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LAFAYETTE'S VISIT
TO GERMANTOWN

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DeFoy et al.

LAFAYETTE'S VISIT TO GERMANTOWN

JULY 20, 1825

An Address delivered before

THE PENNSYLVANIA GENEALOGICAL SOCIETY
MARCH 1, 1909

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THE SITE AND RELIC SOCIETY OF GERMANTOWN
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THE CITY HISTORY SOCIETY OF PHILADELPHIA
JANUARY 11, 1911

By

CHARLES FRANCIS JENKINS



PHILADELPHIA

WILLIAM J. CAMPBELL

1911

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FROM THE PAINTING BY THOMAS SULLY IN INDEPENDENCE
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Acknowledgment

THE main details of Lafayette's early life and Revolutionary services are from Hon. Charlemagne Tower's "The Marquis de La Fayette in the American Revolution," Philadelphia, 1895. The incidents and dates of the tour of 1824-5 are taken from the official journal of the trip, "Lafayette en Amérique en 1824 et 1825 ou Journal D'Un Voyage aux États-Unis," par A. Lévasseur, Paris, 1829. James Schouler's vivid and satisfying essay, "Lafayette's Tour in 1824," has also been an inspiration. The details of the visit to Germantown are from M. Lévasseur's account, as well as from a Philadelphia daily paper, *Poulson's American Daily Advertiser*, of July 23 and July 26, 1825. In the latter issue the addresses are reported in full.

I am also indebted to the Hon. Francisco J. Yanes, Secretary of the International Bureau of American Republics at Washington, D. C., and to Señor Manuel Landeata Rosales, of Caracas, Venezuela, for information as to the early life of Fernando Bolivar; also to Geo. A. Barringer, Conservateur honoraire de la Bibliotheque Nationale, Paris, France, for information as to the present-day location of relics of Lafayette.

C. F. J.



A. W. S. 1864. Boston.

Sully's Study of Lafayette's Head

*Lafayette's Visit to Germantown
in 1825*

IN the same session of Congress which had been opened by that message from the President conveying to it, and to the world, the so-called Monroe Doctrine, there was passed, February 4, 1824, a resolution offering to the Marquis de Lafayette a ship of war to bring him to America to pay the visit he had long planned, and which this nation was then eagerly anticipating. Leaving his country home, La Grange, an estate of some eight hundred acres lying forty miles east of Paris, which through many vicissitudes had been his refuge, he set out on what was to be one of the most remarkable visits in the annals of the world, an event which Charles Sumner declared was one of the poems of history. And if this episode belongs to the poetry of history, the whole life

and career of Lafayette constitute one of its most striking romances.

Born of illustrious parents, a posthumous son, the death of his mother left him an orphan at an early age. Soon after the boyhood heir of a large fortune, married before he was seventeen to a young woman of one of the leading noble families of France, a father at eighteen, he became fired with zeal for the American cause at nineteen, on listening to a recital of the Colonies' wrongs by one of the last persons you would expect—the Duke of Gloucester—brother of the English king. Shortly after this meeting, Lafayette visited his uncle, the French Ambassador in London, and was presented to George the Third himself. He had already offered his services to the American Commissioners in Paris, and on his return to France he hid himself from his wife and family, the latter being bitterly opposed to his course. Without a parting farewell to those he loved, he stole away from Paris, eluded the agents of the government, and after many vexatious delays



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London

sailed from a Spanish port for America in company with Baron de Kalb. He presented himself, not yet twenty years of age, with the commission of a Major-general in the American army, given him by Franklin and Deane, to the astonished Continental Congress, then sitting in Philadelphia.

Such is the brief record of Lafayette's entry upon the American horizon, and romantic as it is, it is but a fitting prelude to nearly threescore more years, equally fraught with experiences and adventures such as have come to but few men.

Soon established in intimate daily companionship with Washington, he became through his military skill a Major-general in reality. Wounded at Brandywine, nursed to health at Bethlehem, sharing the discomforts of Valley Forge, a successful tactician at Barren Hill and at Monmouth, given an independent command in Rhode Island, he everywhere met the confidence reposed in his ability and good judgment.

