

with a receipt signed by Gwinnett. Still, Dr. Raffles lacked a Taylor autograph to complete his collection—so he wrote to Mr. Tefft. This letter was shown to Rev. Dr. Samuel Gilman, of Charleston, S. C., on his first visit to Mr. Tefft, in 1834: “I now,” wrote Dr. Raffles, “possess every signer of the declaration of independence, save one, viz.: George Taylor.” On Dr. Gilman’s second visit, early in 1837,¹ Mr. Tefft showed him a letter from Dr. Raffles, “recently received” in which he said: “Pray, are your signers complete? I look with mingled emotions of sorrow and hope upon the only *hiatus* I have in mine.” How the good Doctor’s heart must have leaped for joy, when he, not long thereafter, opened a letter from his fellow collector, Dr. Sprague, to find the long-sought “hiatus” supplied. It was a legal document, with the Christian name of the signature unfortunately torn off—still, it served to perfect his set of the signers. Its genuineness was vouched for by Dr. Sprague as an “original manuscript of George Taylor, one of the signers.”

Mr. Tefft’s first collection of the signers, at the time of Dr. Gilman’s second visit, in 1837, was still far from being complete. He had then recently received from his friend, Dr. Sprague, of Albany, among numerous other invaluable specimens, the autograph of Richard Stockton, one of the signers of the declaration. “It had been for years,” adds Dr. Gilman, “upon his list of *desiderata*, and was almost despaired of, as being probably no longer extant.” He still lacked seventeen autographs to make up his set of the signers—those of Thornton, Floyd, Lewis Morris, Hart, Mor-

¹ The dates of these two visits are determined by the time of their publication in *The Rose*, a literary journal, edited by Dr. Gilman and lady at Charleston—the first part of “A Week Among Autographs,” appearing in the issue of April 18, 1835; while the results of the second visit are given from June 10, to July 8, 1837. The papers on these visits were reproduced, first in Mrs. Caroline Gilman’s charming volume *Poetry of Traveling*, in 1838; and somewhat enlarged in Dr. Gilman’s *Contributions to Literature*, in 1856. A file of *The Rose* is preserved by Dr. Gilman’s daughter, Mrs. Eliza Gilman Lippitt, of Washington, who has kindly furnished these dates from that source.