

# The Gazette of the American Friends of Lafayette

No. 93

[friendsoflafayette.org](http://friendsoflafayette.org)

November 2020



**Members of the American Friends of Lafayette gather at the Hornsby House Pavilion after a successful (albeit pared-down) annual Yorktown Victory Celebration.**

## Table of Contents

Title	Page
President's Message	3-4
Character Matters: Perceptions of Lafayette and Lessons for Our Time	5-16
Yorktown Victory Celebration	17-18
Lafayette Birthday Celebration 2020 in Fayetteville, NC	19-22
Lafayette Alliance's New Film Debuts	23-25
Bicentennial of Lafayette's Triumphant Return	26-28
Lafayette and the 1832 Cholera Pandemic in France	29-30
The Story of a Statue	31-47
Trivia Question – Who Was France's Chief Physician in America?	48-50
Wilmington's Most Acclaimed Visitor	51-62
Farewell Tour Bicentennial Postage Stamp Proposal	63-64
Pierre Antoine de Chambrun – Honorary Lifetime AFL Member	65-67
The Lafayette Endowment at FSU – Building Bridges in a Community	68-70
The Lafayette Presentation Button	71-82
AFL at Colonial Williamsburg's Veterans Day Filming Event	83
The Lafayette Society of Fayetteville Strengthens Bond with AFL	84
<i>In Memoriam</i>	85-87
The Curious Tale of the Man Holding the Horse in the Lafayette Memorial	88-103
Connecticut Tavern Signs	104-106
The Lafayette Legacy and the Women of Chavaniac	107-114
The Making of an American Hero: Lafayette at Brandywine	115-118
Lafayette and Slavery	119-122
Marking History Along the Lafayette Trail	123-127
Diane Shaw Visits the Lafayette Collection at Methodist University	128-129
AFL Member Wins DAR Award	130-132
Lafayette Letter Mystery	133-134
Birthday Cards for the Marquis de Lafayette	135
Trivia Answer – Who Was France's Chief Physician in America?	136-138
Letters to the <i>Gazette</i>	139

## President's Message



Dear Friend of Lafayette,

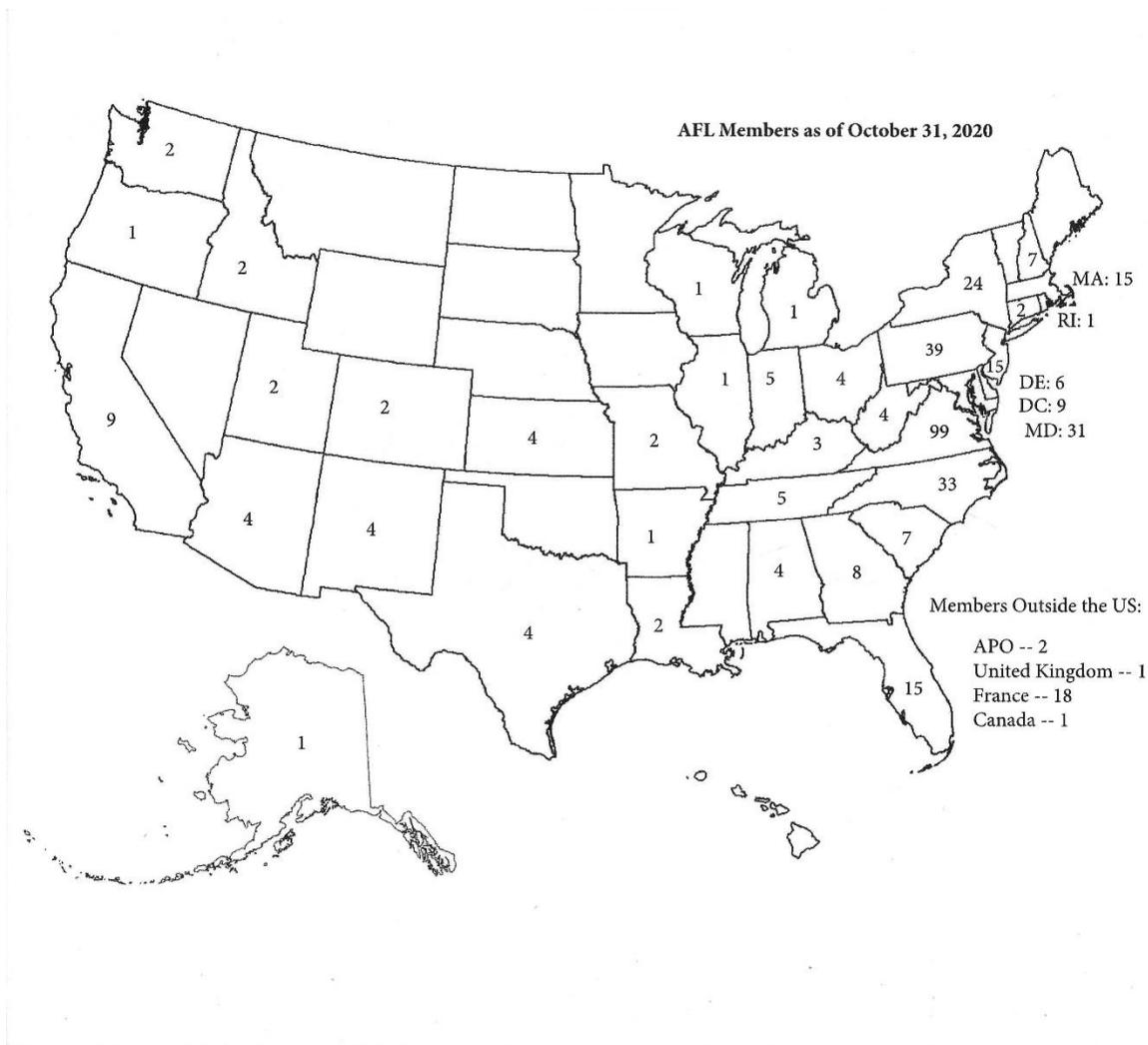
In the midst of the pandemic, we have all had to adapt to a new way of life, and the AFL is no exception.

Our annual meeting was held on July 28, 2020 by Zoom, and we had about 60 people attending. Bonnie Fritz, our Corporate Secretary and CZ (Chief Zoombie) administered the meeting, along with Chuck Schwam, Treasurer and event-planner extraordinaire. It was an excellent meeting, during which we heard committee reports, and our members chimed in as well. Out of the meeting came the idea of a Zoom panel of Lafayette scholars.

On September 11, 2020, the AFL conducted its first Zoom panel discussion. We were privileged to have as panelists Lloyd Kramer, Paul Spaulding, and AFL President Emeritus Robert Crout. We had about 70 members in attendance. The audience was engaged, and we received numerous thumbs-ups and favorable comments on the chat function. Audience questions were so numerous that we extended the Zoom session an extra half hour. For those of you who were unable to attend, the video is available on the AFL website in the members-only portal. See also the article in this Gazette.

We are planning another Zoom panel discussion to be held on Friday, December 4. Our panelists are four authors who write historical fiction and have included Lafayette in their works – Stephanie Dray, Jenny Cote, Dorothea Jensen, and Libby McNamee. We hope you will join us.

The AFL was represented at in-person events on October 19, Yorktown Day, or as I like to call it, Surrender Day. We had great turnout; approximately 30 attended the Hornsby House function, which Chuck and the Bowditches determined would be a luncheon instead of our “World Famous” cocktail reception. The high attendance is reflective of the AFL’s strong presence in Virginia. We currently have 90 members in the Commonwealth as shown on the map prepared by Membership Chair Almut Spalding.



I started attending Yorktown Day in 2006, the 225<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the Surrender. Because of COVID-19 concerns, I was not in attendance this year, for only the second time since then. (The other time was when my daughter unilaterally chose to marry on October 18, 2014, and there was no red-eye flight from Boston to Virginia available.)

Our membership continues to grow. Between June 1 and October 31, just five months, 35 new members joined, and two states were added to our catchment area. Our current membership is now 401. Wow!

Best regards,  
 Alan R. Hoffman

## **Character Matters**

### **Perceptions of Lafayette and Lessons for Our Time**

American Friends of Lafayette Online Panel  
 Panelists: Lloyd S. Kramer, Paul S. Spalding, and Robert Crout  
 Moderator: Alan R. Hoffman  
 September 11, 2020



#### **Introduction by Alan R. Hoffman**

Americans have for centuries been fascinated by and, it's fair to say, entranced by Lafayette.

This phenomenon is exemplified in the following by no means exclusive ways.

There are today at least six active societies dedicated to preserving Lafayette's memory and honoring his work: the American Friends of Lafayette, the Order of Lafayette in New York, the Lafayette Society of Fayetteville, North Carolina, the Massachusetts Lafayette Society, and the Lafayette Alliance in LaGrange, Georgia. Most recently, the Lafayette Trail has become a membership organization.

Lafayette is one of a handful of foreigners whom Congress has made an honorary citizen.

There are four state statutorily mandated Lafayette Days. Massachusetts and New Hampshire honor Lafayette on May 20, the anniversary of his death; Virginia honors him on March 14, the anniversary of his initial arrival in 1781 at Yorktown; and Georgia honors Lafayette on September 6, his birthday.

There are roughly 80 cities, counties, townships, and towns that take their names from Lafayette or the home he lived in from 1799 until his death, La Grange. There are countless numbers of streets, squares, statues, and parks, as well as a mountain and a lake named for Lafayette. There are scores of Masonic chapters named "Lafayette Lodges."

What is it about Lafayette that has generated, over time, such widespread and sustained recognition and commemoration of the man, his life, and his work? As perhaps you have gleaned

from the title of this panel discussion, we think that the answer lies, at least in part, in the character of the man.

In his book *The Founders on the Founders: Word Portraits from the American Revolutionary Era*, John P. Kaminski, founder and director of the Center for the Study of the American Constitution at the University of Wisconsin and prolific author in his own right, has compiled sketches written by the founders about each other, including self-appraisals. Listed alphabetically, John Adams follows immediately after Abigail Adams. If you exclude John Adam's self-appraisals and those of Abigail, 75% of the rest of the appraisals of Adams are distinctly negative.

Bitter adversaries though they were, Jefferson and Hamilton seemed to have shared a similar perception of Adams. Jefferson wrote to Madison on July 29, 1789, when he and Adams were still on cordial terms. In regard to Adam's advocacy of an aristocratic title for the President, Jefferson wrote: "It is a proof the more of the justice of the character given by Dr. Franklin of my friend: 'always an honest man, often a great one, but sometimes absolutely mad.'"

In a letter dated July 1, 1800, Hamilton went a bit further, writing:

Doctor Franklin, a sagacious observer of human nature, draw this portrait of Mr. Adams: -- 'He is always honest, sometimes great, but *often mad*.' I subscribe to the justness of this picture, adding as to the first trait of it this qualification – as far as a man excessively *vain* and *jealous*, and ignobly attached to *place* can be.

If one pages forward to the section on Lafayette, the percentages are reversed. Exclusive of self-portraits, over 75% of the remainder are positive. The few negatives were mostly written by John Adams.

On November 7, 1777, Baron de Kalb wrote: "[Lafayette] is a prodigy for his age; he is the model of valor, intelligence, judgment, good conduct, generosity, and zeal for the cause of liberty for this continent."

On October 17, 1784, Madison, after having spent about four weeks with Lafayette traveling through New York State, including a week at Fort Schuyler for the treaty negotiations with the Iroquois Nations, wrote to Jefferson from Philadelphia. In his letter, Madison offered the following appraisal of his travelling companion:

The time I have lately passed with the M. has given me a pretty thorough insight into his character. With great natural frankness of temper he unites much address with very considerable talents, a strong thirst of praise and popularity. In his politics he says his three hobby horses are the alliance between France and the United States, the union of the latter and the manumission of the slaves. The two former are the dearer to him as they are connected with his personal glory. The last does him real honor as it is a proof of his humanity. In

a word I take him to be as amiable a man as can be imagined and as sincere an American as any Frenchman can be; one whose past services gratitude obliges us to acknowledge, and whose future friendship prudence requires us to cultivate.

A “hobby horse” in this context means a preoccupation or favorite topic. As Lafayette matured, his “hobby horses” became more numerous: protection of French Protestants and other disadvantaged minorities; the rights of man as reflected in the preamble to the 1791 French Constitution that he drafted; national revolutions as a vehicle to foster the rights of man; defense and protection of European refugees like the Poles; and human rights broadly construed. As to his original hobby horses – the Alliance, a strong union of the states, and manumission of the slaves -- as well as his other causes as listed above – Lafayette was unwavering and consistent, no matter what vicissitudes he encountered or trials he suffered.

Here is one remarkable example. Having fled the French radicals in 1792, and having been imprisoned in Magdeburg, Prussia, on March 15, 1793, he wrote his wife’s relative, Princess Adélaïde d’Hénin who was in exile in England, a letter, one of the few letters he was able to send from his cell. In a postscript he wrote: “I do not know what has happened to my plantation in Cayenne [the plantation that he had purchased to try out a program of gradual emancipation of its slaves] but I hope that my wife will see to it that the blacks who farm it preserve their freedom.”

Charles X, the reactionary Bourbon Monarch who succeeded to the throne in 1824 and proceeded to lose it, had this to say of his inveterate adversary, Lafayette, whom he had first known as a teenager at Versailles. “I only know of two men who have always possessed the same principles, myself and M. de Lafayette; he, as a defender of liberty, and I, as the King of the aristocracy.”

So, as I see it, Lafayette was the complete package, but I will leave it to our esteemed panelists to unpack the character of General Lafayette and to tell us the lessons we can learn from him today.

### **Lloyd Kramer’s Presentation**

It’s an honor to have this opportunity to discuss Lafayette with my co-panelists and with members of the American Friends of Lafayette. I want to thank Alan Hoffman and Bonnie Fritz for their work in organizing this event; and I thank everyone who is here for your interest in Lafayette and his historical legacy.

I would like to focus on three aspects of Lafayette’s life and legacy, all of which show his character and his continuing significance for our historical situation in 2020. We can still learn from Lafayette by examining the complex events and conflicts of his life. Like all human beings, Lafayette had his flaws and limitations. He definitely made mistakes, and his experiences in the French Revolution were especially difficult. His personal and political aspirations were overwhelmed in the early 1790s by conflicts that became more divisive and complicated than all

the other struggles he ever faced. But even his greatest setbacks give us historical lessons to reconsider as we analyze the conflicts and struggles of our own era. Failure is part of what made Lafayette fully human, because personal and public failures help to shape all human lives.

The three aspects of Lafayette's life that I want to emphasize today, however, were central components of his important and *successful* public career; and they all show the nature of his character. I want to emphasize his lifelong commitment to human rights, and then I'll note his attempts to mediate between different cultures and political groups in times of extreme polarization. Finally, I'll refer to the ways in which he expressed personal respect for others – what we might call his basic human decency.

### **Lafayette and Human Rights**

Historians have long debated Lafayette's motives for coming to America in 1777. Americans in the nineteenth century always praised his actions as disinterested and idealistic, but twentieth-century historians such as Louis Gottschalk often described him as an unhappy young man who was mainly trying to escape his frustrations and problems in France. I think Lafayette already held an idealized view of the American Revolution when he joined the Continental Army, and then he went away from America's Revolutionary War with a much deeper, lifelong commitment to advancing the cause of human rights.

Lafayette always supported the development of constitutional institutions that could protect the rights of national citizens to participate in public life and shape government policies. He strongly supported free speech, a free press, and freedom of religion in both Europe and America. During the late 1780s, for example, he vigorously affirmed the rights of French Protestants to freely practice their religion. Lafayette also famously introduced a first proposal for a Declaration of the Rights of Man and Citizen in the National Assembly during the first weeks of the French Revolution in 1789.

But Lafayette's advocacy for human rights extended far beyond his support for constitutional systems and freedom of speech and religion. He was one of the first Parisians to join the French Society of the Friends of Blacks – an antislavery organization that was established in 1788. Lafayette also developed a strategy to emancipate enslaved black workers by purchasing a plantation in Cayenne, where he planned to emancipate enslaved people after they gained the skills to work as free and independent persons.

The project in South America failed when he lost all of his property during the French Revolution, but he supported the Scottish feminist Fanny Wright when she developed a similar plan in Tennessee in 1825. Lafayette always condemned slavery and the racism that sustained the slave system, and he saw the enslavement of black people as America's greatest flaw. He also condemned the systematic abuse of native tribes in America, and he particularly befriended the people of the Oneida nation in New York state.

Lafayette's support for human rights expanded in new directions during the nineteenth century, when he firmly supported independent women who agitated for new social and cultural rights. In addition to his robust assistance for Fanny Wright, Lafayette defended the writings and

ideas of controversial, free-spirited women such as Germaine De Stael, the Irish writer Lady Morgan, the Italian political activist Christina Belgiojoso, and the famous Parisian opera singer Maria Malibran.

He gave special legal and political advice to Malibran as she sought to divorce an abusive husband in the era when it was illegal for French women to dissolve their marriages. Lafayette introduced legislation to legalize divorce in the early 1830s; and though these proposals failed, his efforts to help Maria Malibran became another example of Lafayette's support for women's rights. He did not promote voting rights for women, yet he always supported women friends and activists who participated prominently in the public (traditionally male) sphere of political and cultural debates. Amid his wide-ranging political activities, Lafayette remained intellectually engaged with some of the most talented women writers in early nineteenth-century Europe.

We also need to remember Lafayette's lifelong support for the rights of people who opposed imperial systems and struggled against colonialism. This support for anti-colonial movements was another major aspect of his enduring campaign for human rights, and he promoted national independence for people in North and South America, in Greece, in Poland, and in other places where imperial powers denied the political rights of whole national populations.

Lafayette's support for human rights is thus one of his key legacies for political activists who continue the current struggles to establish full equality for Black Americans and for women.

### **Lafayette and Cross-Cultural Mediations in Polarized Societies**

A second trait of Lafayette's character appears in his recurring efforts to mediate between people from different nations and between highly polarized political factions in France and the United States. He became influential during the American Revolution as he mediated between the Americans and the French, and he continued to interpret or explain the cultural values and ideas of each national group throughout his later life. His far-reaching support for national independence movements required constant mediation between people from different cultures, so he was constantly engaged in multicultural causes and political projects.

Equally important, the revolutionary political conflicts in France pushed him toward a mediating "middle way" within his own national culture. During the French Revolution, for example, Lafayette tried to protect the rights of people on both the political left and the political right. He faced the huge challenge of being a strong, principled public leader who actually stood in the lonely middle of the political spectrum, and he lost the trust of both the monarchists and the Jacobins because he favored the moderate political position of a Constitutional Monarchy.

This is a complex issue that we need to reconsider as we analyze Lafayette's long public life: How can anyone successfully occupy a middle position and also affirm deeply-held principles in times of extreme political polarization? Lafayette was not a mushy centrist who lacked strong beliefs. He tried to sustain strong political commitments from a vulnerable position

in the political center, but the extreme polarization of the French Revolution made this position untenable. What lessons can we take from his failures?

He also tried to maintain a middle position during his tour of America in 1824-25, which was another period of intense political polarization. The supporters of Andrew Jackson and the supporters of John Quincy Adams deeply distrusted and disliked each other, but Lafayette carefully sustained good relations with people on both sides of this bitter political battle. Is this kind of strong middle position possible in the contemporary United States? Lafayette's experiences pose this question for all of us as we deal with the intense political and cultural polarizations of 2020.

### **Lafayette and Human Decency**

In addition to noting Lafayette's efforts to promote human rights and to mediate between people in different cultures or political factions, I want to emphasize that these actions expressed an even broader theme in his personal and public life. He showed a remarkable respect for people of all social classes, races, and cultural backgrounds. To put it simply, Lafayette was never arrogant or condescending.

This respect for other people contributed decisively to his achievements during the American Revolution. He did not "look down" on American farmers, workers, common soldiers, or enslaved people. He worked respectfully with people whom most French nobles and other Europeans could never view as equal or worthy partners. This talent for collaborations with people from all social backgrounds was noted by French commanders such as the Comte d'Estaing, who reported to his compatriots that Lafayette was comfortable with the everyday behavior and even the eating habits of Americans who knew nothing about elite European cultures or customs.

Lafayette's respect for the integrity and the values of other people was one of the reasons that critics often called him naïve or too trusting of opponents. He was someone who wanted to work with others rather than to dominate them; he was never like Napoleon or later authoritarian political leaders whose actions have been driven by obsessive self-interest and narcissism.

His decency and commitments to the "public good" were valuable human traits that Americans recognized and appreciated during his lifetime – and traits that many Americans would like to see again in our contemporary political culture. Lafayette understood that no matter what ideas or policies one might support, the democratic processes of public life and the civic health of human communities depended on social *politesse* and on respectful interactions with other people.

As I reflect on Lafayette's character during our own unsettling, difficult period in the history of American democracy, I want to honor these three enduring achievements. Despite his setbacks and political failures, Lafayette always defended essential human rights (including the abolition of slavery and the rights of women to participate in the public sphere). He always tried to mediate between different cultures and between opposing factions in highly polarized political

conflicts. And he always pursued these actions with a basic human decency that conveyed his respect for people of all races and social backgrounds.

These commitments and values shaped Lafayette's public actions over almost six decades, but they also show why his life story still matters as we confront the evolving, historical challenges of the twenty-first century.



Portrait of Lafayette by Charles Willson Peale (1779)  
Second Bank of the United States Portrait Gallery, Philadelphia, PA

## Paul Spalding's Presentation

Hardly any of us would deny that Lafayette showed strength of character in selfless, courageous, persistently hopeful devotion to liberty and justice. He came to live for what he saw as universal human rights undergirded by a constitutional order. This vision, for which he hoped and worked relentlessly, was what he would eventually call his “steadfast political religion” – a matter of ultimate concern.

Let's “follow the money” to back this up. Once one of the richest men in Europe, Lafayette's fortune was gone by the time he reached his 35<sup>th</sup> birthday. We have all heard how, at age nineteen, Lafayette bought his own ship to cross the Atlantic and join the American Continental Army; then how he supplied his troops with uniforms and equipment out of his own pocket. He supported the abolition of nobility in 1790, subjecting himself to taxation for the first time, and ever thereafter corrected anyone trying to call him “Marquis de La Fayette” [an aristocratic title followed by a noble name in three words] and requested to be addressed only by the title he had earned, “General” and a one-word commoner's form of his name: Lafayette. By the calculation of his money manager in 1792, Lafayette had given away almost five times his original annual income for the cause of American independence.

After returning home from America, he proceeded to spend somewhat more than five times that income for the cause of constitutional democracy in France. Along the way, he invested well over another year of his original income in three South American plantations for the sole purpose of offering a model of slave emancipation. When violent Jacobins took power in France by coup in 1792, they seized all his remaining property, short of what he was able to carry on his person as he galloped over the national border into exile. At the end of the 1790s, Lafayette himself offered a rough summary of where all his fortune had gone: he had spent 3/5 of it in the cause of liberty, he wrote, leaving the remaining 2/5 to be confiscated by the Jacobins.

But Lafayette surrendered more than his fortune; he surrendered his security, freedom, and homeland to the cause of liberty. He risked his life on battlefields in America, of course, but then also in urban riots as the Revolution in France began to take an ugly turn. Eventually the radical Jacobins called for his head. Within hours of his escape from the guillotine into Belgium in August 1792, he fell into the hands of forces led by longtime enemies of liberty and national independence, the Prussian king and Austrian Habsburg emperor. They incarcerated him as a “prisoner of state” for what they deemed to be his toxic views – toxic, that is, to the security of their own autocratic governments.

For a time, Lafayette seemed convinced his execution was imminent. The governor of the Austrian Netherlands (archduchess Marie Christine) sent him word that the authorities “were keeping him for the scaffold.” When he bade goodbye to an aide as he and two other especially prominent prisoners were separated from the rest of the men after the tribunal at Luxembourg, he expressed the conviction that even death would not end his work and the values he lived for. It would even promote them: “...My blood, crying vengeance, will bring liberty new defenders.”

His incarceration itself seemed to Lafayette to mimic death, as if he were buried alive. The commandant of his prison in Olmütz ordered that his name be replaced by a number (he was

to be addressed as Prisoner #2), and that he be treated “as if he no longer existed and has been forgotten.” An open gutter carried sewage under his window from the barracks latrine at the end of the hall.

But even at this very low point, Lafayette retained his concern about justice for *others*. He used gifts and loans from American diplomats to ease conditions for his fellow prisoners. The fate of friends and loved ones back in Jacobin-ruled France became more important to him than his own. When he was able to write his wife, he asked about the situation of the slaves they had wanted to free on their South American plantations. After a failed rescue attempt, he was anxious above all for his would-be rescuers. He offered his cooperation with military authorities if they would release them, and took complete responsibility for the break-out on himself.

Only after five years did the pressure of an international campaign on his behalf, a changed French government, and French victories on the battlefield force Lafayette’s release. It was a release conditioned on Lafayette remaining in exile. For the next two years he lived along the coastal periphery of northern Europe depending on loans, handouts, and generous hosts in Hamburg, Denmark, and Holland. Russian involvement in Denmark, then a joint Russian-British invasion of Holland in August 1799 caused him for a while to have nightmares that he might be arrested again and executed or dragged off to a prison in Siberia.

Still, he thought of justice for others. He lobbied on behalf of political prisoners still in Austrian hands. He pleaded with the French government to allow his aides to return home, whom he deemed to have been under his orders and completely innocent of his original plan to escape the Jacobins. He tracked the fate of other fugitives, and tried to help where he could.

As autumn descended a few weeks later, Lafayette found himself in his daughter’s cold rental cottage outside the southern gate of a small Dutch town, writing a letter to his wife Adrienne. In an aside, he reported that he had just sent off his gold repeater watch to a needy friend and fellow exile. He could make do, he surmised, with another, cheaper watch. The gold watch was the last of his once glittering fortune.

Though he would soon manage to slip back into France, it was a France led by a new dictator, Napoleon Bonaparte, who soon found that Lafayette could not be bribed or manipulated into political cooperation. Lafayette eventually tried to mediate Napoleon’s removal from power in 1814-1815, became again a public voice for liberty and justice from his position in the French Chamber of Deputies after 1818, helped to remove an autocratic king (Charles X) in 1830, and at the end of his life was promoting Polish independence and women’s right to divorce. He never let go his vision, he never gave up hope. He had character that mattered.

Lessons for our time? I quote John Lewis in 2018: “Do not get lost in a sea of despair. Be hopeful, be optimistic. Our struggle [for justice] is not the struggle of a day, a week, a month, or a year. It is the struggle of a lifetime. Never, ever be afraid to make some noise and get in good trouble, necessary trouble.”

## Robert Crout's Presentation

I would like to repeat some of the things that the two august presenters have raised as issues. First, I would like to invoke the name of two prominent Lafayette scholars of the 20<sup>th</sup> century. My mentor Stanley J. Idzerda called the period of Lafayette studies in America up to the end of World War I "Hagiography" --- the study of the saints. Lafayette was included among those Founding Fathers who could do little wrong.

After the end of World War I, there emerged a group of young people known as "The Lost Generation," those affected by the bitterness and disappointment of the war's expressed lofty aims: the war to end all wars, the war to make the world safe for democracy, self-determination for all people. A prominent historian at Cornell named Carl Becker trained a generation of historians. One of his students, William B. Willcox, who went on to edit the Franklin Papers at Yale, told me that in the final lecture of Becker's history course, he described the settlement by corrupt diplomats and politicians at the end of World War I as "a tale full of sound and fury signifying nothing." Another of Becker's students was Louis R. Gottschalk, who largely defined the study of Lafayette by the academics of the 1930s to many today, as seeing such heroes as people whose motives tended to be largely self-serving and self-centered.

While Gottschalk was a young professor at the University of Chicago, he came under the influence of a social scientist there named Harold Lasswell, influenced by Freud, who wrote in *Power and Personality* that human personalities are shaped by childhood experiences. Therefore, Gottschalk decided that the key experience for Lafayette was the absence of a father and an authority figure. According to Gottschalk, this vacuum led Lafayette to a life of rebelliousness and revolution. In Lafayette's case it was a life of association with revolutionary causes in America and elsewhere.

Gottschalk's first thin volume on Lafayette was very popular among scholars and the reading public. Though he had originally intended to write about other revolutionary figures after Lafayette, he found himself tagged as the Lafayette expert for the rest of his career. He kept getting awards and wrote more volumes about Lafayette's life up to mid-1790. Page after page, Gottschalk treated Lafayette as a popular figure; then suddenly came a sentence or a paragraph that reduced Lafayette again to a person seeking fame on the stage. According to Gottschalk, Lafayette did not come to America for ideals. He came merely for glory and career advancement before his return to France.

Why have I spent so much time on the influence of Louis Gottschalk and his importance? Because it has defined the general approach many American scholars have taken about Lafayette, and it confirmed what many French scholars have believed about Lafayette. Yet it makes what Stanley Idzerda did in the 1970s even more significant. In 1977, there was a conference in Clermont-Ferrand, France about Lafayette and the American Revolution, and a series of papers were presented. A tiny volume, which is now very difficult to find, was produced containing these papers, including one by Idzerda. His essay and the Lafayette volumes Idzerda produced at Cornell launched the entire revision of Lafayette which has occurred over the last fifty years.

The publication of Idzerda's essay "Character as Destiny: a New Look at Lafayette's Career" presented a very different view of Lafayette's career. It began a major revision in the latter part of the 20<sup>th</sup> century and the early part of the 21<sup>st</sup>. Lloyd, Paul, I, and others have all been affected by Stan's ideas. The question arises: how did Idzerda arrive at a view that was so different from that of the American scholars who followed Gottschalk?

Stan was serving in the US Navy and happened to be in Pearl Harbor on that fateful day that will live in infamy for that generation as 9/11 does for ours. In our Cornell office Stan would regale us with stories of the valor, courage, and selflessness exhibited at Pearl Harbor and across the Pacific in World War II. Stan admired the officer corps, whose members often came from generations of service families. Stan was immersed intensely in the documents by, to, and about Lafayette from contemporaries, and he found them to be consistent with a pre-World War I view of Lafayette, a view that was confirmed the deeper Stan went into the documentation from many of the people who knew Lafayette and shared his values during his lifetime.

Some of the points that have been brought up about Lafayette's character that Lloyd and Paul have touched on were the major issues of Lafayette's life: concern for human rights, his role as a mediator between disagreeing perspectives, and over all, Lafayette's basic decency. These are all very important issues.

I want to focus on another point which Paul Spalding has raised tangentially. The more I study Lafayette and members of that early national generation of Americans, the more I am caught up with the idea of a secular religion in the early American nation. This is usually associated with a group of intellectuals and theologians many of whom became associated with Unitarianism. However, you can see the beginnings of that in remarks exchanged between Lafayette and George Washington, Washington being complimented as the Patriarch of Liberty. This use of Old Testament language connects with the idea of a new nation, a land of justice, a land of opportunity, an asylum for liberty ---with the glaring exception of slavery.

As we look at Alan's wonderful translation of Levasseur's journal, we see that everywhere Lafayette goes in America in 1824 and 1825, he is happy to see old friends and visit familiar places. But what really excites the man is the realization of the American Founders' dream, the idea of carving communities out of the wilderness, of building canals and transportation systems to expand and unite America under great principles.

To tie into Lloyd's idea of Lafayette's respect for people of all backgrounds, we see that, though the municipal organizing committees during the Farewell Tour often wanted to limit access to Lafayette to the elite, Lafayette would have none of it. He wanted to see and be seen by everybody.

In the South where slaves were often forbidden to attend his events, he urged his hosts to include them in public events. We see him embracing slaves which was unheard of in polite society. In the North, he is seen embracing free blacks publicly, which was also considered an inappropriate behavior. When Lloyd said that Lafayette respected people of all backgrounds, I would add parenthetically, unlike Tocqueville who simply was encountering the cream of American society – French aristocracy embracing American aristocracy.

This is one of the wonderful things about Levasseur's book. It was not simply a mere account of Lafayette's speeches, comments, and appearances in 1824-25. It delved into the history of different colonies, states, and towns. It also described how democratic institutions, laws, and constitutions were established, evolved, and (most importantly) how they thrived, as well as philanthropic societies for the support of the least of those in such communities. In other words, it promoted the idea of a democratic society covering not only the mainstream but also the margins, using America as a working and practical model for its European supporters who were then under siege from authoritarian governments. Even today, it can be relevant to people under such threats and relevant to us in America as we look back to the past and into the future.

### **About the Panelists**

Lloyd S. Kramer teaches history at the University of North Carolina in Chapel Hill and serves as the Director of Carolina Public Humanities. He studied under Stanley Idzerda at Cornell University, where he obtained his doctorate in 1983. He is the author of *Lafayette in Two Worlds: Public Cultures and Personal Identities in an Age of Revolutions* (The University of North Carolina Press, 1996).

Paul S. Spalding obtained his doctorate from Yale Divinity School in 1975. He recently retired from Illinois College in Jacksonville, Illinois where he was Professor of Religion. He also taught history, political science, and philosophy there. He is the author of *Lafayette: Prisoner of State* (University of South Carolina Press, 2010).

Robert Rhodes Crout teaches history at the University of Charleston in South Carolina. He obtained his doctorate from the University of Georgia in 1977. He is the Associate Editor of Volumes III and IV of *Lafayette in the Age of the American Revolution - Selected Letters and Papers, 1776-1790* and a co-Editor, with Stanley Idzerda, of Volume V.

The moderator, Alan R. Hoffman, is President of the American Friends of Lafayette and President of the Massachusetts Lafayette Society. He is the translator of *Lafayette in America in 1824 and 1825*, by Auguste Levasseur (Lafayette Press, 2006).

# Yorktown Victory Celebration 2020 Style

by Chuck Schwam

This year the American Friends of Lafayette again celebrated Yorktown Day on October 19<sup>th</sup>. Although we had fewer members there for obvious reasons, the Yorktown Day Association indicated that the AFL had the highest number of attendees of all the historical societies in attendance. We all should be very proud of the AFL's insistence on honoring the victory and the alliance between the United States and France no matter what the circumstances. A safe time was had by all.



Chuck Schwam speaking at the French Cemetery in Yorktown

There was no parade, and the patriotic exercises were abbreviated, but the ceremony at the French Cemetery was still executed and hosted by the AFL. The highlight of the ceremony was the speech given by French Air Force Colonel Benjamin Vinot-Prefontaine. The colonel is a fighter pilot, commanding his own squadron at one time and is now the National Liaison Representative to the Allied Command Transformation headquarters in Norfolk, Virginia. He spoke eloquently about the friendship between the United States and France, while listing the many conflicts our two nations fought side by side. AFL's Chuck Schwam also addressed the attendees regarding the sacrifices the French soldiers made in 1781.



French Air Force Colonel Benjamin Vinot-Prefontaine

The ceremony at the French Memorial was hosted by the French military. Eighteen officers from several branches of French military service paid tribute to their involvement at the siege of Yorktown. AFL's own Lieutenant-colonel Alain Abad orchestrated a very moving service that also highlighted Franco-American relations.



French military officers saluting their colors

The truncated patriotic exercises included the singing of both national anthems and a warm speech from DAR President General Ann Turner Dillon. It was a gorgeous sunny day with temperatures in the mid-seventies and everyone was smiling behind their masks.

Possibly the best part of the day was the luncheon held outdoors that the Hornsby House Inn's pavilion. David, Renée, and Phil Bowditch pulled out all our favorites: Ham Biscuits, Beef Tenderloin, assorted cheeses, and their famous Oyster Bisque. It was a pandemic-conscious, yet deliciously good time.



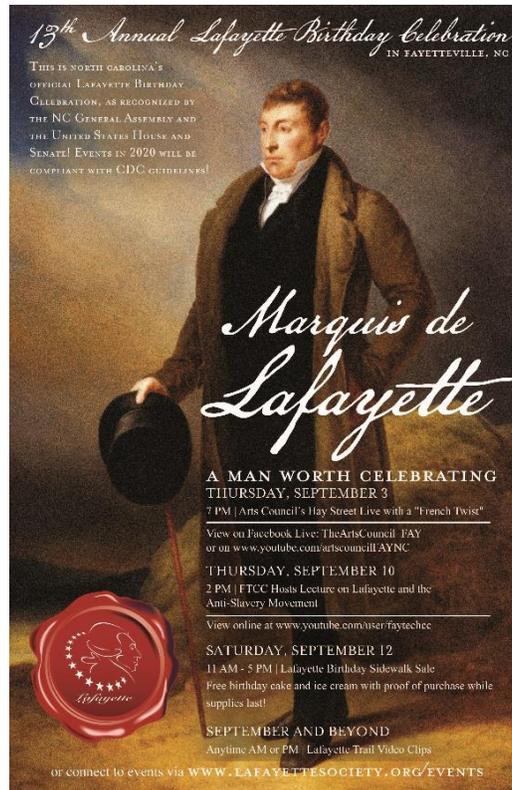
View of the Victory Monument from the Hornsby House Inn

## Lafayette Birthday Celebration 2020 in Fayetteville, North Carolina

by Hank Parfitt

This year, the Lafayette Society and the City of Fayetteville, North Carolina, once again celebrated the birth of their namesake, the Marquis de Lafayette. We did so in an appropriate, CDC-compliant manner, but we still had fun!! Many of our usual birthday activities had to be cancelled, some were virtual, and one (free cake and ice cream during the Lafayette Birthday Sidewalk Sale) took place as usual but with COVID-safe precautions.

