in the early days was Edgar Allan Poe. He came to the University of Virginia in only its second session, which began on February 1, 1826. When Poe arrived at the University, the student body had grown slightly from the previous term, to 177 students. Poe matriculated on February 14, one of five students to do so on that day.\textsuperscript{49} According to Miles George, a student at the time, Poe first lived briefly on West Lawn, but not records survive to indicate in which room.\textsuperscript{50} We do know, however, that he later moved to 13 West Range, the room that has now become famous as the poet’s residence for the majority of the time he spent at the University. He would remain at the University just one year.

Poe was likely encouraged to attend the University of Virginia by General John H. Cocke, a member of the first Board of Visitors as well as a friend and associate of John Allan, Poe’s foster father. Allan provided for Poe while he was that the University, sending him clothes and other necessities. Nonetheless, Poe racked up gambling debts and when the session expired on December 15, 1826, Allan refused to send Poe back to Charlottesville for a second term.\textsuperscript{51}

As a young man, Poe displayed a penchant for languages, both ancient and modern. The early curriculum of the University of Virginia allowed for students to choose their course of study, selecting “tickets,” or classes in the courses they wanted to take, the exams for which would be administered at the end of the session by the Board of Visitors.\textsuperscript{52} Poe took “tickets” in Latin, Greek, French, Spanish, and Italian from George Long, the Chair of Ancient Languages, and George Blaetermann, the Chair of Modern Languages. Together, the two would teach Poe his full slate of classes. Long came to
Virginia from Trinity College at Cambridge where he was a fellow. At the University, he established a strong standard of linguistic scholarship during his brief tenure, which lasted until 1828. If Long was one of stars of the original faculty, Blaetermann achieved considerably less notoriety, as he was ultimately dismissed from his chair in 1838 by request of the student body, after gaining a reputation as a violent and easily angered man. He appears, however, to have been a competent instructor.  

By all accounts, Poe was an excellent student and attended class regularly. A report authored in January 1827 by the Board of Visitors and delivered to the Virginia General Assembly set out to track the progress of the students enrolled in the new University. Poe appears twice in the report, once ranked fourth in the Senior Latin Class, and again ranked sixth in the Senior French Class. Poe was also noted for a translation he gave of Tasso in the Modern Languages Pavilion, for which he even received the praise of the cantankerous Professor Blaetermann.  

Outside of the classroom, we benefit from sparse records of Poe’s reading from the University library, which allow us to get a sense of the young author’s literary interests. In the early days of the University, independent reading was an important part of the curriculum as students spent relatively little time in the classroom. The library itself, however, was strictly regulated—to borrow books students were required to request them in advance and pick them up on the one day per week the Library was open. The record book of the library records six volumes that Poe drew from the shelves: Charles Rollin’s *Ancient History*, William Robertson’s *America*, John Marshall’s biography of George Washington, Voltaire’s *Histoire Particulière*, and Nicholas Dufief’s *Nature Displayed*. By no means do these five titles constitute the extent of Poe’s reading. William
Wertenbaker, the first University librarian, reports seeing him frequently at work in the Library, and he probably also purchased several volumes from local booksellers, such as the copy of Byron that Thomas Bolling, one of Poe’s fellow students, reports buying with him.\textsuperscript{56} It is also likely that Poe partook of the fledgling Jefferson Society library, which members had begun to compile by the time Poe was a student.

Much speculation surrounds Poe’s personal life while he attended the University as well as the reasons for his early exit from school. For example, Wertenbaker claims that Poe never drank in Charlottesville, or if he did, he did so sparingly.\textsuperscript{57} Alderman, however, speculates, “It is certain that Poe gambled and drank at the University,” but goes on to explain “It should be understood that he was not expelled, dismissed, or disciplined in any fashion whatever.”\textsuperscript{58} T. G. Tucker, one of Poe’s neighbors on West Range described Poe’s alcoholism: “His passion for strong drink was even then of a most marked and peculiar character. He would always seize the tempting glass, generally unmixed with sugar or water—in fact, perfectly straight—and without the least apparent pleasure, swallow the contents, never pausing until the last drop had passed his lips.”\textsuperscript{59} It is fairly clear that Poe’s life long battle with addiction began at the University of Virginia. We also know that Poe gambled—John Allan was forced to take a trip to Charlottesville to settle many of Poe’s debts, which amounted by most accounts to roughly $2,500.\textsuperscript{60}

By all descriptions, Poe moved through his student days as a loner, but he seems to have found a home and companionship in the Jefferson Society. The intellectual discourse of the Society was probably a haven for the young artist both to display his budding literary abilities and to find some relative reprieve from the chaos of 1820’s
student life. He was elected to membership on June 17, 1826, at the tail end of the Society’s first year of existence.\footnote{61} By that time, the Jefferson Society had come into its own, counting thirty two young men as members.\footnote{62} Unfortunately, we know comparatively little of Poe’s activities in the society than we do of other famous alumni.

Shortly after he joined, Poe delivered an essay entitled “Heat and Cold,” the text of which unfortunately does not survive. He was active in the meetings of the Society, and presumably as regular in his attendance to them as he was to his classes. At one meeting, Poe served as Secretary \textit{Pro Tempore}, and recorded the minutes for that evening.\footnote{63} In a controversy that has borne through to the present day, Poe’s signature attesting to the accuracy and completeness of his minutes was clipped from the minute book and stolen by Lancelot Minor Blackford, a member in the late 1850’s. The signature was purchased at auction by a group of alumni and returned to the Society in 1988.\footnote{64}

Of those who knew Poe from the Jefferson Society, John Willis wrote of his remembrances most extensively, recalling, “Poe had many noble qualities, and nature had endowed him with more of genius, and a far greater diversity of talent, than any other whom it had been my lot to have known . . . His disposition was rather \textit{retiring} and he had few intimate associates.”\footnote{65} He finished by adding, “Poe . . . in the days of his youth, when first entering upon manhood, his bosom was warmed by sentiments of the most generous and noble character.”\footnote{66}

Poe thrived in the intellectual environment of the Jefferson Society. He would often host readings of poetry or short stories in his room on the West Range, where his friends, many of whom were Society members, would sit for hours and listen to Poe dramatically deliver his work. Poe’s listeners generally admired his work, but “on one
occasion Poe read a story of great length to some of his friends (likely Jefferson Society members) who, in a spirit of jest spoke lightly of its merits, and jokingly told him that his hero’s name, ‘Gaffy’ occurred too often. His proud spirit would not stand such rebuke; so in a fit of anger . . . he flung every sheet into a blazing fire.”67 It is not surprising that Poe cultivated such a following amongst the Society, which since the early days of Poe has enjoyed a lively and close knit intellectual community both inside, and perhaps more importantly, outside of Jefferson Hall. Its members have a diverse variety of interests, and the time spent in the Society forges strong bonds of friendship that extend into all corners of the lives of its members. It is likely that Poe laid the seeds of some of his closest friendships as he read late nights with Society members in his room on the West Range.

Poe was also fond of drawing, which he almost never did on paper, but rather on the walls of his room. Miles George, another one of Poe’s friends, recalled, “Poe, as has been said, was fond of quoting poetic authors and reading poetic productions of his own, with which his friends were delighted & entertained, then suddenly a change would come over him & he would with a piece of charcoal evince his versatile genius by sketching upon the walls of his dormitory, whimsical, fanciful, & grotesque figures.”68 Poe’s sudden mood swings would mark the end of the night for his friends, who would leave the troubled youth to draw in solitude until the next reading occurred.

Poe leaves vivid reminiscences of the University and the surrounding countryside in his work. His short story “A Tale of the Ragged Mountains,” while not written while Poe was a student, is based heavily on his time in Charlottesville, and begins with the line, “During the fall of the year 1827, while residing near Charlottesville, Virginia, I casually
made the acquaintance of Mr. Augustus Bedloe,” Bedloe being a character whose wanderings in the Blue Ridge mountains paralleled Poe’s own experience. Images of Charlottesville appear through his body of work, sometimes directly, other times only as part of a larger picture, but it is very apparent that Charlottesville had quite an impression on the young poet, one that he would constantly come back to.

Poe left the University of Virginia on December 15, 1826. When the term expired, Poe had accumulated such a monumental debt that John Allan refused to send him back to the University for a second session. Poe’s insolvency was considerable; he was over $2,500 in arrears from gambling alone. His debts also included, among many other things, expenses for a servant who attended to his room, (as every student was expected to have in those days) and bills from local Charlottesville merchants. Allan traveled to Charlottesville to pay Poe’s “legitimate debts,” but refused to pay off Poe’s gambling obligations. Despite the fact that Poe considered his gambling losses to be “debts of honor,” and often voiced his intention to repay them, it is unlikely that he ever got the chance.