Sailing for France early in 1779, in the new frigate *Alliance*, he assisted in securing the substantial French reinforcements under Rochambeau. Returning to America in the spring of 1780, he was later given command in the notable Virginia campaign, which ended with the surrender of Cornwallis at Yorktown. The activities of the armies over, he returned to France, again sailing in the *Alliance*, and assisted the American Commissioners in the tortuous steps which led to the treaty of peace. In 1784, he came to America on his third visit, was for a time the guest of Washington, his mentor and friend; at Mt. Vernon, and the recipient of many honors and attentions from the American people.

In the French Revolution, the rise and fall of Napoleon, and the other great events which stirred Europe for four decades, he bore a conspicuous part, and was one of the very few—an able historian has said, “perhaps the only, Revolutionary leader of France whose record left nothing to blush for.” His exile

from his native land, his political imprisonment by the Austrians, shared in part by his devoted wife and daughters, in the noisome dungeons of Olmütz, the loss of his fortune,—all these were well known to his sympathetic American friends. They had seen him standing as a bulwark of political liberty and human rights as exemplified in the cause of American Independence, and the forty years of separation, during which his star had risen and sunk repeatedly, but increased the esteem and affection which they bore him, and intensified their desire to welcome him.

Lafayette declined the offer of President Monroe and of Congress for passage in a public ship, and set sail in a merchant packet, the *Cadmus*, from Havre, July 13, 1824, and, after a pleasant voyage of thirty-two days, reached the harbor of New York on Sunday, the 15th of August. The official landing was made on August 16th at the Battery. Here began a tour without parallel in our history. It lasted in all some fourteen months. “The Nation’s

Guest," as he was called, traversed every state and section of the country. From New York he proceeded through Connecticut to Boston, thence to Portsmouth, N. H. Returning to New York, he steamed up the Hudson to Albany. Retracing his steps, he passed through New Jersey to Philadelphia, Baltimore and Washington, where he was received by Congress with great distinction and given \$200,000.00 in money and a township of land in recognition of his Revolutionary service. An extensive tour in Virginia and then on to Raleigh, Charleston, Savannah, Mobile and New Orleans. By this time it was April, 1825, when he ascended the Mississippi to St. Louis; thence to Nashville, Cincinnati, Pittsburgh, along Lake Erie to Niagara Falls; to Syracuse, Albany, Boston, and as far east as Portland, Me. He returned to New York in time for the great celebration of July 4, 1825. Then to Philadelphia and again to Washington. Everywhere there were receptions, dinners, balls, arches, school children drawn up along



A. H. Benson. I. C. B. Boston.

The Chew House

the roads, while frequently whole communities waited from dawn to sunset for the belated guest. There were presentations, parades, salutes and speeches, over and over. It seemed impossible for the various communities to give expression to their affection and overflowing good will; and the most wonderful part of it is that an elderly gentleman who celebrated his sixty-seventh and sixty-eighth birthdays during the tour could stand the terrific strain. But Lafayette's health, buoyed by his unflinching courtesy and good-nature, and his apparently sincere enjoyment of the attentions shown him, actually improved as the journey progressed, and the whole trip was accomplished without greater disaster than the wrecking of his steam-boat on the Mississippi River through running on a snag, and from this accident the party was rescued from the sinking boat without much difficulty.

It should be recalled that Lafayette was the sole survivor of Washington's generals. At almost every centre some soldier of the Revolu-

tion would present himself, or be pushed forward by his friends, as a companion in arms. Many of them had served under Lafayette in his favorite light infantry;—here the pilot who had brought him into port, or the officer to whom he had given a sword, or the companion of the cold and suffering of Valley Forge, would be recognized by Lafayette and as often called by name. He was indeed a link joining the America of 3,000,000 souls of the struggling Colonies to the Union of twenty-four states and 10,000,000 prosperous people. Everywhere he went the leading men of the country sought him out and welcomed him. In Boston, on his second visit, Daniel Webster, the orator of the laying of the corner-stone of the Bunker Hill Monument on the 50th Anniversary of the Battle, addressed him with all the warmth of his affectionate rhetoric. In the halls of Congress Henry Clay, speaker of the House, conveyed the nation's respect and admiration. In New England he met and renewed his early friendship with the venerable ex-President,



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Doorway of Chew House

John Adams; and at Monticello he did what has fallen to the lot of but few men—dined with three ex-Presidents, Jefferson, Madison and Monroe. James Monroe, as President, welcomed him in the White House, and again President John Quincy Adams received him there on the return from his tour.

