

Richard Wylly Habersham

(Dec 1786 – 2 Dec 1842)

Biographical Directory of the United States Congress 1774-1989

A Representative from Georgia; born in Savannah, Georgia in December 1786; attended private schools, and was graduated from Princeton College in 1810; studied law; was admitted to the bar and commenced practice in Savannah, Georgia; appointed U.S. Attorney and served until 1825, when he resigned, owing to a disagreement between the administration of John Quincy Adams and Governor George M. Troup; attorney general of Georgia; moved to Clarksville, Habersham County in 1835; elected as a State Rights Democrat to the 26th and 27th Congresses and served from March 4, 1839 until his death; while he lay dying, a message was received that the Democratic and Whig Parties had united to make him Governor of Georgia; died in Clarksville, Georgia December 2, 1842; interment in the Old Cemetery. (Nephew of John Habersham and Joseph Habersham, both delegates from Georgia.)

The National Intelligencer, December 15, 1842

The Augusta Chronicle some days ago reported the death of the Hon. Mr. Habersham, the highly esteemed Representative in Congress from the State of Georgia; but to this moment we are in doubt of the fact. He is said to have died on the 2d instant. Our letter announcing his being "extremely ill" was from one of his sons, and was postmarked at his post-town (three miles from his residence) Dec. 4, the letter itself being without date, but, when received by us, was presumed to have been written on the day it was mailed, or at least on the day previous. If this supposition be correct, the report of his death is of course unfounded. It is credited, however, we observe, at Savannah, on the authority of the Augusta paper already referred to.

The National Intelligencer, Tuesday, December 20, 1842

The annunciation of the decease of the Hon. R.W. Habersham, one of the Representatives in Congress from the State of Georgia, induced the adjournment yesterday of both Houses of Congress without proceeding with the ordinary business. In the House of Representatives Mr. Gamble, and in the Senate Mr. Berrien, paid the tribute due to the highly estimable and excellent character of the deceased, whose universal personal popularity in his own State was the best evidence of his private worth and of the confidence of the People in his political integrity.

Until yesterday, we had hoped that yet the newspaper report of the death of Mr. Habersham might prove untrue; and to this moment we have seen no evidence of the fact sufficient to outweigh the presumption of the report being at least premature. Letters have, however, been received by Members of Congress from Members of the Legislature of Georgia, now in session, affirming the fact, which the Proclamation of the Governor authorizing a special election to fill the vacancy thus created seems finally to settle.