



**Distant glances: American members of the Gioeni Academy
in the nineteenth century**
*Doctors, exiles, chemists, geologists, philosophers
and collectors of natural history, astrophysicists for solar eclipses*

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Summary

The events that bind fourteen partners of the nineteenth century to the Gioeni Academy of Catania are described. In the United States and Europe the scientific and political literature is very rich in information on the personalities aggregated to the Gioeni Academy, from the beginning of its foundation until the end of the 19th century. Unfortunately, their scientific contribution to the cultural life of the Academy was almost nil, limited to exchanges of letters and literature references only, with the exception of the presence of the mathematician B. Peirce, of the geodesist C.A. Schott and of the astronomer J.C. Watson on site (direct meetings with local members of the Gioeni Academy in the astronomical observation stations) during the occasion of the total solar eclipse of December 22nd, 1870, observed in Sicily by American and European scientific expeditions.

Keywords: American members of the Gioeni Academy; Boston; Staten Island; New Orleans; Philadelphia; New York; Smithsonian Institution, Washington; Harvard University; United States Coast and Geodetic Survey; Wisconsin University; New York Post Graduate Medical School; New York Academy of Sciences; Johns Hopkins University.

Riassunto

*Sguardi lontani: i soci gioeni statunitensi nell'Ottocento
Medici, esuli, chimici, geologi, filosofi e collezionisti di storia naturale,
astrofisici per eclissi solari*

Sono descritte le vicende che legano i 14 soci statunitensi dell'Ottocento all'Accademia Gioenia di Catania. La letteratura scientifica e politica americana

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ed europea è molto ricca di informazioni sulle personalità aggregate al sodalizio gioenio nei primi anni della sua esistenza fino alla fine del secolo XIX. Il loro contributo scientifico alla vita culturale dell'Accademia è sfortunatamente nullo, limitato a scambi di lettere e di referenze bibliografiche, ad eccezione della presenza in sede (interazione diretta con alcuni soci gioeni nelle stazioni di osservazione astronomica) del matematico B. Peirce, del geodeta C.A. Schott e dell'astronomo J.C. Watson, nell'occasione dell'eclisse totale di sole del 22 dicembre 1870, osservata in Sicilia da spedizioni scientifiche americane ed europee.

Parole chiave: Soci gioeni statunitensi; Boston; Staten Island; New Orleans; Philadelphia; New York; Smithsonian Institution, Washington; Harvard University; United States Coast and Geodetic Survey; Wisconsin University; New York Post Graduate Medical School; New York Academy of Sciences; Johns Hopkins University.

1. Introduction

In total, the American members of the Gioeni Academy (AG) to date have been 21: 14 elected in the 19th century, 3 elected in the 20th century [Hale George Ellery (1908), Pauling Linus (1954), Bunnett Joseph F. 1988], 4 elected in the 21th [Clark T. David (2007), Ferrara Napoleone (2010), Inserra Renato (2018), Gennaro Rosario (2020)]. The least known and most surprising are those of the first group (19th century). It would be interesting to know the proposal and nomination process which would reveal the scientific and human relationships between the proposers and the candidates. Unfortunately, in the AG Acts and in the minutes of the nineteenth-century academic sessions there are no traces of presentations by members that illustrate the scientific personality of the proposed member or members and the reasons given by the supporters or patrons of the nomination proposals. In addition, a first difficulty in addressing the topic arose from the fact that the surnames present in the lists published by President Bruno Monterosso (Monterosso, 1962) or which appear in the minutes of the sessions are sometimes in an inaccurate or incomplete form so as not to allow an easy and rapid identification of the characters. The President's valuable work collects all the information regarding the more than one hundred year organizational life of the Gioeni Academy (Statutes, List of members accompanied by notes and references, Organic Structure, etc.) in an attempt to have safe documentary sources for consultation.

A second difficulty is related to the fact that in the collections kept in the AG Historical Archives there are no autographed letters of active and passive correspondence between the Presidents or General Secretaries and the new members (Grasso Naddei & Alberghina, 2017). Furthermore, they do not appear linked to each other by residence, mutual academic knowledge, professional experiences and/or professed scientific discipline (except for three astronomers). The co-optation of American scientists must have occurred due to

knowledge (from scientific literature), interactions in the field (for astronomers, geologists and volcanologists) and/or personal scientific correspondence (in the case of medical doctors) of active members in Catania with American colleagues who had managerial responsibilities in American institutions that became famous during the nineteenth century. It should be noted that the paths of scientific knowledge and communication also passed through the official exchange of serial publications between the Gioeni Academy and the US Academies and Institutions. The list below, mainly relating to the natural sciences, medicine and mathematics, provides a framework of exchanges (scientific Reports, Transactions, Proceedings, Annales, Bulletins, Magazines) entering the Academy's library in the second half of the nineteenth century. It substantiates the idea of a remote knowledge, on the part of young members, of prestigious American scientific personalities deemed worthy of being associated with the Gioeni Academy to increase international relations which have been growing since the year of its foundation (1824):