Poe is remembered fondly by the Jefferson Society. In 1861, the Society undertook to raise money to support Maria Clemm, Poe’s ailing and poverty-stricken mother-in-law. Later, on January 16, 1909, the Society hosted an event to commemorate the centenary of Poe’s birth. The event drew considerable attendance, and featured a slate of speakers, each of who detailed a different aspect of Poe’s life. “Poe Night,” as it became know was celebrated annually until the 1930’s when a change in the academic schedule put the date during the winter recess. The Society still actively
commemorates Poe’s time as a member by hosting Poe reading contests and referring to the Secretary’s chair in Jefferson Hall as the Poe Chair.

In a 1907 speech on Poe delivered by Edwin Alderman, himself an honorary member of the Jefferson Society, the University President said of the poet, “Poe has endowed his alma mater with immortal distinction, and left it a legacy which will increase with the years. It is not the endowment of money, for there was no scrip left in his purse, but simply the endowment of a few songs and a fund of unconquerable idealism.”

Alderman went on to say, “True he is no exemplar to whom we can point our youth, but the fact that there is a little room on West Range in which dwelt a world poet, who never wrote an unclean word and who sought after beauty in form as passionately as a coarse man might seek after gain, has contributed an irreducible total of good to the spirit which men breathe as well as a wide fame to his alma mater that will outlive all disaster, or change, or ill-fortune.”

Poe’s spirit lives on in the Society, helping to define its spirit of literary creativity from its earliest days.

Poe’s contemporaries in the Jefferson Society distinguished themselves academically as well. In the same report on the progress of students that places Poe near the top of his French and Latin classes, a handful of other students known to be members of the Jefferson Society are recorded excelling in a variety of different classes. Robert M.T. Hunter, who would later become Speaker of the House of Representatives, finished third in the Junior Mathematics class and first in the Moral Philosophy class. John Willis placed fifth in Junior French, Chapman Johnson sixth in Natural Philosophy, and Mann A. Page, one of the original sixteen, fifth in Law.
Outside of the classroom and in the sessions of the Society, these men cultivated close, personal relationships. Rebecca Lomax, a close friend of Robert M.T. Hunter, recommended her “Cousin Mann Page, to you, as an acquaintance. He will deliver this letter to you. And from what I have told him in respect to you, he is anxious to cultivate your acquaintance.” It is entirely probable that the introduction to Mann Page was reason Hunter joined the Jefferson Society. Friendships begun in the Jefferson Society in these early days proved life-long and lasting, just as they did in later years. Hunter served alongside William Ballard Preston, another early Jefferson Society member, as Senators from Virginia in the Confederate Senate. In 1860, a delegation of three men who had been members of the Jefferson Society, Preston, Alexander H. H. Stuart, and George W. Randolph met with President Lincoln in an effort to head off conflict before the Civil War. Close, working relationships born in the Jefferson Society continue to characterize the organization to the present day.

With the Jefferson Society firmly established as an organization, over the following years it moved into a position of the prominence it would come to occupy at the heart of the University of Virginia community. It rapidly grew in membership, eventually comprising almost half of the student body. Its rise to prominence would be marked by its ever increasing role in the events and happenings of the University. The Jefferson Society’s celebrations at Final Exercises were the highlight of the University social calendar just a few years after the Society was founded. The Society also began publishing a magazine, filling the void of literary pursuits and journalism that existed at the young University. Soon, the Jefferson Society had moved into the mainstream of University life, a position it would occupy, if not dominate, for years to come.


7 Thomas Jefferson to Benjamin Henry Latrobe, 12 Jun. 1817. This letter began a long correspondence between Jefferson and Latrobe, in which the two collaborated to design the layout of the University of Virginia.

8 Charles Coleman Wall, “Student Life at the University of Virginia, 1825-1861,” 6.

9 Wall, “Student Life at the University of Virginia, 1825-1861,” 6.

10 *Bruce* II, 298-299.

11 Wall, “Student Life at the University of Virginia, 1825-1861,” 91-92.

12 Ibid.


The Jefferson Society published two editions of a “catalogue,” first in 1854 and again 1859. These documents detail much of what we know about the first days of the Society. They include a brief history of the Society and a roll of the members through their respective dates of publication. The committees that published them would have had access to minute books, roll books, and other early documents of the Society. As a result, there is little reason to doubt the information they provide, even though it is nearly impossible to independently verify them.

Jefferson Society members kept copies of these catalogues and made notations in them, labeling famous members or counting votes with a plus or minus sign next to each member from a particular session. Less than twenty copies of these rare documents survive in research libraries but each one tells a different story.

See, for example, Constitution and By-Laws of JS, 1837 (James Alexander, 1838); the minutes and several news reports of this time period and later tell the story of debates lasting long into the night.

The 1837 Constitution is the oldest surviving constitution of the Jefferson Society. It is preserved in a bound volume of University of Virginia documents and remembrances belonging to the Garnett family. It is likely very similar to the original 1825 Constitution.

**Footnotes:**


15 *Catalogue of the Jefferson Society of the University of Virginia*, (Richmond: MacFarlane and Fergusson, 1854), U.Va.


17 *Catalogue of the Jefferson Society of the University of Virginia*, 1854.

18 See, for example, Constitution and By-Laws of JS, 1837 (James Alexander, 1838); the minutes and several news reports of this time period and later tell the story of debates lasting long into the night.

19 *Bruce II*: 357.


21 *Catalogue of the Jefferson Society of the University of Virginia*, 1854.

22 Ibid.

23 The 1837 Constitution is the oldest surviving constitution of the Jefferson Society. It is preserved in a bound volume of University of Virginia documents and remembrances belonging to the Garnett family. It is likely very similar to the original 1825 Constitution.


25 *Bruce II*, 358.

26 *Catalogue of the Jefferson Society of the University of Virginia*, 1854.
Constitution and By-Laws of JS, 2011, JS Archives.

Wall, “Student Life at the University of Virginia, 1825-1861,” 269.

Ibid., 317n8.

Catalogue of the Jefferson Society of the University of Virginia, 1854.


Ibid., 35.

“The Origin and History of the Jefferson Literary Society,” University of Virginia Magazine XLII, No. 7 (Apr.-May, 1899), 332.


Minutes of the Board of Visitors, 18 July 1827, 173.

Richmond Enquirer, 6 Sep. 1825.
46 Ibid.

47 Bruce II, 356.


50 Miles George to E.V. Valentine, 18 May 1880 in Quinn, Edgar Allan Poe: A Critical Biography, 107.


54 Report and documents respecting the University of Virginia, University of Virginia, Board of Visitors, LD5662, U.Va.; Quinn, Edgar Allan Poe: A Critical Biography, 99.


56 Ibid., 47.


58 Edwin A. Alderman, “Edgar Allan Poe and the University of Virginia.”


62 Catalogue of the Jefferson Society of the University of Virginia, 1854.

SELECTED DOCUMENTS
OF THE
JEFFERSON LITERARY SOCIETY
AT THE
UNIVERSITY OF VIRGINIA

PREPARED AND EDITED BY
THOMAS L. HOWARD III AND
OWEN W. GALLOGLY

WILLIAM R. KENAN, JR. FELLOWS FOR THE ACADEMICAL VILLAGE
The following is a collection of selected important documents pertaining to the history of the Jefferson Society. The compilation and editing of these documents was undertaken in the summer of 2011 in conjunction with the research and writing of Society Ties: a History of the Jefferson Society. Both efforts were supported by the William R. Kenan Fellowship for the Academical Village. These documents constitute the core of documentary record of the Society, and should provide an excellent, accessible resource for future scholars seeking to research the history of the Jefferson Society or the University of Virginia. They come from a variety of locations and span the entire history of the Jefferson Society. We have transcribed them all from the closest source to the original document, in most cases the original document itself, and each has been edited for correctness.

The following abbreviations were used in denoting the sources of the documents:

- **JS**: Jefferson Society
- **JS Archives**: Archives of the Jefferson Literary and Debating Society, University of Virginia Library
- **LVA**: Library of Virginia
- **MHS**: Missouri Historical Society
- **U.Va.**: University of Virginia Special Collections Library
LETTER FROM THE JEFFERSON SOCIETY TO THOMAS JEFFERSON

University of Va, Aug. 11 1825

We, a committee of the Jefferson Society of the University of Virginia, appointed for that purpose, have the honour to inform you of your election as an honorary member of that Society; And in doing so, permit us to express, in the name of that Society, of which we are the organ, and for ourselves individually, the sincere respect which we entertain for your character as a man, and the profound gratitude with which we are impressed for your imminent services as a patron of science, a politician and a philanthropist. We are, with sentiments of the highest esteem and veneration,

Your obedient servants,

Committee-
Edgar Mason
John M. Brockenbrough
Robt. Saunders Jr.

Edgar Mason, J. W. Brockenbrough, and Robert Saunders, Committee of JS, to Thomas Jefferson, 11 Aug 1825, MHS.

