

LETTERS FROM THE LIBRARY

NEWSLETTER OF THE STATE LAW LIBRARY OF MISSISSIPPI

"There shall be ... a library ... known as the state library"

An Act to provide for a State Library – General Laws, 1838

June 2024

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State Library Hours

Monday – Friday
8am – 5pm

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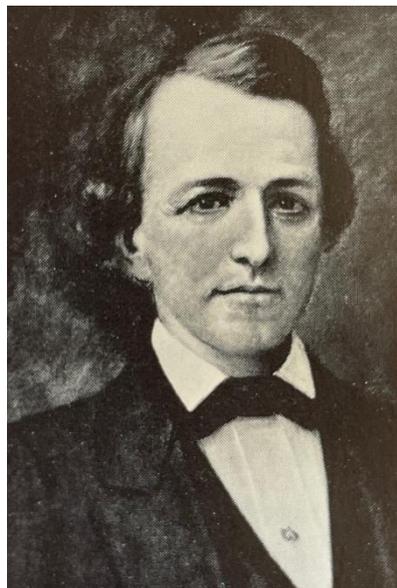
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Greenwood Cemetery and the Judiciary

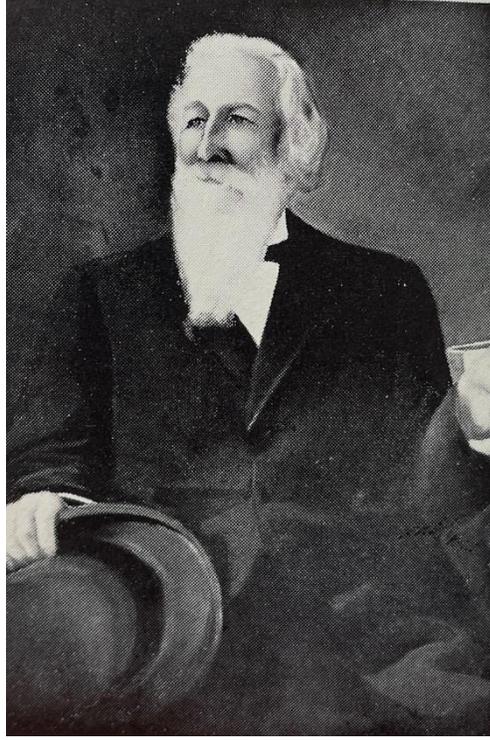
The remains of former Justice James Robertson were laid to rest in Jackson's Greenwood Cemetery on April 12, 2024. Robertson [died](#) on December 10, 2023.

Greenwood, the cemetery just across the street, is the resting place of several individuals connected to the Mississippi Judiciary. Mixed in with the graves of Governors and Mayors are the graves of Justices, Judges, Clerks of Court, and even a State Librarian. Below are pictures and descriptions from a *Politicians Buried in Greenwood Cemetery* tour that was held in October, 2023.

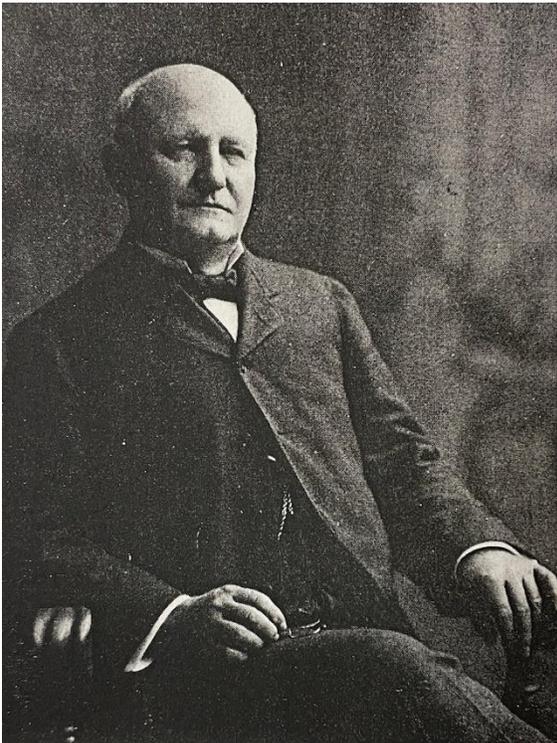
Judge Charles Scott – Last statewide Chancery Judge before changing of state laws abolished the position. Elected in 1853 and served until the Supreme Court of Chancery was abolished in 1857. Member of the Mississippi Hall of Fame.