- Medical Statistics of the U.S. Army - War Department 1839-54, Washington, pp. 625.
- Smithsonian Institution, Washington. Annual Report of the Board of Regents of the Smithsonian Institution, dal 1847.
- Proceedings of the Academy of Natural Sciences of Philadelphia, 1857.
- Transactions of the Academy of Sciences of the St. Louis, 1858.
- Annual Report of the curator of the Museum of Comparative Zoology at Harvard College, 1862.
- Transactions of the Connecticut Academy of Arts and Sciences, 1866.
- Proceedings of American Academy of Sciences, Boston, 1873.
- Bulletin of the Museum of Comparative Zoology at Harvard College, Cambridge, U.S. 1873.
- Annual Report of the Bureau of Ethnology, Smithsonian Institution, Washington 1881.
- Transactions of the New York Academy of Sciences, from vol. 3, 1883.
- Annals of the New York Academy of Sciences, from vol. 4, 1887.
- North American Fauna, , U.S. Department of Agriculture, Washington 1889.
- The Chicago Academy of Sciences, Bulletin of the Geological and Natural History Survey, from 1896 onwards.
- U.S. Geological Survey (U.S.G.S.) - various publications since the year of foundation 1879, to rename the *U.S. Coast and Geodetic Survey* (1836) and to transfer it to the Department of the Interior, "for the classification of the public lands, and examination of the geological structure, mineral resources, and products of the national domain".
- U.S. Geological Survey - Atlas, 1882-98.

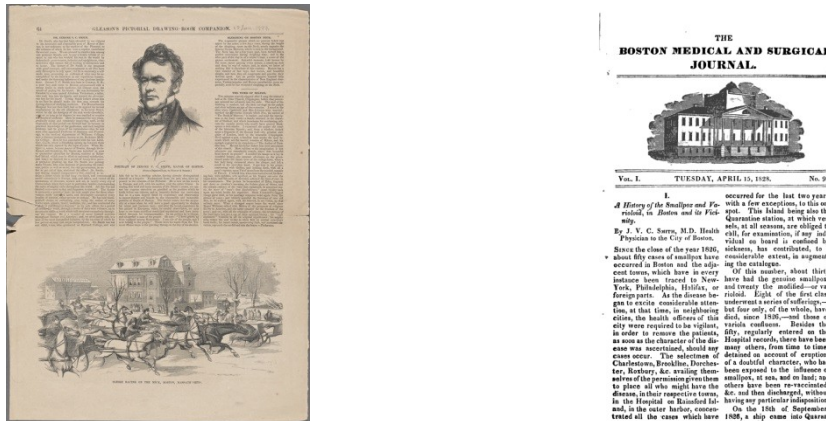


Fig. 1. (Left) Portrait of Jerome V.C. Smith, Mayor of Boston (from a daguerreotype, by Masury & Silsbee, 1854, N.Y.). (Right) Frontispiece of *The Boston Medical and Surgical Journal* (1828).

2. Results

Below are listed and illustrated the figures of the 14 co-opted American members, corresponding or honorary.

1) **Smith Jerome V.C.** (1800-1879), elected corresponding member on 02.23.1837 [Archivio storico Accademia Gioenia (AG), vol. 12, foglio 12].

Smith Jerome Van Crowninshield was the 14th mayor of Boston (1854) for two terms, engaged in numerous initiatives that benefited the city. He studied surgery with Dr. William Ingalls, a prominent Boston surgeon. He received his medical degree from Brown University in 1818 and his degree from the Medical Department of Williams College in 1822. He practiced medicine on behalf of the poor, as well as being an author of considerable ability and an amateur sculptor. A member of the Boston Society for Medical Improvement, he became editor of the *Boston Medical Intelligencer*, later known as *The Boston Medical and Surgical Journal* (1828-1855), writing notes in an edition of *Cooper's Surgery*. For the year 1826 he was editor of the *Boston Weekly News-letter (and City Record)*, the oldest American newspaper, as well as being the author of a treatise on the history of the American Indians. He was elected "Quarantine Physician" at Boston Harbor several times, as well as being professor of anatomy at the Berkshire Medical Institution (1823). In 1837 and 1848 he was elected to the State Legislature of Massachusetts. In 1863, he moved to New York City, where he was a professor of anatomy at New York Medical College and Charity Hospital.

He was the author of the following publications:

- *A history of the Smallpox and Varioloid in Boston and its Vicinity*, 1828, 1, pp.129-133.
- *History of the Wagner Free Institute of Science and its Contributions to Education*.
- *An essay on the practicability of cultivating the honey bee*, Boston, Perkins and Marvin, 1831.
- *Natural history of the fishes of Massachusetts, embracing a practical essay on angling*, Boston, Allen and Ticknor, 1833.
- *The class-book of anatomy*, Boston, Allen and Ticknor, 1834.
- *Indian Wars of America*, Boston, G. Clarke, 1840.
- *Turkey and the Turks: or Travels in Turkey*, Boston, F. Gleason's Publishing, 1852.

2) **Doane A. Sidney (Augustus Sidney)** (1808-1852), elected corresponding member from New York on 05.16.1841 [Atti AG, ser. 1, vol. 18, eighteenth year since foundation, 1842; Archivio storico AG, vol.12, foglio 58].

