

The Society Portraits: Talk Made Before Phi Society
November 14, 1946

By Mrs. Albert Coates
[Gladys Hall Coates]

Several years ago I began researching in the old records of the University with the purpose of tracing the development of student government on this campus. The suggestion for this subject of study came from my husband, who, as director of the Institute of Government was interested in student government. He conceived of it as a real branch of government and not just child's play--a branch of government in governing its citizens. Recalling his membership in one of these societies and what it had meant to him as a student, he suggested that I read some of the Society minutes in order to find whether there was any material to be gotten from them. I soon became engrossed in these records, and found material not only relating to the subject which had been the original reason for our research but all sorts of additional interesting and fascinating material relating to campus life of the early years and continuing on through to this century. Indeed, it was in reading minutes and letters and other materials of the DI and Phi that I first became interested in the portraits which have been collected by succeeding generations of students.

All of the portraits in the recent exhibition shown at Person Hall Art Gallery were collected by your historic organizations, founded in 1795, the opening year of the University. These early Societies, together with their varied activities such as founding libraries, conducting debates, and governing the campus generally, showed an early interest in the arts. In this they were encouraged by their alumni. A letter written to the Philanthropic Society in 1832 by an alumnus reads:

"It occurs to me too that the Society may be instrumental in disseminating some correct ideas of Architecture and Sculpture and Paintings and Engravings--fine Arts that are but little understood in North Carolina."

Society interest in the Arts centered around the collections of portraits of their famous alumni and other distinguished Americans. So early as 1821 we find a resolution in the Philanthropic Society:

"That such regular members as have attained to considerable eminence of which Society shall be judge, be requested to present their portraits to Society."

The great company of portraits in the Society Halls, indicates the response of eminent men to this invitation.

The following letter, written by Francis Lister Hawks who was graduated from this University in 1815 and who became one of the most distinguished clergymen of his time, illustrates this response. The letter is headed

New York City
March 22, 1838

Gentlemen,

I have received your kind letter communicating a resolution of the Society expressive of the wish to possess my portrait. I can truly say that I have never received any compliment which more touched the sensibilities of my nature than has this request of yours. Time has not obliterated the society from my memory or my affections, and as I owe it much for benefits derived from a participation in its exercises, it is most grateful to my feelings to find that in the opinion of my fellow members, I have in some degree at least, made myself worthy of this expression of the Society's regard. If the possession of the portrait will afford you any pleasure, to me it will always be a source of honest pride that you thought so well of me as to ask for it. I shall deem it an honor to know that the literary institution to which in boyhood I belonged has thought the memory of my features worth preserving. I will therefore sit with pleasure for you. The artist whom I select is Mr. Henry Inman of this city. Mr. Inman is (in my opinion) without equal in this country and indeed I may add that among the works of living portrait painters in England, I saw none better than I have seen from Mr. Inman's pencil. He paints Character as well as features and from him you will obtain not only a correct likeness but also a very fine specimen of art. I saw him yesterday and he entered at once with much enthusiasm into your views, saying that he would be prompt to execute the commission.

With most affectionate wishes for the prosperity of the Society, and a very grateful sense of the honour done me, which I beg of you to communicate to the members for me, I am very sincerely,

Your friend and fellow member
Francis L. Hawks

A president of the United States, who was another loyal society member, sat for his portrait to the most eminent artist of his day at the request of his society. President James K. Polk records in his diary:

Thursday, 20 May, 1847. --Having some weeks ago yielded to the request of the Dialectic Society of the university of North Carolina to sit for my portrait, which they wished to obtain for their debating Hall, Mr. Sully, the celebrated artist of Phila., whom the Society had engaged to paint (it), called this morning, and commenced the portrait. I gave him a sitting of 1 and 1/2 hours. Judge Mason, the Secretary of the Navy, also gave him a sitting for his portrait which he is taking for the Philanthropic Society of the University of North Carolina. We both sat in the red parlour above stairs in the President's House. Judge Mason was a member of the Philanthropic, and I was a member of the Dialectic Society when we were at College."