We all know that 2020 has been a complicated, fractious, tumultuous year thanks to the pandemic and economic, climatologic, and social/political upheavals. When Lafayette returned to visit America as The Nation's Guest in 1824, the political landscape was also very divisive – the Presidential election that year had to be decided in the House of Representatives! General Lafayette's visit served as an antidote to the political divide. He praised us for our industry, economic growth, and democratic institutions, which he saw as the fruits of our struggle to win freedom from England. He helped us see that we would not have won that freedom without a unity of spirit and effort. In turn, America admired without reservation this noble Frenchman who had come to our aid fifty years before and who had devoted his entire life to freedom and human rights. In that spirit, we chose the mature Lafayette for our poster this year, at the age when he visited America in 1824-25.



This image is taken from the life-size portrait by Ary Scheffer that hangs in the House of Representatives to the viewer's right of the Speaker's podium. (George Washington's portrait, of course, is on the left.) It is the image of a leader who showed respect for others and treated all with fairness, surely an important message for our troubled times.

In the past, the Lafayette Birthday Celebration kicked off with an event at Methodist University called “Arias and Artifacts.” This event typically included an exhibit from the Lafayette Collection at Davis Memorial Library on campus followed by a short concert of French music performed by professional musicians and vocalists in a small, intimate setting. This year, the “Artifacts” portion had to be cancelled because of COVID. The “Arias” portion did take place in a virtual format on *Hay Street Live*, an Arts Council program on YouTube and Facebook designed to showcase performers in a virtual space. Featured performers included Dr. Gail Morfesis, opera singer Alina Cherkasova, the woodwind ensemble Bella Venti, and the Thiriot Family. Over 400 people logged in to watch the show on Facebook, shattering all previous virtual attendance records for *Hay Street Live*!



The duet *Bella Nuit oh Nuit D'Amour* was performed by Dr. Morfesis (right) and Alina Cherkasova (center), who graduated from the Odessa National Music Academy in the Ukraine and who has performed internationally. They were accompanied on the piano by Anastasia Bryant (left), who taught at the Veronezh State Academy of Arts in Russia and who also has performed internationally.

Another popular event is the Lafayette Trail Tour. In previous years, participants could walk in Lafayette's footsteps as they retraced his visit to Fayetteville on March 4-5, 1825. Their tour guide was always historian-extraordinaire Major Bruce Daws, Commander of the Fayetteville Independent Light Infantry, founded in 1793 and thought to be the United States' second-oldest private militia in continuous existence. Unable to hold the tour this year, the Lafayette Society instead recorded a series of short videos about the trail. In each 2-3 minute video clip, historic interpreter Stan Seay as Lafayette reminisces about each site from his visit 200 years ago. For a direct link to these videos, go to [www.lafayettesociety.org](http://www.lafayettesociety.org).



“Film director” Mike Samperton coaches Lafayette re-enactor Stan Seay about Gabriel DuBrutz, one of several Revolutionary War heroes buried in Cross Creek Cemetery. DuBrutz was a member of the French fleet at Yorktown in 1781. Later, he returned to America and settled in Fayetteville, where he married and became a successful merchant and landowner. He also cultivated grapes for Bordeaux wine with seeds from the family vineyard in Bordeaux, France.

On Thursday, September 10, Fayetteville Technical Community College presented “A Sanctuary for the Rights of Mankind: Lafayette and Human Rights” by Diane Shaw, Special Collections Archivist at Lafayette College in Pennsylvania for 30 years. Ms. Shaw, a recognized authority on the life and times of Lafayette, has written many articles about his opposition to slavery and support of equal rights for all.

Ms. Shaw gave the audience an in-depth look at Lafayette’s embrace of the antislavery movement, a passion that grew out of his experiences in the American Revolution and continued throughout his life. She also spoke of his efforts preceding the French Revolution to restore civil rights to French Protestants and Jews, his friendship for Native Americans, his support for women writers and reformers, and his opposition to solitary confinement and the death penalty. Although in-person attendance was limited by CDC regulations, Ms. Shaw’s talk was seen by a wide audience on the FTCC YouTube channel. Also, the audio was streamed live on radio station WIDU, whose audience is largely African-American. Ms. Shaw’s lecture is definitely worth the watch – see it via a direct link on [www.lafayettesociety.org](http://www.lafayettesociety.org).



After the talk, many in the audience lingered to talk with Ms. Shaw.  
(On her right is FTCC professor Dr. Daniel Stewart and on her left is Jimmy Harvey, radio host at WIDU).

## Lafayette Alliance's New Film Debuts

by Alex Hughes

For two consecutive years, on September 6<sup>th</sup>, the Lafayette Alliance in LaGrange, Georgia hosted a wreath-laying ceremony in the city square at the foot of a statue of Lafayette. This ceremony, which has become a tradition, began after the Georgia State House, Senate, and Georgia Governor declared Lafayette's birthday, September 6<sup>th</sup>, Lafayette Day in Georgia. By April of this year as COVID-19 spread across the country, Lafayette Alliance board members grappled with the idea of canceling the in-person ceremony to prevent the gathering of a large number of people. Members began to think about a contingency plan as they did not want to halt the tradition of having a ceremony on Lafayette Day.

It was decided that the Alliance would partner with the City of LaGrange's communication and marketing team in order to produce a celebratory and educational film that would be released on September 6, 2020, and rather than be a flash in the pan, it would serve as an evergreen educational and inspirational tool for educators and community members.



Lafayette Statue in LaGrange, Georgia

As Richard Ingram, chair of the Alliance, and I began to plan for the film, we discussed the need to emphasize the human rights element of Lafayette's life and legacy. What better story to tell than Lafayette's relationship with James Armistead and his abolition project in Cayenne? The need to tell this part of Lafayette's story grew when in June of this year, LaGrange Mayor Jim Thornton called attention to the confederate statue that was unveiled in 1902 by the Daughters of the Confederacy in LaGrange. The statue was originally located on LaGrange's square where the statue of Lafayette now stands. With the backdrop of the current national political climate, this garnered significant attention from the local community. So inevitably questions began to arise about Lafayette. Did he own slaves? What was his position on slavery? There were those who knew of Washington's and Jefferson's stances on the issue of slavery, but what about Lafayette, they wondered - albeit most of these questions and concerns were arising from the ill-informed and those eager to make any kind of comment on social media platforms. After all, those platforms can give one a sense of anonymity, protection, and therefore an ignorant boldness. At this point, it was even clearer that the Lafayette Alliance has much work to do in fulfilling the mission upon which it was founded - to educate, inform, and inspire the general populace about Lafayette.

The Alliance and the City's communications team set out to produce a film that is composed of nine segments, including an introduction and conclusion by Richard Ingram in front of Lafayette's statue on Lafayette Square in LaGrange. The sections cover the topics of Lafayette as a champion of human rights, James Armistead, La Gabrielle, Lafayette's general biography, France's role in the revolution, the statue of Lafayette in LaGrange, and Lafayette's Farewell Tour. Adam Speas, with the City of LaGrange, did the post-production and editing work, and created the introduction and conclusion segments. I assisted Adam in locating and securing primary sources and images that could supplement the presentation. Adam was specifically interested in changing the filming angles of the presenters in order to gain more of a documentary style for the film. Additionally, every piece of music in the film is one that Lafayette either listened to or could have known about.

The reception of the film was great. The film was featured on the City of LaGrange's Facebook page and shared by the Lafayette Alliance, the local historical society, members of the Alliance, and others to broaden its reach. The video received great expressions of support and praise, and members of the Alliance received enthusiastic feedback from the local community and beyond. It can be said that this current health crisis has made us think out of the box from our normal routines, activities, and events. It is my hope that the pandemic will make us continue to think outside the box when the pandemic is over and help us to think a little differently about what we can do to reach the local community and share Lafayette's life and legacy.



Lafayette Alliance President (& AFL Member) Dr. Richard Ingram during the taping of the film

*The Lafayette Alliance is an organization founded in 2017 and based in LaGrange, Georgia that seeks to educate, inform, and inspire the general populace about the Marquis de Lafayette. Mr. Hughes is Secretary of the organization. For more information about the Lafayette Alliance, visit [www.lafayettelagrange.org](http://www.lafayettelagrange.org).*

# Bicentennial of Lafayette's Triumphant Return

by Chuck Schwam

The American Friends of Lafayette are starting to plan a significant project. Not since Lafayette's 250<sup>th</sup> Birthday in 2007 has there been a more important initiative to bring Lafayette front and center before the American public.



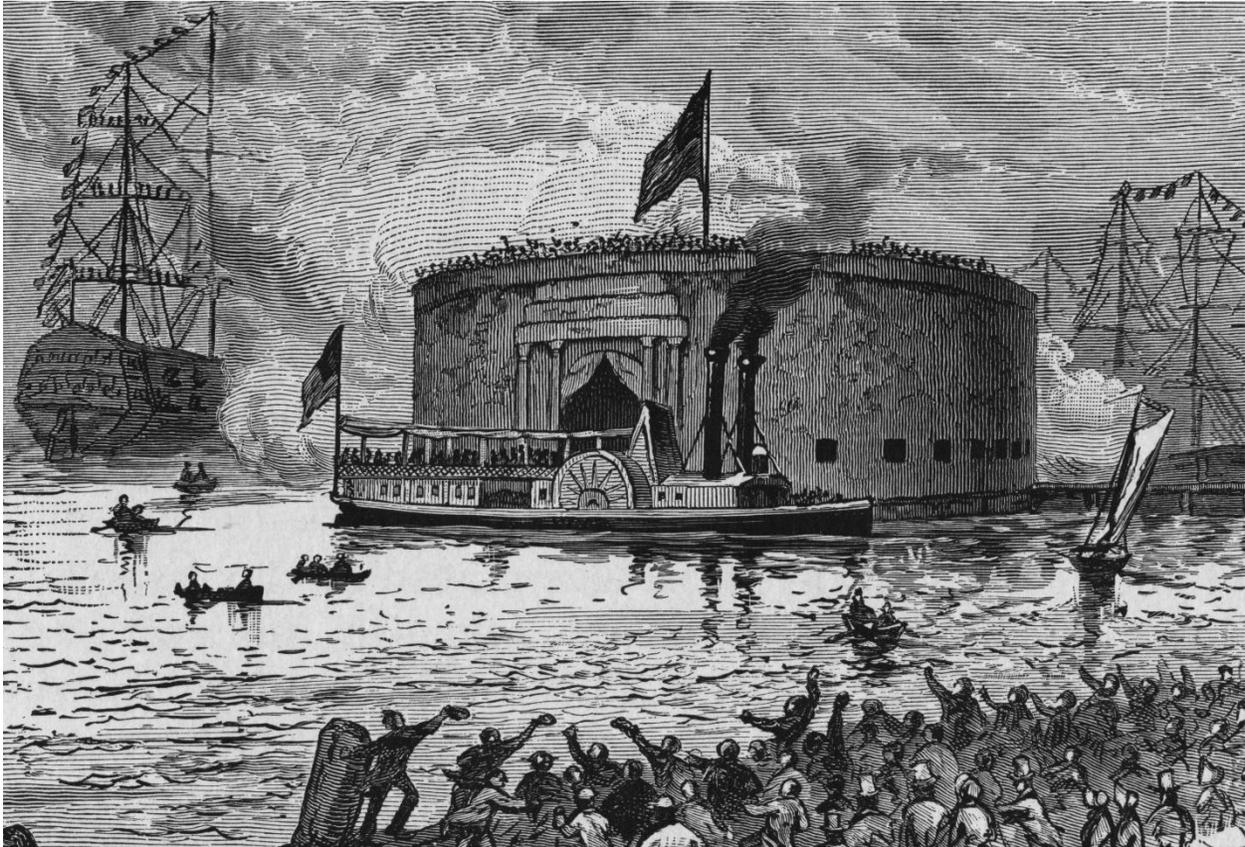
Beginning on August 16, 2024, we will start the thirteen-month bicentennial celebration of Lafayette's triumphant return to the United States. We will of course start in New York City (just as Lafayette did). We will then spend the next thirteen months following Lafayette's footsteps.

Some highlights include...

- August 29, 2024: we will gather in Quincy, Massachusetts just as Lafayette did when visiting John Adams.
- October 17, 2024: we will gather at George Washington's tomb to commemorate Lafayette's somber visit there two centuries before.
- We will of course be in Yorktown on October 19<sup>th</sup>, but in 2024 we will not only celebrate the victory of 1781, but also Lafayette's return on that very day in 1824.
- November 4, 2024: we will be at Monticello to honor Lafayette's visit with Thomas Jefferson.
- March 4, 2025: we will be in Fayetteville, North Carolina and rejoice with the only city Lafayette ever visited that was named after him.

- April 11, 2025: we will be in New Orleans.
- April 29, 2025: we will be in St Louis.
- Our 2025 annual meeting will most likely take place in the Niagara Falls area, where Lafayette visited in June, 1825.
- September 7, 2025: we will be in Washington DC, bidding Lafayette farewell (again !!).

There will be hundreds of planned festivities, in large cities like Boston, Philadelphia, Baltimore, Charleston, and Savannah...but also in the multitude of small towns Lafayette visited that are still brimming with pride that America's favorite fighting Frenchman came through their municipality.



The game plan is to work directly with these jurisdictions and encourage them to help design, plan and fund these sources of civic pride. We will contact each local historical society and share a blueprint for them to follow. Many are already excited by the wonderful work Julien Icher is doing with the Lafayette Trail; we will tap into this excitement and share specifics of Lafayette's visit.

This will be an opportunity for Americans to follow Lafayette's footsteps. Not only will the AFL help coordinate every celebration, but we will also provide a list of hotels and restaurants at every stop. This way, someone could potentially spend thirteen months following the bicentennial festivities. Although it is unlikely that anyone would do that, we will provide Americans the ability to pick and choose which stop best suits them by geography and timing, and they will have local information from us to facilitate their visit.

Of course, we will need to raise funds to pull off all of this. We have applied for grants, and many historical, national, and local organizations seem excited to help. Most of the festivities will be paid for by the regional jurisdictions to accentuate local interest there. The AFL will provide historical data, celebratory guidelines, Lafayette interpreters, and members in attendance.

With Julien Icher's help, the AFL will be contacting each place Lafayette stopped. This seems daunting, but the initiative will be parceled out to a committee. Our "Bicentennial Committee" is forming and currently looks like this...

1. Maryland Chuck Schwam (Committee Chair)
2. Massachusetts – Peter Reilly
3. North Carolina – Bud Lafferty
4. New Hampshire - Deedy Jensen
5. Pennsylvania - Katharine Dunlevy and Graham Brent
6. South Carolina - Joseph Volpi
7. Alabama – Richard Ingram

Right now, we need more committee members. We are currently recruiting for more coverage in the above states and we are still looking for committee members to represent the following additional states...

1. Connecticut
2. Delaware
3. Georgia
4. Illinois
5. Indiana
6. Kentucky
7. Louisiana
8. Maine
9. Mississippi
10. Missouri
11. New Jersey
12. New York
13. Ohio
14. Rhode Island
15. Tennessee
16. Vermont
17. Virginia
18. District of Columbia



19. West Virginia – Lafayette visited Wheeling, Virginia, which became a part of the new state of West Virginia in the 1860s.

If you would like to join the bicentennial committee, please contact Chuck Schwam at either 240-676-5010 or [americanfriendsoflafayette@gmail.com](mailto:americanfriendsoflafayette@gmail.com). I promise this will be a fun, interesting and worthwhile endeavor. Please help.

## Lafayette and the 1832 Cholera Pandemic in France

by Robert Rhodes Crout

From 1831 to 1832 an outbreak of cholera spread from Asia to the Americas. The bacterium, carried by water, attacked its victims' intestinal tract. Thus weakened, they died largely from complications related to dysentery and wasting away. The disease reached Paris by late March. From the beginning, it quickly became politicized. The wealthy saw it as indicative of the careless sanitation practiced by the poor. The poor viewed it as a conspiratorial poisoning of poor neighborhoods by the rich and powerful. Ultra-Catholics saw it as a God-sent plague against the Parisian revolutionaries. Some on the left believed it was a royalist conspiracy to bring back authoritarian government and to curtail their liberties. In the middle of all this was the elderly Lafayette, still politically active but physically weaker than ever. Lafayette was 74 and suffering from being overweight, having long-term breathing difficulties, and more frequent spells of gout that forced him to his bed for days. Yet Lafayette continued as a powerful and active symbol of three revolutions – the American, and the French revolutions of 1789 and 1830.



Western European nations first seriously noticed the outbreak when it arrived in Poland in the winter of 1831, supposedly spread by an occupying Russian army. As the disease spread westward, the Prussians and the British tried futilely to curtail its spread by banning Russian vessels in their ports. Cholera first hit Paris in late March 1832. Within a few days, the outbreak began to cause panic and the rate of deaths accelerated. Bodies were abandoned in the streets. Many of the wealthy fled to their country estates. Since the cause of the disease was unknown, city officials were unsure how to counter it. Scientists had also disagreed on its treatment.

Then, as quickly as the first wave hit, deaths suddenly declined. By mid-April Lafayette believed he had survived a mild case. He went for several days on a strict diet of rice water and took drops of laudanum and ether on sugar cubes. The death of many other prominent French persons carried the crisis to a new level for the elites who had initially thought they were invulnerable to the disease. One of these was Casimir Périer, president of the king's council and uncle of one of Lafayette's grandsons-in-law. In early June Lafayette's political ally General Lamarque also died. His funeral created a furor among republicans made famous later by the funeral procession scene in Victor Hugo's *Les Misérables*. Lafayette's futile efforts to calm that unruly crowd in what became a police riot created a public spectacle that provided a further reason for Lafayette to absent himself from Paris. The riot left 150 dead with 500 wounded.

By mid-June, despite his family's pleas to avoid the outbreaks in the villages and countryside around his estate, Lafayette traveled to La Grange. There he was determined to help his overwhelmed neighbors. His family helped convert a girl's school at nearby Courpalay into a dispensary. Courpalay was particularly hard stricken. Lafayette wrote a friend in early September that it had suffered 56 dead out of a population of 450; twenty had died in a single day. Along with his own physicians, Sautereau and Thierry, and assisted by his daughters Virginie and Anastasie, the Lafayettes provided medicine, blankets, and ice for those less fortunate. All told, Lafayette spent about 38,000 francs assisting his neighbors. His son George called in a young Paris doctor named Cardinal to La Grange to provide additional medical aid.

Though Lafayette made occasional quick forays into Paris, such as a brief but meaningful trip to Paris for the usual Fourth of July celebration with its American community, and a short visit in early September for a few days of business (including meetings to support Polish and Portuguese revolutionaries), he spent most of the summer and early autumn at La Grange. There he rallied his family members around him, and he wrote to other relatives to encourage them to keep up their spirits while reporting news of the friends they had lost. His granddaughter Clementine had an especially long and difficult recovery.

Lafayette did not return to Paris to stay until November 1832. By then the brunt of the pandemic had moved on to southern France, and Lafayette could resume his political agenda in Paris. Over the six months that the pandemic was at its height, about 20,000 died in Paris (7,000 the first two weeks) and 100,000 around France. These losses eventually contributed to the French government's decision to undertake a significant series of public works programs that transformed the crowded and filthy medieval city of Paris to the "city of light" as we have known it since the late nineteenth century. The pandemic also provided Lafayette's country neighbors with more stories of his kindness and generosity.

## The Story of a Statue

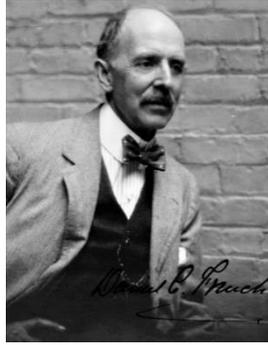
by John C. Becica, Lafayette College Class of 1969

A chance meeting aboard a train results in a magnificent work of art for the Lafayette College Campus.

### THE CAST OF CHARACTERS - IN ORDER OF APPEARANCE



*Donor Henry Harteau*



*Sculptor Daniel Chester French*



*Architect Henry Bacon*



*Artist  
Frederick K. Detwiller, '04*



*Sculptor  
Henry Augustus Lukeman*



*Lafayette College Trustee  
James Gayley*



*Lafayette College Trustee  
John Markle*



*Lafayette College President  
John Henry McCracken*



*Donor / Phila. Merchant  
Morris L. Clothier*

## IN THE BEGINNING – PROSPECT PARK BROOKLYN

Henry Harteau, an American of French Huguenot descent, was born in South Lee, Massachusetts in 1819. He moved to Brooklyn as a young man, worked in a grocery, and in 1842 opened his own grocery store. He then changed direction and became a private secretary for a stone merchant at the Brooklyn Navy Yard. That resulted in his forming his own business to sell stone, building materials, windows, and plate glass. By 1871 he had been successful enough to retire from this endeavor at age 52. After his retirement, Harteau was the organizer and first president of the Mechanics and Traders Exchange. In 1874 he and several other men formed the Metropolitan Plate Glass Insurance Company. He was elected the organization's first president, a position he held until his death, over 20 years later.

A member of the Brooklyn Board of Education, he became involved in Brooklyn politics as a Democrat. He was elected tax collector in the 1850s and later an alderman under two different Brooklyn mayors. Having retired from politics, he was appointed a Parks Commissioner by Mayor Daniel D. Whitney in 1886. This position was probably part of the inspiration for a bequest he made in his last Will and Testament.

Interested in history, Harteau was a proud member of the Society of Old Brooklynites and the New England and Long Island Historical Societies. He had become enthusiastic about Lafayette during the General's Farewell Tour of America. On June 13, 1825, Lafayette, the celebrity, had stopped for a reception at Pittsfield, MA, just north of Harteau's home in South Lee. The General was on his way from Albany to Boston to dedicate the Bunker Hill Monument. It seems likely that this was the occasion at which Harteau, then a small child of six, remembered the thrill of kissing Lafayette's hand.

As a result, when Henry Harteau passed away on September 12, 1895 of typhoid fever, his Will included the following bequest to be carried out by his executors Julian D. Fairchild and Eugene H. Winslow:

Upon the death of my said wife, Margaret N. Harteau, and the other provisions of this my last Will and Testament having been complied with [support payments for his wife's sister and the sister's daughter], I direct that my surviving executors shall devote and appropriate from the general fund of my estate the sum of **thirty-five thousand dollars (\$35,000) to be expended in the erection of a statue of General, the Marquis de Lafayette, to be placed in Prospect Park, Brooklyn, as an expression of my admiration for that noble and patriotic man and of my appreciation, in which my country shares, of his aid in establishing our Republic.... I request that said statue shall be sculptured as far as possible from the negative in the works of Irving (Life of Washington) and from the engraving therefrom, in possession of testator....** I further request that [the commission to be named to effectuate the project] shall consult and confer with St. Clair McKelway and Alfred C. Barnes, both of the City of Brooklyn, as to the preparation of suitable inscriptions upon the statue, which shall indicate that it was erected by Henry Harteau and presented by him to the People of Brooklyn, **in honor of the memory of the**

**friend and close companion of the immortal Washington**, and also to confer with said McKelway and Barnes in regard to the details of such presentation.

As it happened, the daughter of Henry's wife's sister disagreed with the statue bequest and fought to have it revoked in court. During the protracted legal battle, both Henry's sister-in-law and her daughter passed away. The later death of Henry's wife Margaret in 1913 made the question moot. All three women had been supported for the rest of their lives as provided in Henry's estate, and now the way was paved to proceed with the statue project.

Noted sculptor Daniel Chester French was commissioned to execute the larger than life bronze sculpture / bas relief. He worked with well-known architect Henry Bacon, who designed the Stony Creek pink polished granite base in Italian Renaissance style, on a platform flanked by two unique bronze lamp posts. Bacon chose the Presbery-Coykendall Co. of New York to fabricate the granite base.

Many sources state that the final monument was patterned after the painting "Lafayette at Yorktown" by Jean Baptiste Le Paon circa 1783. This is not technically correct. As Harteau requested, the composition is based on an engraving by Noel Le Mire that was patterned after the Le Paon painting and published in Washington Irving's multi-volume set of books "Life of Washington" published in 1859.



*"To his Excellency, General Washington this likeness of his friend, the Marquess de Lafayette is humbly dedicated by Le Mire."*



*Lafayette at Yorktown,  
Jean Baptiste Le Paon c. 1783*

The bronze tableau, cast by the Gorham Co. Foundry, New York, depicts Lafayette with an African American groomsman and steed. Daniel Chester French used artistic license to shift the scene from what is depicted in the Le Mire engraving and in the Le Paon painting. He places the groomsman on the left; he does not turn the horse's head; he has the horse seemingly trying to nuzzle the groomsman; and he places the full statue of Lafayette in front, holding his sword rather than pointing.

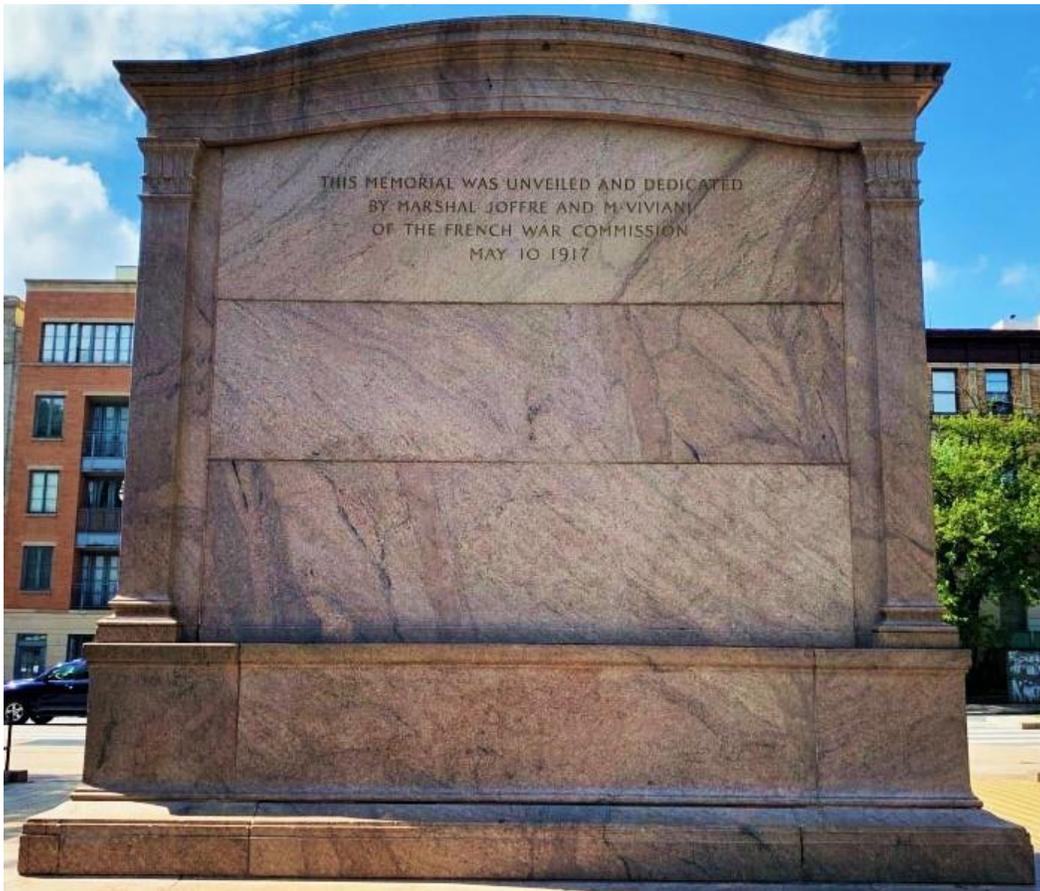
Historians have speculated that the figure of the groomsman is James Armistead Lafayette, the double agent spy used by General Lafayette at the battle of Yorktown and whom Lafayette, the abolitionist, later helped become a free man. Neither Le Paon nor Daniel Chester French mention Armistead in written descriptions of their works so this remains conjecture.

The inscription on the front of the monument reads:

**THE MARQUIS DE LAFAYETTE**  
 THIS MONUMENT WAS ERECTED AND PRESENTED BY  
**HENRY HARTEAU**  
 A DISTINGUISHED CITIZEN OF BROOKLYN TO BE AN ENDURING TRIBUTE  
 TO THE MEMORY OF ONE WHO AS A FRIEND AND COMPANION OF THE  
 IMMORTAL WASHINGTON FOUGHT TO ESTABLISH IN OUR COUNTRY  
 THOSE VITAL PRINCIPLES OF LIBERTY AND HUMAN BROTHERHOOD  
 WHICH HE AFTERWARD LABORED TO ESTABLISH IN HIS OWN



The monument, placed on Prospect Park West, at the 9<sup>th</sup> Street Entrance to Prospect Park, was dedicated with great fanfare on Thursday, May 10, 1917 (coincidentally a month after the United States declared war against Germany) and 21 years after the death of its donor, Henry Harteau. Two months later on July 4, 1917, American General John J. Pershing having arrived in Paris with his WWI expeditionary force, visited Lafayette's grave in Picpus Cemetery. It was on that occasion that his aide Colonel Charles E. Stanton uttered the famous words "Lafayette we are here!"



Two visiting dignitaries from the French War Commission presented the Prospect Park monument at its dedication ceremony. Monsieur Rene Viviani, former Premier of France (who was holding that office when the War broke out in 1914) gave an address, and Marshal Joseph Joffre unveiled the monument. Joffre was a celebrated former General who had earlier commanded the French forces to save Paris and repulse the Germans at the River Marne on the WWI Western Front. As such, he was treated with adulation by the American crowds.

The inscription on the back of the monument reads:

THIS MEMORIAL WAS UNVEILED AND DEDICATED  
BY MARSHAL JOFFRE AND M VIVIANI  
OF THE FRENCH WAR COMMISSION  
MAY 10 1917

According to the dedication program, the Marquis de Chambrun, a member of the French Chamber of Deputies (and a great grandson of Lafayette's daughter Virginie) also addressed the assembled crowd. He was the older of the two sons of the first Chambrun to marry into the family, and he was the uncle of Rene Chambrun who later gained control of the Lafayette family castle La Grange and discovered and cataloged a cache of Lafayette's papers that were later copied for the Library of Congress.

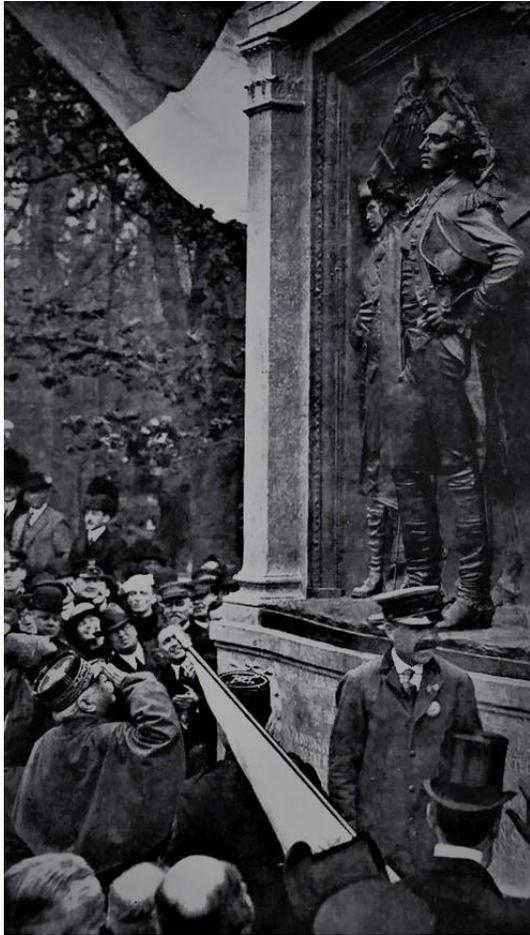


*Lafayette Prospect Park Monument Dedicatory Parade, May 10, 1917*



*Monument Unveiling  
(Note the 48 star American Flag)*





*Former Premier  
Rene Viviani*

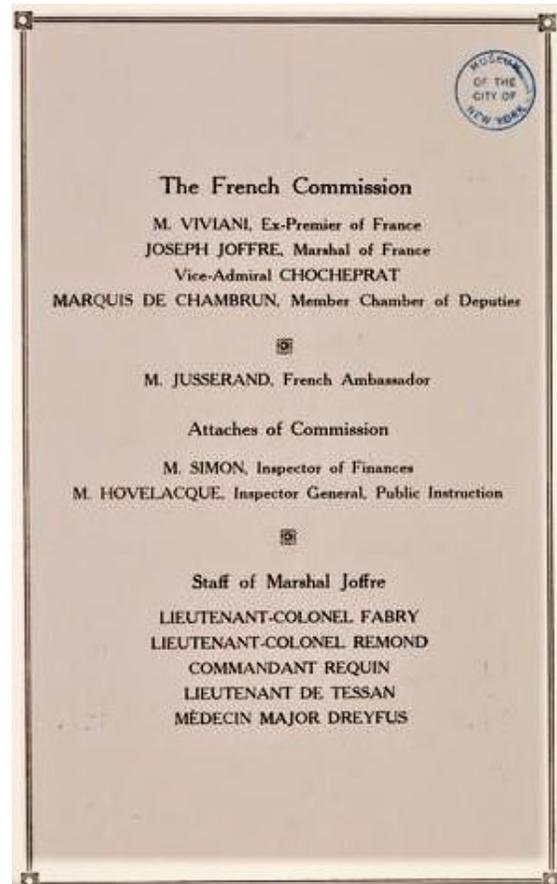
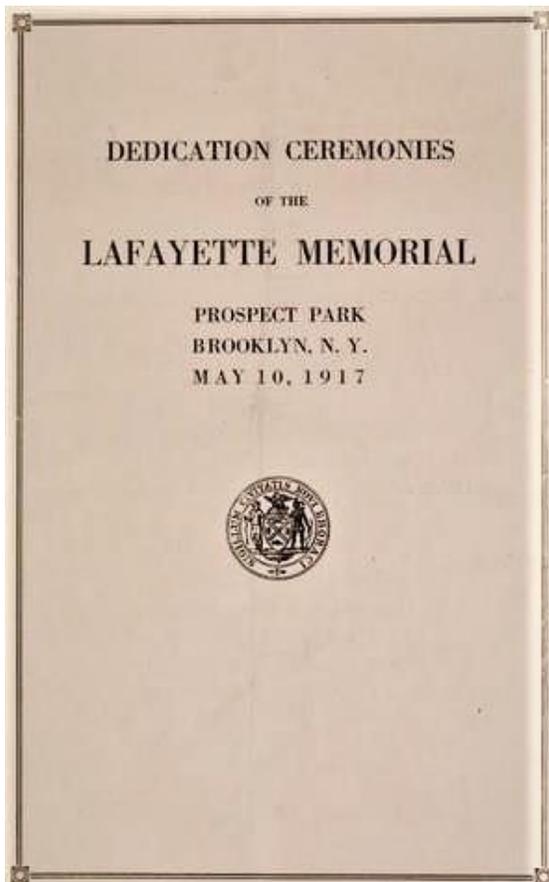


*Marshal Joseph  
Joffre*



*Pierre,  
de Chambrun*

*Marshal Joffre Salutes Lafayette  
at the Monument Dedication*



DEDICATION CEREMONIES  
OF THE  
LAFAYETTE MEMORIAL

PROSPECT PARK  
BROOKLYN, N. Y.  
MAY 10, 1917



The French Commission

M. VIVIANI, Ex-Premier of France  
JOSEPH JOFFRE, Marshal of France  
Vice-Admiral CHOCHERAT  
MARQUIS DE CHAMBRUN, Member Chamber of Deputies

M. JUSSERAND, French Ambassador

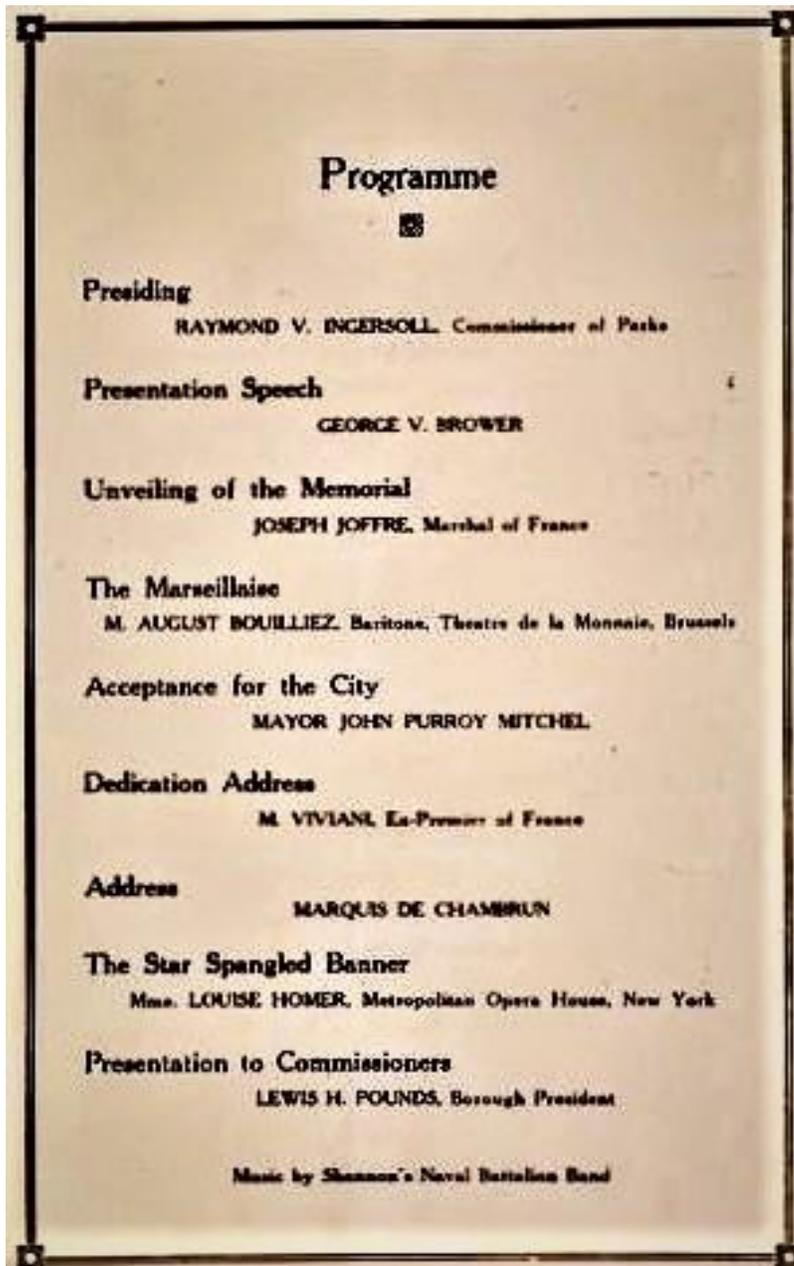
Attaches of Commission

M. SIMON, Inspector of Finances  
M. HOVELACQUE, Inspector General, Public Instruction

Staff of Marshal Joffre

LIEUTENANT-COLONEL FABRY  
LIEUTENANT-COLONEL REMOND  
COMMANDANT REQUIN  
LIEUTENANT DE TESSAN  
MEDECIN MAJOR DREYFUS





The French delegation, led by Viviani and Joffre, had been touring the United States on a diplomatic mission to celebrate French-American friendship and America's support for France in the War. Their visit was also meant to encourage the purchase of Liberty Bonds by Americans to support the War effort. Earlier in the morning of the Prospect Park dedication, they had visited Grant's Tomb in Manhattan. Four days later, on Monday, May 14, 1917, they arrived in Baltimore to break ground at Mount Vernon Place for an equestrian statue of Lafayette. That monument, placed in front of a large existing memorial to George Washington, was not completed and dedicated until seven years later, on September 6, 1924, the anniversary of Lafayette's birth.