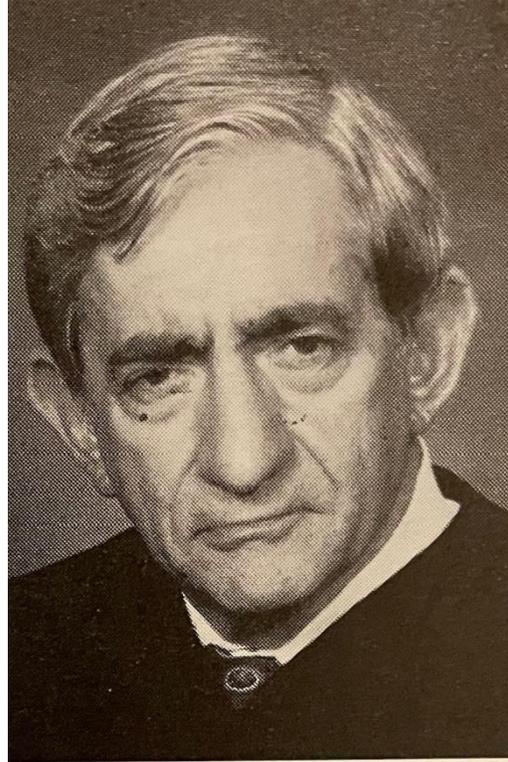
Chief Justice JAP Campbell, Sr. – Justice on the Mississippi Supreme Court, 1876-1894, Chief Justice, 1892-1894. Member of the Mississippi Hall of Fame.



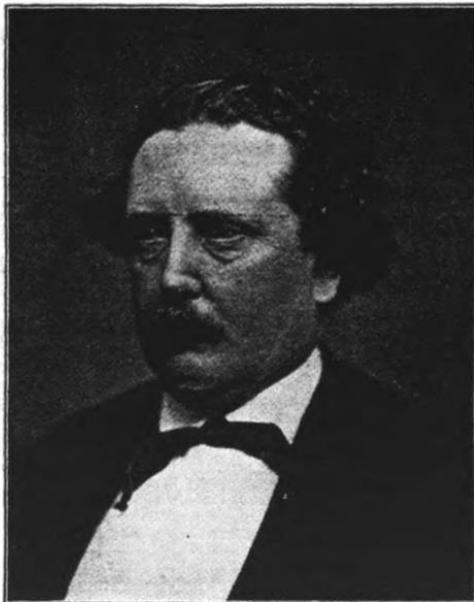
Chief Justice Tim E. Cooper – Justice on the Mississippi Supreme Court, 1881-1896, Chief Justice, 1894-1896.



Judge Frank Barber – Elected to the Court of Appeals when the Court began in 1995 and served until his death in 1997.