These portraits were executed just before the visit of the President and his Secretary of the Navy to the university for the Commencement of 1847.

It was in this year that the Phi Society asked for the portrait of Dr. Elisha Mitchell who was for so many years a member of this faculty. Dr. Mitchell at first declined the honor giving as his reason that he felt the Society should build up its library and other collections rather than spend its money on portraits.

The next year however he relented and wrote

University of N. Ca. May 26, 1848

To Messrs
W. A. Jenkins
T. J. Person
G. Washington

Gentlemen,

I could not but be gratified by your communication announcing a resolution of the Philanthropic Society, that it be proposed to me to have my portrait taken, and placed with those of the many distinguished men which already decorate your hall."

It is known to you that when a year ago, the same proposal and offer were so kindly made on the part of the Society, they were respectfully declined for reasons then stated. It has occurred to me since, that although my portrait may not be entitled to a place amongst those of the distinguished men that are already there, yet there is one reason, why I should now accept of the honour that is proposed to me--the same that influences the father of a family, even though having no pretensions to eminence as a man--to leave his portrait to his children.

I have now been connected with the University of N. Ca. For a little more than thirty years, and with all the faults and follies of which I am conscious, I cannot resist the evidence that is continually presented to me, that there are many men in North Carolina, to whom it would be agreeable (sic) to have preserved some memorial of their old instructor, when his heart shall have become a clod of the valley.

The following letter from a man who was a student in this University in the class of 1805, who was the first United States Senator from the State of Alabama, was Minister to France, and later elected Vice-President of the United States sums up the depth of feeling which these eminent men had for their Societies.

Gentlemen:

The estimation in which I am held by the members of the Philanthropic Society, as evidenced by their request, will ever be a source of pride and gratification. To sustain the honor and advance the prosperity of that Institution, constituted at one period of my life, the strongest feeling of my nature; it entwined itself around every fiber of my heart, and stimulated all my energies. Time and diversified pursuits have weakened but not extinguished that feeling. I still exult in the success of the White Badge; nor in the palmy days of Rome's power and grandeur did the "I am a Roman Citizen" command more of confidence and respect, than "I am a Member of the Philanthropic Society" does for me. It has been, is, and I trust ever will be a sure guarantee of honor and moral worth.

I comply with great pleasure with the request of the Society, shall sit to the best artist here; and so soon as the painting is finished transmit it by the most secure conveyance which can be obtained.

With the highest respect,

I am Gentlemen
Your obedient servant
William R. King

A circular sent out to alumni by the Dialectic Society in the 1830's, requesting funds for building a larger and grander hall gives the setting which the Society portraits were hung:

. . .we now have an extensive library, believed to be equal to any in the Southern States--a Hall of respectable dimensions--rich Damask Curtains, from the looms of France, are suspended from window arches--the floor is spread with neat carpeting--from the walls hang portraits of various state worthies, like guardian genii of the place, looking with complacency on the efforts of the young hope of the State . . .

. . .should we succeed in rearing a Hall of suitable size and proportions, we should not only expect to see a rapid addition to our present number of volumes, but our walls covered with portraits, and our niches filled with busts of North Carolina's distinguished sons.

As you know the Society libraries referred to in this letter were united in the 1890s with the University library and became the nucleus for our great library of today. Except for books in special collections all University library books bear the names of the two societies in recognition of this union.

The University is justly proud of the Society portraits and in 1942 Chancellor House approved a generous appropriation of funds to bring to the campus Dr. Arthur E. Bye of Princeton, an authority on the science of art restoration. Dr. Bye undertook the restoration of the portraits,

many of which had fallen into a tragic state in the more than 100 years since some of them had been painted.

I remember the terrible sight of the portraits of Hawks and Ruffin. One eye of the Hawks portrait had been obliterated and the forehead of the Ruffin portrait was fearfully torn. I remember making a search for other likenesses of these men so that Dr. Bye might have something to aid him in making these restorations. Such a splendid piece of work did he accomplish that these were two of the portraits requested for hanging in the University library.