LETTER FROM THOMAS JEFFERSON TO THE JEFFERSON SOCIETY

Monticello, Aug. 12, 1825

I am very thankful, gentlemen, for the honor done me by the society of which you are a committee, in electing me one of its honorary members. I could decline no distinction conferred by the them, nor service I could render them, but on reasons of still higher importance to themselves, on maturely weighing the general relation in which the law of the University and the appointment by its visitors have placed me as to every member of the institution, I believe it my duty to make no change in those relations by entering into additional and different ties with different associations of its members. The duties with which I am charged require that in all cases which may arise, I shall stand in an equal position as to every person concerned, not only that I may preserve the inestimable consciousness of impartiality to all, but the equally inestimable exemption from all suspicion of partialities. Your kind expressions towards myself ensure to me, I hope, an equally kind acceptance of the reasons on which I act, and I can add with truth on behalf of my colleagues of the visitation, that the highest reward they can receive from their joint cares and exertions on behalf of this institution, is the anticipated hope and relief that they are rearing up in science and in virtue those on whom the hopes of their country rest for future government and prosperity. For myself, I pray you to accept assurances of my sincere affections and best wishes.

Th. Jefferson

Thomas Jefferson to Edgar Mason, J. W. Brockenbrough, and Robert Saunders, Committee of JS, 12 Aug 1825, MHS.
LETTER FROM THE JEFFERSON SOCIETY TO JAMES MADISON

University of Virginia, May 5th 182[7]

Dear Sir,
The documents of our society having been misplaced and we not being able to ascertain whether you have been informed that you were elected an honorary member of the Jefferson society as a committee have the honour to announce to you your appointment, and that we shall feel ourselves much gratified whenever you visit the University to be honoured with your attendance—We are Sir with respect and esteem Your Obt. Sevts.

John Willis
Thos. S. Gholson
R. Howerton

John Willis, Thomas S. Gholson, and R. Howerton, Committee of JS, to James Madison, 5 May 1827.

NEWSPAPER ARTICLE DESCRIBING THE MARQUIS DE LAFAYETTE’S VISIT TO THE UNIVERSITY OF VIRGINIA AND HIS ELECTION TO HONORARY MEMBERSHIP IN THE JEFFERSON SOCIETY

Richmond Enquirer, September 6, 1825

During his visit to the United States, Lafayette was invited to visit the University of Virginia. His visit culminated with a public dinner in the Rotunda on August 20, 1825. Before the dinner, John H. Lee, one of the founders of the Society and who was serving as President, approached Lafayette on the Lawn and informed him of his election to honorary membership. Lafayette replied, “While under the auspices of a name equally cherished and venerated by all of us, gentlemen, I am initiated to the honour of a fellowship in your institution, I find myself under an additional obligation to your juvenile kindness. I am happy, my dear sir, in those testimonies of affection, to recognize your feelings towards us, the soldiers of independence and freedom—and your attachment to the republican principles for which we have had the honor to fight and bleed. With the most lively gratitude, I accept, and shall ever keep the favour you have been pleased to confer upon me, and while I most cordially reciprocate your friendly wishes on my behalf, I beg you to accept my affectionate acknowledgements.

After dinner, Lafayette toasted the University, saying “The University of Virginia: May it more and more diffuse through every part of mankind, the principles, the feelings, and the benefits of true knowledge, general philanthropy and unalloyed republicanism.”

Richmond Enquirer, 6 Sep. 1825.
LETTER FROM THE JEFFERSON AND WASHINGTON SOCIETIES TO GOVERNOR JOHN LETCHER OF VIRGINIA

University of Va., May 10, 1861

Sir,

The Literary Societies of the University of Va. in separate session, having resolved to appropriate their surplus funds to the cause of the South, we the undersigned were appointed committees of the Jefferson & Washington Societies respectively, to forward to you at Richmond the enclosed checks for $516.61, viz: $316.61 from the Jefferson and $200 from the Washington Societies, the whole amount of the funds of the Societies after meeting all Existing liabilities—and to request you to employ the same in such manner as in your judgment shall most advance the interests of our common cause—the defense of the South.

We would also state that the Annual Celebrations of the Societies have been suspended for the present Session by a unanimous vote, that we might contribute our all towards that cause.

Our only regret is that the condition of our finances at present will not allow us to render more efficient service in this respect. Very Respectfully,

Yours,

Committee of Wash. Soc.                  Committee of Jeff. Soc.
D. R. Barton                                W. W. Minor, Jr.
S. W. Bozeman                                S. M. Garnett
E. H. Dejarretts                             A. B. Wooldridge

JS and Washington Society to John Letcher, 10 May 1861, LVA.

CONSTITUTION OF THE JEFFERSON SOCIETY, 1837

CONSTITUTION OF 1837

ORDER OF PROCEEDINGS.

1. Roll call.
2. Nomination, election, and initiation of members.
3. Reading the minutes of last meeting.
4. Reading the essay, or delivery of the oration.
5. The debate.
6. The selection of a question.
7. Reports of Committees.
8. Motions and resolutions.
9. Election of Essayist or Orator.
10. Election of Officers.
13. Roll call.
THE INITIATION OF MEMBERS.

The President shall request the gentleman to rise after which, the Secretary shall read,

The undersigned students of the University of Virginia, holding it to be true, that opinions, springing out of solitary observation and reflection, are seldom, in the first instance, correct; that the faculties of the mind are excited by collision; that friendships are cemented, errors corrected and sound principles established by society and intercourse; and, especially in a country where all are free to profess and by argument maintain their opinions, that the powers of debate should be sedulously cultivated, have, therefore, associated themselves under the name of the JEFFERSON SOCIETY OF THE UNIVERSITY OF VIRGINIA.

After the gentleman shall have signed the Constitution, the President shall again request him to rise, and read, as follows:

Sir, You have been informed of the nature of our society, and of the obligations which rest upon its members. You have voluntarily entered into the bonds of our union. As one of the duties incident to the chair, I have, in the name of the society, to lay you under the most solemn injunctions not to divulge any of its proceedings, or, anything which may occur within its walls.

It only remains for me to declare you a member of the Jefferson Society.

ARTICLE I.

The style of this society shall be THE JEFFERSON SOCIETY OF THE UNIVERSITY OF VIRGINIA.

ARTICLE II.

The officers of the society shall consist of a President, Vice President, Secretary, Assistant Secretary, Librarian and Treasurer.

ARTICLE III.

DUTIES OF THE OFFICERS.

§ I. PRESIDENT. It shall be the duty of the President to preside at all meetings of the society; to take the vote on all questions decided “viva voce,” and to declare the result; to announce the number of votes given each candidate for any office; to appoint committees; to appoint officers pro tempore; and to call meetings of the society whenever it shall be necessary.

He shall construe the constitution; and decide all questions of order.

He shall keep a book, in which any member of the Society may record a question for discussion; from these questions he shall select three to be submitted to the choice of the House; if he find no suitable questions recorded, it shall be his duty to supply the deficiency.

The Secretary shall report to the President any member who shall not have paid his fines eight weeks after the day they were imposed, whose duty it shall then be to apprise the
member of such neglect; and, if no adequate excuse be rendered within two weeks thereafter, to pronounce upon him in the presence of the society, a sentence of expulsion.

§ II. VICE PRESIDENT. In the absence of the President, it shall be the duty of the Vice President to exercise the powers and perform the duties of that officer.

It shall be his duty to report to the society any officer for neglect of duty.

He shall, after the adjournment of the society, assume the functions of President and investigate such cases of disorder, as the President may have reported, or, as may have attracted his own attention during the session of the society. From his decision, no appeal shall be made.

§ III. SECRETARY. It shall be the duty of the Secretary to keep a neat and attested record of the proceedings of the society; to call the roll at the opening and adjournment of each meeting; and to read the proceedings of each meeting.

He shall preserve the paper and documents of the society; shall deliver a list of all fines assessed, within one week after their assessment, to the Treasurer for collection; shall record all motions passed, with the names of the movers; also, the names and number of those composing committees; shall read all communications addressed to the society; and write such letters as it may direct.

§ IV. ASSISTANT SECRETARY. It shall be the duty of the Assistant Secretary to aid the Secretary in the discharge of his official duties; to discharge those duties in his absence; to compile all laws passed during his term of service; to embody in the constitution any amendments to the same, which may, from time to time, be adopted; and to see that the Hall be properly prepared before each meeting of the society.

§ V. TREASURER. It shall be the duty of the Treasurer to keep a correct account of the receipts and expenditures of the society; to make all disbursements; to collect all dues; to exhibit at each meeting of the society a statement of the amount due, from each member; and to report to the President the name of any member who shall have not paid his fines within eight weeks after the day upon which they were imposed.