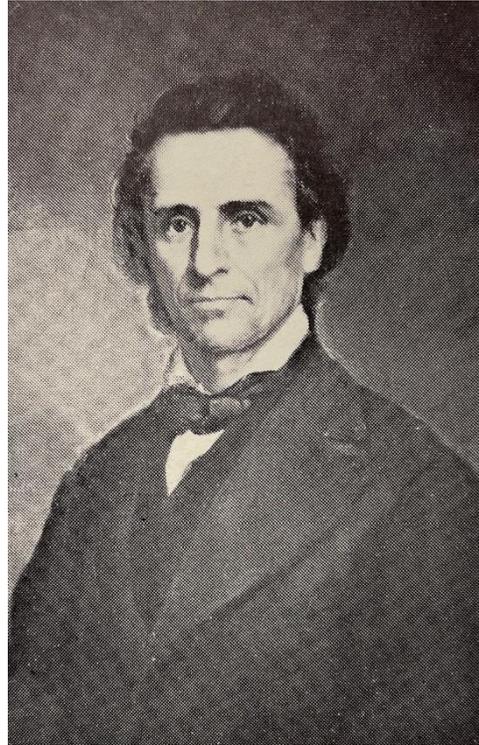
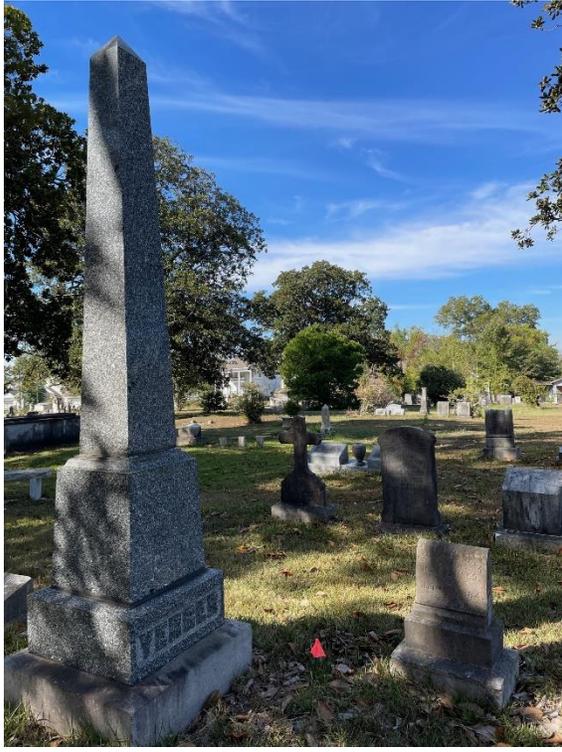
Justice Hamilton Henderson Chalmers – Appointed to the Mississippi Supreme Court in 1876 and served until his death in 1885. Had previously served as Librarian and Keeper of the Capitol in 1854-1855.



H. H. CHALMERS.



Justice William Yerger – Appointed to the High Court of Errors and Appeals of Mississippi in 1851 and served until 1853. Member of the Mississippi Hall of Fame.