He was born in Boston to a respectable family on April 2, 1808. He graduated in medicine from Harvard in 1828 and immediately went to Europe, where he continued to study medicine for two years in Paris, the Mecca of scientific studies of the time. He returned to Boston, but in 1830 settled in New York, where he became a well-regarded practical physician. He dedicated himself to studies of political history and literature, revealing himself to be a skilled writer on medicine and surgery. In 1839 he was appointed professor of physiology at New York University, a position he soon left. He was subsequently appointed chief physician of the Marine Hospital and Quarantine Station of Staten Island, New York (opened in 1799) and returned to practice general medicine from 1843 until 1850, to be reappointed Commissioner of Health on Staten Island. He was a zealous translator of works by established European authors and writers on medicine and surgery, given his familiarity with languages such as French, German and Italian: Maygrier's *Midwifery* (1833), Dupuytren's *Surgery* (1833), Lugol's *Scrofulous Diseases*, Baylis's *Descriptive Anatomy*, Blandin's *Topographical Anatomy*, Ricord's *Syphilis*, Chaussier's *The Arteries*, Mechel's *Human anatomy e Scoutetten's Cholera*. He was editor of the *Dr. Good's Study of Medicine*. He contributed to *Surgery Illustrated Magazine* and other medical publications. In 1848 he was chosen as one of the consulting medical doctors at Bellevue Hospital. Soon after he declined that position to accept the more remunerative one at the Astor House, a luxurious hotel on Fifth Avenue in New York. He died of contagious malignant fever, contracted during his professional practice at the Staten Island Immigration Bureau, on January 27, 1852. He is buried in Mount Auburn Cemetery in Cambridge and Watertown, Massachusetts. He received the highest honors from his Alma Mater.

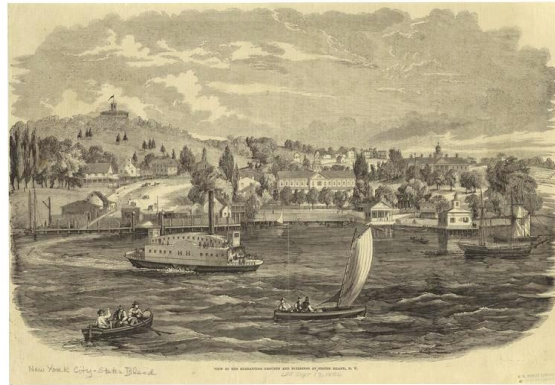


Fig. 2. An 1833 view of the Marine Hospital on Staten Island's northeastern shore (Credits: Ephemeral N.Y.).

He was the author of the following publications:

- *A practical treatise on venereal diseases: or, critical and experimental researches on inoculation, applied to the study of these afflictions with a therapeutical summary and special formulary, by Ph. Ricord; translated from the French by A. Sidney Doane, New York 1849, pp. 339.*
- *Clinical lectures on surgery: delivered at Hotel Dieu, in 1832 Baron Dupuytren; published by an association of physicians; translated from the French, by A. Sidney Doane, New York 1833.*
- *Manual of general, descriptive, and pathological anatomy, New York, Boston 1831-1832.*
- *A treatise on topographical anatomy; or, The anatomy of the regions of the human body considered in its relations with surgery and operative medicine, New York, Moore & Payne, 1834.*
- *The study of medicine, improved from the author's manuscripts, and by reference to the latest advances in physiology, pathology, and practice by Samuel Cooper. With notes by A. Sidney Doane, A.M., M.D., New-York, Harper & Brothers, 1835.*
- *Surgery illustrated: compiled from the works of Cutler, Hind, Velpeau and Blasius. With fifty-two plates, New York 1836, pp. 200.*

References:

- *The International Monthly Magazine of Literature, Art, and Science, New York 1852, vol. V, pp. 427-428, Recent Deaths.*
- *The post of duty, Discourse on the death of Dr. Doane, delivered in the Murray Street Church, February 15, by E. H. Chapin, D.D. New York 1852.*
- *Appleton's Cyclopedia of American Biography, edited by James Grant Wilson, John Fiske and Stanley L. Klos. Six volumes, New York, D. Appleton and Company, 1887-1889 and 1999.*

3) **Picton John Moore White**, M. D. (1804-1858), corresponding member from New Orleans, Louisiana, elected on 05.13.1841, eighteenth year since foundation [Atti AG, vol. 19, 1842; Archivio storico AG, vol. 12, foglio 58].

He initially attended the United States Military Academy at West Point until 1832 and in the same year he graduated in medicine from the Medical Department of the University of Pennsylvania. He settled in New Orleans where he practiced surgery for 32 years privately and at the New Orleans Charity Hospital. He was President of the Medical Department of the University of Louisiana and founder of the New Orleans School of Medicine (1856) at Charity Hospital, where he was professor of "Diseases of Women and Children" until 1858, the oldest member of the Faculty.

Publications:

- *On the exclusion of light as a means of preventing the pittings in small-pox*. Art. VIII, The American Journal of the Medical Sciences, vol. 10, Philadelphia 1832, pp. 119-120.

- *Yellow fever at Bay St. Louis, 1853 - Testimony of Dr. J. M. W. Picton*, 1853. Report of the Sanitary Commission of New Orleans on the epidemic yellow fever of 1853: published by authority of the City Council of New Orleans, 1854.

References:

- *New Orleans School of Medicine: A Guide: 1856-1870s*, New Orleans Medical news and Hospital Gazette, New Orleans, 1856, vol.3, p. 567.

- Fossier, A. E. *History of Medical Education in New Orleans. From its birth to the civil war*. Annals of Medical History, 1861,(Part II), pp. 427-447.

- *Appleton's Cyclopaedia of American Biography, Famous Americans. Virtual American Biographies*, 1888.

- *The South in the Building of the Nation*, 1909 vol. XI, edited by J. Curtis Ballagh, W. Lynwood Fleming & Southern Historical Publication Society.