Some of the most distinguished American artists are represented in University portraits:

The Di portrait of William R. Davie was painted by Charles Willson Peale in 1826.

The Phi portrait of Benjamin Franklin by William Dunlap in the same year.

The Phi portrait of Francis Hawks by Henry Inman in 1838.

The portraits of James K. Polk and John Y. Mason, as we have said, by Thomas Sully.

The portrait of John C. Calhoun as a young man is by Chester Harding, a fact which Dr. Bye discovered in the course of his work. This is not a Society portrait and it hangs in the Law Building.

The portrait of James C. Dobbin, perhaps the most valuable of the portraits belongs to this Society and was painted by Eastman Johnson in 1856.

The University is fortunate in possessing some of the best work of William Garl Brown who has been called the Sully of the South. He painted three generations of North Carolinians and the University has seventeen of his canvasses. Several of these are hanging in this hall.

One of these is the portrait of General Bryan Grimes. I have a copy of a letter signed by two future governors of North Carolina, Charles B. Aycock and Locke Craig, who as committee members of your Society solicited this portrait from General Grimes.

Dr. Bye, while in this State, wrote a very interesting and illuminating article on the University portraits which should be of interest to all of you. You will find it in the December issue of the Alumni review Magazine for 1943-44.

Before closing I want to congratulate you on accepting along with the Di the offer of the University Library to exhibit three portraits from each Society. Dr. Rush plans to exhibit them in a most favorable part of the library where they will be seen by many persons--visitors to the University as well as students. With appropriate cards indicating the career and services of each portrait subject and an added notation showing the loan by the respective Society, both campus and visitors will become more and more conscious of the historic position of the Societies and the University's heritage.

I have told your president that I shall be glad to meet with any committee he shall appoint, or any volunteers, and help you re-arrange a few of the portraits. Some small changes could be made that would greatly enhance your hall. The larger portraits should be given more space, whereas the smaller ones might be hung somewhat in the manner of the portraits at the back of his room.

May I suggest that one of the best things for keeping the identity of your portraits would be for a committee to go to Memorial Hall and search out memorial tablets, which will probably be there for many of your portraits. Typewritten copies of these placed next to the respective portraits in this hall would furnish a guide not only for your college generation but for those generations to follow. It is a great pleasure to be with you this evening and I shall always be happy to help you in any way I can.

**What follows are
Mrs. Coates' typescript notes, etc.
bound in with the talk to the Phi
November 14, 1946**

Hall of the Philanthropic Society
University of North Carolina
Chapel Hill, N.C.
Febry 17th 1880

Gen Bryan Grimes
Washington, N.C.

Dear Sir,

The Philanthropic Society, through us, its committee, does itself the honor to ask you for your portrait, with which to adorn the walls of our hall.

We hope you may find it in your power and convenience to comply with the request.

Very Respectfully,

Your Ob't Servants

James Pender
C. B. Aycock
Locke Craig

Special Committee

Washington N.C.
Feb 21st 1880

Gentlemen

Your very kind letter requesting my "portrait on behalf of the Philanthropic Society" came duly to hand--which request will be cheerfully complied with when the services of a competent artist can be procured and steps shall be taken to the effect that purpose at an early day. Upon its completion I will forward direct to you.