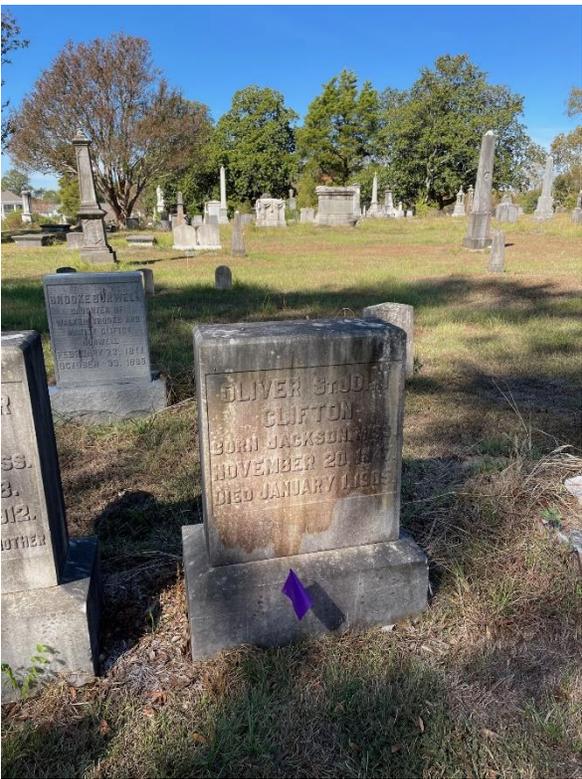
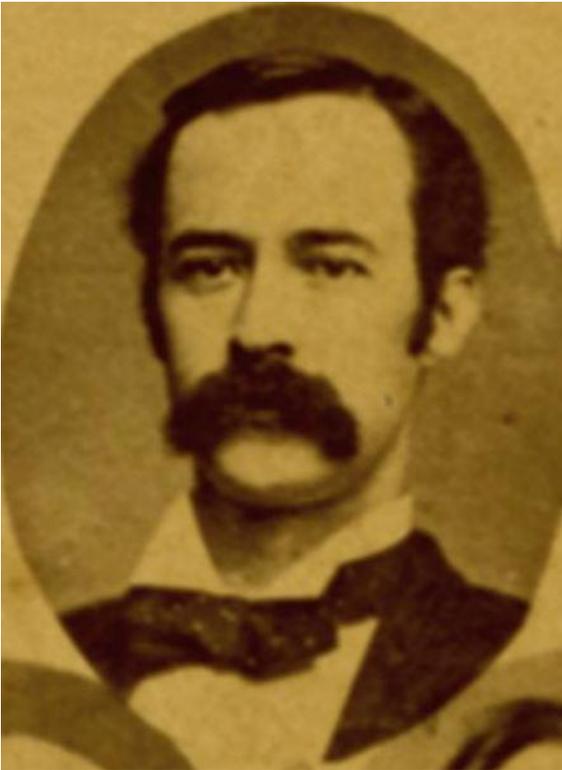
Chief Justice William Sharkey – Elected to the High Court of Errors and Appeals of Mississippi in 1833 and served until 1851.



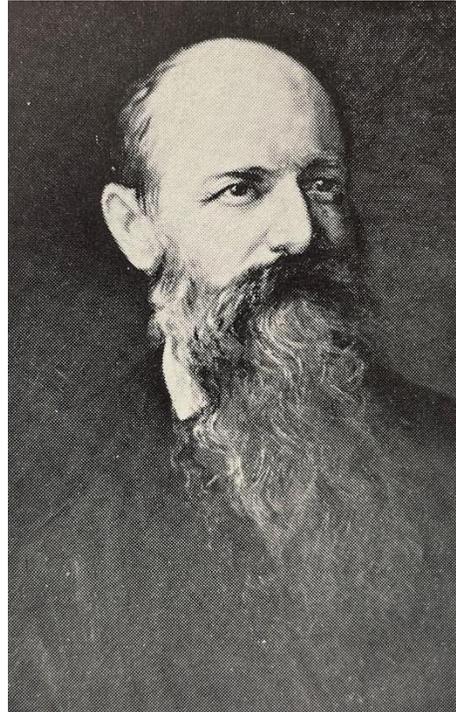
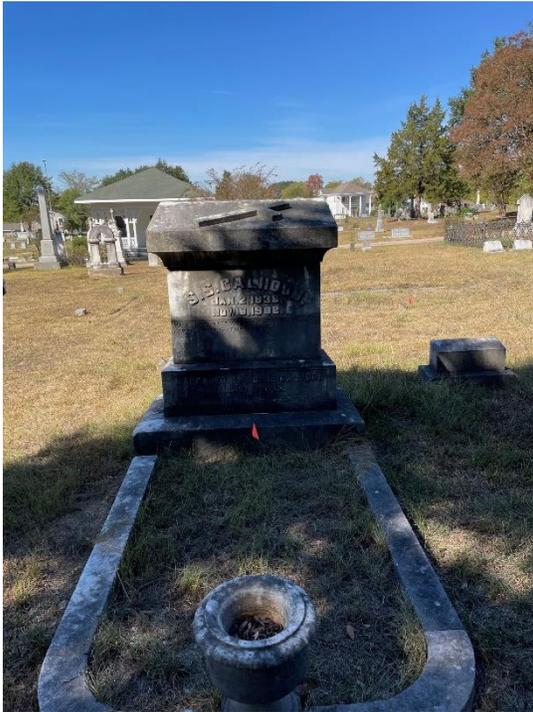
Caswell Clifton – Served as the Clerk for the High Court of Errors and Appeals from 1851-1856.