In 1824, Lafayette presented a fine portly figure, nearly six feet high, his sixty-seven years lightly worn, his only apparent infirmity being a slight limp, popularly attributed to his wound at Brandywine, but in reality caused by a broken hip, the result of a fall on the ice in 1803. His face is said to have been without a wrinkle, and he wore a dark-red wig, set low on his forehead, which stood in good stead to one who was constantly bowing with uncovered head. It is related that the Seneca chief, Red Jacket, who had met and known Lafayette in the early days, frankly expressed his amazement that the passing years should have left the General such a fresh countenance and a hairy scalp. Lafayette was accompanied in his triumphal

tour by his only son, George Washington Lafayette, then a mature man of forty-five, himself not without distinction, and later a senator of France. The third member of the party was Auguste Lévasseur, the secretary and historian of the trip. They were accompanied by one servant.

It was on the occasion of Lafayette's second visit to Philadelphia, in July, 1825, that arrangements were made for him to be welcomed in Germantown. By this time he had nearly completed his tour and his face was homeward turned. It had been ten months since his first visit to Philadelphia, in September, 1824, when it would seem that the excess of welcome and good will had exhausted the city; but, while less demonstratively, his second visit was no less cordially received and appreciated. Again there was the round of receptions and many other social events. He had arrived at Philadelphia on Saturday, July 16th, and his stay at this time covered a period of nine days, about six hours of which were devoted to vis-

iting Germantown. I am going to give in some detail the principal events of the day in Germantown—a day that I do not imagine was filled with more than the ordinary sight-seeing and hand-shaking, speech-making and eating; and when this is multiplied by four hundred, the number of working days Lafayette spent in America, you can appreciate the prodigious exertion of himself and his companions.

The weather had been extremely warm,* a period such as we know in Philadelphia about the middle of July, and M. Lévasseur records temperature of more than a hundred for several successive days, and one day with 104 degrees. But the intense heat did not daunt Lafayette, and not a single detail of the visit was altered

*“ Besides the accounts which we have daily received of the fatal effects of heat on men, on horses and on fish, we yesterday learned that even some of the feathered tribe have become its victims. The swallows which inhabit the large ship house at the Navy Yard, are daily dropping down dead among the workmen below. This curious and uncommon incident, induced one of the Officers to ascertain the temperature by means of a Thermometer.

“ In the Commandant’s Office, 98 degrees.

“ In the ship house near the roof, 106 degrees.”

From *Poulson’s American Daily Advertiser*, July 23, 1825.

on account of it. The visit to Germantown was made on Wednesday, July 20th. There had been a big dinner on the 16th, a concert on the 18th, and a visit to the then comparatively new and famous Fairmount waterworks on the 19th.

We have living in Germantown to-day Joseph Murter,* or "Uncle Joe," for many years our only policeman, now well on to ninety-five, who, as a boy of ten, remembers well the reception to Lafayette, in which he was an interested and active participant. Like many old people, the events of his youth stand out with vividness, while later events are lost in memory's recesses. There is little in his recollections not substantiated by contemporary accounts; yet the description of an eye-witness adds color and interest to any important event. Lafayette set out from the city at an early hour, accompanied by his suite and a committee of

* Since the above was written Joseph Murter has passed away. He was born May 5, 1815, and was a resident of Germantown all his life. He died January 14, 1911.



A. W. Benson del. Boston

Benjamin Chew Jr.

Councils, and reached the bottom of Neglee's Hill, where is now Wayne Junction, between eight-thirty and nine o'clock. Captain Heilig's company of artillery had been stationed on the lawn in front of Loudoun, which was given its name because Thomas Armat, a famous merchant in his day, whose early home it was, had first settled in Loudoun County, Virginia. A colored bugler named Johnson, said to have been one of the best buglers in the country, having been stationed to announce the coming of the distinguished guests, a salute of cannon was fired. Drawn up to meet him at the hill were a company of Germantown Cavalry; the Germantown Blues, a famous infantry company modeled after the McPherson Blues of Philadelphia; members of Hiram Lodge of Masons; a body of manufacturers, and numerous benevolent societies. The cavalry headed the procession, "followed," the chronicle of the day states, "very properly by his (Lafayette's) brethren of the Freemasons"; and thus escorted, the General, riding in an open barouche drawn by four

horses (which Joseph Murter says were grays), proceeded up our old Main Street, or German-town Road, by this time a well-kept turnpike. Our records do not say whether the old toll-gate, which stood for so many years and within the memory of the present generation, at Rittenhouse and Main Streets, was thrown open to the public this day or not, but this had been the custom all over the country. Nowhere would the people allow "The Nation's Guest" to put his hand in his pocket. Bridges, ferries, turnpikes—all were hospitably opened when he came. At the first gate outside of New York, on his way to Boston, the General had observed two men in a carriage ahead stop and pay toll. As his own carriage pulled up, the gate-keeper came to the door, waved his hand, and said: "Go ahead, the road is free; General Lafayette travels this road to-day and no man pays toll." I should have qualified the statement that all gates were free, for once while riding with President John Quincy Adams on a visit to Oak Hill, the seat of ex-President