Congratulating you upon the revival of the Society, and with my best wishes for her continued prosperity

I am very truly

Your obt svt
Bryan Grimes

Messrs. James Pender
C. B. Aycock
Locke Craig

Committee

Graham N.C. - April 6th 1880

Genl. Bryan Grimes

My Dear Sir

Your letter dated Washington N.C. March 30th - reached me two or three days since--The letter you wrote me at Washington City D.C. was received and answered at the time- and I have often wondered why I did not get any reply to it-I am now satisfied that it never reached its Destination - I should be happy to make a copy of your portrait for you. The price would be \$175 " I may go to Wilmington from her, by about the last of this week, and if I should remain there long enough- could execute the picture for you there. The original could be sent to me from Raleigh by Exprefs and as soon as I have done with it, could easily be returned to Raleigh - and the Copy to Chapel hill or where ever you might direct - When I get to Wilmington and see how long I am likely to remain there, will write you, so that you can avail yourself of the opportunity-should you conclude to have the copy made- Hoping that yourself and family are well-

I am very respectfully

Wm. Garl Browne

15 Vernon Row Washington City
May 6th 1880

Gen.l Bryan Grimes

My Dear Sir

I received a letter from you Dated March 30th - a few days before I left Graham, and answered it promptly- On my return home I found two letters from you, at my studio, one of Feby 21st the other March 22nd. I hope you have received my last from Graham, I should be pleased to paint the Copy of your Portrait. You had better have it taken out of the gilt frame and packed in a light box just large enough to hold it- and sent to me Exprefs Directed to me at 15 Vernon Row Penna Ave Washington City D.C> - and I will execute the work immediately - and ship as you may direct. The price will be two hundred dollars - you say that your fathers portrait has cracked - If so I will repair it for you without charge, and you could have it put in the same box with your

own picture - and I will return it to you with the other pictures- You had better notify me by mail as the time of the Shipment- and on arrival I will acknowledge receipt. I expected to have gone to Wilmington from Graham, but being unexpectedly called back to Washington, had to change plans- or I could have executed your order before leaving N.C. I am sorry that you had so much trouble in getting answers to your letters. Hoping that this will reach you.

I am yours truly & respectfully

Wm. Garl. Browne

Arlington House Washington D.C.
May 18th 1880
Genl. Bryan Grimes

My Dear Sir

I wrote you from Graham N.C. immediately on receipt of your letter - and I also wrote you on my arrival home in this City. I have not as yet heard anything from you, like my former letter - I now write again. I stated that I should be pleased to paint the copy of your portrait - and hat the price would be two hundred Dollars - and gave directions for packing and shipment - viz- a light box just large enough to hold it - and ship to me by Exprefs 15 Vernon Row Pennsylvania Av Washington D.C. If this should reach you please let me hear from you

Respectfully Wm Garl Browne

15 Vernon Row Washington D C -
Wm Garl Browne Aug 7 1880

P. Cowper Esqr

My dear Sir

Your Postal Card received - I have no as yet heard from Genl Grimes - The picture is finished and ready for Shipment - Please inform the Genl that I am awaiting his instructions -

Yours truly & respectfully

Wm Garl Browne

Washington N.C.
August 12th 1880

W. Garl Brown Esq
Washington City
D-C-

Dear Sir

Your letters forwarded through Cowper to hand.

When the portrait is completed please put in suitable frame, and put on the back of the canvafs - in small letter - "Bryan Grimes - Maj Genl Provincial Army of the Confederate States" and your own name as Artist and have fixed & addressed to "Philanthropic Society Chapel hill - care of Mefs James Pender- C. B. Aycock- Locke Craig- Committee - and prepay the freight by Exprefs at same time notify this Committee that you have by my request shipped the box to their addrefs - Send the original portrait back to Raleigh. Cowper will send your bill for it on to me.

I will not insult you by asking if the Portrait is well done for I know otherwise it could not come out of your hands

Very truly yours
Bryan Grimes

University
Of
North Carolina

Chapel Hill, N.C. Sept 5 1880

Dear Sir: -

On the absence of our Committee, James Pender, C. B. Aycock, and Locke Craig, I am empowered and directed by the Philanthropic Society to write to you informing you of the receipt of Gen. Bryan Grimes' portrait. It arrived here on last Thursday, being preceded by your letter a day or two; it was in good condition having apparently experienced no damage en route and now graces the walls of our Society Hal. Assuring you of the satisfaction of the Society as to the condition of the portrait on its arrival and thanking you for your kind trouble in writing, I have the honor to be