Sculptor Henry Augustus Lukeman was, at the time of the Prospect Park unveiling, an assistant to Daniel Chester French. Lukeman designed the 2 inch by 2 ½ inch bronze medallion shown below as a souvenir of the dedication. It was crafted by Medallic Art Company, the successor firm of which is still in business today. Lukeman, who preferred to be called Augustus, will play a large role in the next part of our story.



*Souvenir Medallion by Henry Augustus Lukeman*

## A CHANCE MEETING & A BOISTEROUS FRIEND!

Fredrick K. Detwiller was a local Easton lad who grew up and attended Lafayette College in his hometown in Pennsylvania. After college graduation in 1904, he entered the field of law but later commenced his new vocation as a painter. By 1919 he was working from the Holbein Studios at 145 West 55<sup>th</sup> Street, New York City. In the early summer of that year, just over two years after the Prospect Park monument dedication, he boarded a train on the Shore Line of the New Haven and Hartford Railroad, heading for Boston.

As the train rumbled along, suddenly a hand slapped him on the shoulder and a familiar voice exclaimed, "What are YOU doing here?" Startled and flustered, Detwiller virtually yelled "I'm on my way to Boston." "So are we!" came the instant reply. This fellow passenger turned out to be Augustus Lukeman, a "contemporary sculptor of note" and Detwiller's next door neighbor at the Holbein Studios. Detwiller quotes Lukeman as saying, "Detwiller, I want you to come in the next car and meet Mr. French. You know I am his assistant, and we are on our way to Cambridge where we are at work on the statue of John Harvard which Mr. French has just completed for the University."

Upon introduction to Daniel Chester French, Detwiller was bowled over by the loud, somewhat crude and obnoxious Lukeman. **Noting Detwiller's embarrassment, French broke into the conversation and asked, "Where did you go to college?" Detwiller replied, "Lafayette."**

"Why," cried Lukeman, "Mr. French has made a wonderful statue of the Marquis, and in his studio on 8<sup>th</sup> Street stands the replica, a full-round figure of Lafayette, taken from his monument which stands in Prospect Park, Brooklyn."

Lukeman then asked **"What kind of campus have you at Lafayette?" "No finer in the land!"** Detwiller replied. "Well, the replica is only in our way in the 8<sup>th</sup> Street studio, why don't you ask Mr. French to give it to you and ship it out to the College....Then someday one of your wealthy alumni can have it cast in bronze and erect it on the grounds."

Taken completely by surprise, Detwiller gasped, "I am sure Lafayette would accept such a gift with gratitude." **"Well,"** said Mr. French, **"Mr. Detwiller, you can have it for your College.** Mr. Lukeman has often spoken to me of you, and I paint a bit myself now and then."

Detwiller was barely able to verbalize his reply: **"Mr. French, Lafayette appreciates this gift, and I will take it up with the College and your offer will be formally accepted."**

Late in June, Detwiller, armed with a letter from Lukeman and a photograph of the statue in Plaster of Paris arrived on the college campus and met with his good friend, College Trustee James Gayley. Gayley informed him that the Board of Trustees meeting had concluded, but that he would retroactively put the acceptance of the gift in the meeting minutes. Gayley requested permission to see the gift and viewed it at French's studio with Detwiller and Lukeman.

In a letter to French dated June 23, 1919, Detwiller states, "Permit me to say that the Spirit, Courage and Youth expressed in this work are most inspiring. Mr Gayley was delighted, and so was I. I know that a monument so wonderful is what Lafayette College, needs; and it will be greatly appreciated at the College – and by the undergraduates – the more so at the present time, as over thirty Lafayette men gave their lives in the Great Cause." (WWI)

French's reply letter included: **"I need not tell you that it gratifies me very much to know that the statue meets your ideals of the youthful soldier. It was an inspiring subject. I hope that some time you will see the monument in Brooklyn of which this statue is a detail."**

By November of 1919, America was in an economic depression, Mr. Gayley was busy dealing with financial problems at his employment at US Steel, and he became ill. The Plaster of Paris cast (the original model from which the Brooklyn casting was made) had been gifted, but it had not physically changed hands. Detwiller opined to Gayley that had they commissioned French to make an original statue, it would have cost \$50,000. Recasting French's model would only cost \$10,000. Later in the Winter, Trustee James Gayley died, leaving Detwiller greatly discouraged by the lack of progress on the project.

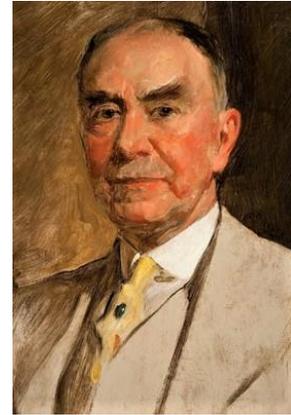
One night about six months later in July of 1920, Detwiller had a strange dream that Gayley was directing him to attack the matter of the statue with all speed. Not knowing where to turn, Detwiller finally approached another Lafayette College Trustee whom he had known through the New York Alumni Association - Mr. John Markle. After meeting with Markle, Detwiller was sent off to write a letter dated August 30, 1920 to John Henry McCracken, President of the College whom Markle said was interested in procuring a Lafayette statue.

Twelve years earlier on June 9, 1908, the name of the College had been legally changed from "Trustees of Lafayette College" to "Lafayette College." At the same time, the official college seal had been retired. In use since 1826, it depicted the aging Marquis as he looked during his Triumphant Tour of America in 1824-1825, a visit which had inspired the naming of the College. A new seal incorporating the school motto and a likeness of Lafayette as a young man took its place. It was felt that the youthful Lafayette better represented the spirit of the College.

Nevertheless, President McCracken traveled to see a statue of the mature Lafayette at the University of Vermont, visited French's studio to view the plaster cast, and considered several other works, (including one of Lafayette dancing a minuet) before he made his final decision. In the end, the Daniel Chester French depiction of a youthful Lafayette won the President's approval.

The month of September passed, and a letter to Detwiller from McCracken arrived dated October 14, 1920. McCracken agreed to go ahead with casting the Daniel Chester French model in bronze with a pedestal base crafted by architect Henry Bacon, the same gentleman used for the Prospect Park Monument. He informed Detwiller that he had already commissioned French and Bacon to produce the monument.

Managing editor of the Philadelphia Press and poet Harvey Maitland Watts '86, another loyal Lafayette College alumnus, had been able to interest wealthy Morris Lewis Clothier of Philadelphia (son of one of the two founders of the Strawbridge and Clothier department stores) in the project. Clothier agreed to provide the required \$10,000 in funding. This was somewhat of a feat because Clothier was a graduate of Swarthmore, and most of his largesse went to that institution. At commencement in 1920, the college had awarded Morris L. Clothier the honorary degree of Doctor of Laws. He was later to give Lafayette College the original address that General Lafayette gave to Congress in 1824 during his Farewell Tour.



*Painting of  
Harvey M. Watts '86*



*Dedication of the Daniel Chester French statue in front of Colton Chapel  
Lafayette College, Founders' Day, November 18, 1921*

Installed in front of Colton Chapel on campus and draped with American and French flags for the unveiling, the Daniel Chester French Statue standing on the Henry Bacon pedestal was dedicated on Founders' Day, November 18, 1921.

Morris L. Clothier made the presentation which was accepted by Israel P. Pardee, President of the Board of Trustees. (Pardee was the son of the late benefactor Ario Pardee who had also been Board President, and who had made many gifts to the College over the years, including the magnificent classroom building Pardee Hall.)

William C. Sproul, Governor of the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania performed the unveiling. The group then processed into Colton Chapel for the rest of the Founders' Day exercises which included an address about Lafayette, and the reciting of a poem "The Sword of Lafayette" by H. MacKnight Black '16. Having graduated from the College five years earlier, Black would become one of America's significant poets.

It is interesting to note that in neither the Prospect Park dedication program nor the College dedication program are Daniel Chester French or Henry Bacon listed as participating or being in attendance.

**LAFAYETTE COLLEGE**  
1826—1921  
**FOUNDERS' DAY**  
NOVEMBER EIGHTEENTH, NINETEEN HUNDRED TWENTY-ONE  
**ORDER OF EXERCISES**  
COLTON MEMORIAL CHAPEL AT TWO-THIRTY O'CLOCK

---

**BEFORE THE CHAPEL**

**MARCH**  
THE STAR SPANGLED BANNER - - - - - *Lafayette College Band*

PRESENTATION OF STATUE OF LAFAYETTE  
TO LAFAYETTE COLLEGE - - - - - *Morris L. Clothier, LL.D.*

ACCEPTANCE OF STATUE ON BEHALF  
OF THE BOARD OF TRUSTEES - - - - - *Israel P. Pardee, M.E.,  
President of the Board  
of Trustees*

MARSEILLAISE - - - - - *Lafayette College Band*

UNVEILING OF THE STATUE - - - - - *His Excellency  
William C. Sproul, LL.D.,  
Governor of Pennsylvania*

"WAY DOWN IN EASTON THERE'S A COLLEGE" - - - - - *Students and Band*

---

**IN THE CHAPEL**

PROCESSIONAL—"Meistersinger March" - - - - - *Wagner*

INVOCATION - - - - - *Rev. John Carruthers, M.A.,  
Chaplain of Lafayette College*

**"America"**

My country! 'tis of thee, Sweet land of liberty, Of thee I sing; Land where my fathers died! Land of the Pilgrim's pride, From every mountain side, Let freedom ring.	My native country thee, Land of the noble free, Thy name I love; I love thy rocks and rills, Thy woods and templed hills; My heart with rapture thrills Like that above.	Let music swell the breeze, And ring from all the trees Sweet freedom's song; Let mortal tongues awake; Let all that breathe partake; Let rocks their silence break, The sound prolong.	Our fathers' God! to Thee, Author of liberty, To thee we sing; Long may our land be bright With freedom's holy light; Protect us by Thy might, Great God, our King!
---	--	---	---

FOUNDERS' DAY ADDRESS—"Lafayette" - - - - - *Hon. William I. Schaffer, LL.D.,  
Justice-elect of the Supreme Court of Pennsylvania*

DEDICATORY ODE—"The Sword of Youth" - - - - - *H. MacKnight Black, A.B. '16*

**"Battle Hymn of the Republic"**

Mine eyes have seen the glory of the coming of the Lord; He is trampling out the vintage where the grapes of wrath are stored; He hath loosed the fateful lightning of His terrible, swift sword! His truth is marching on.	I can read his righteous sentence by the dim and flaring lamps His day is marching on.— <i>Chorus.</i>
CHORUS.—Glory, glory, hallelujah! Glory, glory, hallelujah! Glory, glory, hallelujah! His truth is marching on.	He has sounded forth the trumpet that shall never call retreat; He is sifting out the hearts of men before His judgment seat; Oh, be swift, my soul, to answer Him! be jubilant, my feet! Our God is marching on.— <i>Chorus.</i>
I have seen Him in the watch-fires of a hundred circling camps; They have builded Him an altar in the evening dews and damps;	In the beauty of the lilies Christ was born across the sea, With a glory in His bosom that transfigures you and me; As he died to make men holy, let us die to make men free, While God is marching on.— <i>Chorus.</i>

**CONFERRING OF HONORARY DEGREES**

The candidates will be presented by Hon. Edward J. Fox, LL.D., on behalf of  
the Board of Trustees

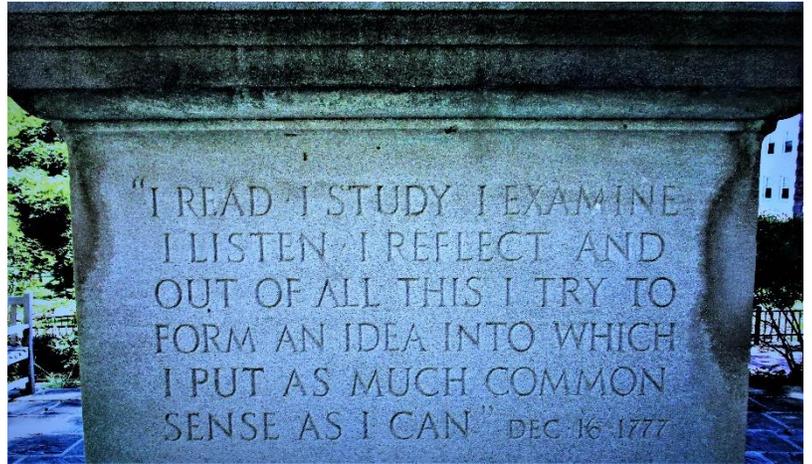
BENEDICTION - - - - - *Rev. Leighton W. Eckard, D.D., '66*

**"Alma Mater"**

We'll gather by the twilight's glow, In front of old Pardee, In all the world no other scene, So fair, so dear to me, O Lafayette, O Lafayette, To thee our voices raise! While loyal lips and loyal hearts Unite to sing thy praise.	CHORUS. We'll gather by the twilight's glow, In front of old Pardee, In all the world no other scene, So fair, so dear to me.	And future years shall not erase These gems of memory rare, But oft we'll live the scenes again, Impressed so firmly there. O Lafayette, O Lafayette, O joyous college days! E'er while these loyal hearts shall beat, There's loyal lips to praise.— <i>Cho.</i>
--	---	--

RECESSIONAL—"March Pontifical" - - - - - *Lemmens*

During the American Revolution, while in camp at Valley Forge in the Winter of 1777-1778, Lafayette had written these words in a letter to his father-in-law: "I read, I study, I examine, I listen, I reflect, and out of all of this I try to form an idea into which I put as much common sense as I can." Given the saying's significance for an educational institution, it was chosen from a number of suggestions to be inscribed on Bacon's pedestal base. To put the phrase in context, Lafayette's letter to his father-in-law had continued: "I shall not speak much for fear of saying foolish things. I will risk still less for fear of doing them, for I am not disposed to abuse the confidence which they have deigned to show me. Such is the conduct which until now I have followed and will follow." President McCracken himself translated the saying from the original French for the pedestal inscription.



*Inscription on back of pedestal*



*Inscription on front of pedestal*

David Bishop Skillman, in his two-volume *The biography of a College – Lafayette*, relates the following story about dedication day. A student prank almost disrupted the statue's ceremony. Arriving early before the dedication, the college Bursar "noticed changed contours in the flag draped statue of the Marquis." Investigation underneath the American and French flags revealed that the statue had been scantily dressed in shocking female attire. The garments were immediately removed, and the ceremony went on with none of the participants knowing what they had missed.

During the author's college years in the late 1960s, it was standard practice for the students at each school in the most-played college football rivalry (Lafayette College vs. Lehigh University), to wreak havoc on each other's campuses during the week prior to the game. Accordingly, the Lafayette grounds crew would protect the Daniel Chester French Statue each year by encasing it in a plywood box. One year, someone (presumably a student) scrawled the following message in spray paint on the box "I read, I study, I examine, I listen, I reflect, and out of all of this I try to figure out WHY THE HELL THEY PUT ME IN THIS BOX EVERY YEAR!"

Over the decades the Marquis has had his sword removed many times by pranksters, but the College still has possession of the original. In 2007, for the 250<sup>th</sup> anniversary of Lafayette's birth, the decorative white gravel surrounding the statue was removed and a bluestone plaza was constructed with bench seating, lighting, and a fountain positioned behind the statue. The plaza was funded by Jere G. Oren '50 in memory of his parents. The fountain was dedicated in memory of a recent graduate of the college, Dan O'Neil '06, who had been a victim of the mass shootings that year at Virginia Tech.





Centennial Celebration [of the College's opening] in May, 1932, as it was the first inception or beginning of this inspiration for the Marquis, and is very precious, since it will always be an example of how from the little images, great work grows."

Our story of the statue comes full circle in July of 1931, ten years after the campus dedication. Daniel Chester French presented the College with a one-foot square sketch model of the Prospect Park monument cast in Bronze. It turned out to be the last work of the great sculptor. He died 3 months later. Frederick K. Detwiller, in his account of the statue story published in the November, 1943 issue of *The Lafayette Alumnus*, concluded by saying: "I know Mr. French would have been pleased to know that [the small bronze model] was one of the most prized possessions of the College at the

It should be noted that the 1932 Centennial Celebration also resulted in the formation of the historic and patriotic society, *The American Friends of Lafayette (AFL)*. Stuart Wells Jackson and Judge Walter P. Gardner, leading Lafayette collectors, along with eleven other enthusiastic admirers of General Lafayette formed the Society at that time. The AFL collection of historical documents and memorabilia, along with additional items acquired by the College, is now housed in Special Collections at Skillman Library on campus as "The Marquis de Lafayette Collection." It consists of more than 2,000 catalogued items: books, pamphlets, articles, manuscripts, engravings, prints, and scores of other memorabilia.



*Frederick K. Detwiller, the mover and shaker behind the Daniel Chester French statue at Lafayette College, was a loyal dedicated alumnus who fell into the role in a chance meeting on a train ride. He spent the final years of his life (1948-1953) as artist-in-residence at the College. His personal and business papers, as well as the contents of his studio are now held in the College archives.*

*In the 1943 Lafayette Alumnus article, Daniel Chester French's daughter, Margaret French Cresson, wrote the following about her late father:*



**DANIEL CHESTER FRENCH**  
1850-1931

*On the day that he completed his twenty-fifth year, Daniel Chester French's first statue, the Minute Man, was unveiled at Concord, Massachusetts. Nearly fifty years later, his statue of Lincoln was dedicated in the Lincoln Memorial in Washington. Between these two pinnacles have risen the Custom House groups in New York, the bronze doors of the Boston Public Library, the Standing Lincoln in Lincoln, Nebraska, the John Harvard at Harvard University, the Alma Mater at Columbia, and the Equestrian of Washington in Paris. Through these monuments and hundreds more, Daniel Chester French has given to our American cities the highest standard in American sculpture.*

**Author's Notes:** As far as we know, this story of a chance train meeting resulting in the magnificent Daniel Chester French statue on the campus of Lafayette College has not been told in print since 1943 when Detwiller wrote about it himself. It resurfaced when AFL and Massachusetts Lafayette Society President Alan Hoffman was told the basics of the story by AFL member Frederic C. Detwiller, a descendent and cousin of the great alumnus. All quotations in this story come from the 1943 *Lafayette Alumnus* article by Frederick K. Detwiller '04.

Commentators at the time of the Prospect Park dedication emphasized the placement of the monument at a Revolutionary War site - The Battle of Brooklyn. While a true statement, this author believes that it is simply a coincidence. Many locations on the east coast were touched by the war, Brooklyn among them. Harteau chose the Prospect Park site because he was a prominent citizen and member of the Brooklyn Parks Commission. In truth, the Battle of Brooklyn was nothing to celebrate. The Continental Army barely escaped across the East River in the dead of night to what is known today as Manhattan, losing New York to the British for the rest of the war. Washington's troops then retreated across New Jersey to Pennsylvania. The fact remains that Lafayette had nothing to do with any of this because it all took place before the young Marquis arrived in America at age nineteen.

The events portrayed here are yet another indication of the tremendous impact that General Lafayette made on America during his 1824-1825 Triumphant Tour. He was the biggest celebrity that this country had ever seen. Residents from large cities to small towns tried to outdo each other with their expressions of adulation and adoration. After meeting the great man, Easton Pennsylvania citizens named their College after him. After kissing his hand, a small boy grew up to donate a magnificent monument in a Brooklyn park in his honor. Having created that monument, a generous sculptor supported by a generous contributor, donated an awe-inspiring statue of the dashing young Marquis for the Lafayette College campus.

As almost everyone connected with Lafayette College knows, there is a second statue of Lafayette on the campus standing behind Hogg Hall. A copy of the statue located in Paris on the North Façade of the Louvre by Parisian sculptor Jean Pierre Gras (J.P.Grass), it was once installed at the entrance to the John Wanamaker store in Philadelphia. This statue's donation to the College by the John Wanamaker Company took place in 1938, seventeen years after the dedication of the Daniel Chester French masterpiece in front of Colton Chapel.



*Two views of the copy of the Gras statue donated to Lafayette College by the Wanamaker Company in 1938*

**Trivia Question:**  
**Who Was the French Physician Nominated by Lafayette  
to the Society of the Cincinnati?**

by Ernest & Janet Sutton

On Veterans Day, Colonial Williamsburg sponsors a wreath-laying ceremony which is customarily held at the Williamsburg Governor's Palace Revolutionary War Cemetery. Enclosed by a brick wall with a dedication plaque, the cemetery is in the former orchard terrace of the Governor's Palace. It's not well known except to members of the AFL, and those who participated in a private tour of Williamsburg and its cemetery as part of a previous AFL Yorktown Day program. In 2020, the event was filmed in advance at the Williamsburg Magazine, with US Navy veteran Paul Higgins representing the AFL. Higgins earlier served as the skipper of the ballistic missile nuclear submarine USS *Lafayette* (SSBN-616).

After 148 years, the cemetery was only rediscovered in 1930 when the Rockefeller Foundation was reconstructing Colonial Williamsburg, which included the Governor's Palace. The Palace was built from 1706 onward. In its day, it was considered to be one of the most majestic buildings in America. With the coming of the American War of Independence, the last royal governor, John Murray, fled Williamsburg. The palace then became the residence of the first two governors of the new Commonwealth of Virginia, Patrick Henry and Thomas Jefferson. The seat of government was moved to Richmond in 1780. After the successful siege of Yorktown on October 18, 1781, the vacant palace was used as an American Military Hospital. The French Army also retired to Williamsburg to winter over and used one wing of William & Mary College as a hospital.

As one of three major generals with Rochambeau, the Marquis de Chastellux in his *Travels in North America 1780, 1781, 1782*, describes the wintering over as being enlivened by two events: the accidental burning of the French Hospital at William & Mary College, and on December 22, 1781, the burning of the American Hospital at the Governor's Palace. It took three hours for the latter to burn to the ground. Otherwise, the younger French officers had nothing to do but "riding to the hounds and calling on the ladies." The latter activity led to some very successful liaisons for American history.

After the French encampment, the American cemetery was abandoned, as was the French burial site at nearby Bucktrout Cottage. In 1930 the National Park Service (NPS) rediscovered the cemetery with 156 soldiers and 2 women identified by the military components of their uniforms.

Because the French Army Medical Corps was well-established, it was their Chief Physician, or *premier médecin* (called Command Surgeon in today's American Army parlance), who cared for both American and French soldiers at Williamsburg. While serving as Chief Physician in America, he earned the esteem of Washington as recorded in correspondence dated October 7, 1782, the friendship of Benjamin Franklin, and doctorate degrees from two American Universities. But because he was not of noble birth and considered only a French staff officer, it took the personal intervention of Lafayette and Franklin for him to be inducted into the Society of the Cincinnati. Who was this French Expeditionary Force Chief Physician considered by the National Library of Medicine during the American Bicentennial as one of the top ten physicians in our War for Independence?



Governor's Palace, Colonial Williamsburg, Virginia - Original 1706, Reconstructed 1931  
Photo by Larry Pieniazek



Governor's Palace Revolutionary War Cemetery with dedication plaque, Colonial Williamsburg, Virginia  
Photo by Cory (CSC) on findagrave.com



Dedication plaque, Governor's Palace Revolutionary War Cemetery, Colonial Williamsburg, Virginia  
Photo by Cory (CSC) on findagrave.com

**Grave Marker Text:**

Within this Enclosure  
Lie Interred the Remains  
of One Hundred and Fifty Six Men  
and Two Women

\* \* \*

These Remains were Discovered  
in the Year 1930  
during the Excavations incident to the  
Reconstruction of the Palace and its Gardens  
and were left undisturbed  
No Record of Internments in this Garden has been  
found in spite of diligent and extended Search  
It is known that the Palace was used  
*by George Washington*  
as a Military Hospital  
during the Yorktown Campaign of 1781  
Military Insignia were found in the Graves  
It is Concluded from this Evidence that  
the Palace Garden was used as a Cemetery  
for Soldiers of the Continental Army  
under his Command  
To the Memory  
*of those who lie buried here*  
*this Enclosure*  
*is Dedicated*

## Wilmington's Most Acclaimed Visitor

by William S. Knightly

Wilmington, Delaware has hosted many interesting and famous visitors over its approximately 275-year history. History argues that one visitor was easily the most acclaimed person ever to visit Wilmington. Who was this honored visitor? Hint: More than forty cities, towns, and counties across America bear his name. No, it wasn't the ever-popular George Washington or any subsequent president, although such dignitaries spent time as guests of the city.

Wilmington's cherished guest was a Frenchman named Marie Joseph Paul Yves Roch Gilbert du Motier. History knows him better as the Marquis de Lafayette.

Lafayette was largely unknown during his first trip to Wilmington in 1777. But forty-seven years later during his jubilant return, he was welcomed by joyful and emotional throngs. Immense crowds that exceeded the entire population of the city gathered, eager just to get a glimpse of him. Wilmington had never seen such a celebration. No single person since has generated such an outpouring.

Lafayette's triumphant return to Wilmington in the years after the American Revolution and the unprecedented welcome he received are hallmarks of Wilmington's early history, yet they are largely unknown to current residents. Unfortunately, almost nothing remains in the city's modern memory to commemorate these historic visits. Today, it's hard to imagine the kind of emotional attachment that Americans—and particularly the people of Wilmington—felt for Lafayette. These feelings were undeniably mutual.

Why was Lafayette so respected and beloved by the citizens of Wilmington?

### *Lafayette and the American Revolution*

Lafayette served as a major general in the Continental Army and as the trusted aide and confidante of George Washington. His formative mentoring and initial military experiences during the Revolution were centered within a fifteen-mile radius of Wilmington.

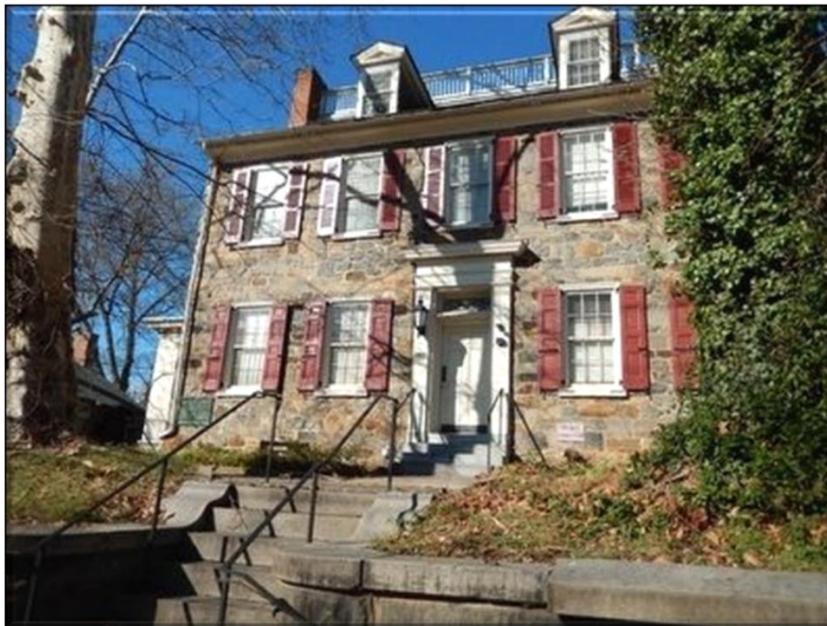
The nineteen-year-old French nobleman first came to the United States in the months just prior to the Battle of the Brandywine. Arriving in Charleston, South Carolina, in June of 1777, Lafayette described colonial America in a letter to his wife. "The country and its inhabitants are as agreeable as my enthusiasm has led me to imagine. Simplicity of manner, kindness of heart, love of country and of liberty, and a delightful state of equality, are met with universally."<sup>1</sup> Delaware's Victor DuPont described Lafayette's affection for America, saying he was "the friend of mankind by nature and of America by choice."<sup>2</sup>

Lafayette was convinced of the righteousness of the colonial independence movement, and he sought to put his idealism, resources, and life at the service of the American cause. Arriving in Philadelphia in July of 1777, he was soon introduced to George Washington. The

larger-than-life Washington made an indelible first impression on Lafayette. “Although he was surrounded by officers and citizens, it was impossible to mistake for a moment his majestic figure and deportment, nor was he less distinguished by the noble affability of his manner.”<sup>3</sup> Washington, on the other hand, was at first unsure of the young Frenchman. During the Revolution, numerous foreign generals, nobles, and soldiers of fortune had made their way to America looking to lend their services. Many had suspect motives. Soon, however, Washington saw something different in the earnest young Frenchman, who spoke only halting English. Unlike many of the other foreign officers offering their services, Lafayette’s attitude was subdued, even humble. He told Washington, “It is to learn and not to teach that I come hither.”<sup>4</sup> In August of 1777, Lafayette received his commission as a major general in the Continental Army. Lacking a unit to command, he was appointed as an aide-de-camp on Washington’s staff. It was in this capacity that he made his first visit to Wilmington, arriving with Washington on August 25, 1777.<sup>5</sup>

That same day, the British, under General William Howe, landed about twenty miles southwest of Wilmington at Head of Elk (present-day Elkton, Maryland) with an army of approximately fifteen thousand troops. Their objective was the capture of Philadelphia. The Continental Army occupied a strong defensive position in and around Wilmington between August 25 and September 9, 1777. Positioned here, Washington hoped to block the British advance on Philadelphia.

While in Wilmington, Lafayette stayed in the home of Joseph Tatnall at 1803 North Market. He shared this residence with General “Mad” Anthony Wayne, who established his division’s headquarters in the same house. The home still stands today in the Brandywine Village section of Wilmington. Tatnall owned one of the largest flour mills on the Brandywine. Although a Quaker and opposed to war, Tatnall courageously continued to grind flour for the Continental Army at significant risk to himself.<sup>6</sup>



*The Tatnall House is located at 1803 Market Street (Kings Highway) in Brandywine Village, Wilmington. This house was used by Lafayette in Aug and Sep of 1777 prior to the Battle of the Brandywine.*

Embarking from their headquarters in Wilmington, Washington and Lafayette reconnoitered British positions at Iron Hill, just outside of Newark, Delaware. Lafayette is also thought to have accompanied Washington on his reconnaissance ride along the Brandywine River from Wilmington to Chadds Ford, Pennsylvania, around August 30, 1777.<sup>7</sup> Lafayette likely assisted Washington in evaluating all the fords above Wilmington, including those at current-day Rockland and Smith's Bridge.<sup>8</sup> As a result of this reconnaissance, Washington placed 250 troops at each of these specific fords.<sup>9</sup>

The young French officer said goodbye to his teenage years when he turned twenty on September 6, 1777. Two days later, the British conducted a strategic flanking maneuver, bypassing the expected route through Wilmington. The result was the epic struggle at Chadds Ford known as the Battle of the Brandywine. It was here that Lafayette, while trying to rally American troops, was wounded. He was eventually evacuated to Chester, Pennsylvania. Washington dispatched his personal surgeon to attend him. Lafayette spent weeks recovering in Bethlehem, Pennsylvania, before rejoining the army at Valley Forge. He went on to command a division of Virginia troops, becoming one of Washington's most trusted generals.

Lafayette forged a close relationship with Washington, who treated him like a son.<sup>10</sup> For Lafayette, Washington was a father figure.<sup>11</sup> "Never was an adoption more complete than his own."<sup>12</sup> Their relationship was so close that Lafayette named his own son George Washington Lafayette. They maintained a close relationship until Washington's death in 1799.

During the revolution, Lafayette may have had other occasions to pass through Wilmington, given its strategic location along the King's Highway. This thirteen-hundred-mile road running between Charles Town, South Carolina, and Boston, Massachusetts, was the well-traveled lifeline of the original colonies.<sup>13</sup>

### *Lafayette Returns to Wilmington*

Lafayette made two notable visits to Wilmington in his later life. The first and most significant visit would be an emotional and joyous return marked by official pomp and ceremony. The second visit, just months later, would be personal and somewhat less public. Both visits, although different in character, were memorable, if not historic, events for the city.

The most celebrated visit by Lafayette to Wilmington occurred in 1824. President James Monroe and the United States Congress invited Lafayette to officially tour the United States. The intent was to thank and honor him at a time when those who had secured American independence were in their twilight years. By then, his reputation as a hero of the American Revolution was legendary. Lafayette was sixty-seven years old and the last surviving major general of the Revolutionary War.<sup>14</sup> The visit induced a remarkable outpouring of patriotism and emotion throughout the nation. Over thirteen months, Lafayette visited all twenty-four states. This grand tour brought Lafayette to Wilmington, where he was officially welcomed and honored by the city and state.