Miss Anne Chew.

Monroe, the party was forced to pay, the only instance in the trip, an incident Secretary Lévasseur considers all the more remarkable when the chief magistrate of the country was escorting them.

It is two miles up and down the hills of the Main Street from the lower entrance of the town to Cliveden, the Chew house, where the breakfast was to be given. The committee had originally planned to have the function at the Green Tree Tavern, one of the famous hostleries of the early days, but they later decided that the Green Tree did not afford sufficient accommodations, and at the last moment the plans were changed and the Chew house selected for the function. As they approached the mansion the escort, which had preceded the General, halted along the road, and Lafayette and his party passed through them and entered the house. The members of the Masonic Lodge and then the various members of the military bodies were introduced to Lafayette individually, as well as a vast number of the in-

habitants of the town—as the ancient chronicle states it, both “males and females.”

M. Lévasseur records in his journal the battle-scars on the house—the traces of the cannon and musket balls which had so sadly disfigured its walls, and which to-day are living relics of one of the best-remembered engagements of the Revolution. On this festive day the house and grounds were hospitably thrown open to the public, as they have been so many times since, and the citizens of Germantown generally availed themselves of the opportunity of inspecting the battle-scarred walls and the historic interior. The Benjamin Chew* of the day was the son of the Chief Justice. His household was presided over by his young daughter, Miss Anne Sophia Penn Chew, who continued to live at Cliveden for many years. We are fortunate in having a contemporary letter from one who was present at the “breakfast.” Among the archives of Upsala, the beautiful

* This was Benjamin Chew, Jr., born in Philadelphia, 1758. Died at Cliveden, April 30, 1844.

Johnson home, opposite the Chew house, there was a letter written by Miss Ann Johnson, July 14 of 1825, to her mother, who was then at Saratoga Springs. Her account of the reception is as follows:

“Last 4th day morn I had the honour of breakfasting with LaFayette at Mr. Chews. I wish you had been here—the house both up and down stairs was crowded with men, women and soldiers—and around the house. Mrs. and two of the Mifs. Morris’s and myself were the only invited ladies that sat down to Breakfast—about 16 sat down at first, and when they had finished others took their place, and so on till I believe nearly all the soldiers had breakfast—those that did not come in had something in the kitchen. I heard that they eat everything they had till at last the cook had to lock the doors.

“I was introduced to LaFayette twice and shook hands with him three times. Ann Chew regretted M was not there to enjoy the scene—it was quite delightful to see anything so animated in G——. There was so much noise that I could not hear a word the General said, every person seemed so anxious to see him *eat*, that a centinal had to keep guard at the door with a drawn sword—it was very fine indeed. When

he departed the shouts of the multitude and the roaring of the cannon was almost deafening. A. L. Logan said I could give you a very fine description of it—but I told him I would have to leave it to your imagination, it would be impossible for me to describe everything.”

The original of this letter has been deposited by Miss Sally W. Johnson in the Museum of the Site and Relic Society in Vernon Park, Germantown.

The breakfast over, the General's party, accompanied by the Germantown Cavalry, proceeded up the Main Street to the institution called Mt. Airy College, which occupied the site of Chief Justice William Allen's country place, also called Mt. Airy. The Chief Justice had built the house shortly after 1750, and it had been a famous country home in its day. The square building of stone was the original house, the other buildings having been added for school purposes. Here, after some changes of ownership, had been established, in 1807, a Catholic school, and it later became, in 1815,



A. H. E. & C. Boston

Opposite No. 15 E. Broadway

Reception to Lafayette at the Chew House

the American Classical and Military Institute,* under the management of Benjamin C. Constant and Major August L. Roumfort. Among the later distinguished pupils of the school were General P. G. T. Beauregard, General George G. Meade and Admiral Du Pont. The old buildings made way some twenty years after Lafayette's visit for the more convenient country home of James Gowen, and this property was later sold to the Lutheran Theological Seminary, which now occupies the site. No details of the stop at the school are available, but the visit must have been a short and hurried one. It is preserved that Lafayette "expressed the highest gratification with the school and its management."

