

INITIATORY LETTER

The Philosophical Society of Washington had its origin in the following initiatory letter:

Prof. Joseph Henry, LL.D.

The undersigned respectfully request you to preside at a meeting which they propose to hold for the purpose of forming a society, having for its object the free exchange of views on scientific subjects, and the promotion of scientific inquiry among its members.

M. C. MEIGS,	HORACE CAPRON,
BENJAMIN PEIRCE,	THOMAS ANTISELL,
THEO. GILL,	J. J. WOODWARD,
PETER PARKER,	J. S. BILLINGS,
F. B. MEEK,	J. K. BARNES,
T. R. PEALE,	C. H. CRANE,
WM. B. TAYLOR	GEORGE A. OTIS,
CHAS. A. SCHOTT,	ALBERT J. MYER,
E. B. ELLIOTT,	A. A. HUMPHREYS,
F. V. HAYDEN,	ASAPH HALL,
J. E. HILGARD,	SIMON NEWCOMB,
J. H. LANE,	WM. HARKNESS,
S. F. BAIRD,	B. F. CRAIG,
WALTER L. NICHOLSON,	J. H. C. COFFIN,
WM. H. DALL,	THORNTON A. JENKINS,
B. FRANKLIN GREENE,	GEORGE H. ELLIOT,
S. V. BENÉT,	W. T. SHERMAN,
GEORGE C. SCHAEFFER,	A. B. DYER,
THOS. LINCOLN CASEY,	J. B. WHEELER,
JNO. G. PARKE,	A. B. EATON,
B. F. SANDS,	ELISHA FOOTE,
	SALMON P. CHASE.

The original of the above letter has not yet been located, however, the letter is quoted in earlier documents (including Vol. 1 of the Bulletin) and was apparently presented to Joseph Henry on March 12, 1871.

The document reproduced on the fold-out insert was found recently in the archives of the Society and appears to be a precursor of the Initiatory Letter.

Prof Joseph Henry & S. W.

The undersigned respectfully request you to preside at a meeting which they propose to hold for the purpose of forming a society, having for its object, the free exchange of views and studies on scientific subjects, and the promotion of scientific inquiry among its members.

7 February 1871

Morning

Benjamin Peirce

Theo. Gill.

Peter Parker.

F. B. Meek

J. R. Seale.

Mr. B. Taylor.

Chas. A. Schott

E. B. Elliott

J. V. Hayden

Wm. J. Myer

W. H. Humphreys

Thos. Lincoln Casey

Mr. G. Parke

J. E. Hilgard

J. H. Lane

N. F. Baird

Horace Caspary

Thomas Antisell

J. J. Woodward

J. S. Willing

J. W. Barnes

W. H. Craze

Gen. A. Otis

B. F. Craig

Walter Nicholson

B. F. Sand

Chas. Will.	W. T. Baird
Peter Parker	Henry Casron
F. B. Mack	Thomas Anturello
J. R. Seale	<u>J. J. Woodward</u>
<u>Mr. B. Taylor</u>	J. S. Willing
Chas. A. Schott	J. W. Ames
E. B. Elliott	Chas. Crane
F. V. Hayden	Geo. A. Otis
<u>Wm. J. Myers</u>	B. F. Craig
W. H. Humphreys	Walter L. Nicholson
Thos. Lincoln Casey	B. F. Sams
Mo: G. Parke	<u>J. H. Coffin</u>
Asaph Hall	Horatio A. Jenkins
Simon Newcomb	George H. Peck
Wm Harkness	<u>W. T. Sherman</u>
<u>Wm. H. Dall</u>	George H. Peck
J. B. Wheeler	General U.S. Army
George L. Schaefer	G. Franklin Heath
A. B. Eaton	et B. Dyer
Elisha Foote	S. V. Peck

DRAFT OF THE INITIATORY LETTER DATED FEBRUARY 7, 1871

The above document appears to be an earlier draft of the Initiatory Letter which was at the origin of the foundation of The Philosophical Society of Washington by 44 members of the Saturday (or Scientific) Club on March 13, 1871. Most probably some of the members of the Saturday Club signed this draft after February 7 (which was a Tuesday). The names of Elisha Foote, Wm. Harkness, and Simon Newcomb seem to have been written in by another person (possibly Asaph Hall). The original document shows that Wm. H. Dall and George A. Otis placed their signatures over their names written in by another person. Salmon P. Chase, whose name appears on the final document, did not sign this draft and W. T. Sherman's signature is followed by the words: General U.S. Army.

The text of the above draft includes the words "and studies" which are omitted in the final document.