§ VI. LIBRARIAN. It shall be the duty of the Librarian to preserve all books, periodicals, and other literary publications belonging to the society; to give them to members applying for them, and to enter their names in a book; to estimate the amount of injury done to any book and hand the same within one week after its assessment, to the Treasurer, for collection; to keep a catalogue of the books; to make known any donations which may be made, together with the names of the donors; to call in, at the expiration of the his term of service, all books, periodicals, &c, to return them to their proper places for the inspection of the Vice President; to report the loss of any book, periodical, &c, with the name of the borrower; and to make a detailed report of the condition of the library, at the expiration of his term of service.

Article IV.

Election of Officers, &c.

§ I. When the President shall announce the election of officers to be in order, nominations shall be made, and the Secretary shall call the roll of each member declare the candidate of his choice. The majority of the votes shall determine the election.
§ II. A member shall be elected at each meeting of the society, who shall, as he may choose, read an essay, or deliver an oration, two weeks from the day of his election.

§ III. Any student of the University may be proposed for admission to membership, at any regular meeting of the society. Applicants for membership shall be elected 'viva voce;' and three fourths of the votes given shall be necessary to elect.

§ IV. The society may also elect any gentleman an honorary member, whose literary attainments shall entitle him to the honor. Three fourths of the members present shall be necessary to elect.

**Article V.**

**The Debate.**

§ I. The members of the society shall be divided, alphabetically, into four classes, one of which shall debate at each regular meeting of the society. The class of debaters shall be read out, by the Secretary, at the meeting but one, preceding that on which it is to debate; and the President, after the selection of the question, shall name one on each side, to open the debate.

§ II. The opinion of the House shall be taken upon the merits of the question by calling the roll, when the number of votes, for each side shall be noted by the Secretary, and read by the President to the society.

§ III. No gentleman shall address the House more than twice, without the consent of the President; nor more than three times, upon any condition.

**Article VI.**

**Fines.**

§ I. The roll shall be called at the opening and adjournment of each meeting of the society; and members shall be fined 12 ½ cents for absence at either roll call.

§ II. If any one, appointed to open the debate, fail to do so, he shall be fined fifty cents; and if any other member of the class of debaters fail to debate, he shall be fined twenty five cents.

§ III. Any member, refusing to take an office given him by the society, or the President; or, after his election, resigning it before the time of service shall have expired; or failing to perform the duty attending any honor conferred upon him, shall be fined one dollar.

§ IV. If the Secretary, Assistant Secretary, Treasurer, or Librarian, be reported for neglect of duty, the Vice President shall impose upon him a fine of fifty cents.

§ V. If any member detain a book from the library longer than one week, he shall be fined five cents, for every day, beyond that time.

§ VI. If any member lose a book, belonging to the society, he shall pay the value of that book; and if the book lost belong to a set of volumes, he shall pay the value of the whole set, the value to be assessed by the Librarian.

§ VII. If a committee fail to report at the proper time, each member of the committee shall be fined fifty cents.

§ VIII. Any member shall be deemed guilty of disorder, who shall by hissing, clapping, laughing aloud, or any other unnecessary noise whatever, interrupt the President,
or any member while speaking; or, refuse to take his seat when ordered by the President; or, withdraw from the Hall, without the permission of the President; or, pass between the President and any member addressing the chair; or, address the President without rising from his seat; or, persist in motions, resolutions or remarks which have been pronounced to be out of order. It shall likewise be considered disorder, for any member to second a motion without rising from his chair; or to read any book, pamphlet or periodical, in the Hall, unless in conjunction with the regular business.

ARTICLE VII.
The President shall have power to appoint a Secretary, an Assistant Secretary, Librarian and Treasurer, every five weeks throughout his term of service.

ARTICLE VIII.
Any student of the University, who at the time of leaving college, may be a member of this society shall be considered an honorary member—entitled to attend its meetings, and to engage in its enterprises, at discretion.

ARTICLE IX.
The President and Vice President shall be elected for a term of ten weeks.

ARTICLE X.
In case of a dissolution of this society the library shall be presented to the University; and any other disposition of it, in that event, will be regarded as a violation of good faith and honorable feeling.

BYE LAWS.
I. Amendments to propositions to amend the constitution shall not be required to lie on the table one week; and no resolution shall be considered, unless it be in writing, and the mover specify the article of the constitution, if any, affected thereby.
   II. The President, Secretary, Assistant Secretary, Librarian and Treasurer are exempted from all but official duties.
   III. No officer of the society shall be permitted to make a verbal report; but all nominations shall be made viva voce.
   IV. Any member who shall have withdrawn from the society may re-enter by paying fifty cents into the Treasury.
   V. No gentleman shall speak more than twice on any motion or resolution.
   VI. Any gentleman may attend a meeting of the society, with the consent of any one of the officers, provided, however, that no student be thus admitted.
   VII. No member shall be allowed to withdraw from the society until he shall have paid all the fines which he may have incurred while a member.
   VIII. Any gentleman, who may be elected a member of the society, shall pay into the treasury one dollar, within eight weeks after the day of admission.
IX. The Secretary shall have printed, annually, two hundred copies of the Constitution and these Bye Laws and shall present each member with a copy on the day of his initiation.


CONSTITUTION OF THE JEFFERSON SOCIETY, 1860

CONSTITUTION OF 1860

FORM OF INITIATION.
The President shall request the candidate to arise, and the Secretary read to him as follows:

“The undersigned, Students at the University of Virginia, holding it to be true that opinions springing out of solitary observation and reflection are seldom, in the first instance, correct; that the faculties of the mind are excited by collision; that friendships are cemented, errors corrected, and sound principles established by society and intercourse, and especially in a country where all are free to profess and, by argument, to maintain their opinions; that the powers of debate should be sedulously cultivated—have therefore associated themselves under the name of the JEFFERSON SOCIETY OF THE UNIVERSITY OF VIRGINIA. In becoming members of this Society they mutually pledge themselves to conform to its regulations and to cherish its prosperity. In testimony whereof the have hereunto affixed their names.”

The Constitution is then signed.

After the candidate shall have signed the Constitution, the President shall again request him to arise, and shall read to him as follows:

“SIR; You have been informed of the nature of our Society, and of the obligations which rest upon its members; you have voluntarily entered into the bonds of our union and, as one of the duties incident to the Chair, I have, in the name of the Society, to lay you under the most solemn injunctions to obey the laws; uphold the Constitution; to observe all propriety as a member and a gentleman; to advance, by strict adherence to duty, the welfare of the Society; to preserve its honor; cherish its prosperity, and to promote its ends to the best of your ability.

“I now declare you a member of the Jefferson Society, and welcome you to the bonds of our union.”

ARTICLE I.

This Society shall be styled the JEFFERSON SOCIETY OF THE UNIVERSITY OF VIRGINIA.

ARTICLE II.

Sec. 1. The officers shall be a President, Vice-President, Secretary, Treasurer, and Assistant Treasurer.
Sec. 2. The President and Vice-President shall be elected every six weeks, and the Treasurer every three months; but the Secretary and Assistant Secretary shall be appointed by the President.

ARTICLE III.
The Society shall be composed of Regular, Irregular, and Honorary Members.

ARTICLE IV.
Sec. 1. At each second regular meeting in January a member shall be elected to deliver an Anniversary Oration on the thirteenth day of April following, and at the same time another shall be elected to read the Declaration of Independence.

Sec. 2. At each first regular meeting in April a member shall be elected to deliver a Valedictory Oration at the close of the session.

Sec. 3. At the first regular meeting in each month a member shall be elected to deliver an Oration before the Society one month thereafter, and at this time shall be extended no ease beyond one week.

ARTICLE V.
Sec. 1. All motions and resolutions which affect the Constitution shall be in writing, and shall lie upon the table on week before they can be acted upon.

A vote of two-thirds of the whole Society shall be necessary to change the Constitution, either in whole or in part, but a majority of those present may suspend, alter, or amend the Rules hereto annexed.

ARTICLE VI.
Resolutions in regard to the Virginia University Magazine:
Sec. 1. That the Jefferson Society unite with her sister Literary Societies in sustaining a Literary Magazine, to be issued monthly during the session, and that the title of this periodical be the Virginia University Magazine.

Sec. 2. That an editor be elected on the part of this Society to serve for a term of three months.

Sec. 3. That the Jefferson Society appropriate its quota for the purchase of a Prize Medal, to be awarded to the author of the best contribution to the Magazine during an entire session, and that the prize be presented on the occasion of the delivery of the Oration before the three Literary Societies; or, in default of such, on the night of the final celebration of that Society, which may be preferred by the successful competitor.

ARTICLE VII.
Resolutions in regard to the Debater’s Medal:
Sec. 1. That the Medal be given by this Society, at the close of each session, to its best Debater.