From Mt. Airy the party continued on to Chestnut Hill for the purpose of obtaining a view of Barren Hill, where, on the 20th of May, 1778, Lafayette had happily accomplished

*An illustration of the American Classical and Military Institute will be found in the Rev. S. F. Hotchkin's "Ancient and Modern Germantown, Mount Airy and Chestnut Hill," Philadelphia, 1889.

that famous retreat which was the beginning of his reputation as a tactician. The time was too short to admit of riding the two miles more and two miles back, down one big hill and up another, which a visit to Barren Hill itself would have entailed, and the party satisfied themselves with the distant view. In 1778, Lafayette with some two thousand troops had been dispatched from Valley Forge toward Philadelphia to "feel" the enemy, then quartered in the city. The news of the French alliance had but lately reached America, and both armies realized that the British must leave Philadelphia. The young General crossed the Schuylkill at Swedesford—now Norristown—marched down the Ridge Road and took station on the high ground at Barren Hill. Here roads led directly to the city through Roxborough, and one nearly as direct through Chestnut Hill and Germantown. General Clinton, whom Lafayette had last seen at the theatre in London, had arrived to take command of the British army, and in honor of the retiring general, Howe,

and of the newcomer, that remarkable fete, the *Mischianza*, was being held at the same time that Lafayette was leaving the dreary winter's camp at Valley Forge. General Clinton, learning of the presence of this small detached force within eleven miles of the city, resolved to capture it, and almost successful plans were immediately put under way. Three main bodies of troops left Philadelphia on the morning of May 20th, and soon reports from all sides convinced Lafayette that he was surrounded except on the side toward the Schuylkill. General Grant with eight thousand troops was on his rear, Generals Clinton and Howe with Admiral Howe as a spectator were in front. His left flank was threatened by grenadiers and cavalry under General Gray. General Grant was nearer to Matson's Ford, the only available crossing, than was Lafayette's force; but through delays and misunderstandings on the part of the British, and the acuteness and ability of the young French General, the American force stole away, crossed the river at Matson's Ford and drew up on the

heights opposite what is now Conshohocken, before the British army could come up with them.

Among the buildings at Barren Hill is a quaint old tavern, the eaves of which for more than a hundred years have been occupied by families of martins. They were there when the confusion of troops and the rattle of musketry surrounded the inn on those days of middle May, 1778, and they have been there every summer since up to two years ago, when for the first time within the memories of four generations they did not come. They have resisted valiantly the attacks of the English sparrow against overwhelming odds, but have apparently departed at last, just one hundred and thirty years after some six English regulars to every American soldier made the latter quickstep down the cross-roads and through the Schuylkill waters.

One of the stories always told in connection with Lafayette's retreat from Barren Hill relates to the Indian scouts, some fifty in number, which were part of his force. A



A. W. Elsen & Co. Boston.

Wyck.

company of British dragoons suddenly came upon them, when the savages gave their war-whoop, which so terrified the dragoons that they fled in dismay. The savages on their part, who had never seen red coats on horseback, fled in terror, and did not stop till they had swam the Schuylkill and were safe beyond.

The Lafayette party, after viewing Barren Hill, returned to Germantown, reaching Wyck, the residence of Reuben Haines* at one o'clock. Here a reception to the townspeople had been planned and elaborate exercises took place. Wyck is one of our oldest homes in Germantown. It is thought to have been built in 1709, and originally it was two houses with an open space between; but this had been built over, forming one continuous front. The halls of the house had been used as operating room and hospital after the battle, and blood-stains still remain upon the floors.

* Reuben Haines, who lived at Wyck, was a leading citizen of Germantown. He was Secretary of the Academy of Natural Sciences. He was born February 8, 1786. Died October 19, 1831.