Fig. 3. Charity Hospital building in Tulane Avenue, New Orleans, ca. 1859 (Courtesy of the Historic New Orleans Collection).

4) **Webster John White** (1793-1850), elected corresponding member on 05.13.1841, eighteenth year since foundation [Atti AG, vol. 19, 1842; Archivio storico AG, vol. 12, foglio 57].

He graduated from Harvard with a degree in chemistry in 1811 and in medicine in 1815. He completed his medical studies in London and then practiced in Boston until being appointed Lecturer on Chemistry, Mineralogy, and Geology from 1824 to 1826 (Cambridge-Boston, Massachusetts, Harvard University) and Adjunct Professor of Chemistry from 1826 to 1827, subsequently Erving Professor of Chemistry and Mineralogy from 1827 to 1850. He taught the principles and recent scientific discoveries of chemistry. He worked as an associate editor to the Boston Journal of Philosophy of Arts (1823-1826) and edited the publication in the United State of *Elements of Chemistry* (1827) of Andrew Fyfe and *Animal Chemistry or Organic Chemistry* of Justus Liebig. He wrote the *Webster's Manual of Chemistry*, new edition. Marsh, Capen & Lyon, 1840. In November 1849, a sensational murder profoundly shook the city of Boston. It all began when George Parkman (1791-1849), scion of one of Boston's wealthiest families and a well-known physician, suddenly passed away. A week later, the janitor at Harvard Medical College discovered body parts hidden in the laboratory of chemistry professor John Webster. Although his influential friends maintained his innocence, in March 1850 Webster was arrested for the murder of Dr. Parkman, found guilty and hanged on August 30, 1850. The spectacular trial attracted crowds in the tens of thousands. Webster owed Parkman money, borrowed from him for years to cover a lifestyle he could not afford.



Fig. 4. (Left) Photo of dr. Webster John White (Murderpedia, the encyclopedia of murderers). (Right) Harvard Medical School ca. 1880 (Historic New England).



Fig. 5. (Left) Photo of William Wagner (Historical Society of Pennsylvania). (Right) Poster. The Wagner Free Institute of Science, Philadelphia.

5) **Wagner William** (1796-1885), elected corresponding member on 04.29.1843 [Archivio storico AG, vol. 12, foglio 77].

Gentleman scientist (Natural History), philanthropist and merchant from Philadelphia, Pennsylvania, he founded the Wagner Free Institute of Science in 1855 for free public education in the sciences, with free access to its natural history collections (shells, plants, fossils, instruments scientific papers and books) for which he financed the construction of a special building (1865). In 1855 he became member of the Academy of Natural Sciences of Philadelphia.

References:

- Garman, E. *History of the Wagner Free Institute of Science and its Contributions to Education*. Temple University Dissertations (1941), unpublished.

6) **Forest Ernesto Felice** (probably Eleuterio Felice Foresti, 1793-1858), elected corresponding member from New York on 02.28.1845 [Atti AG, serie II, vol. 2, 1845, pag. III, Soci eletti nell'anno XXII; Archivio storico AG, vol. 14, foglio 102].

He was one of the Italian political exiles in the United States, where the Mazzini group was the most enterprising. Intellectuals and professionals were among the most authoritative propagators of the Italian language and literature in the chairs of American universities. On the initiative of Foresti in New York and Di Bartolo in Boston, schools in Italian were also opened for emigrants.



Fig. 6. (Left) Lithography of Ernesto Felice Forest (Wikipedia). (Right) Columbia University building, New York (Alamy Stock Photos).

In the volume: *I fondi archivistici della legazione sarda e delle rappresentanze diplomatiche italiane negli U.S.A. (1848-1901), Fonti per la storia dell'emigrazione*, vol. III, a cura di Cinzia Maria Aicardi e Alessandra Cavaterra, Istituto Poligrafico e Zecca dello Stato, Roma 1988, pp. XXVI, 330, pp. 15, 18, 45, we can read the following biographical Note (89) on pag. 45:

"On the appointment of Foresti as consul in Genoa see: Seg. S., registro 292, copialettere: legazione negli Stati Uniti d'America, Dabormida a Valerio, 19 luglio 1853 n. 80; 19 luglio 1952, confidenziale s.n.; 16 agosto 1853 n. 81. H.R. Marraro, *Relazioni*, cit., p. 139. Eleuterio Felice Foresti was born in Conselice in 1789; He entered the judiciary at the age of twenty-two. Affiliated to the Carboneria, he was arrested in 1818 and despite some of his denunciations, sentenced to death. His sentence was commuted to twenty years of hard prison to be served at Spielberg. Freed in 1836, he was deported together with the other exiles of the Husser (Austrian brigantine) to the United States. In New York he held a professorship of Italian literature at Columbia University. Having entered into a relationship with Mazzini he founded the «Central Congregation» of Giovine Italia in New York. A very active propagandist, he linked himself to other exiles and in particular to Garibaldi and Avezzana. In 1847 he was among the promoters of the address to Pius IX. After the failure of the Sardinian authorities to grant the exequatur, Foresti was able to settle in Genoa as a private citizen in 1856. Having approached Manin and Pallavicino, he obtained a new appointment as Consul in Genoa in 1858, this time followed by the exequatur. However, he held the consulate for only three months because he passed away on September 14, 1858.