Sec. 2. That at the last regular meeting in May of each year an election shall be held for the best Debater; that no nomination be made, a majority being necessary for a choice. After the first ballot, if no choice be made, the candidate who has the least number of
votes shall be dropped and so on until a majority of votes are cast for one member, who shall then be declared elected.

Sec. 3. That the Medal thus awarded be publicly presented by the President of the Society to the successful candidate on the night of its final celebration.

Sec. 4. That the medal be of GOLD and cost FIFTY DOLLARS.

Sec. 5. That the form of the Medal be circular, its diameter not less than one inch and three-quarters. It shall bear on its face, enclosed in a wreath of laurel, “PRESENTED BY THE JEFFERSON SOCIETY TO —— AS THEIR BEST DEBATER, SESSION 18.” Under the wreath the Greek letters, “FPQ.” On the reverse, a representation of the University of Virginia, surmounted by the Coat of Arms of Virginia beneath the motto of the Society, “HAEC OLMEMINISSE JUVABIT,” and around it the words, “UNIVERSITY OF VIRGINIA, June 28th, 18—.”

BY-LAWS.

I.

No one shall be a Regular Member of this Society who is not a student of the University of Virginia, or who is a member of any other Literary or Debating Society at said University.

II.

Irregular Members shall consist of those who, having been members of this Society regularly, have left the institution without having joined any other Literary Society at the University, and have discharged all their dues.

III.

Honorary Members shall consist of such eminent persons as the Society shall deem worthy of membership. And all Honorary and Irregular Members shall have the privilege of attending the meetings of the Society, and of participating in the discussion of the questions, but shall not be allowed to vote (except on the question debated), nor to hold any office in the Society.

IV.

The nomination, election, and initiation of members shall be at regular meetings only. The vote shall be taken viva voce, three-fourths of the members present being necessary to elect; and any member who withdraws from the Society shall, in order to renew his connection therewith pay the treasury the sum of two dollars and a half.

V.

Each Regular Member shall pay to the treasury ten dollars initiation fee, and the annual tax of two dollars and a half every subsequent year that he is a member; and no member of this Society shall be allowed to vote or hold office whose initiation fee is due, or the amount of whose fines unpaid amount to two dollars and a half. It being herein provided that all
initiation fees are due on and after the day two weeks from the members signing the
Constitution.

VI. - DUTIES OF OFFICERS.

The President shall preside over all meetings of the Society, preserve order and
decorum, and appoint committees and officers pro tempore. He shall construe the
Constitution and Rules, and decide all questions of order subject to an appeal. He shall
give notice of all elections at least one week before they are to take place, and convene the
members whenever, in his opinion, the good of the Society requires it.

VII.

In all cases of election by the Society, the President shall vote. In other cases, he
shall not vote unless the Society shall be equally divided, or unless his vote, if given to the
minority, will make the division equal, and in case of such equal division the question shall
be lost.

VIII.

The Vice-President shall preside in the absence of the President. He shall report all
cases of disorder and neglect of duty at the same meeting at which they occur or come to
his knowledge. He shall record them, with the prescribed fines annexed in a book to be
provided for that purpose. Excuses for fines imposed by the Vice-President shall be made to
him at the meeting following that on which they were imposed, and no excuses made after
that time shall be considered valid unless the delay was due to an unavoidable absence.
The Vice-President shall have it at his discretion to decide whether an excuse is valid. An
appeal from the decision of the Vice-President shall require a vote of two-thirds to sustain
it.

IX.

The Secretary shall record and read the proceedings, conduct the correspondence,
and carefully preserve all records and documents of the Society.

X.

1. It shall be the duty of the Treasurer to report to the Society at each regular
meeting a list of all the fines and fees due. All such fees shall be considered due after two
weeks membership, and all fines from the time incurred. He shall also be required, at the
end of each presidential term, to report to the Society its exact financial condition.

2. The report of the Treasurer, the approval or disapproval of the Committee, and
the Society’s action upon the same shall be transcribed in the Minutes.

3. During the term of his office the Treasurer shall be excused from all Society
duties save that of attendance on its meetings.

4. There shall be appointed by each President, at the beginning of his term, a
Finance Committee, consisting of three members, whose duty it shall be to inspect and
approve all bills before payment, and at the end of each presidential term to examine the
Treasurer accounts, and report the condition of the same to the Society.
5. Every Treasurer, after serving a full term of three months, shall have optional attendance on the meetings of the Society for six months.

XI.

The Assistant Secretary shall perform the duties of the Secretary in his absence: call the roll and read the names of the Debaters; and, also, at the close of each meeting he shall read the names of those composing the class which is to debate at the next meeting; he shall also aid the Secretary in taking the vote by ballot; he shall also, at the close of each meeting, read over the names of the absentees from both roll-calls, and furnish the Vice-President with a list of such absentees after the adjournment.

XII.—ELECTIONS.

The Officers, Orators, Editors, and Reader of the Declaration of Independence shall be elected by ballot—a majority of the votes cast being necessary to elect. All other votes shall be taken *viva voce*, provided that in the election for Orators and Reader two weeks membership be super-added to the requisitions of the Treasury clause for voters.

XIII.

At each ballot, if no choice be made, the candidate who has received the lowest number shall be dropped, and in no case after the first ballot shall a nomination be made.

XIV.

When only one candidate is nominated for any office the President may, after a considerable time, put the vote to the Society *viva voce*; but no motion shall be in order to declare a candidate elected by acclamation without the consent of the President.

XV.—QUESTIONS AND DEBATES.

The members arranged alphabetically shall be divided into six classes if there be more than sixty members; into four classes if less than sixty—one of which shall debate at every regular meeting.

XVI.

The President shall, at the time of selection, appoint from the proper class one member on the affirmative and one on the negative to open the debate, and when the debate is ordered the Assistant Secretary shall, after the question has been read, call the names of those appointed to open the debate, and then the remainder of the class. This being done, the president shall announce the question open for general debate.

XVII.

At the close of the debate the vote of the Society shall be taken on the merits of the question by calling the roll, and the result announced to the Society by the president. No member shall be allowed to address the Society more than twice at the same meeting on the same subject without the consent of the Society, and no one shall be allowed to speak
more than thirty minutes at any one time, except the members appointed to open the debate, who shall be allowed to speak three times.

XVIII.—QUESTION COMMITTEE.
Sec. 1. Each President, on the opening of his term, shall appoint five members, who shall constitute a Standing Committee on Questions.
Sec. 2. This Committee shall, at each regular meeting, offer four questions, from which one shall be selected by a viva voce vote of the Society.
Sec. 3. This Committee shall meet every Saturday evening fifteen minutes before the meeting of the Society, for the selection of Questions.

XIX.—FINES.
The roll shall be called at the opening and adjournment of each meeting, and members shall be fined ten cents for each absence, and each member failing to debate the question when his name is called, shall be fined Twenty-five cents—But if the member appointed to open the debate in the affirmative or negative fail to do so, he shall be fined Fifty CENTS. Any member who shall be absent from the Society when his class is called upon to debate, shall be fined for not debating unless he is excused for his absence.

XX.
Any member who fails to perform the duty of any honor conferred upon him, except in case of having resigned, shall be fined ONE DOLLAR.

XXI.
Every officer who fails to perform his official duty shall be fined FIFTY CENTS, and each member of every Committee who fails to make a report within two weeks after its appointment, shall be fined TWENTY-FIVE cents, unless the time for such report is deferred by consent of the Society.

XXII.
Any member shall be deemed guilty of disorder who shall, by hissing, clapping, laughing aloud, or by any unnecessary noise, interrupt the President or any member while speaking, or shall withdraw from the hall without permission from the Vice-President or address the President without rising from his seat, or persist in motions, resolutions or remarks which have been pronounced out of order. It shall also be deemed disorder for any member to read any paper, book, pamphlet, or periodical in the hall, unless, in connection with the regular business, to engage in conversation while a member is speaking, to leave the hall for more than twenty minutes, while the Society is in session, or to pass between the chair and a member who is speaking. And for each offense herein enumerated he shall be fined the sum of TWENTY-FIVE CENTS.

XXIII.
If any member shall leave the hall while another is speaking, without permission, he shall be fined FIFTY CENTS.
XXIV.—ADJOURNMENT.
A motion for adjournment shall always be in order, but to adjourn the Society before the regular business shall have been transacted shall require a vote of two-thirds of the members present, and no member voting for the adjournment shall be allowed to move it again during the same meeting.

XXV.—RESIGNATIONS.
All resignations shall be in writing, and shall not be accepted unless accompanied with a written certificate of the Treasurer, that all dues are paid or transferred by permission.

XXVI.—ABSENCE OF THE PRESIDENT AND VICE-PRESIDENT.
In the absence of the President and Vice-President, a member shall be called to the Chair who shall perform the duties incident to that office.

XXVII.—QUORUM.
Fifteen members shall form a quorum and no business shall be transacted unless a quorum is present.