Your Humble Servant
A. S. Grandy

15 Vernon Row Washington D.C. Sept 10th 1880

Mrs. Grimes

Dear Madam

Enclosed I send you a letter from the Philanthropic Society at Chapel Hill, acknowledging receipt of Genl Grimes portrait - I thought you would like to hear of its safe arrival and at the same time, I take the liberty of sending you my Bill, made out in the proper form, as the one I sent to Mr. Wm. Grimes was a mere Memorandum without any heading. You can send me an Exchange on the North for the amount -

Very respectfully
Wm Carl Browne

15 Vernon Row - Washington D.C. Sept 10th 1880

Mrs. Charlotte E. Grimes

To Wm. Carl Browne

To painting Portrait of Genl Bryan Grimes	200
To frame for -Do.....	035.00
To Box & packing	003.50
To Exprefs charges - prepaid	<u>008.25</u>
	\$246.75

Letter From Francis Hawks to the Phi Society

New York, Mar. 22nd, 1838

To a Committee of the Philanthropic Society

Gentlemen,

I have received your kind letter communicating a resolution of the Society expressive of the wish to possess my portrait. I can truly say that I have never received any compliment which more touched the sensibilities of my nature than has this request of yours. Time has not obliterated the society from my memory or my affections, and as I owe it much for benefits derived from a participation in its exercises, it is most grateful to my feelings to find that in the opinion of my fellow members, I have in some degree at least, made myself worthy of this expression of the Society's regard. If the possession of the portrait will afford you any pleasure, to me it will always be a source of honest pride that you thought so well of me as to ask for it. I shall deem it an honor to know that the literary institution to which in boyhood I belonged has thought the memory of my features worth preserving. I will therefore sit with pleasure for you. The artist

whom I select is Mr. Henry Inman of this city. Mr. Inman is (in my opinion) without equal in this country and indeed I may add that among the works of living portrait painters in England, I saw none better than I have seen from Mr. Inman's pencil. He paints Character as well as features and from him you will obtain not only a correct likeness but also a very fine specimen of art. I saw him yesterday and he entered at once with much enthusiasm into your views, saying that he would be prompt to execute the commission. As to his terms, I must refer you to him. He is very constantly employed and commands his own prices for his work, but he is desirous of executing this, and I therefore think you will obtain from him the work on terms as favourable as he ever grants. You had better write to him without delay, as both he and I are so much occupied that the more time we have the better.

We will commence the picture without delay, and will not have proceeded so far before he hears from you, as to lose the opportunity of making it conform to your wishes. Should you find on corresponding with him that the expense greatly exceeds your anticipations allow me in all frankness to say that I shall not feel hurt if you countermand your order. The honour (done) me is in your request and that I shall ever feel. I believe (without knowing much about it) that for a portrait of the size you mention Mr. Inman's lowest price is \$200 and the frame will cost you something. Of all this however you will get more satisfactory information from him.

With most affectionate wishes for the prosperity of the Society, and a very grateful sense of the honour done me, which I beg of you to communicate to the members for me, I am very sincerely,

Your friend and fellow member

Francis L. Hawks

Letter From William R. King to the Phi Society

Washington City

4th April 1838

Gentlemen:

I write you from a sick chamber; having been confined for some time by severe indisposition, from which I am but slowly recovering. This will I trust satisfactorily account for my not having returned an earlier answer to your kind and flattering letter. The estimation in which I am held by the members of the Philanthropic Society, as evidenced by their request, will ever be a source of pride and gratification. To sustain the honor and advance the prosperity of that Institution, constituted at one period of my life, the strongest feeling of my nature; it entwined itself around every fiber of my heart, and stimulated all my energies. Time and diversified pursuits have weakened but not extinguished that feeling. I still exult in the success of the White Badge; nor in the palmy days of Rome's power and grandeur did the "I am a Roman Citizen" command more of confidence and respect, than "I am a Member of the Philanthropic Society" does for me. It has been, is, and I trust ever will be a sure guarantee of honor and moral worth.