About him you can see: G. SPINI, *Le relazioni politiche tra l'Italia e gli Stati Uniti durante il Risorgimento e la guerra civile*, in: *Italia e Stati Uniti nell'età del Risorgimento e della guerra civile*. Atti del II Symposium di Studi Americani. Firenze, 27-29 maggio 1966, Firenze, 1969, pp. 121-185 (pp. 156-158); Henry T. Tuckerman, *Eleuterio Felice Foresti*, in *Atlantic Monthly*, vol. IV (novembre 1859), pp. 525-540; *Ricordi di Felice Foresti*, in: Atto Vannucci, *I martiri della libertà*

italiana dal 1774 al 1848, Milano, 1872; H.R. Marraro, *Da Ponte and Foresti: the introduction of Italia at Columbia*, in *Columbia University Quarterly*, marzo 1937, pp. 23-32; L. Garotti, *Eleuterio Felice Foresti. Cenni biografici*, Faenza, 1951; H.R. Marraro, *Eleuterio Felice Foresti*, in: Elisabeth Manni Borghese, *Testimonianze americane sul Risorgimento*, Milano, 1961, pp. 101-116".

References:

- Roselli B. (1935), *Italian yesterday and today: a history of Italian teaching in the United States*. Boston.

7) **Wheatley Charles Moore** (1822-1882), elected corresponding member from New York, 01.28.1847 [Atti AG ser. 2, vol. 4, pag. III, 1847, soci eletti nell'anno XXIII; Archivio storico AG, vol. 14, foglio 124].

Born in Essex (Ongar, England), he moved as a boy with his parents to the United States (Long Island) and was educated in New York, entering work and mercantile life in 1835 at a very young age to help the family. He was a mineralogist and paleontologist, known for having identified numerous fossil species, some of which bear his name, and for his relationships with the Port Kennedy Bone Cave site (Pennsylvania) which contained one of the most important fossil deposits of the Middle Pleistocene (Irvingtonian, approximately 750,000 years ago) in North America. He operated successfully mines in Connecticut and Pennsylvania, including a lead and copper mine in Phoenixville, Pennsylvania. In 1837 he became a member of the N.Y. Mercantile Library, founded in 1820 at 49 Fulton Street (Brooklyn), of which he was director in the period 1841-1843 and secretary in the period 1844-1845. He was elected a member of the "Lyceum of Natural History" (later the New York Academy of Sciences) in 1840 and treasurer of the same institution in the period 1847-1862.

He then directed his attention to the mining sector. In 1846 he became manager of the "Bristol copper-mine" in Connecticut, a place famous for the production of refined chalcocite crystals (chalcocite, Cu_2S). In 1848 he was called to manage the Perkiomen (Perkiomen Consolidated Mining Company) and Ekton copper mines in Pennsylvania. From 1850 until 1857 he was general manager and part owner of the Wheatley, Brookdale, Phoenix and Sanderson mines (silver-lead mines), which he had discovered and opened. Wheatley published the forerunner "Catalogue of the shells of the United States, with their localities" (New York, 1842, pp. 12) and was an active collector and maintainer of a library of mineralogy and geology books.

He also amassed a collection of more than 6,000 mineral and shell specimens valued at \$25,000.00, purchased by Edward C. Delavan and donated to Union College (a private liberal arts College in Schenectady, New York, founded in 1785) for safekeeping such as "The Wheatley cabinets", subject to the control of New York University. At the 1853 New York Fair he exhibited plans of operations and drawings of machines used in the Wheatley mines for which he received a silver medal. In 1858 Yale University awarded him the title of

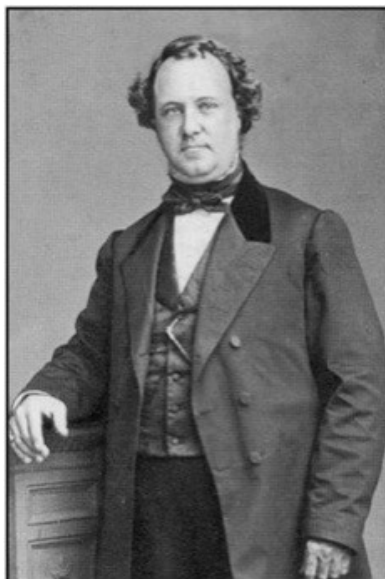


Fig. 7. Photo of Wheatley Charles Moore (Facebook).

“Master of Arts”. He discovered a cave near Port Kennedy, on the Schuylkill River (Pennsylvania), where he found fossils whose discovery was read out in a session of the American Philosophical Society in 1871 by Prof. Edward D. Cope, who named one of the species *Megalonyx Wheatleyi* (a giant sloth) in his honor. In 1879 he was elected a member of the American Philosophical Society.

References:

- *Revision of M. Petit's Catalogue of the genus Monocondylcea, d'orb. by Charles M. Wheatley, Phoenixville, Pa.*, American Journal of Conchology, vol. I, Philadelphia 1865, Febr. 15, pp. 65-67.
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- Evans F.H., *Highlights on the life of Charles M. Wheatley*. Mineralogical Society of Pennsylvania, 1984, p. 49.
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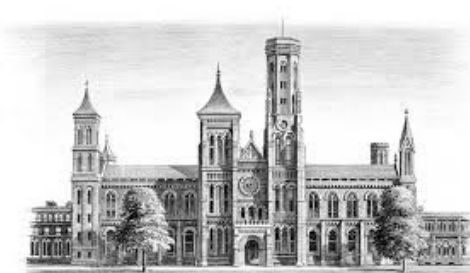


Fig. 8. (Left) Photo of Joseph Henry (Wikipedia). (Right) Smithsonian Institution, Washington (engraving Stock Illustration).