XXVIII.—PRIVILEGED QUESTIONS
When a question is under debate, no motion shall be raised but—
To adjourn.
To lay on the table.
For the previous question.
To postpone indefinitely.
To postpone to a certain day.
To amend an amendment or to amend which of several motions shall have precedence in the order they stand arranged.

XXIX.—PREVIOUS QUESTIONS.
The previous question shall be of this form, viz: “Shall the main question be now put?” and on it there shall be no debate.

XXX.—QUESTIONS OF ORDER.
Any member may call another to order, but such member can only be ruled out of order by the Chair. Either party may appeal from the decision. When no appeal is made, the member speaking shall immediately desist from his course of remark. When an appeal is made he shall yield until it is decided, being entitled to it again after the decision, conforming his remarks thereto. If the President is doubtful in a point of order, he may take the sense of the Society.

XXXI.—MOTIONS.
No motion shall be debated until the same shall be seconded, and when the motion shall be made and seconded, it shall be reduced to writing, if desired by the President, or any member.

XXXII. — CALLS OF AYES AND NOES.
When ayes and noes shall be called for by any two of the members present, the President shall direct the Assistant Secretary to call the roll, and after the decision is announced from the Chair, no member shall be permitted to vote under any circumstances whatever.

XXXIII. — PARLIAMENTARY PRACTICE.
The rules of Parliamentary Practice comprised in “JEFFERSON’S MANUAL” shall govern the Society in all cases to which they can apply, and when they are not inconsistent with the Constitution and Rules.

XXXIV. — VOTE ON QUESTION.
On a regular question for debate, a motion for the previous question or call for the vote shall not be in order before half past ten, and any one violating this law shall be fined fifty cents. But if all debate cease before that time, the President shall put the question to the Society.

XXXV. — TIME OF MEETING.
The regular meeting of the Society shall be on Saturday, at seven o’clock P.M. from October to April, and at half-past seven from April to June.

XXXVI. — FINES REPEALED.
Fines may be repealed by a vote of two-thirds of the members present.

XXXVII.
Any member calling on another regular member shall be fined ONE DOLLAR.

XXXVIII. — SUCH RECENT ENACTMENTS AS AFFECT THE CONSTITUTION.
It was resolved that such changes should be made in the Constitution as may be found necessary in regard to the final celebration. Page 101 of Minutes.

XXXIX. — EVERETT MEDAL.
Whereas, by gift of the Hon. Edward Everett, a fund yielding an annual interest of about $30 is held jointly by the Jefferson and Washington Societies. Be it therefore
1. Resolved, That we can in no better way acknowledge our sense of the generosity of the given, than by encouraging a department of literature in conjunction with his name, to which he has specially devoted his talents, and which he has shown most worthy of cultivation.
2. That, in accordance with the wishes of Edward Everett the annual interest of this fund be devoted to the purchase of a Medal, which shall be awarded as a prize for the best biographical essay on an American citizen, written by a student of this University.

3. That the Committee of award be composed of such members of the Faculty as may be chosen annually by the Societies.

4. That the medal be called the Everett Medal.

**XL.—ELIGIBLE PERSONS**

1. Resolved, That all meetings of the Jefferson Society, whether called or regular, are intended for the sole and exclusive use of its members—Regular, Irregular, and Honorary.

2. That hereafter it shall be unlawful for any gentleman to introduce into the Hall any person not a member, during the whole or any part of a meeting of the Society.

**XLI.—SCHOLARSHIP OF THE JEFFERSON SOCIETY**

Whereas, experience has shown that the annual accruing income of the Jefferson Society is sufficient beyond the incidental expenses for the education and maintenance of a student at the University. Be it therefore

1. Resolved, That the Society hereby institute a scholarship in the University of Virginia as a testimonial of abilities and worth, with an annual appropriation of $250, to be paid quarterly to such a student of fair character and capacity as may be deemed most in want of sustenance.

2. That the sum shall be placed in the hands of the Proctor by the Treasurer of the Society upon the election of the said incumbent.

3. That the election shall take place at the last meeting in May of the present year, and of each succeeding year hereafter.

4. That a committee of five, to be designated by ballot, shall be chosen at least three weeks before the election, to whom all nominations shall be referred, and no nomination shall be acted upon until approved by that Committee, nor unless made one week before the election.

5. From the nominations approved of by this Committee, the Society shall elect one upon whom the scholarship shall be conferred.

6. That the benefit of this scholarship is intended to be confined exclusively to Academical Students, and shall be extended during two scholastic years.

7. If said incumbent shall prove himself to be unworthy of the confidence reposed in him, he shall be impeached and removed by order of the Society.

8. That a committee of five be appointed this night (May 21st, 1859,) to receive nominations to be presented to the Society for election at our next regular meeting.

9. As it is designed that this scholarship shall be a testimonial of abilities and worth, it is prescribed to the committee and recommended to the Society at large, that they be vigilant in conferring the honor on those only whose real merits warrant it.

Constitution and Bye Laws of JS, JS Archives.
CONSTITUTION OF THE JEFFERSON SOCIETY, 1880

CONSTITUTION OF 1880

FORM OF INITIATION.

The President shall request the initiate (or initiates) to come forward and sign the Constitution, and shall then read to him (or them) the following:

Sir—(or Sirs)—You have voluntarily become a member (or members) of the Jefferson Society, and I have, in its name, to lay you under the most solemn injunctions to obey and uphold its Constitution, to observe all propriety as a member and a gentleman; and to advance, by strict adherence to duty, the welfare of our organization.

PREAMBLE.

We, the members of the Jefferson Society of the University of Virginia, in order to form a more perfect organization, provide for our common improvement in the art of debate, promote general culture amongst ourselves and those around us, and drill ourselves in all those exercises which strengthen for the free duties of citizenship, do ordain and establish this Constitution for our government.

ARTICLE I.

MEMBERSHIP.

Sec. 1. Only students in regular attendance upon one or more of the schools of the University of Virginia and not members of any other similar organization in this institution shall be eligible as regular members of the Society.

Sec. 2. The duties and privileges of regular membership in this Society, once assumed, can be renounced only by resignation, under the conditions and in accordance with the rules hereinafter set forth, and by the final termination of a member’s connection with the University of Virginia as a student.

Sec. 3. All the privileges of membership, except that of voting on Society business, shall be extended to alumni of the University of Virginia who have been members of the Society.

Sec. 4. The privilege of attendance upon the meetings of the Society shall be accorded to its honorary members, to regular members of the Washington Society of the University of Virginia, and to none others except by a special resolution agreed to by a vote of two-thirds of the members present.

Sec. 5. To the privileges and dignity of honorary membership this Society may elect such eminent person as it may deem worthy of its courtesy.

Sec. 6. For the election of regular members of this Society a vote of two-thirds of the members present at any regular meeting shall be required.

Sec. 7. For the election of honorary members of this Society a vote of four-fifths of the members present at any regular meeting shall be required.

ARTICLE II.

OUTLINE OF GOVERNMENT.
Sec. 1. The executive government of this Society shall be vested in a President, a Vice-President, a Treasurer, a Committee of Ways and Means, a Committee of Conference, a Judicial Council, a Final Committee, and a Question Committee.

Sec. 2. The President shall be elected by a majority of the members present at a regular meeting of the Society to serve for a term of three months.

Sec. 3. The Vice-President shall be chosen in the same manner and for the same term as the President.

Sec. 4. The Treasurer shall be elected in the same manner as the President, to serve during the academic session.

Sec. 5. The Committee of Ways and Means shall consist of the Vice-President, as chairman ex-officio, and of two other members appointed by the President to serve during a presidential term.

Sec. 6. The Committee of Conference shall consist of five members appointed by the President to serve during the academic year.

Sec. 7. The Judicial Council shall consist of the President, the Vice-President and the Treasurer.

Sec. 8. The Final Committee shall be appointed by the President in February of each year, to serve during the remainder of the academic session, and shall consist of two members from the State of Virginia and one member from each of the other States represented in the Society; by in no case shall it consist of less than ten members.

Sec. 9. The Question Committee shall consist of two members appointed by the President to serve six weeks.

Sec. 10. The President shall appoint, to serve during his term of office, a Secretary and an Assistant Secretary; and shall appoint monthly a Sergeant-at-Arms.

**ARTICLE III.**

**DUTIES OF OFFICERS.**

Sec. 1. The President—The President shall preside over all meetings of the Society and of the Judicial Council, to preserve order and decorum; shall construe and enforce the Constitution and By-Laws of the Society and the rules of practice, subject always to an appeal to the Society itself; shall appoint the Secretary, the Assistant Secretary, the Sergeant-at-Arms, the non-official members of the Committee of Ways and Means, the Committee of Conference, the Final Committee, the Question Committee, all special committees ordered by the Society, and all officers pro tempore; and perform all other duties usually pertaining to his office. It shall be his duty to convene the Society whenever requested to do so by a writing signed by five members. He shall have on vote save a casting vote. It shall be his privilege to take part in any of the regular debates of the Society, after having called the Vice-President to the chair pro tempore.