Among the trees about the house is a Spanish chestnut, a seedling from a tree which Washington had planted for Judge Peters on the lawn at Belmont. The house is one of continual delight to everyone fond of the old days and ways. It is not provided with either gas or electric light, candles and lamps being all that are used, in keeping with its low ceilings and furniture of the olden time. The house stands in the midst of the noise and bustle of our Main Street, a quiet and peaceful memorial of the past. It was here, the chronicle continues, Lafayette stopped for an hour, "where he again received visits" (and I am now quoting) "from ladies and gentlemen of respectability." The presentation of the townspeople was made by Charles J. Wister, for many years one of the best-known and active citizens of the town. He was the brother of Sally Wister, the diarist, and not without local distinction as a writer and poet. It was in his father's house that the British general, James Agnew, had made his headquarters, and had later died,

leaving the indelible blood-stains on the parlor floor.

The formal program begun, an appropriate address was made by Charles Pierce, Esq., Chairman of a committee from the Germantown lodge of Masons. This over, a relic of more than ordinary interest was presented to Lafayette through Reuben Haines, the host. The relic, in the shape of a small, round, wooden box, had been made either by or under the supervision of John F. Watson, then a comparatively young man, the cashier of our Germantown Bank, as he was for more than twenty-three years after. He was at this time gathering material for his "Annals," which were not published, however, until six years after Lafayette's visit. Apparently, Watson had two boxes made exactly alike, retaining one for himself; and this through the process of time has descended to our Site and Relic Society of Germantown, and is now part of the museum of relics. On the under side of the box was this inscription: "Relics of the olden time.

Gift of J. F. Watson, member of the Society of Penn, to General Lafayette, when he was in Germantown, 20th July, 1825." The letter is dated from the old banking-house where Watson lived and wrote his "Annals," still standing, but now a meat shop. The letter is as follows:

Germantown (Bank House)

July 20, 1825.

Sir:

The frank politeness with which you have so often received the tokens of friendship from my countrymen, encourages me also, upon a slender acquaintance, to approach you with the present of a small Wooden Box, of Materials consecrated to the memory of some of the earliest historical incidents of my country. I am the more inclined to this, from having the honour to approach you as a brother *Miquon*, we being members of the Penn Society, for commemorating the landing of the Pilgrim Fathers of Pennsylvania. As these and similar relicks are peculiarly such as the Society encourages and preserves, I presume they may not meet an unwelcome reception from you.

The love of relicks, connected with incidents on which the soul delights to dwell, is a passion *natural*



A. W. Elst. & J. Boston

Reuben Haines

to man and especially to those of the finest moral feelings; and the reason is obvious: by such associations, such constituted minds, are capable of generating the *ideal presence*, and to commune with men and things of other times. (So long as fancy and imagination shall find their proper place in feeling and enlightened minds, we shall expect to hear of the "Touch Wood Trunk," of the Bard of Avon; of Rabelais' Old Clock, at Montpellier; or of Thomson's Table at Richmond.)

You yourself have already manifested your affection for Dr. Franklin's Cane, and for Gen. Washington's hair.

" We beg a hair of him for *memory*
And dying, mention it within our wills."

The character of the several pieces of Wood incorporated in the Box, is as follows, to wit,—The Box is turned from a piece of *Black Walnut*, which till 1818 was a living Forest Tree, standing in front of the Hall of Independence, and had been, with other like Trees there, the contemporaries of William Penn and the first settlers of Pennsylvania. That Group formerly served as imposing and appropriate conductors to that venerable building, when standing as it formerly did, at the utmost verge of City Population. When Richard Penn visited Philadelphia, and

was shown these last *living* vestiges of his great Progenitor's day, he burst into a flood of tears. The interest to be afforded by this Wood now is, that it is the *last* of all the Forest Race, so near the City. The four sections of the circle on the Lid are as follows, to wit:—

The *Oak* is a piece of the *top log* of a butment wharf (now strange to tell) located at the Junction of Hudson's Alley and Chestnut Street, in the year 1683, and then appertaining to the *first* Bridge ever made over Dock Creek. Under this Bridge, replaced by a stone one in 1699, vessels loaded with wood, used to go up to the "common landing" at the junction of High and Fourth streets. The present piece of wood was found six feet under the present surface in 1823.

The *Sweet Gum* is another Tree of the Forest Race of Penn's day, and *the last* present living Trees so near the City (save an Elm still standing at the N. W. corner of Schuylkill Seventh and Race Streets) it being one of 3 or 4 now standing on the northern side of Vine Street, in front of Bush Hill. Such facts as these tend powerfully to impose upon our consideration the wonderfully rapid growth of our American Cities from the Rude Sylvan, to the embellished City State.