8) **Henry Joseph** (1797-1878), physicist, elected honorary member on 02.16.1854 [Archivio storico AG, vol. 13, foglio 47].

Born in Albany, New York, in 1824 he embarked on a career in civil and mechanical engineering. He carried out pioneering experiments in electromagnetism (self-induction) which later allowed the development of the telegraph. He developed one of the first models of an electric motor. In 1832 he became professor of "Natural philosophy" at the College of New Jersey (later Princeton University). For a long time he was first Secretary of the Smithsonian Institution in Washington (1846-1878), founded on the substantial bequest of J. Smithson (1765-1829). He directed a large part of the institution's income to support the museum, the art gallery, the laboratories and the library. He helped found the American Association for the Advancement of Science and served as its second President. He was also a founding member of the Philosophical Society of Washington (1871) and received the Copley Medal from the Physics Committee of the Royal Society of London for his contributions to the science of electricity (1839). He was a foreign member of the Accademia dei Lincei (Rome). Upon his death, a statue of him was placed in the gardens of the Smithsonian Institution and in front of the United States Library of Congress (Washington). A volume published in his memory (*A Memorial of Joseph Henry*, published by order of Congress, Washington 1880, pp. 528) is present in the AG Library.

References:

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- Henry Joseph, *Meteorology in its connection with agriculture*, by Prof. Joseph Henry ..., 1857.
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- Henry Joseph, *A summary of researches in sound: conducted in the service of the United States Light-House Board, by Joseph Henry, during the years 1865 to 1877*, Washington 1879.
- Henry Joseph, *Scientific writings of Joseph Henry*, Smithsonian, Miscellaneous Collections v.30, Washington, vol. 1, 1886.

9) **Peirce Benjamin** (1809-1880), mathematician and astronomer, elected honorary member on 12.24.1870.

After graduating from Harvard University (Cambridge, Boston), in 1831 he was appointed tutor at Harvard College and in 1833 he became professor of Mathematics and Natural Philosophy. In 1867 he was appointed "Superintendent of U.S. Coast Survey", succeeding Alexander Dallas Bache. In 1870 he personally directed the American expedition to Sicily to study the total solar eclipse of December 22. In Catania he was joined by his family visiting Europe. He made notable contributions to algebra, to the applications of planar and spherical trigonometry to navigation, to number theory, to the philosophy of science, and to celestial mechanics.

Publications:

- *Physical and celestial mathematics*, Boston 1855, Little, Brown.
- *An elementary treatise on plane and spherical trigonometry, with their applications to navigation, surveying, heights, and distances, and spherical astronomy, and particularly adapted to explaining the construction of Bowditch's navigator, and the nautical almanac*, Boston, 1861, J. Munroe.
- *Linear associative algebra*, Washington, 1870.
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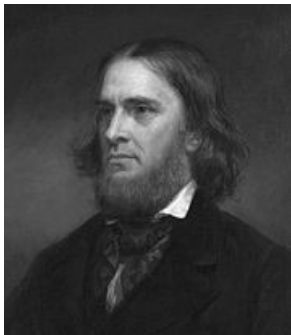


Fig. 9. (Left) Peirce Benjamin (Harvard Mathematical Department). (Right) Photo of the Old Harvard Medical School (Wikipedia).

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10) **Schott Charles Anthony** (1826-1901), elected honorary member on 12.24.1870.

He was a German-American scientist who worked for the U.S. Coast and Geodetic Survey, Washington. In 1855 he was placed in charge of the Computing Division, a position he held until 1899. In 1856 he was promoted to the rank of assistant. He was a member of the government Commission charged with observing the total eclipse of the sun in August 1869, in Springfield (Illinois), and in Catania on 22 December 1870 (station in the garden and terrace of the Benedictine Convent of San Nicola; station at the Monti Rossi; station to the north in the country villa of the Marquis of San Giuliano, outside the city in Viagrande) as a member and assistant of the Superintendent's party (group) sent to Sicily. On this occasion the US expedition was assisted by C.H.F. Peters, Lorenzo Maddem and Orazio Silvestri. The professor Silvestri accompanied some members of the American and English expedition to establish an observation station on Etna at 4,950 feet (1,500 meters) above sea level (Casa Ferrandina). He was the author of many works on hydrography, geodesy, tides and meteorology, physics of the globe published with the Smithsonian Institution. He was a member of many scientific societies including the American Philosophical Society (1863), the National Academy of Sciences (1872), the American Association for the Advancement of Science (1874) and the