Sec. 2. The Vice-President—The Vice-President shall be ex-officio chairman of the Committee of Ways and Means and member of the Judicial Council. In the absence of the President, he shall occupy the chair and exercise all the functions of presiding officer.

Sec. 3. The Treasurer—The Treasurer shall receive and take charge of all the funds of the Society, keeping, in a book provided for the purpose, a careful and minute account of all receipts and disbursements, which account he shall submit to the Committee of Ways
and Means at their regular meetings. He shall make no disbursements except such as shall have been approved by the Committee of Ways and Means and reported by that Committee to the Society. He shall report at each regular meeting of the Society a list of all fines imposed within the two preceding weeks, with the cause and date thereof, and an account of all moneys received and paid out since his last report, with receipted bills for all payments exceeding one dollar. His reports must be submitted in writing, in a book provided for the purpose, and shall, after adoption, be filed, together with all accompanying receipts, with the Secretary. He shall also submit at the end of each presidential term a full and exact written report of the financial condition of the Society which report he shall leave with the Committee of Ways and Means to be incorporated in their next regular report to the Society.

Sec. 4. The Secretary—The Secretary shall keep a careful record of the proceedings of the Society; shall conduct its correspondence; shall carefully preserve all its records and all documents that may be entrusted to his care; shall transcribe, in a book kept for the purpose, all amendments and additions to this Constitution and to the By-Laws of the Society; shall read the appointments for debate; and shall perform all the duties naturally incident to the office of recording and corresponding Secretary.

Sec. 5. The Assistant Secretary—The Assistant Secretary shall perform the duties of the Secretary in the absence of the latter: shall call the roll; shall keep an alphabetical list of the members of the Society, from which he shall, at each regular meeting, furnish the Secretary with the list of the appointments for debate for the third ensuing meeting; shall aid the Secretary, when no tellers are appointed, in taking the vote by ballot; and shall, at the close of each meeting, furnish the Treasurer with a list of the absentees from each roll-call.

Sec. 6. The Sergeant-at-Arms—It shall be the duty of the Sergeant-at-Arms to see that no person enter the Hall of the Society during its meetings who is not privileged to be present by the provisions of this Constitution contained in Secs. II and III of Article I; to see that the Hall is suitably prepared for the meetings of the Society, and is left in proper condition after adjournment; to note all cases of disorder and neglect of duty, recording them, with the prescribed fines annexed, in a book to be provided for the purpose, reading them at the close of the meeting during which they have been incurred, and transmitting a list of them to the Treasurer immediately upon adjournment; and to act as the President’s ministerial officer in enforcing order. He may, with the consent of the President, appoint, when necessary, one or more temporary assistants to aid in enforcing order.

ARTICLE IV.
DUTIES OF COMMITTEES.

Sec. 1. The Committee of Ways and Means—The Committee of Ways and Means shall meet in the Hall of the Society every Saturday evening immediately after the adjournment of the Judicial Council. It shall be their duty carefully to audit and examine at these their regular meetings, the accounts of the Treasurer; to act upon all bills presented by him and upon all disbursements which he shall report as necessary or expedient; to attend to the supplying of all necessaries for the Hall, and to the furnishing, heating and repairing of the Hall; and to act as executive committee of the Society in carrying out all business not
entrusted to any other committee. It shall, further, be their duty to report to the Society, at each regular meeting, upon the condition of the Treasurer’s accounts, and upon all outlays by them deemed advisable; and no disbursements ordered by them shall be made by the Treasurer unless and until their report upon such orders shall have been adopted by the Society.

Sec. 2. The Committee of Conference—It shall be the duty of the Committee of Conference to act in conjunction with similar committees appointed by the Washington Society, upon all matters, regular and incidental, requiring the joint action of the two Societies.

Sec. 3. The Judicial Council—The Judicial Council shall meet in the Hall of the Society every Saturday evening immediately after the adjournment of the Society. It shall be their duty to hear and act upon all excuses for fines and upon all offers of resignation of membership; and they shall hear no excuses for fines which have been standing for more than two weeks, saving in the case of members who have been unable to submit their excuses within that time on account of sickness or in absence from the University. From their decisions an appeal shall in all cases lie to the Society itself. It shall be the duty of the Treasurer to embody the action of the Judicial Council in his weekly reports to the Society.

Sec. 4. The Final Committee—The Final Committee shall take entire charge of all matters that concern the Final Celebration of this Society.

Sec. 5. The Question Committee—It shall be the duty of the Question Committee to submit at each meeting of the Society two questions for the regular debates three weeks thereafter; and after the submission of their report it shall be the privilege of any member to propose a question to be voted upon, if seconded by any member of the Society, along with those offered by the Committee.

ARTICLE V.
REGULAR EXERCISES.

Sec. 1. From an alphabetically arranged roll of the members of the Society, which it shall be the duty of the Assistant Secretary to prepare, the Secretary shall divide the members of the Society into six classes containing as nearly as possible an equal number of members; and these classes shall be appointed for debate in regular order.

Sec. 2. Each question for regular debate shall be selected, from the questions submitted as hereinbefore provided, by the class which is to debate it; and a majority of the members thereof who are present when choice should be made, shall have power to select. In case of a tie, the President shall have the casting vote. In case of a failure to choose in the part of the class, the choice shall be left to the Society.

Sec. 3. After the discussion by the regularly appointed debaters, the questions shall be open to the house for debate. During the discussion thereof a motion for the previous question or a call for a vote shall not be in order before half-past ten o’clock. At the close of the regular debate, the vote of the Society shall be taken by yeas and nays upon the question.

Sec. 4. At the first regular meeting of the Society in each month, except June, a member shall be elected to deliver an oration before the Society one month thereafter.
ARTICLE VI.
THE MEDAL.

Sec. 1. At the close of each session two medals, ranking respectively as first and second, shall be given by the Society to the two best debaters. But whenever there are but two contestants no second medal shall be given.

Sec. 2. These medalists shall be chosen by a committee of three members of the Faculty of the University of Virginia who shall be elected by the Society at its first regular meeting in November of each year.

Sec. 3. At the first regular meeting in April and at the first regular meeting in May respectively there shall be a debate to be participated in only by the contestants for the medals; and at these meetings the aforesaid committee of the Faculty shall sit as judges.

Sec. 4. The decision of the Electoral Committee, which shall be final, shall be rendered within one week after the May debate.

Sec. 5. After the last regular meeting in February the contestants for the medals shall meet to select a question for their first debate. After this first debate they shall choose a question for their second debate.

Sec. 6. The medals thus awarded shall be publicly presented by the President of the Society to the successful contestants on the night of the Final Celebration of the Society, when each of the medalists shall deliver an oration.

Sec. 7. The form of the first medal, which shall be of gold and of the value of fifty dollars, shall be circular, its diameter not less than one inch and three-quarters. It shall bear on its face, enclosed in a wreath of laurel, PRESENTED BY THE JEFFERSON SOCIETY TO --- AS THEIR BEST DEBATER, SESSION 18-. Underneath this inscription there shall be a representation of the University of Virginia, surmounted by the coat of arms of Virginia beneath the motto of the Society, HAEC OLM MEMINISSE IUVABIT; and, following the circumference, the words, UNIVERSITY OF VIRGINIA, JUNE (OR JULY), 18-

ARTICLE VII.
THE MAGAZINE.

Sec. 1. There shall be at least eight numbers of the Magazine issued during each collegiate year, of which the first shall be published in October.

Sec. 2. The editors of the Magazine shall be six in number. Of these, three shall represent the Jefferson and three the Washington Society. They shall be elected annually, the Jefferson Society making choice of her representatives at the regular meeting of the Society in January of each year. Of the corps of editors thus chosen by the two Societies, five shall have charge of the literary department of the Magazine and the sixth of its financial and other business; and the election of this business editor shall fall alternatively to the two Societies. If, at any time, the Jefferson Society have not her full complement of editors, the Society shall, after due notice, proceed to complete it by election.

Sec. 3. The literary editors of the Magazine shall, in January of each year, select from their own number an editor-in-chief; and if at any time the office of editor-in-chief become vacant, it shall be their duty immediately to fill it by election. The editor-in-chief shall have entire control over both the literary and business management of the Magazine.
He shall have power to allot their work to the other editors and to accept or reject all articles offered for publication.

Sec. 4. When requested to do so, the editors shall preserve strict secrecy as to the authorship of contributions; and no contributions shall be accepted for publication in the Magazine which has previously appeared in print.