Oliver Clifton – Served as the Clerk of the Mississippi Supreme Court, 1878-1896.



Justice Solomon S. Calhoun – Appointed to the Mississippi Supreme Court in 1900 and served until his death 1908. Member of the Mississippi Hall of Fame.



Library Extern, Mysty Langford

The State Law Library supervised an extern, Mysty Langford, from Mississippi College School of Law this spring. Langford graduated in May and is now preparing for the Nevada bar exam. Below are a few words on her future plans, her externship experience, and a couple of items she prepared for this Newsletter.

“July 30th will find me sitting for Nevada's three-day bar exam. I worked during law school as a litigation paralegal for the Richard Harris Law Firm, which has offices in Las Vegas and Reno. The firm has offered to upgrade my position to Attorney when I pass the bar. I've loved Plaintiff's work since I took my first job as a legal receptionist in 1997. Passing the bar will be the culmination of decades of what-ifs.



I am incredibly fortunate to have capped my law school experience off with an externship at the State Law Library inside the Supreme Court. Not a day passed in which my drive to school did not allow me a moment of reflection on how amazing it must be to work inside the Courthouse, and for 270 hours, I've had that privilege. Each day has been incredible since the first day of exploring 19th-century Senate Journals to satisfy a patron's inquiry, all the way to offering to create a Library Legends Bingo card to help engage

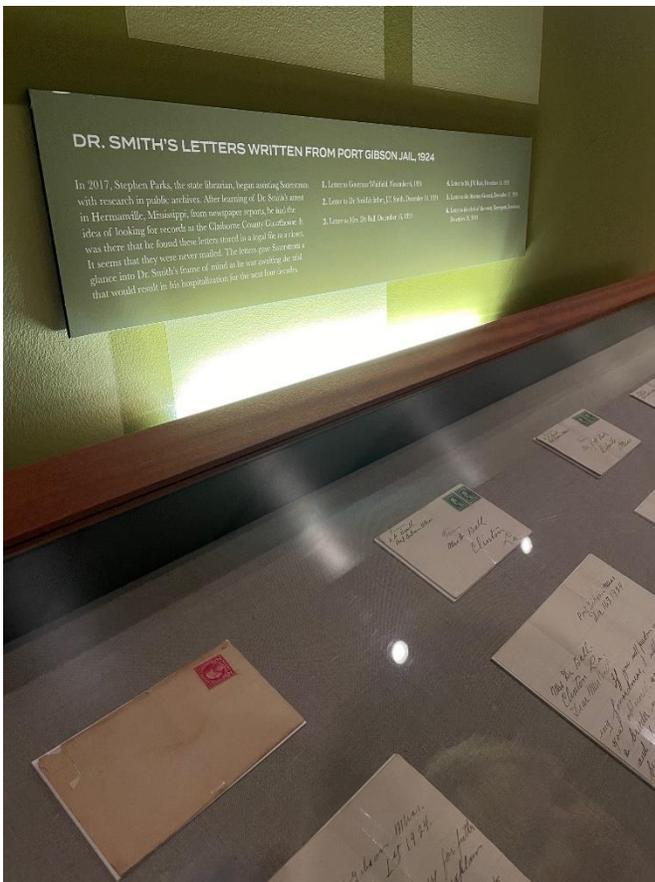
school tours. However, my favorite project has been doing a deep dive into the judges who've made up the Court of Appeals from 1995 to the present. While it would be easy to fan girl over the Supreme Court Justices, when you look at the data, you appreciate the workload that the judges on the Court of Appeals shoulder. For instance, Judge Tyree Irving was on the bench for twenty years and penned 1,078 published opinions for the majority. Chief Judge Barnes has written over 891 published majority opinions. That is a lot of error correction! To think that the legislature initially contemplated just five seats on this court.