On October 8, 1824, the State of Delaware and the Borough of Wilmington prepared an electrifying welcome for the aging French hero.<sup>15</sup> Father Patrick Kenny, one of the first Catholic priests to serve Wilmington, noted the significance of the day in his diary. "La Fayette day in Wilmington ... wagons, dearborns, gigs, sulkeys, horsemen and women, footmen and boys all crowding to witness the entry of La Fayette"<sup>16</sup> Delaware's most prominent citizens met Lafayette at the Delaware border as he made his way from Pennsylvania. He was accompanied by a large delegation from Pennsylvania, including its governor. Delaware's welcoming delegation was led by Congressman Louis McLane and Victor DuPont. An elaborate arch was erected at Naaman's Creek. The arch extended over the Philadelphia Pike (formerly King's Highway). A portrait of George Washington and an American eagle were suspended from the center. The arch was emblazoned with the words, "Delaware Welcomes Lafayette."<sup>17</sup> Lafayette, his secretary Auguste Levasseur, and his son George Washington Lafayette were transported in elaborate barouches (open carriages). Lafayette's barouche was drawn by a team of four white horses. The colorful formation included a civic escort of two hundred mounted horsemen with blue coats and white pantaloons, a cavalry troop, and a "fine band of music."<sup>18</sup> The *American Watchman* newspaper described the order of march:

Captain Moore's troop led the procession, the band followed; next came the committee of arrangement in carriages, General Lafayette in an open barouche accompanied by Louis M'lane Esq., Revolutionary officers in another barouche, George Washington Lafayette and Mr. Auguste Le Vasseur in a barouche followed by a train of carriages, all escorted by the civic guard from Wilmington;- the guard composed of mounted citizens from Upper Delaware brought up the rear. The procession, thus arranged, moved with fine order and great effect toward Wilmington.<sup>19</sup>

The entire procession from the Delaware state line into Wilmington made its way along the Philadelphia Pike.<sup>20</sup> It may come as a surprise to north Delaware residents that the Philadelphia Pike, often assumed to be just another postindustrial highway, was the conduit of this remarkable parade. The response from the crowds along the way was enthusiastic and emotional:

The road from Wilmington to the state line, a distance of seven miles was crowded with people on foot, on horseback and in carriages. ... The scene along the whole route was gratifying and exhilarating in the extreme. ... Wilmington and the neighboring country poured out their population. ... Aged men were seen tottering under the weight of years, crowding around the carriage of Lafayette, and seeking to grasp his hand. ... It is difficult to do justice to the spectacle which attended the General's course through the Borough. The concourse of people assembled to witness the occasion, far exceeds any number that was ever seen in this place. Ten or twelve thousand people were in the streets; while windows everywhere exhibited a splendid display of female beauty, arrayed in all the charms of dress. Several handsome arches were thrown across Market Street under which the procession passed.<sup>21</sup>

As the procession of carriages moved south down the Philadelphia Pike, it reached Shellpot Hill (known today as Penny Hill). “The citizens were apprised of the approach of the procession by a salute of thirteen guns.”<sup>22</sup> About a quarter mile from Wilmington, the entourage was joined by even more escorts. This included one hundred mounted Freemasons, preceded by the state’s Masonic Grand Master.<sup>23</sup>

As Lafayette’s procession passed through Brandywine Village, Joseph Tatnall’s house came into view.<sup>24</sup> This was the very house where the nineteen-year-old general had stayed prior to the Battle of the Brandywine in 1777. The emotions Lafayette must have felt seeing this house after more than forty years can only be imagined. Sadly, Joseph Tatnall was long deceased. But Lafayette spotted Tatnall’s son and family standing in the doorway. “As he passed through Brandywine, he requested that the procession might be detained a few minutes at his (Tatnall’s) son’s door, while he paid his respects to the representatives of his worthy friend.”<sup>25</sup>



*Brandywine Village, Wilmington Delaware*

*Lafayette stayed in the second house from the left in August of 1777 prior to the Battle of the Brandywine. In October of 1824, he stopped in front of this house to pay his respects to the Tatnall family which had hosted him in 1777. The street in front of the houses is the former Kings Highway.*

When Lafayette’s procession came within sight of Wilmington, church bells began to ring. “Joy and exaltation reigned supreme among the people.”<sup>26</sup> Upon reaching the Brandywine Bridge into Wilmington, Lafayette found it decorated with flowers, evergreens, and banners. A sea of men, women, and children lined the streets. Lafayette acknowledged the crowds and

thanked them “as tears streaked down his cheeks.”<sup>27</sup> He confided to his hosts, “Well it is forty-two years since I was here and how pleased I am to visit your town again.”<sup>28</sup>

The procession proceeded down Market Street, parts of King, French, and High streets (now 4th Street), eventually turning back again to Market Street. At 3rd and Market, Lafayette passed the famous Sign of the Ship tavern where multitudes of travelers found food, drink, and lodging in colonial times. Upon this occasion it was renamed the Lafayette Hotel.<sup>29</sup> The scale of the welcome and outpouring of emotion that Lafayette received were beyond anything ever experienced in the city.

The grand procession terminated on Market Street in front of the city hall. Here Lafayette dismounted his carriage and passed through an honor guard of Freemasons. He was escorted to the second floor of the city hall where upwards of one hundred guests waited to celebrate a dinner in his honor. He met with friends, acquaintances, and veterans of the revolution, many wearing a special Lafayette badge designed for the occasion. James McNeal, a local businessman, presented Lafayette with “a splendid pair of boots.”<sup>30</sup>

As the ceremonial part of the dinner commenced, a series of toasts were proposed. “The band in the room accompanied the toasts with appropriate airs.”<sup>31</sup> The First Burgess (mayor) of Wilmington, James Brobson, gave the initial toast. “General Lafayette—welcome to the nation so deeply indebted to his generous and heroic services for the Liberty and happiness it now enjoys.”<sup>32</sup> Lafayette responded with his own toast. “The Borough of Wilmington—and may the Brandywine, after having been a scene of bloody disputes between the soldiers of liberty and the satellites of oppression, become more and more the powerful assistant of ever-increasing manufacture.”<sup>33</sup> Lafayette’s toast was surely pleasing to Èleuthère Irénée (E.I.) DuPont, Delaware’s business and manufacturing leader who was in attendance at the banquet. Mr. DuPont, who had operated the famous gunpowder mills along the Brandywine since 1802, then made a toast to “the prosperity and happiness of the United States, a lesson to the world.”<sup>34</sup>

Ten other guests proposed various toasts to the country, George Washington, fallen veterans, and a host of other patriotic causes. Perhaps the most stirring words were delivered by J.G. Brinkle, Delaware’s Masonic Grand Master:

We cannot forget ... you came to our aid through dangers and difficulties—that you entered our little army without rank—that you risked your life—that you shed your blood in our battles—and in short, that you identified your feelings with those of an American patriot. There breathes not an American who does not honor the name Lafayette.<sup>35</sup>

At the conclusion of the festivities at the city hall, Lafayette departed for New Castle. There he was “welcomed by a salute of thirteen guns and the principals of the place.”<sup>36</sup> He later attended the wedding of Victor DuPont’s son, Charles Irénée DuPont, to Miss Dorcas Van Dyke. Later in the evening, he departed New Castle via the Frenchtown Turnpike en route to a waiting steamship and Baltimore. If the exhausting schedule impacted Lafayette’s stamina, history does not record it.

### *Lafayette's Final Visit to Wilmington*

Lafayette was to make one final, mostly private, trip to Wilmington. This short visit is noteworthy not just because it was Lafayette's last visit to Wilmington and his farewell to the Brandywine Valley, but also because it connects him to people well known to Wilmington and to places that still exist. His visit occurred on July 25 and 26, 1825.<sup>37</sup> Having traveled throughout the United States, Lafayette found himself again in Philadelphia, where he took an extended break from his strenuous schedule. On July 25, he boarded the steamship *Delaware* and headed down the Delaware River to Wilmington.<sup>38</sup> Here, he accepted the invitation to stay as a guest at the homes of E.I. and Victor DuPont. Although this visit did not entail official ceremonies in Wilmington, Lafayette did make time for his Freemason brethren. Upon his arrival on the morning of July 25, he dined with the Freemasons of Wilmington. They presented him with a wooden box that had been carved from an oak tree taken from the battlefield at Brandywine. It contained his certificate of membership into the Grand Lodge of Delaware. Lafayette also signed the charter of Lafayette Lodge No. 14, the Wilmington lodge renamed in his honor.<sup>39</sup> Following the meeting with Wilmington's Masonic community, Lafayette traveled the short distance to Victor DuPont's estate at Louviers along the Brandywine. The actual house in which Lafayette stayed, known as "Lower Louviers," still stands today and is not far from the DuPont Country Club.



*Louviers, Victor DuPont's estate, located on the east side of the Brandywine River, just north of Wilmington*

We know some of the personal details of Lafayette's visit to the DuPonts because of a remarkable letter written by Sophie Madeleine DuPont, the daughter of E.I. DuPont.<sup>40</sup> Sophie was fifteen years old at the time of Lafayette's visit.

In a letter to her brother Henry, Sophie Madeleine wrote about the visit. "They all arrived in the morning & all dined at uncle Victor's at Louviers (grand diner de ceremonie)."<sup>41</sup> She includes typical family moments, describing how a newborn DuPont baby was carried downstairs at Louviers to be presented to Lafayette. Other personal glimpses into the visit highlight the letter. Sophie Madeleine even detailed the sleeping arrangements. "Genl Lafayette

and one of the gentlemen who accompanied him slept at uncle Victor's. George Washington Lafayette & one of the gentlemen whose name was Levasseur stayed at our house."<sup>42</sup> In this case, "our house" was the home of her father, E.I. Dupont, just above the Hagley powder mills. Like Louviers, this house still stands. Preserved at Hagley Museum, the house is regularly open to the public.



*E. I. DuPont's house, located on the west side of the Brandywine River on the current grounds of the Hagley Museum*

Sophie Madeleine was so impressed with the DuPont guests, that she kept as souvenirs small items left behind by Lafayette and his son.<sup>43</sup> The next morning, Lafayette crossed the Brandywine via the footbridge connecting the estates of E.I. and Victor. There, he met with a delegation of Revolutionary War veterans and dignitaries from Delaware and Pennsylvania. They then set out to tour the Brandywine battlefield, arriving near Chadds Ford about 12 noon. Both DuPont brothers and Sophie Madeleine accompanied Lafayette through northern Delaware to Chadds Ford, on what Sophie Madeline described as a "glorious summer day."<sup>44</sup> At Chadds Ford, Lafayette reminisced with old veterans and visited historic locations. He also made time to visit with the elderly Gideon Gilpin in whose house he had stayed before the Battle of Brandywine.<sup>45</sup> Lafayette spent the night of July 26 in West Chester.

The emotion and the genuine affection for Lafayette during his farewell visits in 1824–25 are fascinating, but not surprising. He loved America and felt a keen attachment to its people and ideals. That affection extended to the people of Wilmington and the Brandywine Valley who had so influenced his early life.

Prior to departing Delaware for the last time, Lafayette wrote these poignant words in the album of Sophie DuPont: "After having seen, nearly half a century ago, the banks of the Brandywine a scene of bloody fighting, I am happy now to find it the seat of industry, beauty and friendship."<sup>46</sup>

Lafayette departed America on September 8, 1825. Leaving from the Potomac River, he sailed for France on an American navy frigate, appropriately named *Brandywine*.<sup>47</sup>



United States Navy Frigate *Brandywine*

When Lafayette died in 1834, President Andrew Jackson expressed the official condolences of the United States to the family of Lafayette, calling him “the friend of the United States, the friend of Washington, and the friend of Liberty.”<sup>48</sup> Wilmington mourned Lafayette as if it had lost a native son. “Wilmington showed every sign of respect. ... while stores and other businesses were closed.”<sup>49</sup> An official memorial procession was conducted and citizens from all walks of life came forward to participate.

A solemn funeral was formed and passed through the principal streets of the city in the following order: The Governor of the state, the Mayor, Clergymen, Members of the bar... Masons, Odd Fellows, a white charger led by a groom with chapeau, Cordwainers Society, Benevolent Society, Brandywine Coopers Association, young men between sixteen and twenty-one years, one hundred little boys dressed in white “pantaloons” headed by a white banner with “We mourn our loss,” military companies and citizens - one thousand in all. All the bells in the city tolled as the procession passed through the streets and minute guns were fired from the revenue cutter in the Christiana (now known as the Christina River).<sup>50</sup>

People throughout the city felt the loss deeply. “Everybody appeared to vie with his neighbor in testifying his sincere veneration for the memory of the illustrious and early benefactor of this country.”<sup>51</sup>

Modern memory of Lafayette in Wilmington has dimmed to a faint shadow. To many in the current generation, his historic visits to the city will come as a revelation. Rarely, if ever, have the citizens of Wilmington poured out such a level of admiration and affection as they did

for Lafayette. In 2025, it will have been 200 years since his last visit to Wilmington. The city has a golden opportunity to commemorate him in some tangible way and re-introduce him to younger generations. 21<sup>st</sup> century citizens of Wilmington will find much to embrace given the legacy of honor, freedom and justice that typified Lafayette. Although a man born in the age of revolution, he is a timeless role model for today.

### About the Author

Bill Knightly is a retired army officer and lives with his family in Wilmington, Delaware. He is an avid historian of the local area and has produced numerous podcasts and a film documentary on colonial history in Delaware. He can be contacted at [delawarehistoryexpress@gmail.com](mailto:delawarehistoryexpress@gmail.com).

---

<sup>1</sup> M. Lafayette, *Memoirs, Correspondence and Manuscripts* (London: Saunders, 1837), Volume I, 94. Although Lafayette praised the “state of equality” in America, he was adamantly opposed to slavery and remained a dedicated abolitionist throughout his life. “I would never have drawn my sword in the cause of America if I could have conceived that thereby I was founding a land of slavery.” Hank Parfitt, “Lafayette and Slavery,” Lafayette Society, n.d., [www.lafayettesociety.org](http://www.lafayettesociety.org), accessed July 1, 2020.

<sup>2</sup> “Lists of toasts made at the Lafayette dinner at the town hall on Wednesday last,” *American Watchman* (October 12, 1824), Library of Congress, National Endowment for the Humanities. Wilmington, Delaware, October 24, 1824, <https://chroniclingamerica.loc.gov/lccn/sn88053080>, accessed July 1, 2020. Victor DuPont was the brother of Èleuthère Irénée DuPont, founder of the gunpowder manufacturer E.I. DuPont de Nemours & Company. Victor served as Lafayette’s aide-de-camp in France during the French Revolution before going to Wilmington in 1811. Lafayette maintained close relationships with the DuPont family and corresponded with them frequently.

<sup>3</sup> Lafayette, *Memoirs*, 18. Lafayette details his respect and affection for Washington with these words: “Had he been a common soldier, he would have been the bravest in the ranks, had he been an obscure citizen, all his neighbors would have respected him.” *Ibid.*, 65.

<sup>4</sup> *Ibid.*, 14.

<sup>5</sup> Lafayette had actually passed through Wilmington via the King’s Highway in July of 1777 on his first visit to Philadelphia. There is no evidence that he remained in the Wilmington area for any significant amount of time.

<sup>6</sup> Elizabeth Montgomery, *Reminiscences of Wilmington: In Familiar Village Tales, Ancient and New* (Philadelphia: T.K. Collins Jr., 1851), 16.

<sup>7</sup> Michael C. Harris, *Brandywine: A Military History of the Battle that Lost Philadelphia but Saved a Nation, September 11, 1777* (El Dorado Hills, CA: Savas Beatie LLC, 1978), 119. “On the same day his divisions gathered in Wilmington (August 26), Washington reconnoitered toward Head of Elk with ... Lafayette”; “I was reconnoitering the country and different roads all Yesterday and am now setting out on the same business again.” George Washington to John Hancock, August 30, 1777, *The Papers of George Washington Digital Edition*, “General Orders Headquarters, Wilmington, Delaware August 31st, 1777” (Charlottesville: University of Virginia Press, Rotunda, 2008), [www.rotunda.upress.virginia.edu/founders/GEWN-03-11-02-0097](http://www.rotunda.upress.virginia.edu/founders/GEWN-03-11-02-0097), accessed July 21, 2017.

<sup>8</sup> Lafayette, *Memoirs*, 23. “M.de Lafayette, as a volunteer, always accompanied the general.”

<sup>9</sup> Washington, General Orders Headquarters, August 31, 1777.

<sup>10</sup> Lafayette, *Memoirs*, 105. “When he sent his best surgeon to me, he told him to take charge of me as if I were his son, because he loved me with the same affection.”

<sup>11</sup> When Lafayette was two years old, his father was killed at the Battle of Minden in 1757 during the Seven Years’ War. Ironically, the British officer said to be responsible, General William Phillips, was in Virginia during Lafayette’s famous Virginia campaign of 1781. He died of disease in May, 1781.

<sup>12</sup> Lafayette, *Memoirs*, 26.

<sup>13</sup> The King’s Highway, constructed in the late 17th century, ran thirteen hundred miles and was the main post road connecting the colonies. In northern Delaware, the current Philadelphia Pike follows the track of this colonial highway.

<sup>14</sup> The rank of major general was the highest rank in the Continental Army, except for Washington. His rank was general of the army.

<sup>15</sup> Wilmington received its charter as a borough from King George II in 1739. It was chartered as a city in 1832.

<sup>16</sup> J. Wilcox, “Extracts from the Diary of Rev. Patrick Kenny,” 448, Records of the American Catholic Historical Society of America, n.d., [www.jstor.org/stable/44207677](http://www.jstor.org/stable/44207677), accessed June 6, 2020. Father Kenny noted earlier in his diary, with some irritation, that the local people of northern Delaware had gone to see Lafayette when he visited Philadelphia in September of 1824. “No carpenters, fence makers—all gone to see Lafayette in Phil...Lafayette should have stayed in France.” Kenny Diary, 444.

<sup>17</sup> J. Thomas Scharf, *History of Delaware: 1609–1888* (Philadelphia: L.J. Richards & Co., 1888), 308.

<sup>18</sup> “Lafayette’s Visit to Wilmington,” *American Watchman*, October 6, 1824.

<sup>19</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>20</sup> The Philadelphia Pike became a toll road (turnpike) in 1811 and remained so for about one hundred years.

<sup>21</sup> “Lafayette’s Visit to Wilmington,” *American Watchman*, October 6, 1824.

<sup>22</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>23</sup> Lafayette was a devoted Freemason, as were George Washington and many of the general officers of the Revolution. During his farewell visit to the United States, Lafayette was feted by many local Freemason communities.

<sup>24</sup> Brandywine Village was a small community on the Brandywine just outside of Wilmington. It was famous for its eight flour mills and the quality of its “superfine” flour and cornmeal. It did not become part of Wilmington until 1869.

<sup>25</sup> Montgomery, *Reminiscences*, 16.

<sup>26</sup> Scharf, *History of Delaware*, 308.

<sup>27</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>28</sup> *Ibid.*, 309. Lafayette stated that it has been “forty-two” years since his last visit to Wilmington. This implies that he had revisited the town after 1777, in late 1781. This is likely, given his participation in the Yorktown campaign in the fall of 1781. He departed Boston for France in late December, 1781.

<sup>29</sup> “Lafayette’s Visit to Wilmington,” *American Watchman*, October 6, 1824. The Sign of the Ship was also known as “The Happy Retreat” prior to its name being changed to the Lafayette. Generations of customers likely continued to refer to it by its original name.

<sup>30</sup> “Lafayette at Wilmington,” *The Wilmingtonian and Delaware Register*, October 7, 1824, Library of Congress, National Endowment for the Humanities, <https://chroniclingamerica.loc.gov/lccn/sn88053080>, accessed July 1, 2020.

<sup>31</sup> “Toasts at Lafayette dinner,” *American Watchman*, October 12, 1824.

<sup>32</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>33</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>34</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>35</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>36</sup> “Lafayette at Wilmington,” *The Wilmingtonian*, October 7, 1824.

<sup>37</sup> DuPont Family Journal, “Visitors to the Brandywine in the Fall of 1825,” Entry July 25, 1825, *Sophie DuPont Collection*, Winterthur Manuscripts, group nine, Hagley Library and Soda House, Greenville Delaware. Note that some historians have incorrectly placed Lafayette in Chester, Pennsylvania, on July 25 and 26. This is likely due to a mistake made by Levasseur in his journal. He incorrectly listed Lafayette departing Chester, rather than Wilmington, on July 26. This mistake lives on in selected digital and print media.

---

<sup>38</sup> J. Bennett Nolan, *Lafayette in America Day by Day* (Baltimore, MD: Johns Hopkins Press, 1934), Entry Monday, July 25: "Leaves Philadelphia on steamboat Delaware for Wilmington."

<sup>39</sup> Robert Freke Gould, John Edward Allen, Melvin Maynard Johnson, and Dudley Wright, *Gould's History of Freemasonry Throughout the World* (New York: C. Scribner's Sons, 1936). The charter for Lodge 14 was also signed by George Washington Lafayette and Auguste Levasseur.

<sup>40</sup> Sophie Madeleine DuPont (1810–1888) was the daughter of E.I. DuPont and the niece of Victor DuPont. She married Victor's son (her first cousin) Samuel Francis DuPont and lived most of her life at Louviers on the Brandywine.

<sup>41</sup> Sophie Madeleine DuPont, letter to Henry DuPont, undated (circa 1870), *Sophie DuPont Collection*, Winterthur Manuscripts, group nine, Hagley Library and Soda House, Greenville Delaware.

<sup>42</sup> Ibid. Auguste Levasseur was Lafayette's personal secretary and accompanied him throughout his thirteen-month tour of America.

<sup>43</sup> Ibid. Sophie Madeleine wrote, "I kept for years some leather wax George Washington (Lafayette) left in his room & a piece of shoestring I found in Genl Lafayette's room."

<sup>44</sup> Ibid. Sophie Madeleine accompanied the Lafayette party to Chadds Ford. She indicates the entourage took a route by Montchanin Road on the west side of the Brandywine. The procession of carriages likely crossed the Brandywine at Smith's Bridge.

<sup>45</sup> Auguste Levasseur, *Lafayette in America in 1824 and 1825; or Journal of a Voyage to the United States* (Philadelphia: Carey and Lea, 1829), 259.

<sup>46</sup> Montgomery, *Reminiscences*, 49.

<sup>47</sup> L. Norton, "Connecticut's Charles Morris, The Forgotten Naval Hero," *Connecticut History Review* (n.d.): 76, [www.jstor.org/stable/44370283](http://www.jstor.org/stable/44370283), accessed June 15, 2020. Some historians have incorrectly identified the captain of the *Brandywine* as Jacob Nicholas Jones, a native of Smyrna, Delaware. The historical record clearly identifies *Brandywine's* captain as Charles Morris. Captain Jones, a distinguished officer, later commanded the *USS Constitution*.

<sup>48</sup> Andrew Jackson, "Letter to George Washington Lafayette," June 27, 1834, Cornell University Division of Rare and Manuscript Collections.

<sup>49</sup> Anna Lincoln, *Wilmington, Delaware: Three Centuries Under Four Flags, 1609–1937* (Rutland, VT: The Tuttle Publishing Co. Inc., 1937), 202.

<sup>50</sup> Scharf, *History of Delaware*, 309.

<sup>51</sup> Ibid.

## The AFL Proposes United States Postage Stamp to Commemorate 200<sup>th</sup> Anniversary of Lafayette's 1824 - 1825 Tour

by W. Robert Kelly, Sr.

*“The volumes of history furnish no parallel —*

*no one like La Fayette has ever re-appeared in any country.”<sup>1</sup>*

*Hezekiah Niles*

*November 6, 1824*

Is the above statement extravagance or hyperbole or neither? We hope our proposal answers this question. On Friday, November 13, 2020, the officers of the AFL submitted a 71-page proposal to the United States Postal Service's Citizen's Stamp Advisory Committee (CSAC) entitled “United States Postage Stamp Proposal: A Commemorative Stamp to Memorialize and Celebrate the 200<sup>th</sup> Anniversary of Lafayette's Triumphant Tour of the United States as the Official ‘Guest of the Nation’ August 15, 1824 - September 9, 1825.” Our proposed issue date is August 15, 2024, the day Lafayette arrived in New York 200 years ago.

The CSAC is composed of ten members appointed by the Postmaster General to suggest postage stamps of historical significance as one of the criteria. Historical events are considered for commemoration on anniversaries in multiples of fifty years. Lafayette has been featured previously on three stamps shown below. Lafayette's visit as “Guest of the Nation” has yet to be commemorated. The 200<sup>th</sup> anniversary of this event in 2024 is an ideal date for this highly significant commemoration. Furthermore, it is remarkable that Niles' statement above is still as true today as it was 200 years ago.



Left: Issued September 6, 1957, the 200<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the birth of Lafayette.  
Center: Issued June 13, 1952, the 175<sup>th</sup> anniversary of his arrival in America to take-up a major general's commission in the Continental Army. Right: Issued June 13, 1977, the 200<sup>th</sup> anniversary of Lafayette's landing on the coast of South Carolina.

The Postal Service provides no forms or template for proposal submission. Therefore, we elected to use contemporary sources almost exclusively – Levasseur's *Journal*, letters of Washington, Jefferson, and Madison, the *Niles' Weekly Register*, and other sources. The proposal at 71 pages incorporates 78 footnotes from 44 sources. It was our strategy to provide a panoply of information such that each member of the committee will find something of interest.

The CSAC has set eleven basic criteria for determining the eligibility of subjects for commemoration. Our proposal addressed each of the applicable six criteria in detail. One criterion that was discussed at length was, “What is Lafayette’s legacy to the United States?” There are many positive contributions, but we chose the following four as our top contenders to submit to the CSAC:

1. Lafayette’s military prowess in Virginia during the summer and fall of 1781 culminating in the surrender of Cornwallis at Yorktown must rank first. This victory assured American independence from Great Britain.
2. Lafayette’s steadfast devotion to George Washington led to his becoming known as Washington’s adopted son.
3. His outspoken views against slavery. At every opportunity Lafayette proclaimed his antislavery views to all leaders and their acquaintances. He also was great friend and advocate for the Native Americans who revered him.
4. Lafayette’s visit to Philadelphia and his speech in the Pennsylvania State House which saved the edifice for what became and is now one of the nation’s most hallowed and iconic structures — Independence Hall.

As James Madison said to Thomas Jefferson in 1784 after spending two weeks in upstate New York with Lafayette,

In his politics he says his three hobby horses are the alliance between France and the United States, the union of the latter and the manumission of the slaves. The two former are the dearer to him as they are connected with his personal glory. The last does him real honor as it is a proof of his humanity.<sup>2</sup>

All three are noble causes. In several respects, our proposal follows the thinking of Madison which is a good “template” to follow.

The CSAC needs considerable time for research and approval; therefore, they require that ideas for stamp subjects be received at least three or more years prior to the proposed issuance date. Our proposal meets this requirement. November 13, 2020 to August 15, 2024 is 3.75 years. During the next few months, the AFL will be contacting local and national organizations and individuals seeking endorsements that may increase the likelihood of success.

We suggested that the commemorative be a vertical double pane stamp depicting the route taken by Lafayette in the existing 24-states in 1824-25, with the image of Lafayette overlaid on the map. However, the actual details of design and manner of issue are at the sole discretion of the CSAC.

The proposal was authored primarily by W. Robert Kelly, Sr. and reviewed and edited extensively by AFL officers Alan Hoffman, Robert Kelly, and Chuck Schwam (President, Vice-President, and Treasurer/Event Coordinator, respectively).

<sup>1</sup> Hezekiah Niles, “La Fayette’s Visits To The United States,” *Niles’ Weekly Register*, November 6, 1824, 1. Niles published the *Register* between 1811-1848. He used “magnanimous disputation,” presenting both sides of arguments fairly and objectively, which makes him an important source for historians.

<sup>2</sup> To Thomas Jefferson from James Madison, 17 October 1784, *Founders Online*, National Archives, <https://founders.archives.gov/documents/Jefferson/01-07-02-0345>.

## Pierre Antoine de Chambrun Becomes an Honorary Lifetime Member of the AFL

by Chuck Schwam

On October 7, 2020, the American Friends of Lafayette extended an honorary membership to Pierre Antoine (Marquis) de Chambrun. Why you ask?...

It all starts with AFL member Joyce Good who lives in Paris, France. Joyce has been an advocate of our organization for many years. Although Joyce has never attended an AFL event in the United States, she is an active member who represents the AFL at many Franco-American events in France – Pipus Cemetery, the Lafayette Escadrille Memorial, and Chavaniac, to name a few.

Joyce also shares AFL emails and our newsletter with a select group of friends. Many of those friends enjoyed Richard Ingram's Lafayette Alliance video from LaGrange, Georgia very much (as many of you did). One of her friends happens to be a descendant of Lafayette; Pierre Antoine de Chambrun emailed the AFL to laud the video (which we shared with Richard). As it turns out, Pierre is a descendant via Lafayette's youngest daughter Virginie Lafayette. I immediately called Alan Hoffman, and we extended an invitation for an honorary membership.

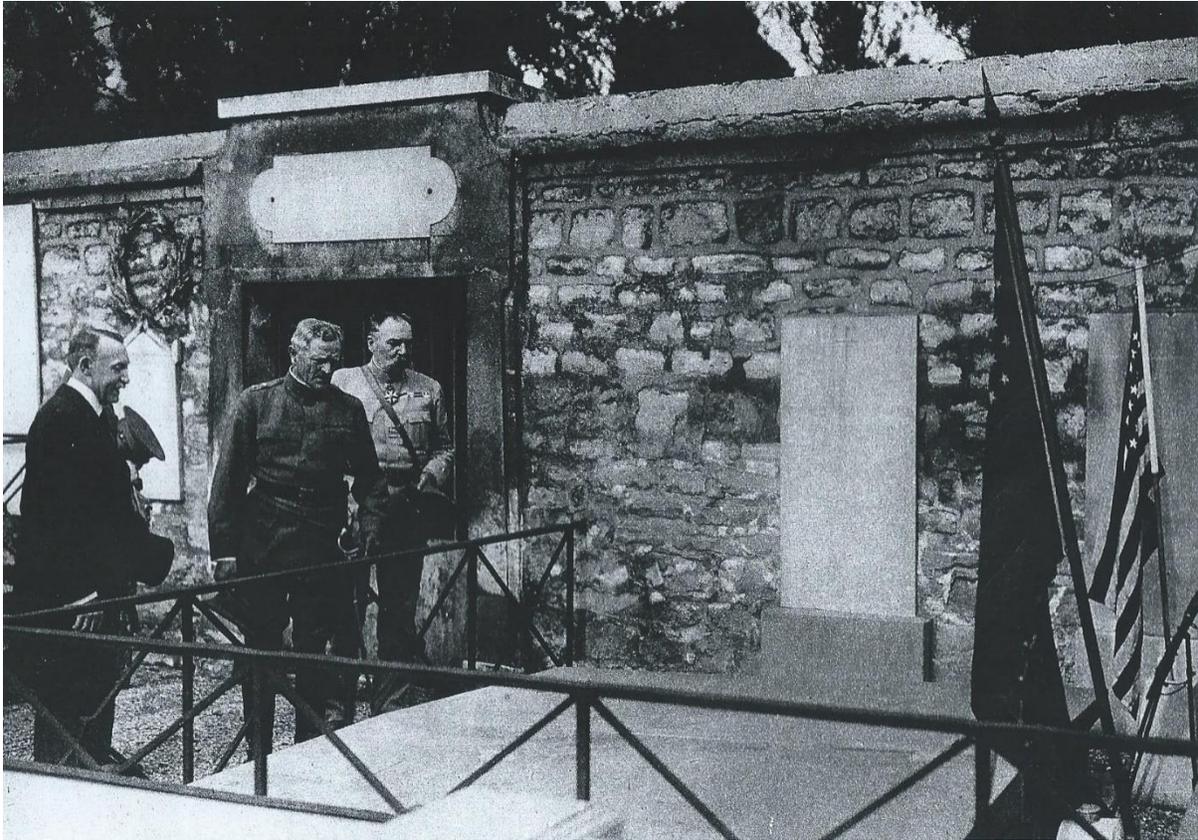


AFL member Joyce Good

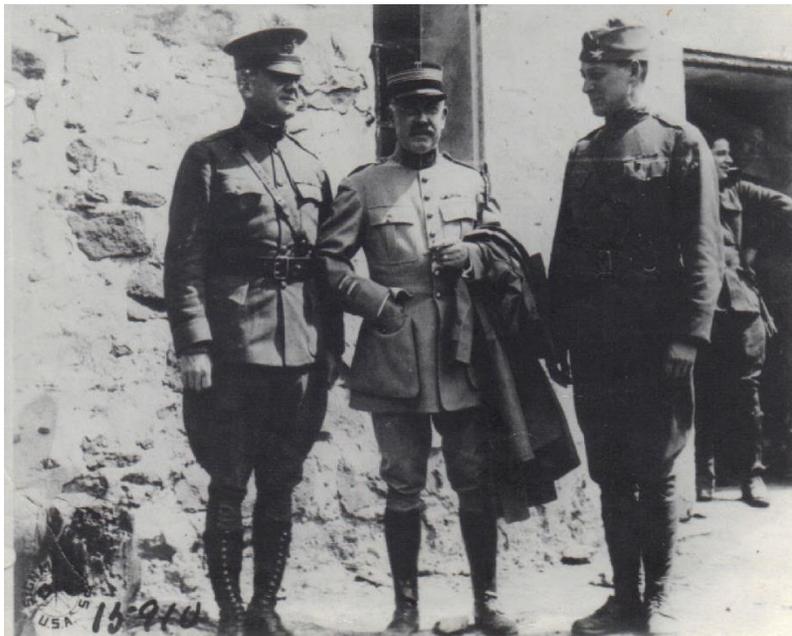


Virginie de Lafayette

*Marthe Tircuy de Corcelle, the wife of Pierre's great-grandfather Charles Adolphe Pineton, Marquis de Chambrun, was the granddaughter of Virginie.* It is interesting to note that Adolphe was friendly with Abraham Lincoln. While in the United States, Adolphe was invited to the presidential box at the Ford Theater in Washington to watch *Our American Cousin*. As the day of the performance was Good Friday, he had to decline the invitation. That evening, April 14, 1865, at 10:45 p.m., he was informed that Abraham Lincoln had been assassinated.



This photo dated June 14, 1917 is taken in front of Lafayette's grave at Picpus Cemetery in Paris.  
 On the far left is Pierre Marquis de Chambrun (Pierre Antoine de Chambrun's grandfather).  
 He was Député de Lozère and a member of the French Parliament.  
 United States General Pershing is to his left (center of the photo).



(L to R) General Pershing, Lieutenant Colonel de Chambrun, (Pierre Antoine de Chambrun's great-uncle)  
 and Captain Patton (yes, THAT Patton) on June 13, 1917 at Boulogne-sur-Mer

Pierre has some well-known friends as well. He hosted Buzz Aldrin in July 2008 for several days. The famous American astronaut was in France to commemorate the 100<sup>th</sup> anniversary of Wilbur Wright's first flight at Les Hunnaudières near Le Mans.



L to R: Buzz Aldrin with his wife Lois Driggs Cannon and Anna de Chambrun with her husband Pierre Antoine de Chambrun in front of Lafayette

The title of Marquis in the Chambrun family goes back to Antoine de Chambrun, camp marshal, sieur de l'Empery, emigrant, who ended his life as governor of Ukraine and Podolia (1797/1798). This title, which is therefore not inherited from the Lafayettes is always and only carried by the eldest of the family. This is the case for Pierre, after the death of his two brothers Charles (Minister of General de Gaulle) and Jean François.

Pierre and his wife Anna live in Avoise, France. He sent a note of gratitude for the honorary membership and will now be wearing his AFL pin, which AFL Membership Chair Almut Spalding sent to him. I am sure we will be hearing more from Pierre, and we promise to share any news with the AFL membership.

## **The Lafayette Endowment at FSU - Building Bridges in a Community through Lafayette**

by Hank Parfitt

Like most historical organizations, the Lafayette Society in Fayetteville, North Carolina has struggled for years to diversify its membership. We have made significant progress over the past 2-3 years, however. One of the main ways we have done this is through our partnership with Fayetteville State University, an HBCU (Historically Black College or University) founded in 1867. It is ironic that this relationship, which has breathed new life into our organization and elevated our profile in the community in such a positive way, came about because of a negative incident.

In 2017, a local environmental group developed a green project for the public-school system with Lafayette, Fayetteville's namesake, as its "spokesperson." Unfortunately, an ill-informed individual complained, asserting that Lafayette had owned slaves, and the whole project was scuttled by the school superintendent. Worse yet, an eager reporter wrote it up in the local newspaper. He told friends he hoped that his story about Lafayette's rejection in the first city named for him would be "the one" to go national. The racial riots in Charlottesville were just one month before that, so this was a real possibility.

The Lafayette Society immediately launched a public information campaign. As president, I wrote an Op-Ed piece in the newspaper and went on local radio talk shows, setting the record straight on Lafayette without criticizing the superintendent. Several AFL board members wrote letters to the *Fayetteville Observer* as well. The editors did their own research and wrote two pieces explaining the Cayenne project and Lafayette's goal in buying the plantation in South America in order to demonstrate a path to universal emancipation. They extolled Lafayette's noble character and *they* castigated the superintendent. Flyers about Lafayette and his opposition to slavery and oppression were circulated at the annual Lafayette Birthday Celebration that weekend. Photos of attendees at the celebration showing the diversity of the crowd were sent to the newspaper and published. In the end, even though the green school project could not be saved, the reporter's story went nowhere, and Lafayette's reputation was restored!

Going forward, our board decided that we must do a better job of telling Lafayette's whole story. We had to do more than talk about his role in the American Revolution and his visit to Fayetteville in 1825. We also saw this as an opportunity to diversify our membership. We found a partner in this through Dr. Rob Taber, a young professor at Fayetteville State University (FSU) and co-advisor of their Black History Scholars Association.

With Dr. Taber's help, we funded a lending library on the FSU campus for their history students. In February 2018, the Lafayette Society and the FSU students co-sponsored a lecture by Diane Shaw of Lafayette College. After lunch in the student union with some history majors, Ms. Shaw made a presentation on Lafayette and slavery and human rights. In 2019, we co-hosted a lecture by Dr. Taber on the Haitian Revolution in the 1790s. It is noteworthy that even on a cold February night, in the middle of the work week, 110 *diverse* members of the community

attended. For the past three years, students with the FSU history association have been our guests at the Lafayette Society's annual meeting and luncheon social.



City Councilwoman Shakeyla Ingram and Dr. Rob Taber (standing) with students from Fayetteville State at the Lafayette Society's Annual Meeting and Luncheon Social on March 1, 2020  
(Photo by Matthew Wonderly, *CityView Magazine*)

Diane Shaw returned this year to talk about Lafayette and human rights at Fayetteville Technical Community College and the event was streamed live on YouTube. (You can still watch it on [www.lafayettesociety.org/events](http://www.lafayettesociety.org/events).) She also did a phone interview on radio station WIDU, which has a predominately African-American audience. Radio host Jimmy Harvey immediately became an enthusiastic fan of Lafayette and live-streamed the audio portion of her talk. He has called me several times since to talk about Lafayette and how he believes that Lafayette's life-long example of treating others with dignity and respect is so very important in America today. He joined the Lafayette Society, and he has already re-broadcast Diane's talk twice on his radio station.