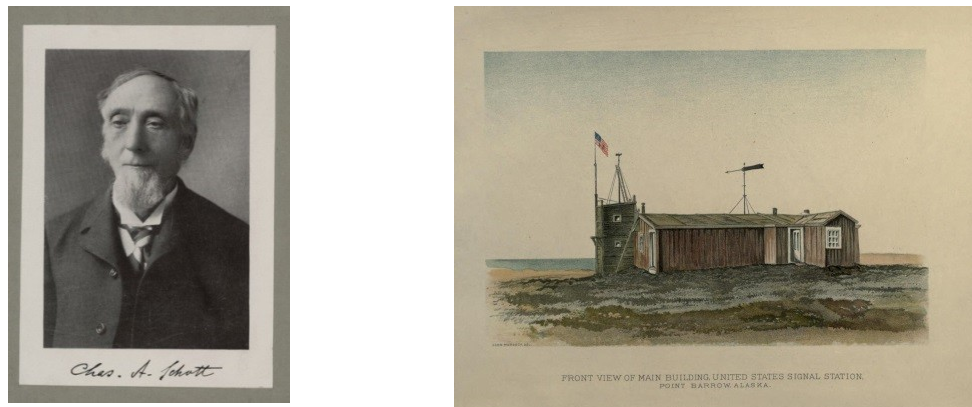


Fig. 10. (Left) Portrait of Schott Charles Anthony (Data Europeana eu / organization). (Right) Main building US Signal Station, Expedition Alaska 1884 (Report of the International Polar Expedition to Point Barrow, Alaska, [&c.] [First edition]. Ray, P.H. and others. Published by Government Printing Office, 1885).

Washington Academy of Sciences (1898). In 1899 he received the Henry Wilde Prize from the Académie des Sciences, Paris.

Publications:

- *Tidal observations in the Arctic seas: made during the Second Grinnell Expedition in search of Sir John Franklin, in 1853, 1854, and 1855, at Van Rensselaer Harbor by Elisha Kent Kane.*

- *Magnetical observations in the Arctic seas. By Elisha Kent Kane ... made during the second Grinnell expedition in search of Sir John Franklin, in 1853, 1854, and 1855, at Van Rensselaer Harbor, and other points on the west coast of Greenland. Reduced and discussed by Charles A. Schott ...*

- *Physical observations in the Arctic seas: made on the west coast of North Greenland, the vicinity of Smith Strait and the west side of Kennedy Channel, during 1860 and 1861 by I. I Hayes. Reduced and discussed at the expense of the Smithsonian Institution by Charles A. Schott.*

- *Report on the Eclipse of the Sun on the 22 of December 1870, by Benjamin Peirce, LL. D. Superintendent United State Coast Survey, Appendix n. 16a, from the Coast Survey Report 1871, pp. 67-72.*

- *Report of the International polar expedition to Point Barrow, Alaska, in response to the resolution of the [U.S.] House of representatives of December 11, 1884 by Alaska International Polar Expedition to Point Barrow, Washington, pp. 695.*

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11) **Watson James Craig** (1838-1880), elected honorary member socio on 12.24.1870.

He was a Canadian-American astronomer, director of the Observatory in Ann Arbor of the University of Michigan's Detroit. Very young he graduated (1857) and specialized in astronomy under the supervision of the eminent professor Franz Brünnow. In 1860 he became professor of physics at the University of Michigan for three years He was the second director of the Detroit Observatory (from 1863 to 1879), succeeding Brünnow himself. In 1868 he wrote a textbook, *Theoretical Astronomy*. His most lasting interest was in celestial mechanics, a branch of astronomy that deals with the determination and nature of the orbits of celestial bodies, an inclination well cultivated as he was an exceptional mathematician and calculator. Watson identified 22 asteroids during his career, starting in 1863. He wrote a popular treatise on comets (1861) and numerous scientific articles. He received many awards, three honorary doctorates and was elected member of the National Academy of Sciences in 1868. He actively participated in government expeditions to study solar eclipses (Iowa, 1869; Sicily 1870, responsible for the station outside the walls of Charles V in Carlentini; Wyoming, 1878). He was a member of the government expedition to observe the transit of Venus (Peking, 1874). In 1879 he became the first director of the new Washburn Observatory at the University of Wisconsin in Madison.

The proposal to appoint Peirce, Schott and Watson as honorary members of AG is probably due to profs. A. Boltshausen, director of the Meteorological Observatory of the R. University of Catania and professor of Physics, and prof. O. Silvestri.

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- Annual Report of the Director, United States Coast and Geodetic Survey, The year 1870, Washington 1873, pp. 232. Appendix n.16, pp. 115-134.



Fig. 11. (Left) Photo of Watson James Craig (Wikipedia). (Right) Photo of the Ann Arbor Observatory, Detroit (University of Michigan Digital Exhibits).

12) **Taylor Robert W.** (1842-1908), elected corresponding member on June 1880.

He was professor of Dermatology and Syphilography of the New York University, founding member of the New York Dermatological Society (05.18.1869), of which he was president four times, and of the American Dermatological Association (1876), vice president in 1877 and president in 1882 and 1883. Taylor earned his medical degree from the College of Physicians and Surgeons of New York in 1868. He was first professor of Dermatology at the University of Vermont and then professor of Dermatology at the New York Post Graduate Medical School and Hospital and the College of Physicians and Surgeons. He was a pioneer in the study of bone syphilis and the first to describe progressive idiopathic atrophy (1876). Primo Ferrari, professor of Dermatology in the Royal Dermosyphilopathic Institute of the University of Catania in 1879, corresponding member of the Gioeni Academy, was corresponding member of the Dermatological Society of New York, and he was probably responsible for the proposal to elect Taylor as corresponding member.

Main publications:

- *Syphilitic lesions of the osseous system in infants and young children*, 1875.
- *A case in which syphilitic contagion was conveyed in the operation of vaccination, with remarks upon the means of prevention*, 1875.
- *A contribution to the study of the transmission of syphilis*, 1875.
- *Notes on psoriasis*, 1881.
- *A clinical atlas of venereal and skin diseases (large folio)*, 1889.
- *A practical treatise on sexual disorders of the male and female*, 1899.