I comply with great pleasure with the request of the Society, shall sit to the best artist here; and so soon as the painting is finished transmit it by the most secure conveyance which can be obtained.

With the highest respect,

I am Gentlemen
Your Obedt Svt
William R. King

Letter from J. Y. Mason to the Rev. Wm Green

Washington. April 23 1847

My dear Sir.

A few weeks since a committee of the Dialectic Society addressed to the President a letter asking that they would sit to an artist, and have his portrait taken to be placed in the Hall of the Society. About the same time a similar communication was made to me, by a committee of the Philanthropic Society, with a similar request. The young gentlemen of each committee desired the artist should be selected here, and the bill sent to them for payment.

We acknowledge with sensibility the honor, which has been conferred upon us, by the literary Societies to which we respectively belonged when students at the university, and are anxious that the portraits, shall be painted by a competent artist, but without excessive encroachment on the funds which the Societies collect and apply to the noble purposes of advancing the objects of their institution.

At the request of the President, I made enquiry as to the best artist, and believe that the elder Sully is the best of his profession. Mr. Dallas, Vice president, kindly wrote to him, and I enclose a note from him, with a memorandum from Mr. Sully.

I have mislaid the letter which I Received from our Society, and do not remember the names of the committee. Will you do us the favor to consult with the Committees of the two Societies, and ask them if they approve the artist, to select from his memorandum the description of portrait which they desire, of the president and myself respectively -And write to me- We hope that they will not desire one of those, to which Mr. Sully attached so high a price- but we wish the gentlemen to make the selection, as they will readily appreciate my delicacy on the subject.

Very Respy. & truly
Yr friend
J.Y. Mason

Revd. Wm. M. Green
Chapel Hill

University of N. Ca. April 20th 1847

To Messrs

J. J. Pettigrew Committee of Correspondence of the Philanthropic Society

A. Alston

J.D. Myrick

Gentlemen

I could not but be otherwise than gratefully affected by the communication received from yourselves as Committee of Correspondence conveying in the name of the Society an invitation to have my own portrait (however unworthy of such honour) added to these of the distinguished men that are already in their hall. I duly appreciate the value of this token of respect and kind feeling the acceptance of which however I must for the present decline.

The compliment to Judge Mason was in any case appropriate; and under the circumstances particularly necessary and graceful, and I hope he may accede to your wishes in this respect.

But there are a number of spacious alcoves to be so filled with books and other matter connected with science and the arts that may not offend the eye of strangers who may visit us by an appearance of emptiness and poverty. A single portrait would do little towards filling the vacuity and with the addition of that of Judge Mason there will with the portraits and busts now on hand, be a very decent shewing in that line.

It is known to the members of the Society that amongst the remains of ancient art that have been preserved to us are certain statues which are the admiration of all who behold them. Some of them, though very heavy articles; if offered for sale would be promptly purchased by the sovereigns (sic) of Europe for their weight in gold.

The originals we cannot hope to possess, but copies of them in plaster of great accuracy and beauty are furnished at very moderate prices. That they are not mere worthless and contemptible toys is sufficiently indicated by the fact that a collection of them was thought worthy of being presented many years since to the Academy of Fine Arts in the City of New York by Buonaparte - which as well as the autograph which accompanied them is still there. Two or three of these casts judiciously selected would occupy and fill one of the alcoves gracefully - and at small cost - they would also be a means of improvement (sic) to the persons who should look upon them by conveying an accurate idea of what the ancient statues were.

Collections of shells, minerals and other things of the kind, might be made to meet in part a necessity which at present exists and may perhaps continue for some years. With reference to these things if the ideas here thrown out shall be deemed at all worthy of attention I may be of some use to the society and I need hardly add that I shall be happy to further their views in any way that is in my power.