Perhaps most significantly, the Lafayette Society has established an endowment at FSU for the Black History Scholars Association, "The Lafayette Fund for the Study of the Age of Revolutions, Emancipation, and Civil Rights." Proceeds will be used to encourage the scholarly study of history and to support continued educational programming with a variety of guest speakers. I am pleased to say that we are ahead of schedule to fund the endowment, but we still have to raise \$11,000 more to reach our goal of \$25,000 in order to activate the fund and access some of the accrued interest to use for student projects.



Fayetteville Mayor Mitch Colvin presents the Black History Scholars with copies of Stanley Idzerda's *France and the American War for Independence*. Dr. Lloyd Kramer from UNC gave a short talk on the late Dr. Idzerda's life and his experience working under him on the Lafayette Papers Project at Cornell. (Photo by Linda McAlister, Lafayette Society)

---

We know that it takes a long time and a lot of work to build bridges between people, but the Lafayette Society membership is more diverse now and our efforts have raised our profile in the community. We are seen as a civic organization as much as an historical society. It has been said that great change brings great opportunity. We are fortunate that our organization was already well on its way to becoming more relevant in this time of great change and civil unrest. Our partnership with Fayetteville State University has been a key part of that. The AFL board has supported the Lafayette Endowment and we hope that our many friends in the AFL will donate as individuals. If you would like to help us reach our goal by donating any amount, you may send a check for "FSU Lafayette Fund" to FSU Advancement Services, 1200 Murchison Road, Fayetteville NC 28301. To donate online, go to [www.uncfsu.edu/fayetteville-state-forward](http://www.uncfsu.edu/fayetteville-state-forward) and click on "Give to FSU" at the top of that page. Once the giving page comes up, look for "The LaFayette Society Endowed Scholarship" in their alphabetical listing of scholarships.

The Lafayette Society is most grateful to the American Friends of Lafayette and its members for their friendship and support. Please feel free to contact me if you have questions or need any assistance ([hankparfitt@gmail.com](mailto:hankparfitt@gmail.com) or 910-286-3979).

# The Lafayette Presentation Button

by Jan O'Sullivan

About a year ago, I purchased a gilt reproduction of the Lafayette Presentation Button at a button auction. The previous collector had mounted it on a card along with a small copper-framed copy of a 1779 portrait by Charles Willson Peale. Notice that the button is not a profile of our favorite Frenchman, but rather his mentor and father figure, George Washington. It measures  $\frac{3}{4}$ " in diameter.



If you are surprised at the existence of such a specific auction, perhaps you didn't know that there are thousands of button collectors in the U.S. and all over the world. The National Button Society is the umbrella group over all of the local chapters, and five times a year they publish *The National Button Bulletin (NBB)* which has articles on every facet of button history, manufacture, and collecting. A couple of months after acquiring the button, I attended a meeting of the Connecticut chapters; the program that day, given by the group's president, Laurel Durso, was on the history of the Scovill Company, founded in Waterbury, Connecticut in 1802. Specializing in brass buttons, Scovill manufactured buttons for many types of Army and Navy uniforms for the War of 1812, as well as buttons for dress coats, vests, and other fine clothing.

I was delighted that this talk included information on my new button. I learned of a very informative 28-page booklet, *The Lafayette Presentation Button 1824*, written by Edward H. Davis in 1951 for the Mattatuck Historical Society, Waterbury, Connecticut (hereinafter referred to as the MHS booklet). Edward Davis was the archivist for the Scoville Company from 1948-1970, after a long career as a statistician and analyst for the company. My research was now off and running, and this article is a summary of all the documentation I could find, mostly from button publications.

## Making the Gold Buttons

At the time of Lafayette's Farewell Tour, there were many businesses in the United States that presented him with fine examples of their products, and the Scovill Company took the opportunity of Lafayette's visit to make something really special, as both a gesture of respect and a way to promote business.

The MHS booklet cited an October 23, 1824 issue of the *Niles' Weekly Register*, a national magazine, which included some early information about a plan to make the buttons. (I was able to find a digital copy of this magazine, and was glad I did because the MHS booklet did not transcribe the reference correctly.) After several pages of detail about Lafayette's visit to Baltimore, there are some small items of commodities news:

**Gold. Mr. J. Ladd, watchmaker of New-York, has sold a piece of native gold, valued at \$100, found in North Carolina. It is to be made up in buttons for general La Fayette.**

The die used to make the front of the button with George Washington's profile was made at the U. S. Mint, probably the one in Philadelphia. The back of the button was inscribed "Presented to General Lafayette · By L. H & Scovill · Button Manufacturers · Waterbury Con ·"



After the buttons were made, the following item appeared in the *New York Gazette* on July 7, 1825, and is included in the MHS booklet. I have transcribed it here:

**We yesterday saw at Mr Ladd's watch store in Wall street, a set of Buttons, with the head of Washington on them, manufactured of North Carolina Gold, and intended as a present to General Lafayette. They were manufactured by Mess Hayden, Scofield and Levensger, of Connecticut, and afford another example of the skill of American artists.**

Hayden, Scofield, and Leavenworth (not Levenger) had become partners of the Scovill Co. in 1811. In addition to the “Mill on Mad River” in Waterbury, they had offices in New York City; it was there that they presented the buttons to Lafayette shortly before he left New York at the end of his Farewell Tour in 1825. I have not been able to find any contemporaneous reporting of this event, but when the Scoville Company celebrated its 150<sup>th</sup> anniversary in 1952, it published a keepsake book, *The Mill on Mad River*, which features key moments in its manufacturing history. Each event is given a two-page spread in this 36-page, 14x15” hardcover. Significant buttons are shown with artwork depicting the historical events at that time.

A sketch of the Lafayette Presentation Button is shown along with this artwork and text:



*The presentation to General Lafayette – 1825*

“Thank you, gentlemen.  
They’re MAGNIFIQUE!”

SINCE SCOVILL entered into the business of manufacturing buttons in 1802, it has produced many sets of closures which are collectors’ items today.

Among the most famous of these was a set made for General LaFayette and presented to him on the occasion of his visit to this country in 1825.

These closures, seventeen in number, were made

from solid gold and featured a head of George Washington. The gold was obtained from a single nugget unearthed in North Carolina.

The LaFayette buttons were acclaimed as masterpieces of their time and even today they are considered to be among the most beautiful ever manufactured by the Company since its founding.

The artwork shows a set of seventeen buttons (sixteen in the box and one in Lafayette’s hand). Seventeen is often the number cited, but some sources have the set at fourteen or sixteen buttons. Fourteen would have been considered a complete set needed for a dress coat. It is documented that three additional buttons were struck for the Scovill partners to each have one, so the number of gold buttons made was somewhere between seventeen and twenty.

### Where are the buttons now?

A significant discovery is heralded in the May 1953 *NBB*. The original die used to strike the front of the gold buttons was believed to have been lost in the Scovill fire of 1830. Sometime between 1951 and 1953, the die was found in Scovill’s die vault, in the archived work chest of distinguished engraver Jarvis E. Ellis. The age of the die was verified by the U.S. Mint in Philadelphia. Close examination found heat blisters, indicating that the die was likely salvaged from the 1830 fire. Other technical analysis led to the conclusion that the die was used as a matrix to make the die for the first restrike in 1876. (See section on Restrikes, below.)

As to what became of the gold buttons presented to Lafayette, the 1951 MHS booklet says that they were applied to “a suit of blue woolen cloth which had been made and presented to him in Carolina.” An inventory of Lafayette’s effects published in 1835 includes the suit with buttons in a wardrobe in the bedchamber of La Grange. Of course, in the intervening years, there were wars and eventual occupation of the residence by both German and American armies, and after WWII, the wardrobe was no longer present. The author of the 1951 MHS booklet hopes that the buttons are still tucked away somewhere, but also reports that when interviewed in 1949, Lafayette’s descendants had no record or memory of the buttons.

Fortunately, this is not the end of the story. In 1956, shortly after acquiring La Grange, Josée and René de Chambrun discovered a closed-off area on one of the upper levels. This treasure trove of Lafayette artifacts included ten of the buttons! In 1959, the *Fondation Josée et René Chambrun* was founded, and it still exists today. I reached out to the Foundation, hoping to

get a photo of the gold buttons or to learn if there are plans to put them on display. They provided me with some citations of the buttons in books about Lafayette, but no other news.

This discovery was announced in the September, 1956 *NBB* by Editor Lillian Smith Albert:

#### **UNUSED TOWER OF LAFAYETTE'S CHATEAU YIELDS COUNTLESS TREASURES**

Paris was more than mildly surprised, in mid-June, by the announcement that thousands of letters, papers, and other personal possessions of the Marquis de Lafayette were brought to light at the fifteenth century castle by the new owner, a direct descendant of the famous general. That **buttons** were among the items found makes it all the more exciting. We hope to bring you more definite news soon.

Lafayette's castle is now being turned into a museum which will house countless treasures for exhibition in the near future.

The following year was the 200<sup>th</sup> anniversary of Lafayette's birth. The President of the National Button Society, Zula Fricks, went to France for the celebrations and reported in the September and November 1957 issues of the *NBB*. She visited La Grange and met with René de Chambrun. (She notes that he is an American citizen, as are all of Lafayette's male descendants, in accordance with an early Maryland statute.) Because La Grange had only been transferred to him the year before, the planned museum for La Grange was not ready. The exhibition of the items discovered in the tower was held at the Museum of the National Archives in Paris.

To the delight of the button world, on February 27, 1959, Count René de Chambrun brought two of the gold buttons to New York City and loaned them to Edward Davis, the MHS booklet author and Scovill archivist, for a week. In the March 1959 *NBB*, Davis is quoted:

It was a real joy and satisfaction not only to see but to finally hold in my hand the original Lafayette Presentation Buttons. They are heavier, thinner and slightly smaller than the replica with which we are familiar. I was privileged to take these historic buttons back to Scovill in Waterbury where they originated 134 years ago. The buttons will be studied, weighed, measured and photographed before returning.

In the May 1959 *NBB*, Davis elaborated on bringing the buttons back to Waterbury. The buttons were compared to the original die and detailed measurements were taken. The buttons weighed just under six grams each, and had diameters which varied from .804 to .825 inches, depending on where the diameter was measured. The backs of the original buttons were a little different from the earliest restrike in 1876, confirming that the original die for the back was not used at that time; it had probably been lost in the 1830 fire.

This event is also noted in the book *Record of American Uniform and Historical Buttons: Bicentennial Edition*, December 1976, by Alphaeus H. Albert. Albert was part of the group

invited to come to the Cooper Union Museum (now the Cooper Hewitt) for the return of the two buttons on March 6, 1959. Albert photographed the buttons and included the photographs in his book. His delight in being present at this event is apparent; the passage stands out from the rest of the book, which is largely written as a catalog of historical buttons.

We know that Lafayette received more than the ten buttons that were found at La Grange, but only one of the remaining four to seven in the set he was given has ever turned up. Albert reports that in the fall of 1967, an Englishwoman named Mrs. Elizabeth Barnes wrote to the mayor of Waterbury, Connecticut saying that she had a gold button. Her description of the backmark matched the Lafayette Presentation Button, but she assumed that the profile on the front was Lafayette. Edward Davis corresponded with her, and established that it was indeed one of the original set of buttons. The woman's grandmother had been a governess for the Lasteyrie family in the 1880s when they lived in the La Grange chateau. The governess found the coat, had a jeweler determine that the buttons were solid gold, and asked if she could have one before she put the coat away with Lafayette's other belongings. She married and returned to England in 1892. On her son's 21<sup>st</sup> birthday, she had the button made into a tie pin, and it became a treasured family heirloom. Albert included photos of the front and back of the tie pin in his book, and also reported on it for the September/October 1968 *NBB* with the title, "Loyal English Gentleman Wore Gold Button with Washington Profile as Tie Pin."

This tie pin was offered at auction in 2011 by Gilding's Auctioneers in the UK, and went unsold there, but did make its way to an antiques dealer in New York, who exhibited it at the January 2012 Metro Show. Another dealer, Arthur Liverant, spotted it on the preview night. It was displayed in an open metal-sided cube on top of a white plinth with a spotlight on it, and the gold really sparkled. Mr. Liverant was drawn to it, and upon finding out what it was, immediately called a client that he knew would have to have it. The client was delighted. I visited Mr. Liverant at his shop in Colchester, Connecticut to hear this story about the tie pin. I brought my gilt restrike with me, and both he and his assistant told me how much more amazing the original gold one was compared to the restrike. The relief was stronger and crisper. We were even able to confirm this by comparing the restrike to a photograph of the tie pin.

The buttons that were given to each of the partners of the Scovill Company have their own stories. Hayden's button was lost within a month. Scovill's button is presumed to have been destroyed in the 1830 factory fire. Leavenworth's button was handed down to his son, and was still accounted for as of 1894.

### **Restrikes of the Lafayette Presentation Button**

The 1876 Centennial celebration and Philadelphia Exposition provided an opportunity to market a restrike of the button. The buttons were presented on a card in an elaborate box. They were made of brass and gold plated. The MHS booklet surmises that there may have been an oversupply because in October 1876, the company had several gross still on hand, available at \$10 per gross; the relatively high price was due to a higher than expected expense of producing these buttons. Because the MHS booklet was written two years prior to the discovery of the original die, the author speculated at the time that the Leavenworth button was used as a model

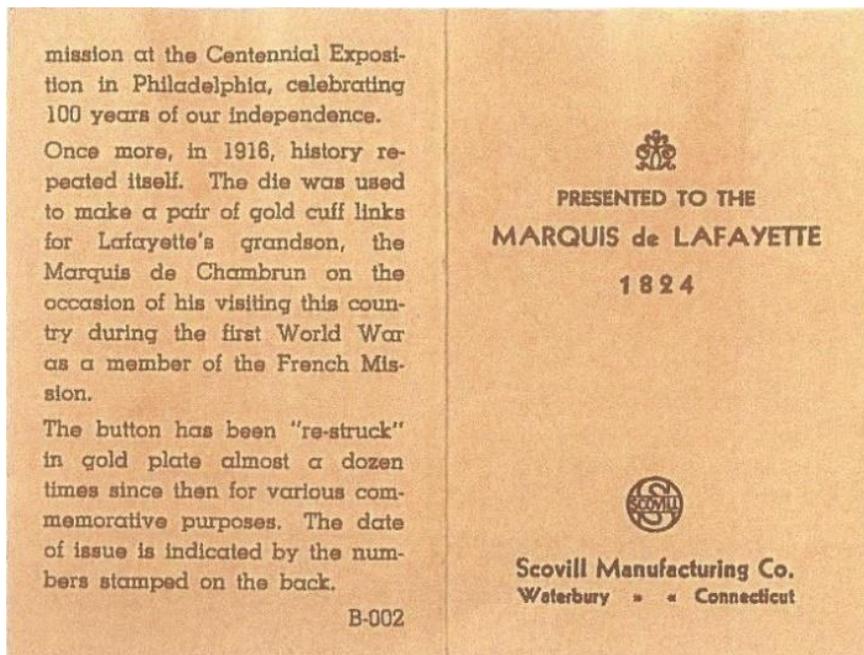
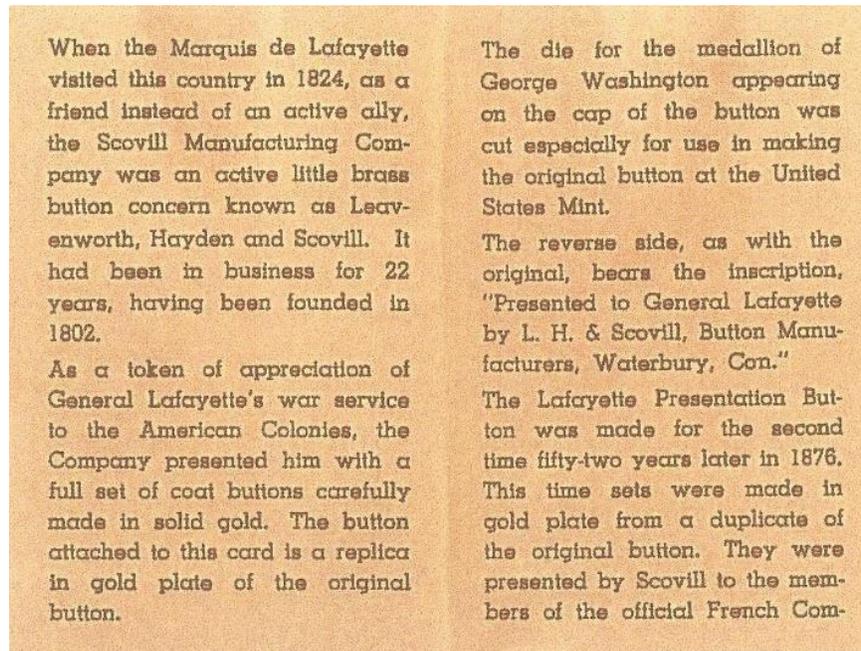
for the restrike. The discovery of the original die in 1953 shed new light on how the 1876 buttons were made. The September 1963 *NBB* has an update to the 1951 MHS booklet, in which Davis mentions a 1959 discovery, at the Château de Chavaniac, Lafayette's birthplace, of buttons from the 1876 restrike that had been presented to the French Commission at the Philadelphia Centennial Exposition. I discovered an earlier reference to the 1876 buttons found at Chavaniac; in the September 1957 *NBB* there is an item about these buttons also being on display at the National Archives that year.

There have been many other restrikes in 1895 and later; the MHS booklet lists thirteen through 1946. Albert lists two more after that, in 1952 and 1960. A restrike in 1916 is notable; the button was again struck in solid gold to make cuff links presented to the Marquis de Chambrun, who was a member of the French Mission to Washington during WWI. (This Marquis being Pierre de Chambrun, who is René de Chambrun's uncle.)

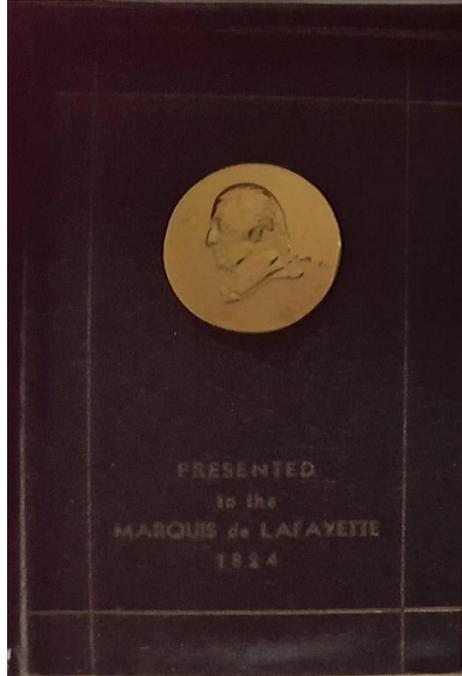
AFL member and avid Lafayette collector Andy Golbert shared one of his rare finds, a restrike presented by Scovill on a rosette of red, white, and blue ribbon with two streamers. According to the MHS booklet, these rosettes were made to accompany buttons restruck in 1917 for the Allied Bazaar, held in Waterbury, Connecticut in May of that year, to raise money for war relief. The officials of the Bazaar wore them, and they were also likely available for sale.



There are several examples of restrikes in the Lafayette College Archives, along with this small commemorative brochure. It must have accompanied one of the restrikes in the 1940s or later, as it mentions there having been almost a dozen restrikes. I have also found an example of this brochure in the collection of the Mattatuck Museum in Waterbury. The museum attributes a restrike of the button on black cardstock, along with this brochure, to be a party favor at a 1960s dinner for Waterbury Bank employees. It is possible that the booklet and button on cardstock might have been available for other presentations or purchases of the restrike.



*2-sided brochure that accompanied some restrikes of the Lafayette Presentation Button  
Photos courtesy of Lafayette College*



*Button on card that would have been accompanied by the 2-sided brochure  
Backmark includes an engraved "46" indicating manufacture in 1946.  
Collection of the author*

In 1954, a second full set of solid gold buttons was struck to be given by the Scovill Manufacturing Company to the Republic of France. They were presented to Geneviève de Galard-Terraube, "The Angel of Dien Bien Phu," at the end of her visit to the United States. She was a Flight Nurse posted in French Indochina, whose heroism and hard work had earned her the *Légion d'honneur* and the *Croix de Guerre*. A few months after she was evacuated from Hanoi, she came to the U.S. for three weeks. She was awarded the Medal of Freedom by President Eisenhower, and toured six states. The button presentation was made on August 16, 1954 at the Plaza Hotel in New York by Lamson Scovill. The August 1954 *NBB* shows a photo of the presentation box with a set of thirteen buttons. This article reports that the original set given to Lafayette was thirteen buttons, which does not agree with earlier sources that cite fourteen, sixteen, or seventeen as the number in the set. Mlle. Galard was also presented with one button in its own small box as a personal memento. Her remarks were also recorded in the article:

I thank you very much for this kind present. I am very touched by the fact that these are exact reproductions of those which were given by your great-grandfather to General Lafayette. These buttons will be put in a French Museum as a symbol to the friendship which has existed between the United States and France since General Lafayette and which has been reaffirmed by the warm welcome which I have received in this country.

### Are there any other Lafayette buttons from his Farewell Tour?

Also mounted on the card I purchased at the button auction is another button that has an oval medallion on a patterned background. The back of the button says \* LAFAYETTE \* A · BENEDICT on the outer ring and \* \* \* EXTRA FINE on the inner ring around the shank. The button is gilt and measures 7/8" in diameter.



There is a small article about this button in the publication *Just Buttons*, July 1963. The only information provided is that there was a button company owned by Aaron Benedict which made metal buttons, and gilt ones only between 1823-1829. The editor surmises that the button might have been made to promote Benedict's company during the Farewell Tour, and it is not known if any were given to Lafayette. The back of this button is also cataloged in Albert's book; this type of button is known as a backname button. The medallion design does not seem to have a connection to Lafayette; it is a type of design element known as a patera, often used in architecture and furniture. The company that Aaron Benedict founded in 1812 is still in business today, as the Waterbury Button Company, and they are the most prominent maker of uniform buttons in the U.S.

### So, are there any buttons that have Lafayette's likeness on them? Yes, there are!

I found three articles about buttons made by the Scovill Company with a profile of Lafayette on them, and they are also documented in Albert's book. All of the articles caution the reader not to confuse these Lafayette Medallion Buttons (Lafayette's profile) with the Lafayette Presentation Buttons (Washington's profile). (This mistake was even made in the background on a mounting card with Scovill branding that is in the collection of the Mattatuck Museum.)

This button with Lafayette's likeness was made in large quantities by the Scovill Company at the time of the Farewell Tour. They were available in three sizes, the largest about 7/8" in diameter. There was so much demand for these buttons that a second die had to be made. The original die was made by noted engraver Charles Cushing Wright, but the second one does not bear his signature, and some of the details of the profile vary from the original.



*Lafayette Medallion Button  
Photos courtesy of Johnson Frazier*

Albert's book also displays an advertisement from a "Boy's Clothing Emporium" in New York, which even mentions the name of the engraver and that a plaster cast had been "taken a few weeks ago."

**LA FAYETTE BUTTONS.**  
**A NEW AND ELEGANT ARTICLE.**  
**C**AMPFIELD offers to the public another  
*Capital Likeness of Gen. La Fayette* stamp-  
 ed upon Buttons of several sizes—extra rich gilt.  
 They were manufactured by Leavenworth, Hay-  
 den & Scovill, of Connecticut, and will be sold in  
 quantities to suit purchasers. The likeness was  
 executed by C. C. Wright, (Durand & Wright,)  
 from a plaster cast taken a few weeks ago by  
 Mr. Frazer, which is pronounced by artists to be  
 very superior.

*Boys' Clothing Emporium,*  
 oct 8 303 Broadway, corner of Duane-st.

*New York Commercial Advertiser  
October, 1824*

I asked AFL member and retired Lafayette College archivist Diane Shaw whether there was any documentation of a plaster cast having been made, and she turned up a reference in an essay by Marc Miller in *Lafayette, Hero of Two Worlds: The Art and Pageantry of his Farewell Tour of America, 1824-1825*, a book published to accompany an exhibition at the Queens Museum in 1989. The 1824 advertisement misstates the artist's name; he was John Frazee, "a self-taught New York stonecutter who specialized in funerary statues," according to Miller. Because the session with Lafayette took place on September 6, 1824, Frazee may have been the first artist to meet with him. Frazee was hoping to make a bust to use as a presentation piece to gain admission to the American Academy of Fine Arts, but also advertised in the *New York Evening Post* that he had miniature replicas for sale. He was clearly entering the marketplace for Farewell Tour souvenirs, and offering an American-made alternative. Miller's essay also refers to a notice in the October 8, 1824 *New York American* stating that Frazee was the artist whose work was used for the Scovill buttons with Lafayette's profile image. According to Wikipedia, he became known for his portrait busts, including the one he made of Lafayette, which unfortunately has been lost.

### General Lafayette Button

Another button, probably also made at the time of the Farewell Tour, has a likeness of Lafayette along with his preferred title, General Lafayette. There are no backmarks, so the manufacturer is unknown. The two-piece construction (the material for the face wraps around the backing) is different from the one-piece construction of the Scoville and Benedict buttons. A photo of the front is also included in Albert's book of military and historic buttons. It was available in two sizes, 5/8" and 7/8".



*General Lafayette Button*  
*Photos courtesy of Johnson Frazier*

---

I would like to thank the following people for their help in gathering research and photos: AFL members Diane Shaw and Andy Golbert, button collectors Laurel Durso and Johnson Frazier, antiques dealer Arthur Liverant, the staff at the Mattatuck Museum, and Sal Geraci at the Waterbury Button Company.

## AFL Represented at Colonial Williamsburg's Veterans Day Filming Event

by Chuck Schwam

I received a call from Colonial Williamsburg regarding a Veterans Day Tribute they were filming on October 21<sup>st</sup>. They asked if we had a veteran in our group who might be interested in representing the American Friends of Lafayette in a film that they were producing for Veterans Day. They were looking for representatives from each branch of our military, but specifically a Navy veteran from the AFL.

Paul Higgins immediately came to mind. Paul was the Commander of the *USS Lafayette* submarine and is a member of the American Friends of Lafayette. Perfect!!!

With the AFL flag in tow, Paul, his wife Mary Liz, along with their grandchildren Joseph (age 8) and Claire (age 6) drove from suburban Washington, D.C. to Williamsburg, Virginia for the filming. It was a glorious Autumn morning where representatives from the Army, Air Force, Coast Guard, Marines, and Space Force joined our very own Navy Commander Paul Higgins for the filming of the ceremony.

The ceremony took place around Colonial Williamsburg's Magazine Building (circa 1715). George Washington honored the veterans with his presence and appreciation for their service. Huzzahs were heard all around.

The film will be presented on Veteran's Day (November 11<sup>th</sup>, 2020). I promise to alert AFL members on how and when to watch the video. Thank you, Paul Higgins for representing the AFL and the United States. Thank you for your service!



From L to R: Claire Durika, Paul Higgins, Joseph Durika, and George Washington (aka Ron Carnegie)



Paul Higgins holding the AFL flag with his grandchildren Joseph Durika and Claire Durika

## The Lafayette Society of Fayetteville Strengthens Their Bond with the AFL

by Chuck Schwam

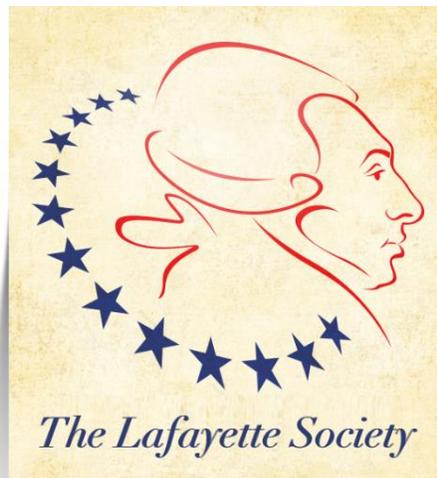
Hank Parfitt, President of the Lafayette Society of Fayetteville, thought it would be important for everyone on his board to become a member of the American Friends of Lafayette. This will ensure further cohesiveness between our organizations and give his leadership the ability to keep track of what is happening with Lafayette nationally. As it turns out, many Lafayette Society board members were already members of the AFL. They include...

- Hank Parfitt (Life Member)
- Gwen Melton (Life Member)
- Ron Schooler (Life Member)
- Arleen Fields
- Bud Lafferty
- John Malzone
- Robin Wiggs

Then, in July, the Lafayette Society sent me \$200 to initiate new AFL memberships for five of their board as members. Our new members are...

- Rob Taber
- Weyher Dawson
- Betty Goolsby
- Lulie Harry
- Jamie Ammons

Each of these Fayettevillians will receive a one-year individual membership, with the hope that they will renew (we will wow them !!). Hank Parfitt (who is also Vice President of the AFL) has once again proven that although his heart is in Fayetteville, he is devoted to Lafayette nationally as well.



## *In Memoriam*

**Monique Madeleine Panaggio**, who died this August at the age of 93, was, with her husband Leonard J. Panaggio, a mainstay of the American Friends of Lafayette for many years. While Len served as President for two decades as editor, publisher, and principal contributor of the *Gazette* for three decades, Monique served as a long-time member of the governing board and most recently was made an honorary life member of the AFL. Len always credited Monique for introducing him to the AFL. The Panaggio family, which also includes Len's two brothers Pat and Ron and their wives Arline and Vivian, were major participants in AFL activities and events for decades.

As you can see from the beautiful obituary in the Newport Daily News, excerpted below, Monique Panaggio had a long, rewarding, and productive career in her adoptive home in Rhode Island.



Monique Madeleine Panaggio passed away at home on August 24, 2020. She was born on December 10, 1926 in Versailles, France, to Colonel Henri and Mme. Germaine (Drouin) Rouger. She graduated from Lycée de Jeunes Filles, Casablanca, in 1943.

She met and married Leonard J. Panaggio in 1944 while he was stationed in Casablanca during World War II. They were married for sixty-seven years before his passing in 2012.

Monique was a reporter in Sturbridge, MA for the Worcester Telegram and did apprentice work in public relations and publicity for Old Sturbridge Village and served as Executive Secretary of the Newport Publicity Commission, writer and correspondent for the Philadelphia Bulletin, Philadelphia Inquirer, and the Social Spectator Magazine, Public Relations Director of the Preservation Society of Newport County for over 30 years, on the Board of Directors for the American Friends of Lafayette, served on the Women's Committee of the Rhode

Island Bicentennial Commission, past president of Christmas in Newport. She was also recipient of the silver medal from the Department of Foreign Affairs, Republic of France, member of the Tourist and Travel Industry Association of America, past president of the Alliance Francaise, Newport, on the Board of Directors for the Automobile Club of Rhode Island, member of Rhode Island Press Association, served on the Board of the Rhode Island Heritage Commission and the Board of Directors of New England/USA and recipient of "Woman of the Year In Travel Award". She was recognized in the Congressional Record, House of Representatives, Message From The Senate, in 1984 as an outstanding citizen for her 30 years of dedicated service, promoting Newport and the State of Rhode Island.

Monique had tremendous energy and creativity. She earned the respect and friendship of countless people for her imagination, drive, and deep commitment to the community and the State of Rhode Island. She was especially proud to be a naturalized citizen.

She is survived by her children Madeleine J. Panaggio and Leonard C. Panaggio, three granddaughters, Lauren, Lisa and Lianna Panaggio.

She will be fondly remembered for her patience, kindness, generosity, beautiful French accent, great sense of humor, wonderful French cooking, addiction to milk chocolate and cookies, and the love she shared for her family and all nine grandpets.

**A tribute to Monique by Robert Crout, AFL President Emeritus:** Monique has been a friend since my first days with the American Friends of Lafayette in the mid-1980's. She and Len were an incredible team. Of course, Len always reminded me that she brought him to the AFL. Despite her petite size, she was a bundle of energy and enthusiasm. When she walked into a room, she lit it up with her presence and her smile. Whenever I asked her to help, to chair a committee, to speak on an issue, she never withheld her full efforts. When I asked her for an opinion, she always told me what she thought I needed to know to do the best job. And her advice was usually right. Though the *Gazette* Len edited never carried her name on its masthead, she was a major force behind it at all levels of production. The AFL annual meetings showed her good taste in their organization. The two kept the organization going through the lean times. Len was out front; Monique was nearby or at his side. In her later years of failing health, it was a disappointment not to see her at our meetings, and I regret it for the recent members who did not have the opportunity to know her.

**Henry F. Herrera**, 1944-2019, died on April 25, 2019. A graduate of the U.S. Naval Academy, he achieved the rank of Rear Admiral. He was the commanding officer of two fleet ballistic nuclear submarines, including the USS *Lafayette*. He also served as the President of the Board of Inspection and Survey, the Commander of Submarine Group 9, and the Director of C4I Systems (J6) U.S. Strategic Command.



At the time of his retirement from the Navy in 1997, he was authorized to wear the Defense Superior Service Medal, Legion of Merit (two awards), Meritorious Service Medal (two awards), Navy Commendation Medal (two awards), the Navy Achievement Medal and the National Defense Service Medal with bronze star and several other personal and unit awards. Following his Navy retirement, he worked at Westinghouse Savannah River Company, Aiken, South Carolina.

**Edgar Francis Lafayette, III**, 1925-2019, died on December 13, 2019.



Edgar joined the Navy upon his graduation from high school and served from April 22, 1944 to February 11, 1946. With his wife, Barbara Jean, he operated and managed the Lafayette Calapooia Farm and the Lafayette Logging Company in the Brownsville, Oregon area. According to his obituary, "He tried for years through genealogy to prove that his family was a part of the Marquis de Lafayette Legacy. Still working on that!"

## The Curious Tale of the Man Holding the Horse in the Lafayette Memorial

by David Felsen

On October 18, 1824, a brown-eyed handsome man from Kent County, Virginia with a full head of gray hair and lively expression on his face found himself among the multitudes in Yorktown for a special occasion. The elderly man had worried he was too poor to equip himself for the big trip without assistance, but somehow he found a way. After all, he was there to see an old friend. On that day, the town was welcoming the Marquis de Lafayette, a hero of the Revolutionary War, on a reunion tour of sorts. A few days later, at a grand reception for the “Nation’s Guest,” outside the Capitol in Richmond, under an arch bearing the inscription “Temple of Independence,” Chief Justice John Marshall and many other officers from the Revolutionary Army and Navy gathered to greet the general.<sup>1</sup> In a speech praising him for his leadership in the decisive Yorktown campaign, Justice Marshall said:

Some of us served under you in that memorable campaign; many in the course of the war. While duty required obedience, your conduct inspired confidence and love. Time which has thinned our ranks, and enfeebled our bodies, has not impaired these feelings, they retain their original rigour.<sup>2</sup>

Marshall’s words may well have applied to the man from Kent County, but it’s unlikely that he heard them or joined the other veterans during this ceremony because according to the Richmond Enquirer, “no intoxicated or colored person...[was]...permitted to enter the square.” Being the latter, the man would not have been welcome. Instead, a few days earlier he waited among the crowds in Yorktown hoping to catch a glimpse of the general. When, at last, the Marquis passed by, he didn’t disappoint. Recognizing his old comrade immediately, he stopped the procession, called out the black man’s name and embraced him.<sup>3</sup> The man was James Lafayette, the general’s comrade in arms at Yorktown and a Revolutionary War spy.<sup>4</sup>

I first learned about James Lafayette this past fall when I was looking for something to do with my tenth-grade history students in Park Slope, Brooklyn. As it happens, the Lafayette Memorial in Prospect Park is close to my home, and I thought it would be fun for the students to attempt to read this piece of public history like a text and see what it could tell them about Lafayette, the sculptor, and the period in which it was made. Before setting out, I did a quick Google search to bone up on the particulars of the memorial, only to find that it was the subject of a mystery, a mystery that would eventually lead me to a tweeting reporter, the Director of NYC Parks Art & Antiquities Department, a Revolutionary War spy, and history’s greatest gift himself, *Hamilton* creator, Lin-Manuel Miranda.



Fig. 1 Daniel Chester French. *Lafayette Memorial*, Prospect Park, Brooklyn, New York. Bronze, bas-relief on stele, 1917, NYC Parks photograph.

But first, a description of the memorial itself which sits where 9th street ends on the west side of Prospect Park. It is a monumental bronze bas-relief sculpture set in a pink granite stele. It is ten feet tall (the height of a basketball rim) by thirteen feet wide, (about the length of a midsize car). It is big. In order to enter the park on 9th street, the public must walk around it. It is a meeting place, a tourist destination and a welcome spot to sit for many. Unveiled in 1917, the stele was the work of the architect Henry Bacon, while the sculpture was created by Daniel Chester French, known best for the Lincoln Memorial in Washington, D.C., dedicated in 1922.