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Fig. 12. (Left) Photo of Taylor Robert W. (Illustrated history of A.D.A., pag. 38). (Right) The New York Post-Graduate Medical School and Hospital (N.Y. Antique Postcard, 1918. Published: E.R. Trott).

13) **Stevenson James John** (1841-1924), elected corresponding member from New York on 02.22.1885.

He was a geologist, chemist, writer and professor at New York University (NYU). He graduated from New York University in 1863. Between 1866 and 1867 he specialized at the same university first in geology, then in philosophy. From 1872 he held the tenure of the chair of geology at NYU. In the late 1970s and early 1980s, he conducted research for both the U.S. Geological Survey in Virginia and New Mexico and for the Pennsylvania Geological Survey. He remained at the University of New York until 1909. He has worked in particular on the stratigraphy of the Appalachian coalfield, as well as on the interrelationships between fossil fuels. Member and vice president of the American Association for the Advancement of Science, president of the New York Academy of Sciences, Stevenson was among the founders of the Geological Society of America (1888), which he presided over in 1898. He was proposed as a corresponding member probably by the prof. Orazio Silvestri, at that time Secretary of the Natural Sciences section of the Gioeni Academy.

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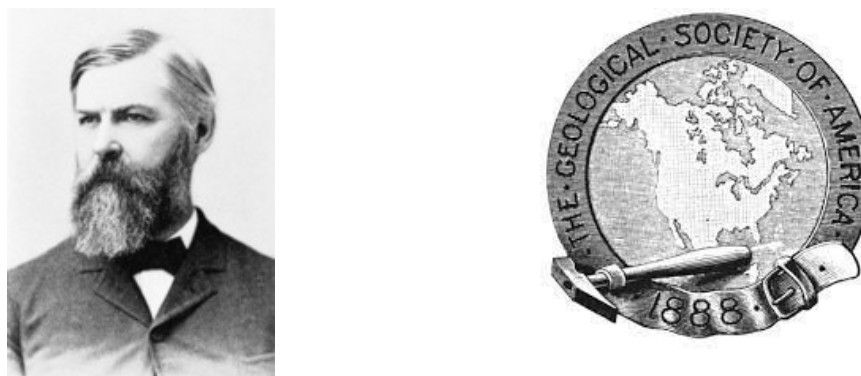


Fig. 13. (Left) Photo of Stevenson James John (Wikimedia Commons). (Right) Logo of the GSA.

14) **Rowland Henry August** (1848-1901), elected honorary member on 12.18.1892.

A physicist from Baltimore, he was the first President of the American Physical Society (1899-1901). He graduated “Civil Engineer” from Rensselaer Polytechnic Institute in Troy, New York in 1870, where he was an assistant professor of physics. He studied with Hermann von Helmholtz in Berlin (1875-76), where he began research on the generation of a magnetic field by an electrically charged body in motion. In 1876, he became the first professor of Physics at Johns Hopkins University, a position he held until his death in Baltimore on April 16, 1901. In 1882, before the Physical Society of London, he gave a description of new diffraction gratings. He is remembered mainly for the high quality of these gratings he used in the study of the solar spectrum [*Photographic Map of the Normal Solar Spectrum* (1888); *Table of Solar Wave-Lengths* (1898)].

In 1890 the National Academy of Sciences awarded him the Henry Draper Medal for his contributions to astrophysics. In 1895 he was awarded the Matteucci Medal. The Henry August Rowland House in Baltimore has been designated a National Historic Landmark. The list of his honors includes those awarded by the major American and European scientific academies and societies. It was probably proposed in AG by the prof. Adolfo Bartoli, professor of Physics (1886-1893) at the Royal University of Catania and General Secretary of the AG, who corresponded with Rowland (see *Atti Accademia Gioenia*, series 4, vol. 4, 1892; pp. 1-96, Memoria VII, The specific heat of water).

In the Bulletin of the sessions of the Gioeni Academy of Natural Sciences in Catania, New series, fasc. 69, 1901, Session of 1 June 1901, President prof. A. Riccò, pp. 1-2, the following sentence is reported: “Commemorates the death of the S.O. Prof. Enrico Augusto Rowland with the following words....”.



Fig. 14. (Left) Photo of Rowland Henry August, 1902 (Wikipedia). (Right) H.A. Rowland row House, Baltimore (Maryland Historical Trust).

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3. Discussion

This research made it possible to correctly identify the characters, given the distortions of names and surnames found in the lists of members, and to survey their scientific contributions in American and European bibliographic-scientific sources. Affiliation to the Academy, in the absence of documentary evidence, seems to be based more on consensus-knowledge on the part of members active through occasional or diplomatic channels, rather than on the renown or widespread scientific fame in Italy of those proposed. The archive documents are also very silent regarding proposals for the appointment of new Italian or European members. In addition, membership of the Gioeni Academy is not cited as a note of merit in personal scientific accounts or in the posthumous biographies of associated figures. Unfortunately, no publications of scientific contributions by American members are present in the journals edited by Gioeni Academy (*Atti* or *Bollettino*) (Monterosso, 1954). Thus, many documentary elements are missing to adequately delve into the information, the doctrinal values and membership relationships of overseas new members with Gioeni community.

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