Please accept gentlemen my thanks to yourselves personally for the kind and obliging terms in which you have been please (sic) to communicate to me the resolution of the Society and believe me

Respectfully yours,

E. Mitchell

Portrait of William R. Davie
[Not the one owned by the Societies]

Made in Paris during summer of 1800. Davie died Nov. 8, 1820 (according to two newspaper notices of the time.)

Who made the portrait?

At first it was thought to be the work of M. Fauret de Saint Memin who did a great many portraits in America but art critics agreed this is not his work.

The work of Gilles Louis Chretien

Gilles Louis Chretien, a French musician, was born at Versailles in 1754. In 1787, he invented a machine called the "Physionotrace," with which he took portraits in profile from life, which were reduced to silhouettes, usually by Fouquet, and then engraved in quatint by himself. Many of these are of great interest on account of the celebrity of the persons represented, "L'Incorruptible Robespierre," Mirabeau, and Marat, being among the hundreds which he produced. Edme Queneday was at first associated with him, but Chretien afterwards worked alone. He died in Paris in 1811. (From Bryan's Dictionary of Painters and Engravers. P. 292, (1903))

Davie's career. General Davie resigned Governorship of N.C. in 1799 to accept an appointment by Pres. John Adams on a commission to France. Portrait made in 1800.

A. J. Parsons, late Chief of the Division of Prints in Library of Congress an authority said, "there were only two portraits by Gilles Louis Chretien in America."

Portrait made 11 years after helping found UNC (1789). Exact measurements, etc.

This and other information from UNC Record, 1921-22, frontispiece. Other portrait by same artist in America.

Letter from Wm Garl Brown to Louis Bane (Di)

Raleigh N.C. June 8th, 1859

Dear Sir,

Your letter of the 6th inst enclosing check for two hundred and two Dollars, amount due me for painting portrait of Hon. W. P. Mangum and also ordering portrait same size of Dr. Phillips reached me this morning. I did agree with Mr. Pinnix to order a frame for the Judge's picture, and will also order one for the portrait of Dr. Phillips as you suggest. I think they will cost about forty five dollars each and can be delivered in about three or four weeks from the date of this. I will instruct the frame maker to ship to you at Chapel Hill and the Bull by Mail to you.

Respectfully

You obt sert
Wm Garl Brown

Louis Bane Esqr
Chapel Hill N.C.

Letter from Sully to John Y. Mason

Philadelphia June 21 1847

Honorable J.Y. Mason

Dear Sir

Just as I was about to leave for providence, your letter arrived.

I have iven the requisite orders about the frames, and your request concerning the protraits shall be attended to.

I will subjoin to this, my account.

Very respectfully

Your obt sert

Thos Sully

Honorable J.Y. Mason

Dr. to Thos Sull

Portrait of His excellency James K. Polk President of the United States	\$300
Portrait of the Honble J.Y. Mason Sectary (sic) of the Navy of the United States	\$300
Frames made by Mr. Earle	\$80
Packing case, Porterage, etc.	<u>\$3</u>
	\$683
Freight to Washington	4

Letter from John Y. Mason to Phi Soc.

Washington, Aug 7th 1847

Gentlemen,

Mr. Sully sent to my care, the portraits of the President and of myself which (he) had painted for the two societies at the University of North Carolina--agreeably to your request, I desired him to send to me his bill, which I now forward.

John D. Hawkins esq of Franklin, kindly took charge of the package, and I doubt not, it has been recd in good order. Will you have the goodness to informe (sic) me, if you and the committee of the Dialectic Society will send me , a bill for the amount, I will pay Mr. Sully, get his receipts and send them to you and the Committee of the Dialectic Society. I hope the portraits will realize the expectations of the Societies. And I shall never cease to cherish the recollection of the high honor, which has thus been conferred on me.

Very truly yr frd

John Mason

Corresponding Com. Of the Philanthropic Society

Letter from James Bogle to Phi Soc.

New York 5th Oct. 1851

Dear Sir,

Having finished the copy of Judge Gaston's portrait, I had it framed, boxed and shipped thro' Messrs Brown and DeRosset yesterday.