In the piece, Lafayette stands uniformed in the center, sword drawn, coolly observing the scene. Behind him are a horse and a leafy tree. To Lafayette's right, holding the horse is a man, also in uniform, who appears to be of African descent. He seems to be leaning away from the horse to avoid his gnashing teeth. The inscription on the front of the memorial reads:

The Marquis de Lafayette; this monument was erected and presented by Henry Harteau a distinguished citizen of Brooklyn to be an enduring tribute to the memory of one who as a friend and companion of the immortal Washington fought to establish in our country those vital principles of liberty and human brotherhood which he afterward labored to establish in his own.<sup>5</sup>

Conspicuously absent from the description is the identity of the man holding the horse. And so it seemed almost inevitable that someone would eventually ask: who is that man? What's surprising is that it took nearly a century for it to happen on the record.

## Summer Brennan Gets “Mad”

On February 18, 2016, investigative journalist and author Summer Brennan was, according to one of six tweets she launched that day, “mad.”<sup>6</sup> In a subsequent New York Magazine article, “The Invisible Black Man on a Prospect Park Statue,” Brennan explained that her frustration began to mount in 2009 when she first noticed the black man in the statue holding Lafayette’s horse and wondered who he was, because the inscription on the statue made no mention of him. She visited the New York City Parks Department website hoping for answers only to find a description that read: “The work, set in a picturesque pink granite stele designed by architect Henry Bacon, features a heroic-sized Lafayette standing next to his horse.”<sup>7</sup> Undaunted, Brennan continued her online research and soon found evidence that convinced her that the black man in question was none other than the famed Revolutionary War spy, James Armistead<sup>8</sup> Lafayette.<sup>9</sup>

Believing that James had been wrongfully erased from the memorial, Brennan would periodically tweet her dismay but to no avail. Nothing changed until February 2016 after she tweeted the following: “Since it’s [#BlackHistoryMonth](#) can somebody finally pls fix the description of this statue on the [@NYCParks](#) website?” Apparently [@NYCParks](#) had considerably upped their social media game in 2016, for within the hour, they responded apologizing for the oversight and promising “to do some research this week to give James Armistead Lafayette his due.”<sup>10</sup> After the tweets, Brennan had a phone conversation with the Director of NYC Parks Art & Antiquities, Jonathan Kuhn, who confirmed his commitment to “amend the content to fully tell the story of James Armistead Lafayette.” Two weeks later, Brennan’s magazine piece concluded on the sour note that no changes had been made to the website.<sup>11</sup>

## Jonathan Kuhn Keeps A Promise

To learn more, I emailed Jonathan Kuhn who kindly took the time to call and discuss the dramatic events of 2016. Kuhn confirmed that he had indeed done significant research into the man holding Lafayette’s horse not only in response to Brennan’s tweets and her article, but also spurred on in part by some unwelcome attention from *Hamilton* creator Lin-Manuel Miranda who tweeted out Brennan’s article to his two million plus followers.<sup>12</sup> Talk about pressure! According to Kuhn, as with many investigations, the deeper he looked the murkier things got. After discussions with, among others, the Lafayette College Director of Special Collections, Diane Shaw, Lafayette biographer, Laura Auricchio, and Donna Hassler, an expert on Daniel Chester French, Kuhn reached a conclusion about the man holding the horse and published the following description of the memorial on the NYC Parks website in March of 2016: “Some historians have speculated that the figure of the groomsman [sic] in Le Paon’s painting and other related engravings of the time is James Armistead (Lafayette).” Kuhn also included a brief bio of James and had a historical sign installed with the same text as the website adjacent to the memorial. So, at least according to NYC Parks, the groom in the painting and engravings that French based his sculpture on was *possibly* James Lafayette. Murkier indeed.

I also learned from Kuhn that a historical sign was first placed at the site in 2001 as part of NYC Parks campaign to bring a sense of community and history to parks, playgrounds and memorials. With help from local college students, NYC Parks researched, wrote, and installed over 2000 of the 24" x 36" wooden signs so that the public would know how, for example, Adam Yauch Playground got its name and who he was.<sup>13</sup> The first sign at the Lafayette Memorial disappeared at some point between 2002 and 2009 (when Summer Brennan first noticed the monument) and like the website that launched Brennan's tweets, it did not include information about James. Kuhn described this in his phone call with Brennan as "an omission" and "not an intentional oversight."<sup>14</sup>

So, we have a groom on a memorial who may be James Lafayette or not. This raises a few questions: why do some historians believe it is he and when did they start believing it? Was he intentionally erased from the record, or simply overlooked? Finally, if James isn't the man in the memorial who, if anyone, could he be? Perhaps it's best to start with what the sources tell us about James and his connection to General Lafayette.

### **James Lafayette Earns His Freedom**

James (the Lafayette will have to wait) was born into slavery in Virginia around 1748 by his own reckoning. He was the property of William Armistead, Jr., the military supply commissary for the General Lafayette during his Virginia campaign. James worked in Armistead's office and was believed to be literate. Lafayette relied heavily on spies to keep him informed of the enemy's movements. Slaves, generally ignored by soldiers, were ideal for this kind of work. At some time before July of 1781, James asked for and received Armistead's permission to volunteer to serve Lafayette and his Army of Virginia. James did this hoping that through his service to the colonies he would earn his freedom.<sup>15</sup>

Much has been claimed about exactly what services James performed for Lafayette. It's generally agreed by historians that he infiltrated General Cornwallis' camp under the guise of a forager (someone who found food for the army). During this time, thousands of runaway slaves were joining the British army because of Lord Dunmore's 1775 promise of freedom in return for service. In July and August of 1781, shortly before the pivotal battle of Yorktown, Lafayette's letters to Washington reveal that he was getting valuable intelligence about the enemy from a "servant to Lord Cornwallis."<sup>16</sup> It is widely believed by historians that this source was James, and that he had risked his life to gain intimate access to the British Commander. In order to convince Cornwallis of his commitment to the loyalist cause, James played the role of double agent and provided the British with token intelligence about the Americans.

Meanwhile, James' reports were critical in convincing General Lafayette that Cornwallis was committed to his position in Yorktown and could be defeated if Washington's army came down from New York and the French Fleet trapped the British army at Yorktown.<sup>17</sup> On September 5, in the Battle of the Capes, the French fleet led by the Comte de Grasse defeated and drove the British fleet back to New York, ending any hope of resupply for James' unwitting source, Cornwallis. On September 14, Washington and his army arrived and joined in the siege of Yorktown. On October 19, 1781 the British surrendered at Yorktown in the last significant

battle of the Revolutionary War, arguably making James one of the most effective double agents in the history of American warfare.

There's no indication that James was either officially recognized or rewarded at the end of the war. Instead, he remained enslaved to William Armistead, and it was only a chance encounter with Lafayette in 1784 at the Virginia State Capitol in Richmond where Armistead was a member of the House of Delegates, that saved James from this fate. To show his appreciation for James' extraordinary service, Lafayette, who held well-documented anti-slavery beliefs, kindly wrote him the following commendation:

This is to certify that the bearer by the name of James has done essential services to me while I had the honour to command in this state. His intelligences from the enemy's camp were industriously collected and faithfully delivered. He perfectly acquitted himself with some important commissions I gave him and appears to me entitled to every reward his situation can admit of.

*Done under my hand, Richmond,  
November 21st, 1784.  
Lafayette<sup>18</sup>*

In December of 1784, shortly after his reunion with Lafayette, James petitioned the Virginia House of Delegates for his freedom and was turned down for reasons that remain unclear even though he used the general's sterling letter of recommendation to make his case. After two more years of enslavement, in the fall of 1786, James was allowed by William Armistead to mount another emancipation campaign.<sup>19</sup> In a petition to the Assembly, an unknown author wrote that James joined Lafayette's command because he was "Perswaded [sic] of the just right which all mankind have to Freedom, notwithstanding his own state of bondage." In other words, James joined because he believed in the promise of the Declaration of Independence for black people even if most of the founders didn't, and he thought his service would earn his liberty. The petition went on to describe how James risked his life for the revolutionary cause, cited the general's commendation as proof and simply asked that James, "be granted that Freedom, which he flatters himself he has in some degree contributed to establish; & which he hopes always to prove himself worthy." This time the petition was granted. According to the statutes, on October 11, 1786, along with a host of laws including: "An act Against Conspirators" and an "An act to encourage the apprehending of horse steelers [sic]," the Assembly passed "An act to emancipate James, a negro slave, the property of William Armistead, a gentleman." The second section of the act began, "Be it therefore enacted that the said James shall from and after the passing of this act enjoy as full freedom as if he had been born free."<sup>20</sup> We can only imagine what hearing or reading those words must have meant to James. And he wasn't alone, in the years following the war, the same assembly also saw fit to emancipate Caesar Tarrant, William Boush, Jack Knight, Saul Mathews, David Baker, Pluto, and Richard Pointer for their war service.<sup>21</sup>

Lest we think too highly of the legislators actions, the third section of the act to free James called for an assessment of his value so the Assembly could reimburse Armistead for his

loss out of the “general fund.”<sup>22</sup> All sentiment aside, James had been property and his freedom was bought from his enslaver by the state in return for a service.

### “A Black Man Even”

A free man now, James showed his appreciation for the general by choosing the surname Lafayette. According to research compiled by the Jamestown-Yorktown Foundation, even though some sources continue to refer to him as “James Armistead Lafayette,” he clearly did not choose that name, and never used it himself. In 1787, he was officially known as James Lafayette when he was listed in the property tax book of Kent County Virginia as the head of a household with three slaves in residence and some horses. It’s likely that the slaves listed were not, as some have claimed, people that James owned, but his children with his free wife, Sylvia. This bizarre set of circumstances was possible because according to Virginia law, James’ children would still have been the property of their mother’s owner if they had been born while she was enslaved.<sup>23</sup> James was free but there would have been constant reminders of his status as a second-class citizen.

As of 1792, James and Sylvia, like all free blacks in Virginia, would have been required to register with local officials and pay 25 cents a year for a paper certificate which they would have carried with them at all times to prove their status should the need arise. As a free black, James would have been heavily taxed and lived with the knowledge that if he failed to pay taxes he could be sold back into slavery. Without the full rights of citizenship, life by any standard must have been challenging for the war hero. While the records show that James managed to buy forty acres of land, it was too poor to yield any crops of value which is perhaps why James was still hiring himself out to work late into his 60s and why in 1818, at the age of 70, he applied to the Virginia Assembly for a State pension in return for his service during the war. Based on James’ claim that he was “poor and unable to help himself,”<sup>24</sup> the Assembly gave him \$60 and awarded him a pension of \$20 every six months which he would travel to the Capitol in Richmond to collect.<sup>25</sup> Even a slave state like Virginia had enough respect for the merit of James’ service that they couldn’t deny his right to a pension.

James was getting by on this pension in 1824 when General Lafayette returned triumphantly to Virginia as part of a twenty-four-state tour of his beloved America. Despite his race, over forty years after his secret service to the general, James’ heroism was still well enough remembered for *The Richmond Compiler* to consider a reunion a great story, “Would not the recognition of this faithful old negro by our illustrious visitor at the scene of his former glory be a spectacle worthy to be remembered,” wondered the *Compiler*. The paper even did enough digging to discover that James was “too poor to equip himself for the occasion without some aid.”<sup>26</sup>

Apparently, “some aid” was provided as James made the long trip to the battlefield at Yorktown and joined the crowds hoping to see the Marquis. In a popular novel, *Edge Hill*, published in 1828, James’ exploits during the war were depicted with what can generously be described as vivid imagination. However, the final scene rings true as it shows an aged James holding Lafayette’s life-changing 1784 testimony for all to see, “this document so flattering to

the sable patriot and volunteer, was triumphantly exhibited by him at Yorktown.” The book ends with the complete text of the Marquis’ recommendation.<sup>27</sup>

The *Richmond Enquirer* described the anticipated reunion between the general and his spy with effusive praise for the former and a backhanded compliment for the latter:

A black man even, who had rendered him service by way of information as a spy, for which he was liberated by the State, was recognized by him in the crowd, called to him by name, and taken into his embrace.<sup>28</sup>

For the *Enquirer*, the idea that the Marquis would recognize “a black man even” was proof of the great man’s surpassing magnanimity.

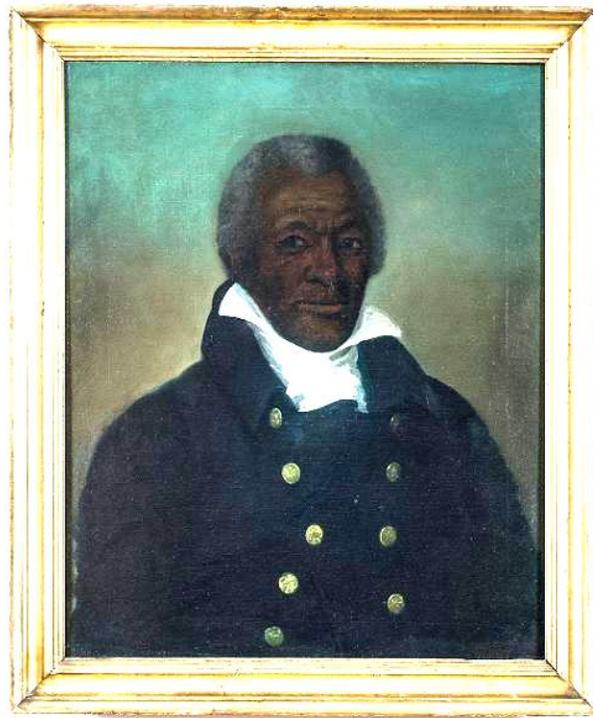


Fig. 2 John Blennerhasset Martin, *James Armistead Lafayette*.  
Oil on canvas, 1824. The Valentine, Richmond, Virginia.

At some point in 1824, possibly around the time of the festivities described above, James found himself sitting for a portrait by Richmond artist John Blennerhasset Martin. How this was arranged is unclear. Born in Ireland and recently arrived in America, Martin would later be known for a series of portraits of Chief Justice John Marshall one of which hung in the U.S. Supreme Court building.<sup>29</sup> This is how Ralph Ellison, in 1974, described James in this painting that now hangs in Richmond’s Valentine Museum: “Proud and dignified, he appears with his highly individualized features forcefully drawn, a dark ruggedly handsome man looking out at the viewer with quizzical expression.” James wears a white neck cloth and a dark blue military coat. Fastened to the coat and clearly on display are silver buttons stamped with the American eagle. Ellison concludes his piece with a worthy tribute to James, portraying him as, “Asserting

an individual identity earned at the repeated risk of his life and offering an unshakeable faith in the ideal of democracy.”<sup>30</sup>

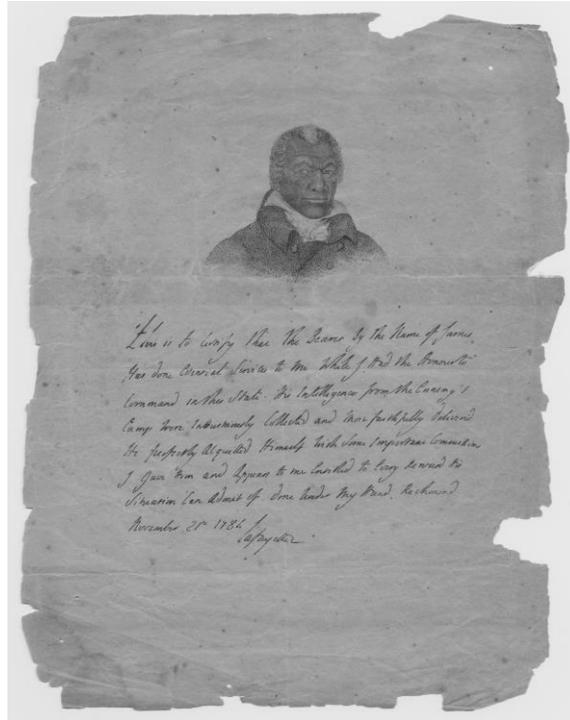


Fig. 3 Facsimile of the Marquis de Lafayette's original certificate commending James Armistead Lafayette for his revolutionary war service with portrait after John B. Martin." Engraved Broadside, ca. 1824. New York Public Library Digital Collections.

It was unusual for a black person to sit for a portrait at this time, and while we don't know exactly who or what brought James and the artist together, we do know that Martin was interested in James' valor during the War of Independence because he made an engraving of the portrait which included a facsimile of the Marquis' testimony. Martin then published broadsides of the engraving that accompanied Lafayette's grand tour celebrating the kindness of the gallant general who honored his promises even to a slave. By 1828, after he had been featured in newspapers, the subject of a portrait and a broadside, as well as the supporting character in a popular novel, it's hard to imagine a more famous black man in America than the Marquis' "essential" spy, James Lafayette. For the *other* hero of Yorktown, this would be his last moment in the sun during his lifetime.

In March of 1830, James made his last trip to Richmond to collect his \$20 pension. At some point not long after, he moved to Baltimore where, coincidentally, a twelve-year old Frederick Douglass was coming of age. On August 9 of that year, James died without fanfare. Sadly, there's no record of where he was buried or of his descendants.<sup>31</sup> Four years later, when General Lafayette died, Congress was draped in black as the nation mourned the death of a hero. John Quincy Adams delivered a three-hour eulogy in the Capital in which he claimed, "The

name of Lafayette shall stand enrolled upon the annals of our race high on the list of the pure and disinterested benefactors of mankind.”<sup>32</sup>

### Erased?

In 1855, one of America's first black historians, the New England abolitionist, William C. Nell, wrote *The Colored Patriots of the American Revolution*.<sup>33</sup> A series of brief profiles of courage organized by state, the book is among the first histories devoted to black American slaves, including Frederick Douglass' *Narrative*. Harriet Beecher Stowe wrote a moving introduction in which she argued for the importance of black historiography:

Each record of worth in this oppressed and despised people should be pondered, for it is by many such that the cruel and unjust public sentiment, which has so long proscribed them, may be reversed, and full opportunities given them to take rank among the nations of the earth.

Abolitionists were well aware that in order for blacks to advance, they needed a past. James Lafayette would seem to have been an ideal candidate to join the record at this point, but in an entire chapter devoted to the contributions of black Virginians he earned no notice. Why wasn't he included?

On May 10, 1917, over eighty years later, on a bright spring day in Brooklyn's Prospect Park, thousands of Americans turned out to honor General Lafayette yet again. A clutch of top-hatted dignitaries along with the former Commander in Chief of French forces *lui-même*, Marshal Joffre, gathered around the focus of the celebration: The Lafayette Memorial.<sup>34</sup> The same memorial that would trouble Summer Brennan a century later for failing to identify the general's comrade in arms, the heroic spy, James Lafayette. Was Brennan right? Had he somehow been a victim of “erasure”?

The historiography of this period would suggest that James' story, like that of so many black Americans before and after him, may have been either unknown, or intentionally buried. At a time when the Dunning School of history could ignore or erase the achievements of blacks and the country during Reconstruction and replace it with a narrative that praised white supremacy, this seems possible. At a time when *The Birth of a Nation* could be shown in the White House it seems likely. In 1915, the year of that infamous screening, W.E.B. Du Bois wrote this devastating critique of African American historiography:

In order to paint the South as a martyr to inescapable fate, to make the North the magnanimous emancipator, and to ridicule the Negro as the impossible joke in the whole development, we have in fifty years, by libel, innuendo and silence, so completely misstated and obliterated the history of the Negro in America and his relation to its work and government that today it almost unknown.<sup>35</sup>

In the climate described by Du Bois, it seems unreasonable to expect that James Lafayette would be fondly remembered by the white establishment. So, it should not have been expected to find mention of James in the memorial inscription. Or, to see a word in the *Brooklyn Eagle's*

extensive coverage of the unveiling about the man holding Lafayette's horse, let alone James.<sup>36</sup> So, who was this man? Perhaps the answer can be found in the unusual story of how the memorial came to be?

Henry Harteau was a Brooklyn merchant of French descent with an outsized affection for his hero, General Lafayette.<sup>37</sup> Later in life, he was a Parks Commissioner which likely inspired him to leave \$35,000 in his last will and testament to the City of Brooklyn to commission a statue of Lafayette in Prospect Park, "as an expression of my admiration for that noble and patriotic man and of my appreciation, in which my country shares, of his aid in establishing our republic."<sup>38</sup> Harteau's death from typhoid in 1895 kicked off years of legal wrangling by descendants who weren't eager to see their potential inheritance turned to stone, as it were. Ultimately, Harteau's bequest prevailed and the executors gave the commission to Daniel Chester French (1850-1931), the sculptor behind the Lincoln Memorial. French later recalled that Harteau envisioned a design that followed "in its general features a painting by a French artist...The painting shows a full-length figure of the youthful Lafayette with a negro holding a horse." French would keep the key elements of the painting, Lafayette, horse and "negro," but how was the identity of James Lafayette somehow invisible to the man who carved the Great Emancipator? Or, was there no identity for him to see?



Fig. 4 Le Paon, Jean Baptiste. "Lafayette at Yorktown," Oil on canvas, 1783-85, Lafayette, Pennsylvania, Lafayette College, Kirby Collection of Historical Paintings.

The piece that Harteau had in mind as a model for his statue was Jean Baptiste Le Paon's (1738-1785), *Lafayette at Yorktown* (1782) which the general modestly commissioned of himself along with an engraving by Noel Le Mire (1724-1801). Le Paon's painting shows a uniformed Lafayette standing before his spirited bay horse pointing to a distant military scene. A young black man in a bright red uniform with an earring and a plumed hat holds the horse's reins and looks to the general. Is this James Lafayette? A superficial comparison of this young man and the elderly James Lafayette in the Martin portrait provides no definitive proof. Likewise, eyeballing the Le Paon, the Martin and French's memorial all at once fails to deliver the bolt of illumination that one would hope for.



Fig. 5 (From left to right) Le Paon, *Lafayette at Yorktown*, Martin, *James Armistead Lafayette* and French, *Lafayette Memorial*. Excerpted and arranged by the author.

The fact that Lafayette commissioned the Le Paon painting would lead one to think that he must have made his ideas about the piece known, but there's no direct evidence to suggest that he intended for the black man in the painting to be James, the man he relied on at Yorktown. Accordingly, in Le Mire's engraving, *Conclusion de la Campagne de 1718 en Virginie* after Le Paon's painting, both the caption on the image and the extensive descriptive text sold with the engraving make no mention of the man gripping Lafayette's prancing bay horse. Who, then, if anyone, is he?

One possible answer is that he's not James Lafayette at all. Instead, he's either an anonymous slave or a generic black African, part of what Lafayette biographer, Laura Aurricchio, described as "a centuries-old tradition of picturing black grooms or pages in portraits of European noblemen."<sup>39</sup> The man in the bright uniform with an earring and fancy hat (an unlikely outfit for a spy) is only an accessory to complement a general, like his horse. Another example of artists using black Africans as ornaments for great white men can be found in a Le Paon painting already owned by General Lafayette of his idol George Washington with a turbaned black valet tending to his horse in the background. It was this piece that the general was hoping his portrait would accompany as part of a set when he made the commission.

So it would appear that, at least as of 1917, the man fending off the Marquis' nipping mount is not James Lafayette. The question is, what changed in the next century to convince Summer Brennan and others that he was?

## “Negro History”

In 1915, just a few years before the unveiling of the Lafayette Memorial in Prospect Park, the black historian and educator, Carter G. Woodson, founded the Association for the Study of Negro Life and History (ASNLH) in Chicago. Woodson was the driving force behind Black History Month and, like W.E.B. Du Bois, was determined to push back against the dominant white narrative of history and give black Americans and their history a platform. Of the importance of black history, he wrote, “Not to know what one's race has done in former times is to continue always a child.”<sup>40</sup> In 1916, ASNLH printed the first edition of *The Journal of Negro History*, an academic publication still in print under the title *The Journal of African American History*. The quarterly was edited by Woodson and featured the work of black historians including Woodson whose piece on “The Negroes of Cincinnati Prior to the Civil War” was in the inaugural issue along with a section on historical documents like, “What the Negro was thinking in the Eighteenth Century.” There was also a review of books including one on John Wesley Cromwell’s, *The Negro In American History: Men and Women Eminent in the Evolution of the American of African Descent*.<sup>41</sup> Written in 1914, this book makes no mention of James Lafayette in any of its nearly three hundred pages.<sup>42</sup> James, alas, would have to wait until 1942 to be recognized by the black academy in Volume 27, no. 3 of the *Journal of Negro History* when Luther Porter Jackson, a black history professor from Virginia State College (founded as Virginia Normal and Industrial Institute, and now Virginia State University), referenced his Yorktown exploits in the comprehensive article “Virginia Negro Soldiers and Seaman in the American Revolution.” Jackson relied on state archives to tell the story of James’ manumission and pension, and he even included the names of the male slaves listed above who, like James, had earned their freedom through military service in the Revolution.<sup>43</sup> Jackson would make no mention of James’ appearance in works of art by Le Paon or otherwise. That would have to wait.

## “The Black Presence”

The Act of Congress which brought the National Portrait Gallery in Washington D.C. to life in 1962 called for it to “function as a free public museum for the exhibition and study of portraiture and statuary depicting men and women who have made significant contributions to the history, development, and culture of the people of the United States.”<sup>44</sup> With the only complete set of Presidential portraits outside of the White House, it is very much an “establishment” institution.<sup>45</sup> And yet, in 1973, undoubtedly influenced by the civil rights movement and as part of a wave of Bicentennial celebrations prior to 1976, the gallery made a clear statement about who belonged in its hallowed halls when it launched a monumental exhibition of over 200 works from nearly fifty collections featuring black Americans called *The Black Presence in the Era of the American Revolution*. In words that echoed Woodson, Du Bois and Stowe before them, the exhibition catalog left no doubt about the intent of the show:

...to help restore to the national memory a historic fact that has been long suppressed or forgotten -- the living presence of black men and women during the thirty years that stretched from the martyrdom of Crispus Attucks in the Boston Massacre of 1770 to the conspiracy of Gabriel Prosser in Virginia at the turn of the century.<sup>46</sup>

Many of the images were of anonymous people but, according to the catalog, the curators and researchers were able to supplement "their portraits with documentary evidence of their activities and characters" so as "to arrive at a fuller understanding of the *dramatis personae* of the epoch."<sup>47</sup> Among the well-documented figures in the exhibit were the Poet Phillis Wheatley, Crispus Attucks, martyr of the Boston Massacre, and our hero holding the horse in the Le Paon painting, identified at last, possibly for the first time, as "James Armistead Lafayette."

It would be wonderful to tell you at this point that the catalog provided the long-awaited direct evidence that this was James. Sadly, the text accompanying Le Paon's *Lafayette at Yorktown* in the catalog refers to the major events of James' life already enumerated above but makes no claim that James is the other man in the Le Paon painting, and neither does the descriptive text of the painting. It does, however, seem that the display of the Le Paon in such proximity to the biographical text of James was intended to lead those who attended the show and the readers to assume that the man holding Lafayette's horse was James. Indeed, to this day, the description of the painting on the National Portrait Gallery website describes "James Armistead Lafayette" as the other "sitter" in the scene besides the general.<sup>48</sup>

This might explain why Ralph Ellison only a year after the exhibit in his 1974 essay "James Armistead Lafayette" confidently identified James as the man holding Lafayette's horse in the Le Paon painting which now hangs at Lafayette College in Easton, Pennsylvania. Ellison thoroughly captures James (who he calls Armistead) in all his elaborate finery, "in the lobe of his left ear the gleam of a golden earring evokes European fantasies of exotic blackamoors."<sup>49</sup> It's as if Ellison somehow doubts that this really is the man he's profiling:

...while Lafayette and his horse are drawn realistically, the shadowy Armistead appears a figure of fable, perhaps a lesser noble who has strayed to the New World after accompanying the blacker of the Three Wise Men to Bethlehem.<sup>50</sup>

Ellison concludes his profile by comparing the mythical man in the Le Paon with the real man in the portrait by John B. Martin: "Armistead, the former spy, is no longer clothed in fantasy. Proud and dignified, he appears with his highly individualized features forcefully drawn..."<sup>51</sup>

In the wake of the National Portrait Gallery exhibit and the Ellison piece, James Lafayette once again became a widely recognized historical figure in the United States. He was featured in academic papers like "A Mission of the most secret and important kind: James Lafayette and American Espionage in 1781" (1981), and the Jamestown/Yorktown Foundation is supporting a well-researched biography currently in the works. He's the star of children's books like *Black Heroes of the American Revolution* (1992), and *A Spy Called James* (2016). During Black History Month he has earned his rightful place among black patriots, and there's even been an historical interpretation of James at Colonial Williamsburg since 2005.<sup>52</sup> The internet has also been kind to James. A quick Google search of "James Armistead Lafayette" reveals over two hundred and forty thousand hits, which brings us to why it was so easy for Summer Brennan in February of 2016 to do some basic online research and reasonably come to the conclusion that the man holding the horse in the Lafayette Memorial was a representation of James Lafayette.<sup>53</sup> If only it were so.

In the absence of direct proof, one is left to conclude that James Lafayette is not the other man in the Le Paon painting and therefore not the man holding the horse in the Lafayette Memorial. The claim or suggestion at the 1973 National Portrait Gallery exhibit that it was James was made without any direct evidence, and generic black grooms as ornament to white European men were a common trope in paintings from this time. So, why would the National Gallery draw this conclusion? Without our hearing from them directly, it seems possible that the curators, hoping to insert more black patriots into the revolutionary narrative, simply wanted it to be him and made it so. Why the clearly documented and much more flattering portrait of the elderly James by Martin wasn't enough for the show is another question. Since the National Portrait Gallery show, many historians and galleries have been happy to go along with the innocent fiction that James is the man in the Le Paon. So why not go along? After all, it may not be him but shouldn't it be? Perhaps it should? Or, consider this: rather than reducing him to just the black man holding the white man's horse, a member of the supporting cast, wouldn't a more fitting commemoration for one of America's greatest spies be a memorial of his own? At present none exist and there are no plans. On the other end of Prospect Park from the Lafayette Memorial, NYC Parks is building a well-deserved monument to another great American, Shirley Chisholm, the first black woman to run for President. Certainly, one of America's greatest spies deserves a similar tribute.

### About the Author

David Felsen teaches global history at Avenues: The World School in New York City. He has a BA in history from Haverford College and is currently working toward a MA in American History in the Pace-Gilder Lehrman program. Before becoming a history teacher, David produced television documentaries for HBO, PBS, and History, among others.

---

<sup>1</sup> *Richmond Enquirer*. [volume] (Richmond, Va.), 29 Oct. 1824. *Chronicling America: Historic American Newspapers*. Lib. of Congress.

<sup>2</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>3</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>4</sup> The foregoing is an attempt to imagine some of the scene from James' perspective based on primary source accounts of the day and John B. Martin's 1824 portrait.

<sup>5</sup> "Prospect Park," Prospect Park Monuments - Lafayette Memorial : NYC Parks, accessed February 25, 2020, <https://www.nycgovparks.org/parks/B073/monuments/883>

<sup>6</sup> Summer Brennan, Twitter Post. February 18, 2016, 1:39pm.

<sup>7</sup> Summer Brennan, "The Invisible Black Man on a Prospect Park Statue," *Intelligencer* (Intelligencer, February 29, 2016) <https://nymag.com/intelligencer/2016/02/invisible-black-man-on-lafayetes-statue.html>

<sup>8</sup> Armistead was the name of James' former owner, William Armistead. For this reason he is referred to in most secondary sources as "James Armistead Lafayette." However, according to the Jamestown-Yorktown Foundation, in the primary sources where the literate James signed his name, he signed it James Lafayette or Fayette. Out of respect for this choice, and to avoid confusion, I'll refer to him as James or James Lafayette except when quoting a source.

<sup>9</sup> In an email exchange with Brennan who graciously responded despite being sick with Coronavirus, I asked her what source she used for the claim that the man holding the horse was James Armistead Lafayette, and she pointed me to the following article published in 2019: Thad Morgan, "How a Slave-Turned-Spy Helped Secure Victory at the Battle of Yorktown," History.com (A&E Television Networks, February 4, 2019, <https://www.history.com/news/battle-of-yorktown-slave-spy-james-armistead>)

<sup>10</sup> Summer Brennan, Twitter Post. February 18, 2016, 1:39pm.

<sup>11</sup> Summer Brennan, "The Invisible Black Man on a Prospect Park Statue," *Intelligencer* (*Intelligencer*, February 29, 2016)

<sup>12</sup> Lin-Manuel Miranda, Twitter Post. February, February 29, 2016, 5:49pm.

<sup>13</sup> "Historical Signs," *Historical Signs: NYC Parks*, accessed March 27, 2020, <https://www.nycgovparks.org/about/history/historical-signs>)

<sup>14</sup> Summer Brennan, "The Invisible Black Man on a Prospect Park Statue," *Intelligencer* (*Intelligencer*, February 29, 2016)

<sup>15</sup> Slave Belonging to William Armistead who entered the service of the Marquis de Lafayette asks to be Granted his Freedom, Legislative Petitions, New Kent County, 30 November 1786, Box 179, Folder 10, Library of Virginia, Richmond, Virginia.

<sup>16</sup> Marie Joseph Paul Yves Roch Gilbert Du Motier Lafayette, *Memoirs, Correspondence and Manuscripts of General Lafayette*. London: Saunders and Otley, 1837.

<sup>17</sup> John Salmon, "'A Mission of the most secret and important kind': James Lafayette and American Espionage in 1781." *Virginia Cavalcade* 31 (1981): 78–85.

<sup>18</sup> "Lafayette's Testimonial to James Armistead Lafayette." George Washington's Mount Vernon. Accessed April 8, 2020. <https://www.mountvernon.org/george-washington/the-revolutionary-war/spying-and-espionage/american-spies-of-the-revolution/lafayettes-testimonial-to-james-armistead-lafayette/>.

<sup>19</sup> Katherine Gruber, "Slave and Revolutionary War Spy James Lafayette," September 28, 2016. Jamestown-Yorktown Foundation, Virginia <https://www.c-span.org/video/?415962-1/slave-revolutionary-war-spy-james-lafayette>.

<sup>20</sup> William Waller Hening, ed, "The Statutes at Large, Being a Collection of the Laws of Virginia." P. 380. Google Books. Printed by and for Samuel Pleasants, junior, printer to the commonwealth, 1823. Accessed March 7, 2020. <https://books.google.com/books?id=wOrTLRd0328C&pg=PA380#v=onepage&q&f=true>.

<sup>21</sup> L. P. Jackson, "Virginia Negro Soldiers and Seamen in the American Revolution." *The Journal of Negro History* 27, no. 3 (1942): p.274. Accessed April 12, 2020. doi:10.2307/2715325.

<sup>22</sup> William Waller Hening, ed, "The Statutes at Large, Being a Collection of the Laws of Virginia." P. 381. Google Books. Printed by and for Samuel Pleasants, junior, printer to the commonwealth, 1823. Accessed March 7, 2020. <https://books.google.com/books?id=wOrTLRd0328C&pg=PA380#v=onepage&q&f=true>.

<sup>23</sup> Gruber, Katherine. "Slave and Revolutionary War Spy James Lafayette," September 28, 2016. Jamestown-Yorktown Foundation, Virginia

<sup>24</sup> "James Lafayette." *History Is Fun*. Jamestown-Yorktown Foundation, Virginia Accessed April 9, 2020 <https://www.historyisfun.org/learn/learning-center/james-lafayette/>.

<sup>25</sup> Gruber, Katherine. "Slave and Revolutionary War Spy James Lafayette," September 28, 2016. Jamestown-Yorktown Foundation, Virginia <https://www.c-span.org/video/?415962-1/slave-revolutionary-war-spy-james-lafayette>.

<sup>26</sup> Quotations in this paragraph from the *Richmond Compiler* are as quoted in Auricchio, "Lafayette at Yorktown." p. 24.

<sup>27</sup> James E. Heath, *Edge Hill, or The Family of the Fitzroyals, A Novel* (1828)

<sup>28</sup> *Richmond Enquirer*, October 29, 1824 <https://chroniclingamerica.loc.gov/lccn/sn84024735/1824-10-29/ed-1/seq-3/>

<sup>29</sup> Kathryn Lynn Mahone, "The Irish community in antebellum Richmond, 1840-1860" (1986). Master's Theses. Paper 448.

<sup>30</sup> Ralph Ellison. *The Collected Essays of Ralph Ellison. "James Armistead Lafayette."* New York: Modern Library, 2003.

<sup>31</sup> Katherine Gruber. "Slave and Revolutionary War Spy James Lafayette," September 28, 2016. Jamestown-Yorktown Foundation, Virginia <https://www.c-span.org/video/?415962-1/slave-revolutionary-war-spy-james-lafayette>.

<sup>32</sup> John Quincy Adams, *Oration on the Life and Character of Gilbert Motier de Lafayette* (Boston: S. Colman, and Russell, Odiorne & Co., 1835), 88.