Sec. 5. The business editor shall have control, under the editor-in-chief, of all business matters connected with the Magazine, such as its financial management, its subscription lists, its advertising department, and the mailing and distribution of its issues. He shall, at the end of each three months of his term of office, make to each Society, through its Secretary, a report, exhibiting the exact condition of the Magazine as regards the concerns under his management.

Sec. 6. No member shall be eligible for the position of literary editor of the Magazine who has not had at least one prose article of his own composition accepted for publication in the Magazine.

Sec. 7.—The Magazine Medal—This Society shall at the beginning of each session, through its Committee of Conference, join with the Washington Society in choosing a committee of three members of the Faculty of the University of Virginia to select the best literary production contributed to the Magazine during the session by a member of either Society; and to this number the two Societies shall jointly award a gold medal of the value of fifty dollars. This medals shall be publicly presented by the Chairman of the aforesaid committee of the Faculty at the Final celebration of that Society to which the recipient of the medal may belong.

ARTICLE VIII.
RULERS OF ELECTION.

Sec. 1. No one shall be entitled to vote for any officer of this Society or for any editor of the Magazine unless he shall have been a member of this Society for two weeks previous to the election.

Sec. 2. No member who is indebted to the treasury of the Society shall be qualified to vote for the Final President of Vice President, or be eligible for either of those offices.

Sec. 3. No member may be Final President or Vice-President or Medalist of this Society unless previous to election (or previous to his appearing before the electoral committee of the Faculty, in the case of the Medalist) he shall have spoken on at least two separate occasions before the Society, either as monthly orator or on a question chosen for regular debate.

ARTICLE IX.
The Badge.

Sec. 1. The badge of this Society shall be of gold in the shape of a scroll, three-quarters of an inch wide. On its face shall be engraven the following: U. V. JEFF. SOC., two pens crossed, 1825, and the initial letters of the three Greek words “Filoi, Patriς, qeoς.”

ARTICLE X.
RESIGNATION OF MEMBERSHIP.
Whenever any member wishes to resign he shall signify his desire in writing to the Judicial Council, stating his reasons, and, upon obtaining the acquiescence of the Council and paying all his dues to the Society, may be permitted to withdraw. If the consent is withheld, he shall have the privilege of appeal to the Society.

**ARTICLE XI.**

**CHANGES IN CONSTITUTION AND BY-LAWS.**

Sec. 1. All motions and resolutions affecting the Constitution or By-Laws of this Society and all resolutions proposing appropriations of Society funds shall be submitted in writing and pass through three readings and a Committee of the Whole; and not more than two readings shall be taken at one sitting of the Society.

Sec. 2. A vote of two-thirds (2/3) of the regular members of the Society shall be necessary to amend this Constitution; but a vote of two-thirds (2/3) of the members present at any regular meeting shall be sufficient to amend the By-Laws.

Sec. 3. Two-thirds (2/3) of the members present at any meeting of the Society may, by a single vote, suspend, for that sitting, and provision of the By-Laws.

**BY-LAWS.**

**ARTICLE I.**

**MEETINGS.**

Sec. 1. This Society shall meet every Saturday evening during the session at seven o’clock P.M., from October to April, and at half-past seven from April to June.

Sec. 2. If, after having been properly requested to do so, the President fail to call a meeting of the Society, a quorum of members may convene it, after having given twenty four hours’ notice of the time at which the meeting is to take place, and of the purpose for which it is called. Notice posted upon four of the college bulletin-boards shall be sufficient.

Sec. 3. Option attendance on the meetings of the Society shall be allowed to all applicants for degrees and to members living one mile from college at the discretion of the Judicial Committee.

**ARTICLE II.**

**MEMBERS EXCUSED FROM DUTY.**

Sec. 1. Members of less than two weeks standing shall be excused from all duties except attendance on the meetings of the Society.

Sec. 2. Members shall be excused from all duties for one week before and four days after each of their examinations.

**ARTICLE III.**

**DUES AND FINES.**

Sec. 1. Each member shall pay to the treasury of the Society Ten Dollars initiation fee, and an annual tax of two dollars and a half every subsequent session that he is a regular member.
Sec. 2. The roll shall be called at the opening and the close of each meeting, and members shall be fined twenty-five cents for unexcused absence from each roll-call.

Sec. 3. Each member failing to debate the question upon which he has been regularly appointed shall be fined fifty-cents.

Sec. 4. Every officer and every member of a committee who fails promptly to perform his duty as such shall be fined one dollar.

Sec. 5. Any member elected monthly orator who fails to perform his duty as such shall be fined one dollar.

Sec. 6. Any member guilty of disorder shall be fined twenty-five cents, the Sergeant-at-Arms being judge of what constitutes disorder.

Sec. 7. Special Fines—
(1) For passing between President and member speaking, twenty-five cents.
(2) Leaving the Hall without permission, twenty-five cents.
(3) Persisting in resolutions, motions, or remarks ruled out of order, fifty cents.
(4) Absence from Hall on leave for more than twenty minutes during meeting, twenty-five cents.

ARTICLE IV.
DEBATE.

Sec. 1. It shall be the duty of the Secretary to re-arrange, from time to time, the classes for debate with a view to keeping the numbers in the several classes as nearly as possible equal. He shall also separate each class into two divisions, one division consisting of the first, third, fifth, &c., on the roll of the class, the other, of the second, fourth, sixth, &c.

Sec. 2. Manner of Choosing Question for Regular Debate—The President shall call upon the Secretary to read the questions which have been submitted in accordance with Article IV, Sec. 5 of the Constitution, and, after the reading of each question, shall inquire if it is seconded by any member of the class appointed to debate the question which may be chosen. He shall then take the vote of the said class upon each question thus seconded. The first of these questions which shall receive the votes of a majority of the class he shall declare chosen. If none of them is chosen by the class, the selection for a question shall fall to the House.

Sec. 3. After the choice of question the Secretary shall read in alphabetical order the names of the members of the class which is to debate the question chosen. He shall then give the privilege of the choice of sides to each member of the class in succession until one declares his preference. The side thus chosen shall be debated by the division to which the member making choice belongs.

Sec. 4. Each member of the class appointed for debate shall, at the meeting for which he is appointed, have the privilege of speaking twice upon the questions chosen. The Secretary shall call upon the appointed debaters in order, naming alternatively those allotted to the affirmative and those allotted to the negative. In this order he shall twice call upon each appointed debater.
Sec. 5. Members not regularly appointed to debate shall have the privilege of speaking twice on each regular question after its discussion has been thrown open to the house; on all other questions also each member shall be allowed to speak twice.

ARTICLE V.
QUORUM.

One third of the members of the Society shall constitute a quorum for the transaction of all business.

ARTICLE VI.
ORDER OF BUSINESS.

1. First roll call.
2. Reading and adoption of minutes of last meeting.
3. Installation of officers.
4. Nomination, election and initiation of new members.
5. Election of officers.
7. Debate.
8. Report of Question Committee and choice of question.
9. Announcement of class to debate and determination of sides.
10. Treasurer’s report.
11. Reports of committees, Ways, Means, Conference, etc.
12. Extraordinary and unfinished business.
13. Motions and resolutions.
14. Reading of class to debate within one, two, and three weeks with announcement of sides and questions.
15. Notices of elections.
17. Second Roll-Call.
18. Adjournment.

ARTICLE VII.
MISCELLANEOUS BUSINESS.

Sec. 1. All motions and resolutions must be submitted in writing, in a blank book provided for the purpose and kept at the desk of the Secretary. They must be signed by the movers and read by the Secretary in the order in which they are submitted.

Sec. 2. The President shall give notice of every election at least one week before it is to take place.

Sec. 3. To adjourn the Society before the regular business has been transacted shall require a vote of two-thirds of the members present; and no member who has voted for adjournment shall be allowed to move it again during the same meeting.

Sec. 4. Call for Yeas and Nays—At the request of five members the vote shall be taken by yeas and nays.
Sec. 5. The rules of parliamentary practice as set forth in “Robert’s Rules of Order” shall govern the proceedings of this Society in all cases in which they are not inconsistent with its Constitution and By-Laws.

Sec. 6. Any student of the University of Virginia who was a member of this Society previous to the session of 1880-81, but is not now one, may reconstitute himself an active member by signing the Constitution and subjecting himself to the payment of the annual tax.

Sec. 7. Blank books shall be provided by the Treasurer for the reports of each of the standing committees, of the Secretary, of the Treasurer, and for all other uses called for by the Constitution or By-Laws.

Sec. 8. At the meeting in April, at which the first medal debate takes place, and immediately prior to the debate, Article VI of the Constitution shall be read by the President to the Electoral Committee of the Faculty.

ARTICLE VIII.

PREVIOUS ACTS NOT HEREIN CONTAINED.

All motions and resolutions affecting the Constitution and By-Laws of this Society previously passed, and not herein contained, shall be and are hereby repealed.

Constitution and of JS, Papers of WW.