

Baltimore Jan 29th 1809

1820
 Sir
 Your letter of December 21st 1808 reached at Annapolis, on the 26th of that month, and informed me of the Honour conferred on me by the Washington Society of Alexandria, in appointing me to deliver the annual oration. Within a few days afterwards, I had a violent attack of the Rheumatism, which confined me to a considerable time to my bed, and prevented me from reaching home till the 25th instant. It also prevented me from writing, and since my return the multitude of things that claimed my attention, and the constant interruption to which I have been subjected, have put it out of my power, till now, to answer my letters. I enter into this detail, to excuse a delay, which might otherwise appear to have proceeded from neglect.

Yesterday I received your letter by Mr. Simmes.

When the post reached me, having more time for the requisite preparation, I resolved to undertake

undertake the task offered to me by the County, although it
was very doubtful whether my engagements in the Supreme
Court, would not render my attendance at Coleridge's
incarceration if not difficult. But now, having my
time and attention engrossed by the preparation for
cases which are to come on early in the session of the
Supreme Court, as well as by business here, and know-
ing that my business in the Court may require my
constant attention, I cannot undertake a duty which
it is so improbable that I shall be able properly to
discharge. I must, therefore, though with great re-
gret, decline the appointment which the County have
conferred upon me, and request you to make known
to them the sentiments of respect with which I am
Sir

Yours most obed^t. Serv^t

Robt. G. Harper

Geo. Demole Esq^r

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BALTIMORE, MD
JAN 30

Geo. Donnell Esq.

Alexandria

Columbia