My heartiest thanks go to State Librarian Stephen Parks and the staff, LaTavius Jackson, Casandra Noel, and Russell Patterson, for the most memorable experiences.”

Dr. Smith Exhibit on Display

By Mysty Langford

Discover "What Became of Dr. Smith" – a captivating new exhibit at the Mississippi Museum of Art. Created over five years by artist Noah Saterstrom, with invaluable support from State Librarian Stephen Parks, this immersive experience vividly reconstructs Optometrist D.L. Smith's life journey. From his modest beginnings and advantageous marriage to his triumphs and setbacks in business, the story



culminates with Smith's descent into madness and eventual commitment, first at Jackson's Old Asylum and later at Whitfield. Dr. Smith was driven by his desire to bring optometry to needy people across Louisiana and Mississippi. His devotion caused him to miss the birth of his first child, put him at odds with lawmakers, and ultimately cost him his health. It is the cautionary tale of the need for balance, connections, and self-care we all need.

Embark on your journey with an engaging 8-minute orientation video, setting the stage for an art experience unlike any other. Take time for reflection, jot down your thoughts in a journal, or find solace in the tranquil atmosphere. In this exhibit, time stands still as you immerse yourself in Dr. Smith's story, emerging with a deeper understanding of his complex life.

Saterstrom says, "When we are asking questions, we want a definitive answer." As with the law, sometimes there isn't an absolute ending. For the artist, after five years, almost

as many questions remain as answers found. For his part, Dr. Smith was not without complicity. Various moments in the depiction demand attention for those caught up in Smith's delusion. Don't miss your

chance to explore "What Became of Dr. Smith," on display until September 22, 2024. Make your way to 380 S. Lamar Street to experience this unique blend of history, art, and introspection.

For a more extensive review, see [The Mississippi Museum of Art Takes on Mental Illness](#), NY Times.



Memorial Addresses

By Mysty Langford

“Say less” is both a slang expression of agreement and an effort to limit continued talking. In the case of the State Law Library’s newest collection, *Memorial Addresses on Life and Character*, readers can engage in a masterclass in layering artful phrases to honor colleagues.

For over 125 years, memorial addresses have been made upon the passing of a member of Congress. These speeches are prepared and circulated under the direction of the U.S. Joint Committee on Printing. Due to the generosity of a private patron, the State Law Library now holds a set of *Memorial Addresses* with speeches dating back to the 1874 passing of Sen. Charles Sumner of Massachusetts. Upon the occasion of his passing, Mississippi Sen. L.Q.C. Lamar filled eight pages in which he fervently squared the mysteries of friendship and foundational conflict.

Across volumes spanning April 1874 to May 1924, 32 Mississippi politicians share words of eloquence, with each phrase reminding the pervious reader of the dearth of compliments paid or received in one’s

lifetime. Consider this compilation of phrases offered upon the passing of their Mississippi colleague and father of flood control, Rep. Benjamin Humphreys:

Let us pay a lasting moment to his genius and perseverance, for he was a man of strong convictions, and his courage in those convictions was superb. An audible sigh of sorrow would have swept the vast hall, and tears would have gathered in eyes that had not wept in years; so beloved was he and so poignantly personal the grief that filled every heart where he occupied a place of friendly affection.

When was the last time you gave or received such high praise? The foregoing is but one example of the inspiration that can be found in the Memorial Addresses. In another example, Rep. Samuel A. Witherspoon was lauded as a strong man who “never quailed from fronting in fierce combat giants full panoplied and worthy of his steel” and whose “eloquence was logic on fire.”

While the set eulogizes politicians from across the country, other Mississippians include “the humblest citizen,” Sen. Anselm J. McLaurin, a man of “rare judgment and great aptitude” Rep. William F. Love, and the “winning courtesy” of Sen. Edward C. Walthall.

We invite you to enjoy inspiration from *Memorial Addresses*, but rather than tuck them away for the morrow, be generous with them today.