- <sup>33</sup> William C. Nell, *The Colored Patriots of the American Revolution, with Sketches of Several Distinguished Colored Persons*. (Boston: R.F. Wallcut, 1855)
- <sup>34</sup> “10 May 1917, Page 1 - *The Brooklyn Daily Eagle* at Newspapers.com.” Brooklyn Public Library. Accessed March 19, 2020. <https://bklyn.newspapers.com/image/55292975/?terms=>.
- <sup>35</sup> W.E.B. Du Bois, and David Levering Lewis. *Black Reconstruction in America*. Free Press, 1998. p. 723
- <sup>36</sup> “10 May 1917, Page 1 - *The Brooklyn Daily Eagle* at Newspapers.com.” Brooklyn Public Library. Accessed March 19, 2020. <https://bklyn.newspapers.com/image/55292975/?terms=>.
- <sup>37</sup> Suzanne Spellen and Montrose Morris, “The Man Who Gave Us the Lafayette Statue in Prospect Park,” *Brownstoner*, June 15, 2015, <https://www.brownstoner.com/neighborhood/clinton-hill/the-man-who-gave-us-the-lafayette-statue-in-prospect-park/>.
- <sup>38</sup> Quotation from Henry Harteau’s will in this paragraph are as quoted in Auricchio, “Lafayette at Yorktown,” p. 23.
- <sup>39</sup> Laura Auricchio, “Lafayette at Yorktown (1782): Transformations and Interpretations.” *“A True Friend of the Cause” Lafayette and the Antislavery Movement*, 2016, 17–31.
- <sup>40</sup> Carter G. Woodson, “NEGRO HISTORY WEEK.” *Negro History Bulletin* 47, no. 1 (1984, reprint of Vol. XI, April 1926): 10-11. Accessed April 15, 2020. [www.jstor.org/stable/44176551](http://www.jstor.org/stable/44176551).
- <sup>41</sup> “Front Matter.” *The Journal of Negro History* 1, no. 1 (1916). Accessed April 16, 2020. [www.jstor.org/stable/2713511](http://www.jstor.org/stable/2713511).
- <sup>42</sup> John W Cromwell, *The Negro in American History*, Google Books (The American Negro Academy, 1914), <https://books.google.com/books?id=IY5GAAAAMAAJ&q=lafayette#v=onepage&q&f=false>
- <sup>43</sup> L. P. Jackson, “Virginia Negro Soldiers and Seamen in the American Revolution.” *The Journal of Negro History* 27, no. 3 (1942): 247-87. Accessed April 12, 2020. doi:10.2307/2715325
- <sup>44</sup> [USC02] 20 USC 75b: Establishment of National Portrait Gallery; functions, accessed April 19, 2020, <https://uscode.house.gov/view.xhtml?req=granuleid:USC-1999-title20-section75b&num=0&edition=1999>
- <sup>45</sup> Sysadmin, “About Us,” National Portrait Gallery, August 21, 2015, <https://npg.si.edu/about-us>
- <sup>46</sup> Sidney Kaplan and Emma Nogrady Kaplan, *The Black Presence in the Era of the American Revolution*, Revised ed. (Amherst, MA: University of Massachusetts Press, 1989), 3, <http://www.questiaschool.com/read/6395857/the-black-presence-in-the-era-of-the-american-revolution>.
- <sup>47</sup> Quotations in this paragraph from the original exhibition catalog are as quoted in Auricchio, “Lafayette at Yorktown. p. 26.
- <sup>48</sup> “Lafayette at Yorktown.” National Portrait Gallery. Accessed April 21, 2020. [https://npg.si.edu/object/npg\\_L400](https://npg.si.edu/object/npg_L400).
- <sup>49</sup> Ralph Ellison. *The Collected Essays of Ralph Ellison. “James Armistead Lafayette”*. New York: Modern Library, 2003.
- <sup>50</sup> *Ibid.*
- <sup>51</sup> *Ibid.*
- <sup>52</sup> “Podcasts on History.org: The Colonial Williamsburg Foundation's Official History and Citizenship Website.” James Armistead - Past & Present Podcasts: Colonial Williamsburg Official Site. Accessed April 21, 2020. <https://podcast.history.org/2005/09/26/james-armistead/>.
- <sup>53</sup> Google Search. Google. Accessed April 21, 2020. [https://www.google.com/search?safe=strict&sxsrf=ALeKk01y9uSDTNh-BGYBIIWiIDOCFBADaA:1587510981379&ei=xX6fXrFbFqHJ1QHJ-qaYCw&q=james+armistead+lafayette&oq=james+armis&gs\\_lcp=CgZwc3ktYWIQAxgBMgIIADICCAAYAggAMgIIADICCAAYAggAMgIIADICCAAYAggAMgIIADoECAAQQzoGCAAQBxAeOgQIABAEogYIABAWEB46BQgAEJECOGUIABCDAToGCAAQChBDUKezLFiyyxg7tYsaAFwAHgAgAGBAYgB6gmSAQM3LjaYAQCgAQQgAQdnd3Mtd2l6&sclient=psy-ab](https://www.google.com/search?safe=strict&sxsrf=ALeKk01y9uSDTNh-BGYBIIWiIDOCFBADaA:1587510981379&ei=xX6fXrFbFqHJ1QHJ-qaYCw&q=james+armistead+lafayette&oq=james+armis&gs_lcp=CgZwc3ktYWIQAxgBMgIIADICCAAYAggAMgIIADICCAAYAggAMgIIADICCAAYAggAMgIIADoECAAQQzoGCAAQBxAeOgQIABAEogYIABAWEB46BQgAEJECOGUIABCDAToGCAAQChBDUKezLFiyyxg7tYsaAFwAHgAgAGBAYgB6gmSAQM3LjaYAQCgAQQgAQdnd3Mtd2l6&sclient=psy-ab).

## Connecticut Tavern Signs

by Jan O'Sullivan

Every time I go to an event at the Connecticut Historical Society (CHS) in Hartford, I enjoy seeing their collection of more than sixty tavern signs displayed on the walls of their large auditorium. One of them in particular caught my eye, in part because the beautiful painting is not as weather-worn as the others, and in part because it was from an establishment in my town of Killingworth. The laminated gallery guide had some additional information, including that the sign dated from around 1823. Wow, that military figure on the left looks very familiar. I know a guy that came through Killingworth\* in 1824! And is that a tricolor feather? Am I jumping to conclusions?



Unfortunately, the Connecticut Historical Society has no information supporting my hypothesis. What they do know is that the sign was made for Jared Carter's Inn, which was in operation from 1823-1828. Carter was trying to appeal to a wealthy clientele, which is why he used the word Resort, somewhat uncommon for the time. The words Strangers and Resort were not part of the name of the inn. The sign was most likely made by Solomon Jones and Thomas

---

\*Full disclosure: in 1824, Killingworth comprised two districts. The one on the shoreline became the town of Clinton in 1838, and the North Killingworth district was incorporated as Killingworth. Lafayette came through on the Post Road, which is in present-day Clinton.

K. Bush, who had a partnership in Middletown, Connecticut that lasted from 1823 until 1825. The CHS assumes that the sign would have been painted in 1823 for the opening of the Inn. When the Inn closed in 1828, the sign went into the attic of Jared's family home, which is why it is so well preserved. In the 1920s, Morgan Brainard, the President of Aetna Life Insurance Company, began to collect tavern signs, and he bought this one in 1929. It hung in his dining room for many years.

The sign has artwork on the reverse side as well, which is against the wall of the CHS auditorium, but a photo of it is available in their comprehensive book, *Lions & Eagles & Bulls, Early American Tavern & Inn Signs from the Connecticut Historical Society*.



The male rider in the carriage is dressed the same way as the seated figure on the right on the other side of the sign. The book notes that the carriage, a calash, is definitely not a public stagecoach, to reinforce the impression of a well-to-do clientele. Also noted is Jared Carter's description of his enterprise as "a pleasant and healthful resort for valetudinarians [persons concerned about their ill health] who may wish the benefits of the sea air." He also promised "an extensive view of the sound" and "a constant supply of sea food." Could he have added Lafayette to his sign as an additional signal that this was an elegant place to stay? We may never know, but I'd like to think that the brief visit Lafayette paid to Killingworth on his way from New Haven to Saybrook might be recorded in this artwork, either in anticipation of his arrival, or after he left.

What do you think? Let us know: [americanfriendsoflafayette@gmail.com](mailto:americanfriendsoflafayette@gmail.com)

My research turned up an unexpected bonus; the CHS *does* have a sign in its collection that has been said all along to have a likeness of Lafayette. It was painted in 1831 for the Stiles Inn in Thompson, Connecticut, which is the town at the state's northeast corner. The Thompson Hotel did not open until 1902, so that name was added to the sign then. In addition to the oral history saying that the rider is Lafayette, the carriage is the correct style, so either the signmaker saw it in person, or had access to a drawing. Note that the horses on this sign only have six visible legs.



The Stiles Inn was a popular destination for couples from Massachusetts and Rhode Island who wished to marry quickly; their states had waiting periods, but Connecticut did not. The building remained an inn, becoming the White Horse Inn, and is currently a bed and breakfast named the Cottage House. Their Wikipedia page makes the clearly erroneous claim that Lafayette spent three nights there in 1824. (He did spend one night in Plainfield, a few towns to the south, on his way from Norwich, Connecticut to Providence, Rhode Island.)

So, I *did* find a Lafayette tavern sign. However, I'm not giving up hope that there are actually two in the CHS collection – maybe you can find one in your state, too!

## The Lafayette Legacy and the Women of Chavaniac

by Stephanie Dray

Lafayette carved out a world-changing legacy of civil rights, religious freedom, and democratic ideals. A legacy that forced America to embrace her destiny in World War One with the famous words, “*Lafayette, we are here!*”<sup>1</sup> A legacy that inspired the Resistance during World War Two.<sup>2</sup> A legacy that still echoes today in marches and debates about our civic future,<sup>3</sup> and it's a legacy to which I pay tribute in my forthcoming novel, *The Women of Chateau Lafayette*.

I joined *The American Friends of Lafayette* in February of 2017 on the heels of finishing two American Revolution novels about two different Founding Mothers: Patsy Jefferson (*America's First Daughter*) and Elizabeth Schuyler (*My Dear Hamilton*). Along with my co-author—Dr. Laura Kamoie, former professor of History at the US Naval Academy—I was delighted to discover how Lafayette inspired both of these Founding Mothers and validated them in moments of personal difficulty.<sup>4</sup>

For my next book, I wanted to write about Adrienne, Lafayette's wife and true partner in two revolutions—a heroine in her own right.<sup>5</sup> A woman I have come to think of as our French Founding Mother. What I didn't realize was that my research into Adrienne's incredible true story would lead me to a castle in the mountains of France and to the staggering legacy borne of that special place.



Adrienne Lafayette

I still remember trekking into the wild mountains of Auvergne and seeing the dramatic, craggy landscape rising around me. There it was, the Château de Chavaniac, standing in the forested mountains of rural France just as it had for centuries: Lafayette's birthplace<sup>6</sup>—the site where Adrienne was first arrested, returned under house arrest, then, having called additional

attention to herself by protecting religious dissidents in Auvergne,<sup>7</sup> arrested again and carried off to “almost the foot of the scaffold.”<sup>8</sup>



Château de Chavaniac

Her stand at Chavaniac during the French Revolution would have been a remarkable story by itself. But it was also there at Chavaniac, more than a century later, that the colorful American sculptress Beatrice Chanler became the moving spirit behind purchasing, renovating, and repurposing Lafayette’s birthplace as a refuge for sick, displaced, and refugee children.<sup>9</sup> And, perhaps most movingly of all, it was there where Jewish children found sanctuary during the Holocaust.<sup>10</sup>

Standing in that extraordinary château brought home for me that Adrienne’s story was not just about her life, but also about those who followed her, all inspired to undertake acts of courage in Lafayette’s name.

For the next two years, I gave myself over to the research, sorting mountains of papers, poring over hundreds of old letters, and uncovering century-old secrets with more twists and turns than any novelist could dream up. And some of my most spectacular finds came from the pages of old issues of the *Gazette* of the AFL!

Not only were these *Gazettes* a treasure-trove of factual information about Lafayette’s life that helped me understand Adrienne better, but they also provided vital clues about the ladies to whom she passed the torch, including especially the formidable Beatrice Chanler—a member of the AFL as early as 1934, and a founding mother of a different sort.

Because Beatrice was a former stage-star<sup>11</sup> and had married into a branch of the wealthy Astor family, I found her frequently mentioned and photographed in old digitized newspapers. Yet, her amusingly casual relationship with the truth on official documents became the bane of my research existence. On passports and travel records, she frequently changed her name as well as the date and place of her birth. I was stymied until I stumbled upon a wonderful article in *The Gazette of the American Friends of Lafayette* written by Beatrice’s grandson, and fellow AFL member William A. Chanler.<sup>12</sup>

With the help of our treasurer and publisher, Chuck Schwam, I took a chance to reach out, and a heart-warming correspondence commenced. Bill Chanler—who, like his grandmother, is a generous soul and author in his own right—shared family letters with me that shed a great

deal of light on Beatrice's personality and contributions. On the surface, the letters painted a deceptively simple picture of Beatrice as a rich society maven whose troubled marriage somehow survived the Great War and gave way to remarkable philanthropy at Lafayette's castle in Auvergne.

At the start of World War One, Beatrice had been in Paris with her two sons to visit their father at the American Hospital at Neuilly, where he was being treated for a mysterious leg injury.<sup>13</sup> At first, probably presuming the war would be over swiftly, Beatrice intended to remain in Paris to study sculpture.<sup>14</sup> But by autumn, it became apparent that she and the boys were trapped in a war zone, and she evacuated Paris on the last civilian train, which made a fateful stop in Amiens where she had the opportunity to speak with wounded soldiers.<sup>15</sup>

On the *SS Cedric*, the steamship she took back to New York in October of 1914, she and her dear friend, American heiress Emily Sloane, conceived of a new charitable foundation that they would call *The Lafayette Fund*.<sup>16</sup> This charity aimed to provide kits to French soldiers in the trenches just as Lafayette provided clothes and supplies to American soldiers during the Revolution.

Because Beatrice, like Lafayette, was never one to do anything on a small scale, her charity would be responsible for sending more than a hundred thousand "Lafayette Kits" to France, and in a related enterprise, she helped raise nearly \$1 million for the Allies (\$17 million in 2020 dollars). As a reward for her pains, she was criticized for having violated President Wilson's neutrality policy. But despite leaflets accusing those "mushy beldames" of the "Lafayette League" of "murder,"<sup>17</sup> she only redoubled her efforts.



Beatrice in 1915, sending Lafayette Kits

Perhaps her belief that America ought to come to France's aid was because her nephew Victor Chapman was one of the first Americans to volunteer for service. He would go on to be a member of the Lafayette Escadrille and was the first American aviator to die at war.<sup>18</sup> So for Beatrice, her war relief efforts were personal. But as the wife of a former congressman,<sup>19</sup>

Beatrice was also a maestro of the political, and she marshaled symbolism like a professional by sponsoring a National Lafayette Day<sup>20</sup> and *The Children's Revolution*, a patriotic play starring her son in the role of Lafayette.<sup>21</sup> She probably hoped the latter would give Theodore Roosevelt a plausibly deniable platform with which to skewer Wilson, whose administration she called “feeble.” And that’s just what he did.<sup>22</sup> Backstage at that play, in the hearing of reporters, Roosevelt told the children never to be neutral between right and wrong.<sup>23</sup>

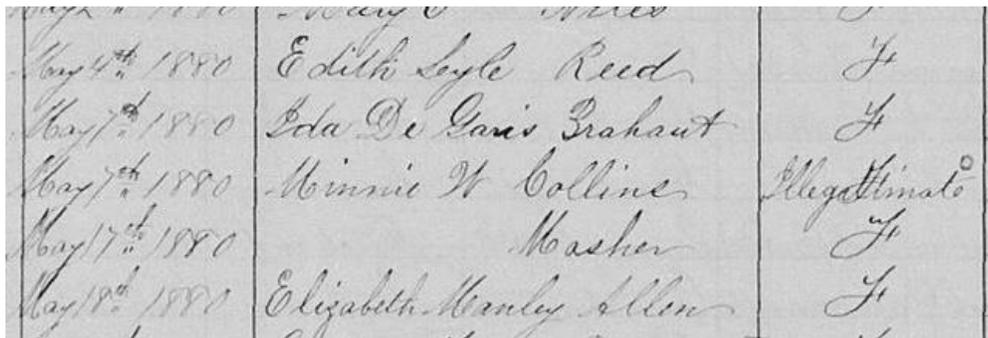
(Which might as well have been Lafayette’s second motto after *Cur Non.*)

Certainly, it was a credo that appealed to Beatrice Chanler in spearheading the project to purchase Lafayette’s birthplace and transform it into an orphanage, college, and preventorium for children at risk for tuberculosis, as well as a museum to honor the alliance of Western democracies. Having transformed the *Lafayette Fund* into the new *French Heroes' Lafayette Memorial Fund, Inc.*, her plans were so ambitious and expansive that I continually found myself wondering what drove her.

I would discover part of the answer amongst the twenty-six unsorted boxes of her papers at the New York Historical Society. It was there that I discovered photos of secret tunnels at Chavaniac that I had not seen when I visited. I also discovered love letters that pointed to a liaison with a French officer—a romance that Beatrice seems to have sacrificed, perhaps to continue her good works in France. But most importantly, I discovered a family tree that I shared with Bill Chanler, who then went down a rabbit hole of genealogical discovery.

And what a rabbit he came back with!

With the indispensable and extensive research of Bill’s long-lost cousin Roy Collins, we learned that Beatrice Chanler wasn’t who she said she was: she was someone even more extraordinary. Exactly when or why she decided to adopt the name Beatrice is anyone’s guess, but birth records reveal that she was born *Minnie W. Collins*, the illegitimate daughter of Eliza Tully Collins, from an Irish immigrant line.



Minnie W. Collins birth record, Dartmouth, Massachusetts,  
courtesy of Roy Collins

Though she would later imply that she came from a wealthy family, she did, at least once, make vague reference to her humble past in Lewis Clinton Strang’s *Famous Prima Donnas*. She wasn’t born in Charlottesville as she so often claimed; her childhood address was in Boston, not far from what was then known as the Lafayette Mall.<sup>24</sup> As a child, she lived with a butcher by the

name of George Ashley, to whom her mother claimed to be married. (Records showing that Mr. Ashley was married to another woman named Azuba Collins put this very much in doubt.)

Thus, young Beatrice went by the name *Minnie Ashley*, which she would later claim was only a stage name. Given the varying answers she gave on official documents about her birth, she also appears to have hoped that people would believe she was younger than she really was. (Roy discovered birth records showing that she was born in Dartmouth, Massachusetts, on May 7, 1880.)

But can one blame this magnificent lady for this small vanity?



Minnie Ashley, c. 1898

She was six years old when France's gift of the Statue of Liberty was dedicated. She was nine when a French dance instructor took pity on her reduced circumstances and gave her free lessons. She attended the Barnard Memorial School,<sup>25</sup> a charity school for impoverished children,<sup>26</sup> and while other kids her age worked in factories, she found a job on the stage.<sup>27</sup>

That she had such humble beginnings yet went on to do such great things was, for me, a deeply moving discovery, because I realized that, insofar as the Lafayettes fought for social mobility and human equality, Beatrice wasn't merely an agent of the Lafayette legacy; she was an *embodiment* of it.

In all the desperate children she helped, she likely saw herself. And her work continued after the First World War right into the Second, where many of the lady friends she recruited continued to dedicate themselves to Lafayette's birthplace.<sup>28</sup>

Perhaps, then, I shouldn't have been so startled to learn that Jewish children were saved at Chavaniac. In *Témoignages de résistants: 1940-1945*, a collection of first-hand recollections from the French Resistance—excerpts of which were generously provided to me by the United States Holocaust Memorial Museum—French resistance fighter Charles Boissier testified that almost the whole village of Chavaniac was pledged to the cause of fighting the Nazis. Chavaniac is a very small village, and yet, Aimé Montiel, a member of the French Underground known as the *maquis*, testified that almost sixty of these villagers fought alongside him. And in apparent defiance of Nazi occupation, Dr. Anglade and the administrators of the preventorium issued a pamphlet saying they did not discriminate on the basis of religion.<sup>29</sup>

In light of all this, I was excited to show how the work of Adrienne Lafayette and Beatrice Chanler culminated in heroism at Lafayette's birthplace and in his name. Imagine my surprise to discover that this most modern period at the castle was the one I had the most trouble learning about.

Though communications between the Free Zone and America were possible before 1942, my research uncovered complaints from American benefactors that they weren't even sure the Lafayette Preventorium was still operating. There wasn't much more information to be gleaned on the other side of the ocean. When I visited Chavaniac, guides told me castle records from the 1940s no longer exist. This was later confirmed by our own expert, AFL member Myriam Waze, founder of Le Club Lafayette. Thus, I was forced to rely on other sources—like Gisèle Naichouler Feldman's touching memoir entitled *Saved by the Spirit of Lafayette*.

Gisèle and her brother were hidden and protected at the chateau, and she recounted that an additional fifteen Jewish children were brought to the preventorium, reported by a supervisor, but ultimately escaped high into the mountains with the help of resistance fighters. Unfortunately, her recollection did not name the persons who orchestrated the escape. Ms. Feldman also asserted that her brother witnessed resistance fighters storing weapons under the floorboards at the boys' dormitory of the preventorium, but again, did not say which staff members aided or abetted them.

The Resistance seems to have had a friend in the aging Marie-Louise LeVerrier, whose carefully worded letters, reprinted in *The Gazette of the American Friends of Lafayette*, tell us about how a statue of Lafayette in Le Puy was liberated from Nazis who were trying to melt it down.<sup>30</sup> In another issue, Clara Greenleaf Perry reported from her correspondence with those at the castle that the museum collection, including George Washington's dueling pistols, were hidden from the Nazis.<sup>31</sup> Yet she didn't say where or by whom. Resistants praised the women of Chavaniac for marching on Bastille Day in defiance of the Nazis, but didn't name which women of the castle took part. Charles Boissier tells us a fifteen-year-old boy from the preventorium joined the Resistance, but not which one. And so on...

These mysteries presented a real challenge. I had overwhelming evidence that heroic acts took place at and around Chavaniac, but I couldn't know who the heroes and heroines were. In the end, for the book, I had to put together the clues left behind and fictionalize the rest. But of course, this is the real contribution that historical fiction novels like *The Women of Chateau*

*Lafayette* can make—by going where historians rightly fear to tread, telling stories that cannot responsibly be told any other way.

And the story of Lafayette’s legacy is one that deserves to be told.

It’s a story that extends beyond the confines of his biography—a story about a name that other people invoke while doing important work for human rights. It’s also a story that continues, many chapters of which remain unwritten, and in which I hope we all will play a part.

### About the Author

Stephanie Dray is the *New York Times* bestselling author of *America’s First Daughter* and *The Women of Chateau Lafayette*.

This photo of the author was taken at the only café in Chavaniac.



<sup>1</sup> Keyes, Ralph. *The Quote Verifier: Who Said What, Where, and When*. United States, St. Martin's Press, 2007.

<sup>2</sup> Volle, Lucien. *Par ceux qui l'ont faite, la Résistance: des maquis de la Haute-Loire jusqu'au bord du Rhin: la singulière épopée du "Groupe Lafayette."* France, L. Volle, 1988.

<sup>3</sup> Hovey, Lonnie J. *Lafayette Square*. United States, Arcadia Publishing Incorporated, 2014.

<sup>4</sup> In the case of Martha “Patsy” Jefferson Randolph, Lafayette’s arrival at Monticello in 1824 coincided with her marital difficulties. In the case of Elizabeth Schuyler Hamilton, his triumphal tour was in the wake of her husband’s death, when she was locked in a battle to prove that Alexander Hamilton authored George Washington’s Farewell Address, and she was buoyed in her cause by riding with Lafayette in his carriage at West Point.

<sup>5</sup> Lane, Jason. *General and Madame de Lafayette: Partners in Liberty's Cause in the American and French Revolutions*. United Kingdom, Taylor Trade Publishing, 2003.

<sup>6</sup> Leepson, Marc. *Lafayette: Lessons in Leadership from the Idealist General*. United States, St. Martin's Publishing Group, 2011.

<sup>7</sup> Virginie du Motier de La Fayette marquise de Lasteyrie, et al. *Life of Madame de Lafayette*. United Kingdom, L. Techener, 1872.

<sup>8</sup> Wright, Constance. *Madame de Lafayette*. N.p., Borodino Books, 2018.

<sup>9</sup> *French Heroes' Lafayette Memorial Fund yearbook: sous la présidence d'honneur de M. Clemenceau*. Fondé en avril, 1916 .... United States, French Heroes Lafayette Memorial Fund, 1918.

<sup>10</sup> Feldman, Gisele Naichouler. *Saved by the Spirit of Lafayette: The French Righteous and the Hidden Children*. United States, Ferne Press, 2008.

<sup>11</sup> *Robert Winthrop Chanler: Discovering the Fantastic*. United States, Vizcaya Museum and Gardens, 2016.

<sup>12</sup> Chanler, William A. “Beatrice Chanler and Lafayette,” *Gazette of the American Friends of Lafayette*, No. 85, Oct-2016.

<sup>13</sup> Chanler, William Astor, Jr. *And Did Those Feet in Ancient Time. A Seven Hundred Acre Island Reminiscence*. Rockport, Maine: Outerbridge Books, 1984.

<sup>14</sup> “Emergency Passport Application.” [Online]. Available:

[https://www.ancestry.com/imageviewer/collections/1174/images/32296\\_1220706418\\_0014-00620?pId=2189342](https://www.ancestry.com/imageviewer/collections/1174/images/32296_1220706418_0014-00620?pId=2189342). [Accessed: 29-Sep-2020]

<sup>15</sup> “14 Sep 1914, Page 7 - The Sun at Newspapers.com,” Newspapers.com. [Online]. Available:

[https://www.newspapers.com/image/?clipping\\_id=27789618](https://www.newspapers.com/image/?clipping_id=27789618)

<sup>16</sup> *Harper's Pictorial Library of the World War*. United Kingdom, Harper, 1920.

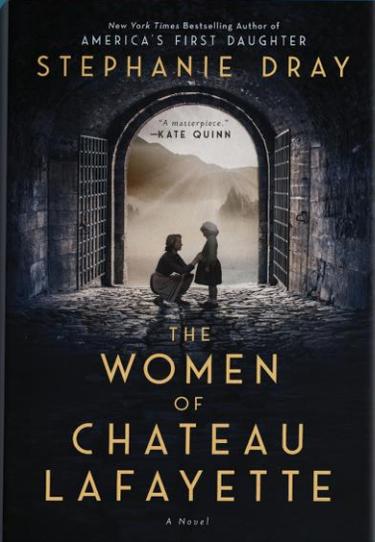
- <sup>17</sup> Shrader, Frederic Franklin. "Warring on Women and Children." *The Fatherland*, Volume 3. United States, International Monthly Incorporated, 1915.
- <sup>18</sup> Chapman, Victor Emmanuel. *Victor Chapman's Letters from France: With Memoir*. United States, Macmillan, 1917.
- <sup>19</sup> *United States Congressional Serial Set*. United States, U.S. Government Printing Office, 1989.
- <sup>20</sup> Wilson, Ross J. *New York and the First World War: Shaping an American City*. United Kingdom, Taylor & Francis, 2016.
- <sup>21</sup> *Social Register*. United States, Social Register Association, 2003.
- <sup>22</sup> Bogar, Thomas A. *American Presidents Attend the Theatre: The Playgoing Experiences of Each Chief Executive*. United States, McFarland, Incorporated, Publishers, 2015.
- <sup>23</sup> "ROOSEVELT TO CHILDREN.; 'Never Be Neutral Between Right and Wrong,' He Tells Little Actors," *The New York Times*, 16-Apr-1915. [Online]. Available: <https://www.nytimes.com/1915/04/16/archives/roosevelt-to-children-never-be-neutral-between-right-and-wrong-he.html>. [Accessed: 29-Sep-2020]
- <sup>24</sup> Bacon, Edwin Munroe. *Boston, a Guide Book*. United States, Ginn, 1903.
- <sup>25</sup> In a newspaper interview, Beatrice said it was the Barns' Memorial School associated with the Warrenton Street Church. But the only school associated with the Warrenton Street Church was the Barnard Memorial School.
- <sup>26</sup> School Document. United States, Rockwell and Churchill, 1913.
- <sup>27</sup> Strang, Lewis Clinton. *Famous Prima Donnas*. United States, L.C. Page & Company, 1900.
- <sup>28</sup> Among the lady friends who dedicated themselves to what would eventually become the Lafayette Preventorium were the Baroness LaGrange (née Emily Sloane), journalist Valentine Thomson, educator Marie-Louise LeVerrier, artist Clara Greenleaf Perry, and public health authority Clara Simon.
- <sup>29</sup> I found this pamphlet among Beatrice Chanler's papers at the New York Historical Society.
- <sup>30</sup> LeVerrier, Marie-Louise. "Chavaniac, a Maquis Center." Lafayette Digital Repository, *Gazette of the American Friends of Lafayette*, No. 6, Mar-1946. [Online]. Available: <http://hdl.handle.net/10385/701>. [Accessed: 29-Sep-2020]
- <sup>31</sup> Greenleaf Perry, Grace. "Chavaniac." Lafayette Digital Repository, *Gazette of the American Friends of Lafayette*, No. 5, Apr-1945. [Online]. Available: <https://ldr.lafayette.edu/concern/publications/b2773w05f>. [Accessed: 29-Sep-2020]

An epic saga based on the true story of an  
**EXTRAORDINARY CASTLE IN THE HEART OF FRANCE**  
 and the remarkable women bound by its legacy.

"Three heroines with seemingly nothing in common—a French Revolution Founding Mother struggling to preserve her family, a World War I socialite turned passionate activist, and a World War II orphan pulled into the French Resistance—turn out to have everything in common as they struggle through the chaos of three separate wars to forge a united legacy."

—KATE QUINN

Learn more at [prh.com/drays](http://prh.com/drays)



 Penguin Random House

## **The Making of an American Hero: Lafayette at Brandywine**

by Bruce E. Mowday

Lafayette is an American hero – undisputed. He was idealistic. He was principled. And he risked his life and fortune to fulfill his beliefs. As a modern saying goes, he put his money where his mouth is.

What noble deeds did Lafayette perform for America to claim the honor of hero? What were the key events that led Lafayette to being the most honored foreigner in American history? Did Lafayette have to overcome substantial obstacles to earn his accolades?

Far too many people today have little or no knowledge of Lafayette's miraculous achievements and devastating sacrifices made for America. A sad and troubling state of affairs is taking place in America today. Our country's rich history, not only of Lafayette, is being altered, ignored and forgotten.

True, Lafayette biographies are plentiful. Abundant academic works are available. Many books and articles give information on segments of Lafayette's life. Information is plentiful but scattered. Historical documents can be accessed through online searches. The missing link for today's populace is a book focusing on Lafayette's experiences related to America's fight for independence.

My journey to attempt to fulfill this void began more than two decades ago – last century – when I began researching and writing a book on the battle of Brandywine, which took place on September 11, 1777. While working on a newspaper column for the *Daily Local News* of West Chester, Pennsylvania, I discovered that no book had been written on the battle. Brandywine was important because General George Washington's attempt to defend the seat of government in Philadelphia was foiled by British forces. Brandywine was an overwhelming and almost devastating defeat. British officers wrote that if another hour of daylight existed, Washington's army would have been no more. Washington's life, according to one account, almost came to an end that morning.

A book on the battle of Brandywine was obviously warranted and after more than five years of research – including trips to the British Public Records Office and British Army Museum – my book on Brandywine was published. Documents were difficult to find in this pre-internet age. I found as many original records as possible, interviewed experts and visited museums and libraries. As Americans – and those of other nationalities – are wont to do, we attempt to find the silver lining, even in a disaster. The silver lining I was told, and referenced in my book, was that the Americans stood toe-to-toe with the best army in the world, the British, for several hours during the afternoon of September 11 before being defeated. The soldiers took that moment back with them to Valley Forge and the memory helped them to become better soldiers, soldiers that won America's independence.

A few years ago – note some of my books take years to formulate, research and write – the “silver-lining theory” began to nag at me. The American soldiers didn’t arrive at Valley Forge until three months after Brandywine and intense drilling didn’t begin for several more months. In between, Washington’s army suffered defeats at Paoli and Germantown. Were they really influenced by two hours of fighting in a devastating loss? That notion didn’t make sense. If the soldiers needed a memory to be emboldened, they would look to the October 17, 1777, American victory at Saratoga.

The Brandywine “silver-lining theory” didn’t work for me. So, what was the most important consequence for America at the battle of Brandywine? After I reexamined my research and I did other reading, my thoughts crystalized. The shedding of blood by Lafayette marked the beginning of the creation of an American hero. Many brave soldiers were wounded at Brandywine. The wounding of Lafayette was momentous because of factors that took place before Brandywine and the soldier and leader Lafayette became after Brandywine.

As I had opportunities to talk with those who have studied Lafayette, I became convinced of my theory. I signed one of my Civil War books – *J. Howard Wert’s Gettysburg* - at the Union League in New York City. At the event was Lafayette biographer Harlow Giles Unger. I talked with Unger about Lafayette. At Gettysburg during another book signing – this one was *Pickett’s Charge: The Untold Story* - I had a discussion with a noted academic historian about Lafayette. During a re-enactment of the battle of Brandywine, I was part of the program that included Ben Goldman, Lafayette scholar and re-enactor. Recently, members of the American Friends of Lafayette have been generous with their assistance in my research. This has been a long road of research that is continuing. Most authors will tell you that there always seems to be another piece of the historic puzzle to find, just out of reach. All editors will tell you at some point the research concludes – ready or not - and the writing commences. I’m approaching the writing stage.

Lafayette’s early life and his fervor for liberty was examined. France supported America’s independence. The country’s hierarchy wasn’t so much upset at Lafayette’s support for America, just the fact that he “jumped the gun” before the King was ready to openly commit French resources. Upon arrival in America, Lafayette wasn’t welcomed with open arms. Washington’s edict of no more European generals almost caused Lafayette to return to France before joining Washington’s army.

Lafayette’s early days with his comrades were rocky, as the very young general with a limited knowledge of English and no battle experience outranked some veteran generals who had been fighting alongside Washington for many months. Lafayette’s shedding of blood at Brandywine changed that perception. During my research, I found a one-sentence reference in a book that Lafayette left Brandywine a hero. Nothing more than that brief description.

The deeds Lafayette performed for Washington and America after Brandywine are many and valuable. Lafayette financially supported the revolution. Lafayette was a staunch defender of Washington when others in Washington’s own army and French leaders wanted Washington replaced. Washington relied on Lafayette in key instances to be his liaison with France military and governmental leaders. Without the assistance of the French fleet and army, Washington’s victory at Yorktown would not have taken place. Lafayette quickly developed into a competent

military leader. Washington gave Lafayette chances to succeed after his Brandywine wound healed and later gave Lafayette an order to chase down traitor Benedict Arnold. During that command, the Virginia Campaign, he bedeviled British General Cornwallis and contributed to the victory at Yorktown.

Lafayette earned his hero status, and the grand tour of the United States that Lafayette enjoyed more than four decades after America gained its freedom celebrated that status. Those intervening years weren't kind to Lafayette as he was persecuted and imprisoned while supporting liberty in his own France.

Earlier, I wrote about Ben Goldman, Lafayette aficionado. The illustration for this article is a preliminary sketch for a new painting of Lafayette at Brandywine by renowned artist Adrian Martinez. Adrian's work has been displayed nationally and internationally, including at the White House. Ben is the model for Adrian's Lafayette. Adrian's work will be one of a series of paintings for Brandywine's upcoming anniversary.



My work on this book is part of my long association with Brandywine. During my childhood, my parents used to take my sister, my brother, and me to play on the fields of Brandywine to tire us before bed. Many years later, I became President of the Brandywine Battlefield Park Associates.

An old newspaper story was the genesis of my book *September 11, 1777: Washington's Defeat at Brandywine Dooms Philadelphia*. As an amateur ephemera collector, I attended paper shows and scoured trade publications. An auction for newspapers printed in the 18<sup>th</sup> century caught my eye. The description of one paper was stunning – a first-hand report of a participant of the battle of Brandywine.

I was high bidder on that lot of newspapers and decided to write a newspaper column on my discovery. I was by no means an expert on the battle of Brandywine and went to the local book store to purchase a book on the engagement. I discovered no one had bothered to research and write a book on Brandywine, except for a slim volume as part of an anniversary publication on the American Revolution. Instead of a newspaper column, I decided to write a book. Now, I've decided to do a second book involving Brandywine and Lafayette.

The time has come to remind America of the origin story of its hero, Lafayette.

**About the Author:**

Bruce E. Mowday is an award-winning author and newspaper reporter. He has written 21 books on history, sports, business, and true crime. Mowday has appeared on the **Discovery ID** channel, **ReelZ network**, **C-SPAN**, the **Pennsylvania Cable Network**, **Hollywood and Beyond**, **Whatcha Got**, **Journey into the Civil War**, **Chronicles of the American Civil War**, and other television shows. He is a frequent speaker at various civic and historical groups. The Congress of Civil War Round Tables has named Bruce a "5-Star" speaker. Mowday has hosted his own radio shows, has been editor of magazines and was chairman of the Chester County Historical Society and president of the Brandywine Battlefield Park Associates. He is a former board member of the Valley Forge Park Alliance and the Chester County Conference and Visitors Bureau. For more information on Mowday, his books, and his schedule of events, see [www.mowday.com](http://www.mowday.com).

