ONE HUNDRED AND FIFTY YEARS OF MUSEUM HISTORY

We have come together here to celebrate a dual anniversary—the anniversary of the founding of the Charleston Museum and the anniversary of the inception of the museum idea in the New World. That this idea has been a fruitful one is evidenced by the long roster of museums represented in this national association. It would be inappropriate for us to meet this year in any less historic place than Charleston.

In behalf of the American Association of Museums it is my duty and my privilege to pay homage to the broad vision of the founders of The Charleston Museum, to honor the city of Charleston for its steadfast preservation and nurture of the institution through the vicissitudes of a hundred and fifty years, and to congratulate the present generation of Charlestonians upon the youthful vigor of their venerable museum.

In behalf of the Charleston Museum it is but fitting that some of the more significant features of its history should be reviewed on its sesquicentennial anniversary.

The museum was founded in 1773 by the Charles-Town Library Society, to which belongs the credit of conceiving the museum idea, or at least of first giving it formal expression. This was done in a document so thoroughly worthy of the movement it initiated that I shall read it in full:

THE LIBRARY SOCIETY OF CHARLES-TOWN

Taking into their consideration the many advantages and great credit that would result to this Province from a full and accurate Natural

1 Address delivered at the anniversary session of the American Association of Museums, in its eighteenth annual meeting, held at Charleston, S. C., April 4, 1923.

2 South Carolina Gazette (Powell’s) of March 22 and April 5 and 12, 1773. South Carolina Gazette and Country Journal of March 30 and April 6, 1773.