I was unable to get a frame of the requisite width for less than \$25, including boxing, which is usually about two doll/but as it was a higher price than I had intended giving they deducted the expense of boxing.

The picture was pronounced by all who saw it by the original, a literal and perfect copy - some persons who knew Judge G said that they could not distinguish between them. The original having been painted some twenty years since, presents rather an old fashioned look so far as the dress.

It cannot be regarded as a specimen of any style, being totally unlike in color and drawing.

I trust that it will be received in good condition, and that it will give satisfaction to the Society. You will oblige me by letting me know the opinions of all the members.

When the picture is opened it will be necessary to brush it gently with a silk handkerchief to remove the dust. --if rubbed it will only adhere the more firmly.

With much respect

Your obdt. Svt.

James Bogle

Mr. Wm E. Barnes
University
Chapel Hill
North Carolina

From James K Polk's Diary

Thursday, 20th May, 1847. Having some weeks ago yielded to the request of the Dialectic Society of the university of North Carolina to sit for my portrait, which they wished to obtain for their debating Hall, Mr. Sully, the celebrated artist of Phila., whom the Society had engaged to paint (it), called this morning, and commenced the portrait. I gave him a sitting of 1 and 1/2 hours. Judge Mason, the Secretary of the Navy, also gave him a sitting for his portrait, which he is taking for the Philanthropic Society of the University of N. Carolina. We both sat in the red parlour above stairs in the President's House. Judge Mason was a member of the Philanthropic, and I was a member of the Dialectic Society when we were at College."

Friday, 21st May, 1847. I gave Mr. Sully, the artist, another sitting of two hours this morning. He is painting my portrait for the Dialectic Society of the University of N. Carolina. After I had sat for him I transacted public business . . .

Saturday, 22 May, 1847. I sat again this morning for Mr. Sully, the artist, who is painting my portrait for the Dialectic Society of the University of N. Carolina.

Other sittings were: May 24 and 25 when the President entertained Mr. Sully at dinner. Pres. Polk left Washington May 28, 1847 to attend Commencement at Chapel Hill, arrived there May 31 (he graduated June 1818, 29 years before). Prof. Mitchell was only member of old faculty left.

Letter from Thomas Sully to J.Y. Mason

Philadelphia May 27 1847

Judge Mason,

I have lost no time in advancing the portraits to Chapel hill, and expect to finish them soon. Meantime as I thought frames would be required, I have obtained an estimate of different prices, and submit them to the society for their selection.

I have found it better to enlarge the portraits to half-length, but I will not alter the price fixed upon --viz 300 for each portrait.

With great respect

Yr obt sert
Thos Sully

Mr. Earles estimate

Half-length frame, plain moulding, 6 inches wide	\$20
Ditto - ornamental, and 7 in. wide	\$32
Ditto - richly ornamented	\$40

Note from G. M. Dallas to J.Y. Mason

Dear Sir:

Mr. Sully's terms are somewhat higher than I had supposed: - but they are not too high for good portraits.

If you can consult Col. Polk, pray let me know what to write back to Mr. Sully as soon as you conveniently can.

Sincerely yrs,
G. M. Dallas
16 Apr. 1847

Honble

John Y. Mason etc. etc.

Letter from Artist Thomas Sully to Phi Society Re Cost of Portraits

Honble George M. Dallas

Dear Sir

I hasten to reply to your kind communication in regard to the application from Chapel Hill College.

List of Prices for Portraits

Head-size	20 inches by 17	\$150
Bust	30 " 25	\$200
Kit Kat	3 feet by 2 fett 4 inches	\$300 with hands
Small half length;	3ft8; by 2ft 10in	\$400
Large half length;	4ft8; by 3 ft 8 in	\$500
Whole Length;	8 ft, by 5 ft	\$1000

Should my terms suit the gentlemen from North Carolina, I will visit Washington forthwith.

With great respect
Your Obt Servant
Thos. Sully

Philadelphia April 15th 1847