## Lafayette and Slavery

by Hank Parfitt  
Fayetteville, NC

In the United States, much of our understanding of Lafayette's importance as a historical figure is focused on his roles as a military leader in the American Revolution and as a negotiator with France, our ally. Certainly, Americans should never forget the youthful French nobleman who came to our country's aid as we struggled for independence. His contributions to mankind, however, extend far beyond his exploits in this country. It was after his return to France that Lafayette began his lifelong journey as an advocate for human rights and dignity.

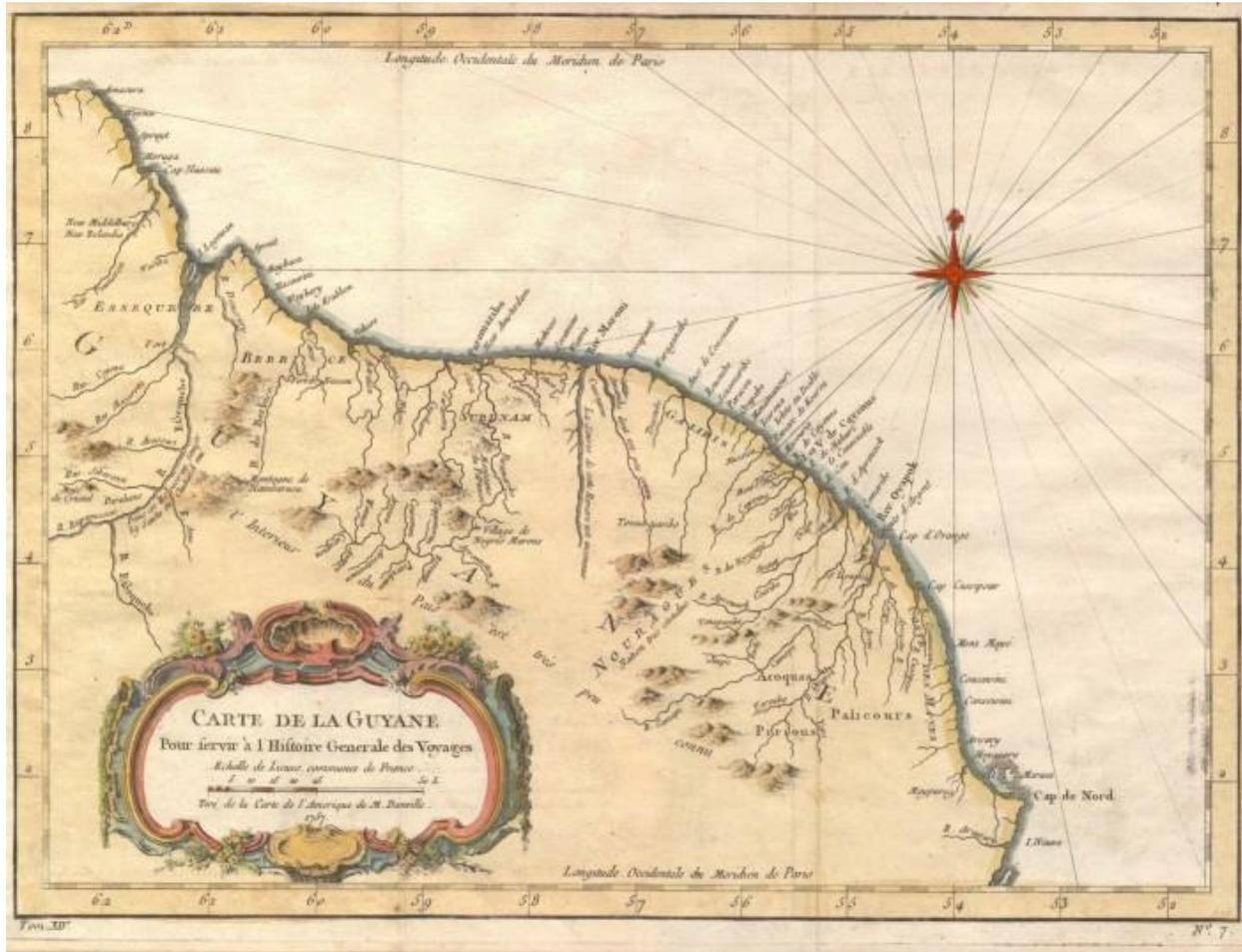
When Lafayette returned home to France, much enamored of his newly adopted country and the republican values he had learned there, he was determined to put them into action. For one thing, he desired a more representative form of government for France's people and he became a leading advocate for a constitutional monarchy. For another, he became an outspoken advocate for social reform in France, including Protestant freedom of religion and equal rights for all men. After election to the National Assembly in 1789, Lafayette wrote the draft for the Declaration of the Rights of Man and pursued legislation to promote his liberal ideals, including the abolition of slavery.

Precisely when Lafayette became an advocate for emancipation is not known. One important influence was his friend John Laurens from South Carolina, a fellow soldier in the Continental Army. Although his father was a slave owner in South Carolina, John was greatly influenced by Enlightenment ideas and he spoke to Lafayette often about the evils of slavery and proposed (unsuccessfully) to grant the enslaved in South Carolina their freedom in exchange for military service. Also, Lafayette became well-acquainted with an enslaved soldier by the name of James Armistead, who volunteered to serve with Lafayette during the siege of Richmond in 1781. Later that year, Lafayette engaged Armistead to spy on General George Cornwallis by posing as a fugitive. The information Armistead gathered was invaluable to the American and French forces and contributed to their victory at Yorktown. In appreciation, Lafayette helped Armistead win his freedom after the war. Another major influence on Lafayette might have been, quite simply, the irony of fighting for freedom in a country where one-sixth of the population was enslaved.

Lafayette was a man of logic and therefore unable and unwilling to accept such irony. Lafayette was also a man of action (some critics would say "precipitous action") and not content merely to talk about emancipation. By 1783, he had hatched a plan to do something about slavery. In a letter to George Washington, Lafayette expressed hope that his old mentor would join him in this venture "...such an example as yours might render it a general practice, and if we succeed in America, I will cheerfully devote a part of my time to render the method fashionable in the West Indies. If it be a wild scheme, I had rather be mad that way, than to be thought wise on the other tack." Washington declined to join Lafayette in this enterprise, but he commended him for his generous spirit and ultimately provided for the freedom of those enslaved to him in his will.

Lafayette later decided to purchase a plantation in the French colony of Cayenne on the northeastern coast of South America with the intention of freeing the enslaved workers through gradual manumission, which he hoped would demonstrate a way to end slavery. He would outlaw the

whip, grant the enslaved more free time with their families, provide them with an education, and pay them a wage – actions that Lafayette thought would prepare the enslaved for freedom.



clove trees under cultivation by an estimated 70 enslaved workers and family members who came with the property. Before Lafayette's plan could be implemented fully, however, the Revolutionary government of Robespierre ascended to power. Supporters of a constitutional monarchy were facing exile or death. Lafayette himself escaped France under threat of death in August of 1792, only to be imprisoned in Prussia and Austria by royal authorities fearful that he might promote revolutionary ideas in their own countries. While in prison, the Revolutionary government of France seized all of his property in South America, including the enslaved workers. They would later receive formal emancipation from the French government in 1794, only to have Napoleon Bonaparte rescind it. This reversal prompted rebellions of the enslaved in Cayenne against the French Empire.

Although Lafayette would not see his plan for gradual manumission implemented, he became an inspiration and a hero to black and white abolitionists such as McCune Smith in New York, Lewis Hayden and William Cooper Nell in Boston, Senator Charles Sumner of Massachusetts, and Thomas Clarkson and Granville Sharp in England. In his newspaper, Frederick Douglass quoted letters by George Washington praising Lafayette for the Cayenne plan. These men considered Lafayette a "true abolitionist" because he advocated for racial equality as well as emancipation. They easily recognized him as different from "antislavery advocates" who deplored many aspects of slavery but whose chief aim was to preserve the Union and whose concept of equality was limited to white men like themselves. They certainly had no difficulty making a distinction between Lafayette, who purchased a plantation and the enslaved workers there in order to free them, and those who owned the enslaved for profit.

Long after his death, Lafayette was quoted by abolitionists in their speeches and writings. Charles Sumner, for example, used his words to rally popular sentiment in the Northern states against a compromise with the South during the secession crisis. Quoting from a 1786 letter from Lafayette to John Adams, he wrote: "In the cause of my black brethren, I feel myself warmly interested and most decidedly side against the white part of mankind. Whatever be the complexion of the enslaved, it does not, in my opinion, alter the complexion of the crime which the enslaver commits, a crime much blacker than any African face." Another common quote by abolitionists was drawn from Thomas Clarkson, who said that Lafayette had told him "I would never have drawn my sword in the cause of America, if I could have conceived that thereby I was founding a land of slavery." Because Lafayette was respected and admired so greatly in America, these were powerful words that undoubtedly encouraged support for a war to free the enslaved.

Lafayette's opposition to slavery, which began as a very young man, was truly remarkable for a privileged nobleman in the 18<sup>th</sup> century. More remarkable was his willingness to commit himself, his fortunes, and his reputation to positive action that might offer a way to end slavery. Finally, and perhaps the most remarkable thing of all, was his absolute, unwavering stance on this divisive issue. As Charles Sumner said, Lafayette was "one who early consecrated himself to Human Rights, and throughout a long life became their representative, knight-errant, champion, hero, missionary, apostle – who strove in this cause as no man in history has ever striven – who suffered for it as few have suffered, and whose protracted career...is conspicuous for the rarest fidelity, the purest principle, and the most chivalrous courage, whether civil or military."

**Author's Note:**

This article was written originally for the Lafayette Society website in late 2017. It was written in part because of the Charlottesville riots and partly in response to a parent's complaint to the local Cumberland County school board that Lafayette was a "slave owner." The Lafayette Society board decided that we should tell the true story about Lafayette and his support of emancipation and human rights. The Society submitted articles to the newspaper, brought in speakers like Diane Shaw, donated money to bring a James (Armistead) Lafayette interpreter to Fayetteville, conducted live interviews on radio, and created an endowment for the Black History Scholars Association at Fayetteville State University, an HBCU founded during Reconstruction. The author is grateful to Dr. Rob Taber, Professor of History at Fayetteville State University, for his advice and for editing this article.

References for this article are from *A True Friend of the Cause: Lafayette and the Antislavery Movement*, edited by Diane Shaw and published by the Grolier Club of New York City and Lafayette College, 2016, to accompany an exhibition by the same name at the Grolier Club. A copy of this excellent illustrated book may be obtained at City Center Gallery & Books in Fayetteville, NC. 910-678-8899 or [citycentergallerybooks@gmail.com](mailto:citycentergallerybooks@gmail.com)

The reader may also view additional images and text by searching "lafayette college - lafayette and slavery."

## Marking History Along the Lafayette Trail

by Dorothea Jensen



*Julien Icher and Dorothea Jensen*

It's not often that I am privileged to witness something grow from a "gleam in the eye" to cast iron reality. (Except for my books, of course, but those usually involve paper rather than anything metallic.) A week or two ago, I had just such an experience however, when I saw three historical markers unveiled by Julien Icher, President of The Lafayette Trail, Inc.

My husband David and I met Julien in June, 2015, on the Yorktown battlefield (which we had just toured with Lafayette himself—aka actor Mark Schneider). We met him again at the 2016 Boston AFL Annual Meeting, during which the then French Consul General of New England welcomed us at his Cambridge home for a cocktail party. That's when Julien first talked his way into a French Consulate "internship" to track down Lafayette's Farewell Tour of New England.

Ever since, we have watched in amazement as Julien has moved on to investigate the trail in all the 24 (now 25) states visited by Lafayette. In doing so, he has met with governors,

legislators, mayors, select boards and other interested folks (not to mention French President Macron) and traveled upwards of 40,000 miles. Along with many other AFL members, and our organization itself, we were happy to support him in every way we could to help him accomplish his goals. We even went with him as he investigated towns in our own state, New Hampshire. But all of this still was in the realm of a “vision” rather than solid reality.

This year, on October 25, David and I went to the unveiling in Bolton, Massachusetts of the first actual marker either of us had seen. It was actually quite moving. There it was in black and white—well, red, white, and blue—cast iron proof that Lafayette had been at that very spot (slept there, in fact) on September 2, 1824.



*The Wilder Mansion, 101 Wilder Road, Bolton, Massachusetts  
The Lafayette Trail marker is located just out of the picture to the right.*

With twenty-five onlookers, this marker was unveiled at the Wilder Mansion, owned at the time of Lafayette’s visit by S.V.S Wilder, an international businessman who had befriended Lafayette in France. Paul and Dawn Tesini, current owners of the historic home, kindly permitted the placement of this marker in their front yard, and hosted the event. (Massachusetts

Lafayette Society President Emeritus Bill Dunham, a direct descendant of Mr. Wilder, helped make this possible.)

After MLS/AFL President Alan Hoffman made introductory remarks, Julien talked about the Lafayette Trail project, and then he and owner Paul Tesini uncovered the beautiful marker.



*Julien Icher and Paul Tesini*

On October 28, we went to our second marker unveiling, in Newport, New Hampshire. (This was especially thrilling because David and I had been along on Julien's first foray tracking down Lafayette in this town.) Undeterred by rain, over twenty people came to witness the dedication on the Newport town common. One of these was Senator Ruth Ward, the state senator who sponsored the bill approved by the New Hampshire legislature that permitted the Lafayette Trail project to put up markers. Also attending were Newport Selectman Hunter Rieseberg and New Hampshire Daughters of the American Revolution representative Laura Kessler.



*Julien Icher and Senator Ruth Ward*

Finally, on October 30, we went to Cornish, New Hampshire, for that marker dedication. It was installed near the scenic covered bridge across the Connecticut River, which Lafayette crossed on June 28, 1825.

AFL President Alan Hoffman again made introductory remarks, followed by a brief speech by Julien. After this came the reading of a letter from the Pomeroy Foundation (which is funding up to 175 of these markers) and a letter from Senator Jeanne Shaheen. (These were read at the other marker unveilings as well.) Arnaud Mentré, Consul General of France in Boston, briefly talked about the enduring friendship between France and America. The marker was then unveiled by Julien and Consul General Mentré.

Again, there were over twenty people gathered for the event. Among these were John Hammond, chair of the Cornish Board of Selectmen; Laura Kessler, New Hampshire DAR; and AFL Members Sarah Gillens, David Jensen, Alan Hoffman (of course), and myself.



*Julien Icher and Arnaud Mentré*

After the wonderful experience of seeing these three markers dedicated in Bolton, Newport, and Cornish, I would urge all AFL members to attend such unveilings in their own states. It is well worth the effort to see these impressive “monuments.” To me, these cast iron markers honor not only Lafayette’s role in our Revolution and his Farewell Tour, but also the concerted efforts of our organization, and the vision and dedication of one tireless young twenty-first-century Frenchman.

#### **About the Author**

Dorothea Jensen is the author of *A Buss from Lafayette* and *Liberty-Loving Lafayette*. She is an AFL life member and a board member of The Lafayette Trail, Inc.

## **Diane Shaw Visits the Lafayette Collection at Methodist University**

by Arleen Fields

As we have so often been reminded this year, there's what you *think* is going to happen – and then there's what actually happens. Such was the case with this year's Lafayette Birthday celebration event at Davis Memorial Library at Methodist University.

Diane Shaw, Director Emerita of Special Collections and College Archives at Lafayette College, had been lined up for months to speak at Fayetteville Technical Community College (FTCC) on September 10 and at Methodist University on September 11. By early September, though, Methodist University had canceled group meetings, conference athletics, and community events. FTCC was still allowing meetings that met COVID-19 protocols for mask-wearing and social distancing, so Diane's talk on Lafayette and human rights went forward as scheduled. Diane didn't have the chance to visit Methodist University and our Lafayette Collection when the AFL met in Fayetteville in 2014, and I knew that I couldn't let that happen again.

Diane's talk at Methodist University was originally scheduled to focus on the more than fifty items donated to the collection since 2014 by MU alumnus Gene Dillman. When we learned of Gene's death in October 2019 due to pancreatic cancer, we decided that the 2020 program should honor his contributions to the Lafayette Collection and Methodist University. A 1973 graduate of Methodist College (now Methodist University), Gene built a career in public service after he served in the U.S. Navy. He remained connected to his alma mater and served in many roles with the MU Alumni Association. In his retirement, he started a political collectibles business and leveraged that endeavor to find a unique way to give back to his beloved school.

Instead of giving a lecture at Methodist, Diane and her husband Bart graciously spent the better part of a Friday morning examining many of the items donated by Mr. Dillman, most of which are related to Lafayette's "Grand Tour" of 1824-1825. I asked Diane to choose some of her favorites so that I could video her talking about them: what she found interesting about them, what she knew about their historical background, and what avenues for further research should be explored.

You may ask "Which ones did she choose?" Well, you'll have to wait to find out! The videos will be presented as part of the annual Lafayette Birthday event at Methodist University in September 2021. And who knows, perhaps Diane herself will be with us next year when we (hopefully!) pay long overdue tribute to our generous benefactor Gene Dillman.

*Arleen Fields is the Archives Librarian at Davis Memorial Library, Methodist University, Fayetteville, North Carolina.*



*Diane Shaw examines some snuff boxes from the MU Lafayette Collection.*



*Gene Dillman explains some of the finer points of copper lusterware and design transfer techniques to Arleen Fields.*

## AFL Member Wins DAR Award

by Saorla Rafferty

This year for the National History Day Contest, the topic was “breaking barriers.” Students across America, including myself, had to come up with an event from history that matched the theme and create a film, poster, website, essay, or performance on the topic. I enjoy making films and have a passion for the American Revolution, so I chose to make a documentary. Last year’s NHD theme was “triumph and tragedy,” for which I made a film on the French Revolution’s Reign of Terror, which seemed like an obvious choice. This year’s theme was a bit tougher.

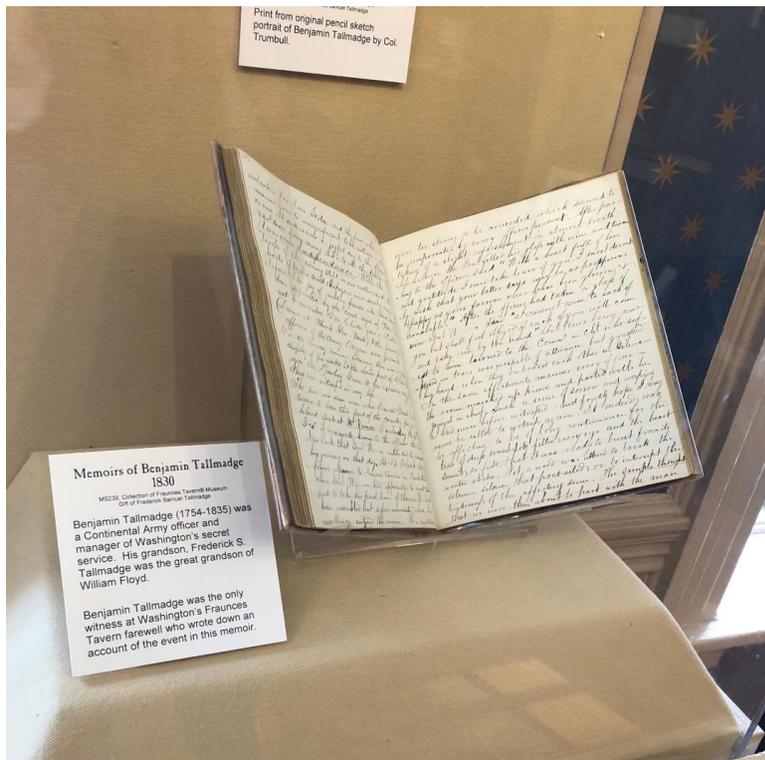
Being a fan of Alexander Rose’s fascinating book on the Culper spy ring, *Washington’s Spies: the Story of America’s First Spy Ring*, and the TV show inspired by it, I began thinking about how this ragtag group of childhood friends turned secret agents could have broken barriers.

The Culper spy ring was founded by George Washington, and after a few false starts, he appointed young Major Benjamin Tallmadge to run it. Tallmadge recruited his childhood friends in Setauket, Long Island. The ring broke scientific barriers, developing one of the first invisible inks that went beyond the simple lemon juice ink of the time, and created a rudimentary but revolutionary secret code. The spies famously broke physical barriers by devising a signaling system for lookouts that reached across Long Island Sound using petticoats. The owner of the petticoats was Anna Smith Strong, a woman who broke social barriers by being one of the first female spies. The Culper Ring’s vital role in the American Revolution and daring feats redefined what it meant to be a spy, redeeming the position.

Always on the lookout for references to our Marquis, I came across a section in *Washington’s Spies* that states that Lafayette most likely introduced Washington to complex European codes.

Lafayette, whose aristocratic sense of honor precluded him from a life of subterfuge, still was no stranger to the world of espionage. Lafayette enlisted the enslaved American James Armistead to spy for the Continental Army. Armistead was in fact a double agent, pretending to spy for the British while secretly relaying vital intelligence to the Americans. He was placed in General Cornwallis’s camp and obtained information that helped ensure the American victory at Yorktown. After the war, James Armistead applied for freedom, and Lafayette sent a note verifying his service in the war, saying, “*His intelligences from the enemy’s camp were industriously collected and faithfully delivered. He perfectly acquitted himself with some important commissions I gave him and appears to me entitled to every reward his situation can admit of.*”

I reached out to a local Setauket historian and tour guide, Margo Arceri of Tri-Spy tours, who was kind enough to give me a live interview, portions of which are included in the film. She was vital to the documentary and helped me enormously. I also visited the Fraunces Tavern Museum in New York City, where I got footage of Benjamin Tallmadge's real memoir. Using primary sources was essential to the research, and reading the genuine letters of Washington and Tallmadge really immersed me in the reality of the time period.



Benjamin Tallmadge's memoir, Fraunces Tavern Museum, NYC



Margo Arceri, Setauket historian, in front of Long Island Sound, with Benjamin Tallmadge's house in the background

The film, *Washington's Spies: Revolutionizing Espionage*, (YouTube) advanced from the regional competition to the state competition, where it won an award for "Best Project on the American Revolution" from the Morristown Daughters of the American Revolution.

**About the author:**

I am now in my first year of high school where I will be concentrating in history and media arts. I am taking French, because even though I started Mandarin, I went to France three years ago; I fell in love with the language and the culture, and I visited Lafayette's grave. Last year I joined the American Friends of Lafayette and attended Yorktown Day, where I was surrounded by like minds. I am a part of the AFL because of the unabashed love of learning that permeates the organization. Everyone is just as eager to listen and to teach. The lunches are pretty great too.



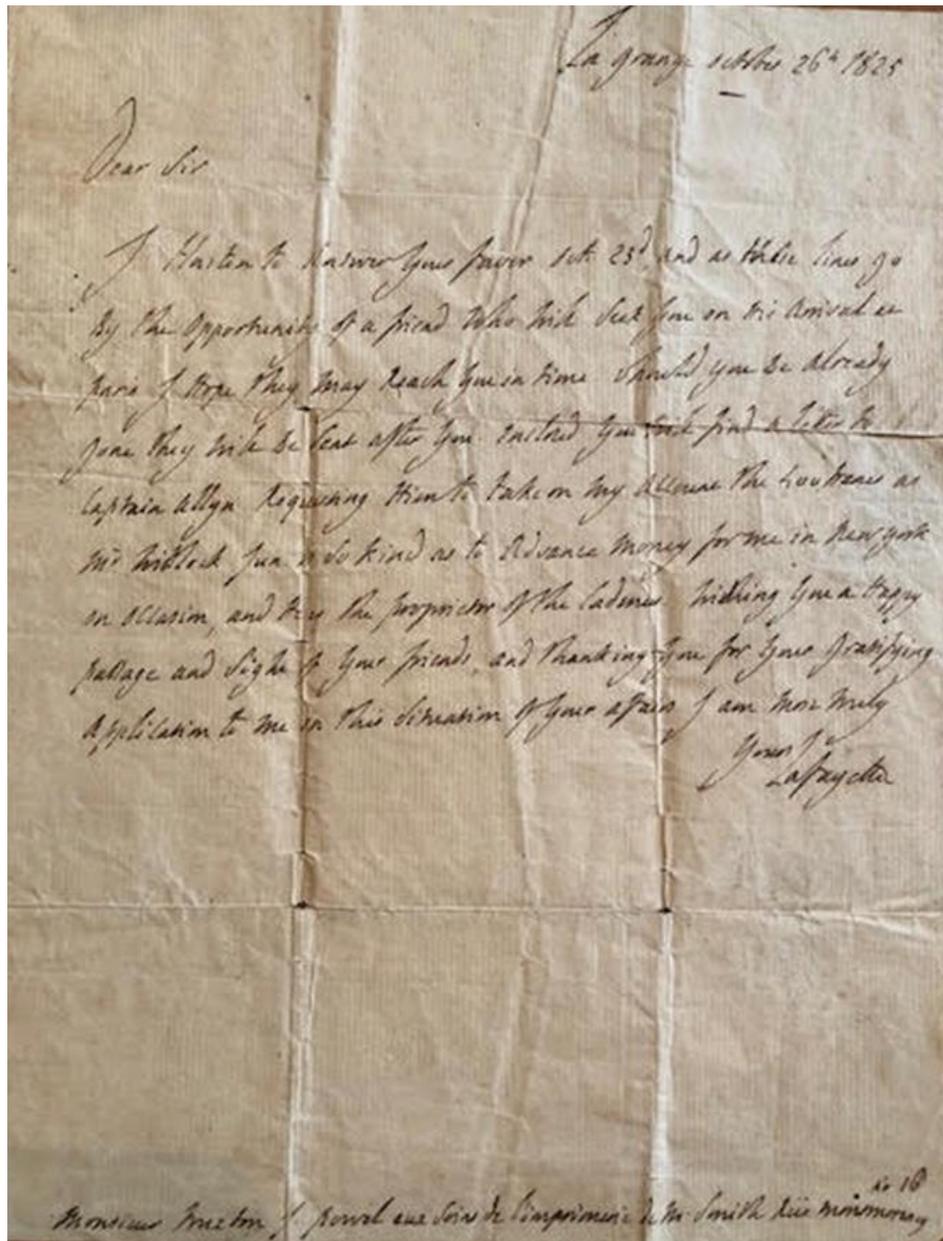
Saorla Rafferty at Picpus Cemetery

# Lafayette Letter Mystery

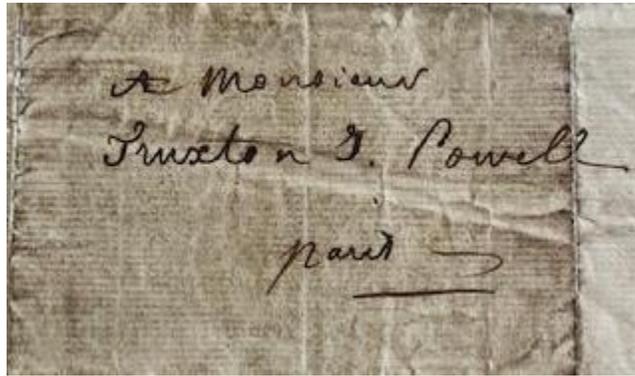
by Chuck Schwam

The American Friends of Lafayette receives many inquiries from people around the world. Most come in the form in an email, to which I respond to the best of my ability.

I received an email earlier this year from a US citizen in possession of a letter written by Lafayette. The owner of the letter asked several questions that I could not answer, so I sent her inquiries to Robert Crout (AFL President Emeritus and Lafayette scholar). Robert has his theories on the letter, but I thought it might be fun to share the letter with you.



The Letter in Question



The letter was addressed to a Mr. Powell

Here is what we think the letter says (verbatim). Please disregard typos and punctuation. We have done our best to type this out exactly as it is in the letter...

La Grange  
October 26. 1825

Dear Sir,

I hasten to answer your favor Oct 23d. and as these lines go by the opportunity of a friend who will seek you on his arrival in Paris I hope they may reach you in time. Should you be already gone they will be sent after you. Enclosed you will find a letter to Captain Allyn requiring him to take on my account the 400 Francs (?) as Mr. Witlock Jun. is so kind as to advance money for me in New York on occasion, and he is the proprietor of the *Cadmus*. Wishing you a happy passage and sight of your friends and thanking you for your gratifying application to me in this situation of your affairs I am most truly

Yours  
Lafayette

It appears from the letter that Lafayette was answering a request from Powell requesting money. In the letter, Lafayette provided him some information as to how to obtain the money. Remember that the *Cadmus* was the ship that brought Lafayette to the United States in August of 1824. Mr. Witlock Jun. is probably William Whitlock, Jr., who owned a shipping business which ran packet boats between New York and Le Havre at the time.

Here is what the owner of this letter was hoping to find out:

1. Who is Powell?
2. Was he a historical figure or just an acquaintance of Lafayette?
3. Why was he requesting money?...maybe to get to the USA from France?
4. Is there any historical value or monetary value to this letter?

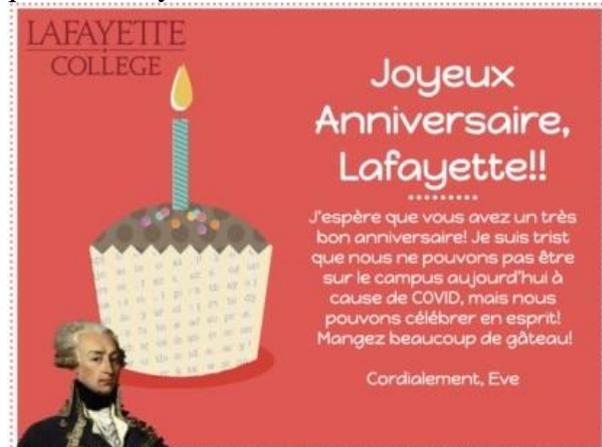
Feel free to contact me at [americanfriendsoflafayette@gmail.com](mailto:americanfriendsoflafayette@gmail.com) to share your thoughts.

## Birthday Cards for the Marquis de Lafayette

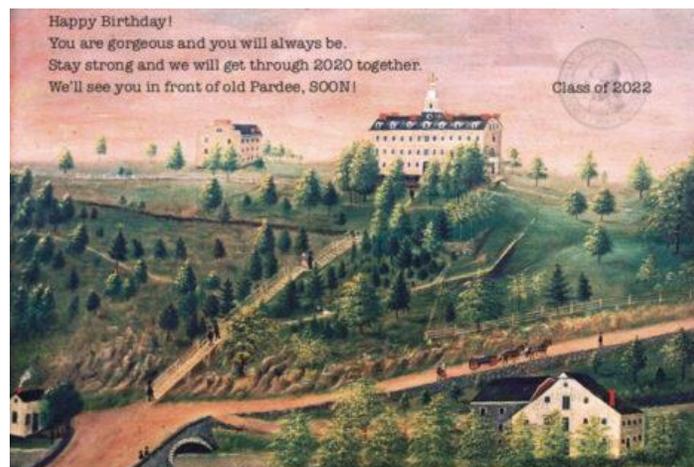
by Dave Block



Lafayette College students in the Intermediate French and Comparative Literature classes taught by AFL member Prof. Olga Anna Duhl created birthday cards to celebrate the September 6<sup>th</sup> birthday of the Marquis de Lafayette in a virtual environment.



Since 2007, Olga has helped organize invited lectures, films, period music, exhibitions, and more for Lafayette's birthday. "Although this year we were unable to gather on campus to observe this important date in the life of the College," she says, "my students sent their birthday wishes to the Marquis as a testimony to their homage to the historic Franco-American cooperation of which he was a pioneer. Cur Non?"



**Trivia Answer:**  
**Who Was the French Physician Nominated by Lafayette  
to the Society of the Cincinnati?**

by Ernest & Janet Sutton

The Chief Physician (known as Command Surgeon in today's American Army) of the French Expeditionary Force in America was Jean-François Coste. Although a non-noble and considered a staff officer, with the support of Lafayette and Castellux, he was inducted into the Society of the Cincinnati. He was a remarkable man in the vanguard of medical history in both colonial America and in Napoleonic France. During our Bicentennial, he was recognized as one of the top medical men in America of the Revolutionary War period by our National Library of Medicine.

Coste was the son of a surgeon and grew up in Villes, France, thirty miles west of Geneva. He studied medicine at the Faculty of Paris, but received his doctorate at the University of Valence, France, where the educational costs were more reasonable. While serving in the military he was introduced to Voltaire who was charmed by his personality and took him under his wing. As a result, he also became a protégé of the Duchess of Grammont, the sister of the Duke of Choiseul, minister of war under Louis XV. Their support of him as a non-noble proved invaluable after Coste exposed financial malfeasance at a military hospital in Nancy by its administrators. Instead of having his career sacked, he was transferred to Calais as hospital director.

On March 12, 1780, again with the support of Voltaire and Choiseul, Jean-François Coste was appointed, at the age of 38 years, the Chief Physician of the French Expeditionary Force going to America, ahead of many nobles who sought that position. During the military campaign, fighting scurvy upon arrival and later also smallpox were ongoing challenges. He was a strong advocate of smallpox vaccination for both French and American soldiers. The French army had a professional medical corps that was far in advance of other European countries and America at the time. Its field military hospitals, noted for their cleanliness and organization, were beyond reproach. Coste's hospital practices served the Continental Army well in Williamsburg.

Beyond the daily practice of military medicine, Coste wrote a *Compendium Pharmaceuticum* for the making of medicines based on plants found in America. It was published in Latin in Newport, Rhode Island in 1780. He also presented academic medical papers to the American Philosophical Society in Philadelphia. This led to his election into the society on January 18, 1783. He received doctorate degrees from William & Mary College and the University of Pennsylvania. His acceptance speech, given in Latin and translated 175 years later into English, "The Adaption of the Ancient Philosophy of Medicine in the New World," can be considered just as important today as it was back in 1782.

After returning to France, he became Mayor of the city of Versailles in 1790 and established its first public library. Being a non-noble, he kept his head during the Revolution, and he continued to practice medicine and publish in the medical literature. In 1803 he served Napoleon as inspector general of the medical corps, then in 1805 became Chief Physician of the Grand Army in Prussia and Poland. He ended his medical career as director of the Hôtel des Invalides in Paris. He died in 1819 following an attack of angina. His funeral was at the Church of Saint-Louis des Invalides in Paris.



Jean-François Coste engraving by Ambroise Tardieu  
 Located in the Wellcome Images Collection Gallery



“Napoleon visiting the Infirmary of Invalides, February 11, 1808,” by Alexandre Veron-Bellecourt.  
 Jean-François Coste is holding a veteran up in bed to speak to Napoleon.  
 National Museum of the Château of Versailles



This memorial plaque was placed on the façade of Coste’s birthplace in Villes, France in 1892.



**1 3/4"**

The Sons of the American Revolution Commemorative Medical Coin honoring Jean-François Coste was released on Yorktown Day 2020. Limited availability. Contact [sareagle1@aol.com](mailto:sareagle1@aol.com)

## Letters to the *Gazette*

Great AFL *Gazette*...it was the best one yet!!! I enjoyed all the articles and the electronic version  
- Paul McDonald

Another fabulous gazette! These are not only fun for members to read but serve as an invaluable resource for Lafayette researchers in the future. I should know, because I was able to find out little known accounts about World War II at Chavaniac for my forthcoming novel due to finding an old *Gazette* from the 1940s. In this edition I particularly enjoyed the timely article about suffragettes in Lafayette Square as a reminder of the historic struggles that have taken place there. - Stephanie Dray

Congratulations! What a great issue! – Hank Parfitt

I just got the summer *Gazette*, and it is just wonderful. I have never seen such well written historical articles and such careful research. Its riveting!! Thank you!! -Myra McCain

Great issue. You always do such a great job! Many thanks for all you do! - Kim Burdick

Of the various museums and groups, I have been a member of, your organization has done the best job of informing its members of lectures, webinars, and potential literature. So glad I found the AFL! - Marie Curtis Stein

We received the *Gazettes*, my what an undertaking! There are never enough thank yours' for all of You! – Claire Ravosa

What a great newsletter, a presage of a great organization, I am certain. - Roger Lerner

Bravo on another fabulous edition of the *Gazette*! – Hannah Grube at Grey Towers

Thanks for keeping us in touch with our American Friends of Lafayette and once again thanks for the outstanding issue of the AFL magazine!!!! – Albert Oberst

Great edition of the AFL *Gazette*. Thanks. Andy Golbert

**For inquiries, correspondence, and letters to the *Gazette*, email  
[americanfriendsoflafayette@gmail.com](mailto:americanfriendsoflafayette@gmail.com)**



## THE AMERICAN FRIENDS OF LAFAYETTE

Dedicated to the memory of Major General Gilbert Motier, Marquis de Lafayette



### *The Gazette of the American Friends of Lafayette*

**Publisher  
Chuck Schwam**

**Editor  
Alan Hoffman**

**Assistant Editor and Layout Chief  
Jan O'Sullivan**

**Layout Consultant  
Dan Fitzpatrick**

**Distributed by  
Phil and Barbara Schroeder**

**[www.friendsoflafayette.org](http://www.friendsoflafayette.org)**