A. W. Elson & Co. Boston.

The Hallway at Wych

The *Elm* is of the celebrated "Treaty Tree" of Shackamaxum, which blew down in 1810, and a Scion of which is again flourishing (like the reproduction of the fabled Phoenix) in the western lot of the City Hospital.

The *Mahogany* is a piece of the *Beam* of the first house constructed by Europeans in America! It was built and occupied in 1496 by the great Columbus, and is still preserved with commendable care by the Haytien Government.

With the present, accept also my lasting respect and esteem.

JOHN F. WATSON.

P. S. I feel disposed also to present you the *last* vestige of the first American Navy. It is a piece of the Timber of the *Alliance*, frigate. It is associated with that happy Alliance for which you so earnestly laboured, and it is besides curious as having belonged to the *only* Frigate of the first Navy, which remained to us at the close of the Revolution. It has, however, been as the seed or parent of something now far much greater and renowned.

It will be remembered that Lafayette had twice crossed the Atlantic in this frigate, so the gift of this relic was particularly appropriate.

The Alliance had had an eminently successful career during the war, and at its conclusion had been sold to Robert Morris and used as a merchant vessel, making several memorable trips. A few years later the frigate had been sold and broken up and her remains run upon Petty's Island in the Delaware.

General Lafayette was highly flattered, his secretary says, by Mr. Watson's present. He received it with gratitude and with a pledge that it should find a place among the precious memorials of his tour. The box was for many years a treasured relic at La Grange, and it is illustrated in the "Souvenirs sur la Vie Privée du Général Lafayette" by his friend and surgeon, M. Jules Cloquet, published in Paris, 1836. Shortly after Lafayette's death, in 1834, the souvenirs were divided among his three children, and in each one of these three branches several times in succession among the various heirs.

Just where these interesting ceremonies occurred can only be conjectured, but it is known that the reception took place in the passageway

through the centre of the house. There is a tradition that the General, fatigued by the labors of the day, was seated during a portion of the reception in an arm chair, still carefully preserved in the Haines family. The tradition is that it was one of two chairs which Franklin brought with him on his return from his service abroad as Minister of the United States to France. The chairs passed into the possession of Miss Molly Donaldson, of Germantown, and on her death she bequeathed one to Reuben Haines and the other to Charles J. Wister. The chair was placed on the right side of the passageway, nearest the street, and the guests filed through into the garden at the rear. Here "the guests were embraced by the General," as the account states, "with his usual politeness and cordiality."

The reception at Wyck concluded, Lafayette, seated in his barouche, accompanied by Charles J. Wister and surrounded by the cavalry escort, moved down the Main Street to yet one more function—a visit to the Academy on

School House Lane. Our Germantown Academy celebrated its one hundred and fiftieth anniversary in 1910, and when Lafayette visited it, it had been for two-thirds of a century an object of interest and solicitude to the incorporators and their descendants. The turmoil of the Revolution sadly interfered with the orderly and continuous conduct of the school. Here, as at Wyck, the floors were stained by the blood of the wounded after the battle. It was offered in 1793 as a meeting place for Congress, and later was occupied by two of the big city banks during the yellow fever visitation. We like to say that its old weathervane is surmounted by the crown of George III., and that its bell, which still calls the schoolboy to his studies, was sent home to England in the tea ship Polly, when this vessel was refused a landing in Philadelphia by our indignant citizens, and at the time when the Boston patriots, with no more earnestness, but with far more wastefulness, were pouring the tea consigned to them into the harbor.



Lafayette Chair

Arriving at the school, the instructors, with Walter R. Johnson,* the principal, at their head, and the pupils were drawn up to receive the distinguished visitors. Mr. Johnson then delivered the following address, which in the main was like hundreds—yes, almost a thousand— oratorical efforts to which Lafayette had listened (in his tour), but which, as it is short and contains some local references, is given in full. It was received with that urbanity and courtesy which everywhere marked the General's visit to Germantown.

Mr. Johnson said:

General:

In behalf of the members of the Academy of Germantown, permit me to express the high satisfaction inspired in our hearts by the visit with which we are now favoured. The thrill of joy which ran through ten millions of bosoms, as the glad tidings of your

* Walter R. Johnson was a young man, born in Massachusetts, June 21, 1795, a graduate of Harvard. He had assumed charge of the Academy in 1821, two years after his graduation, and continued at its head until August, 1826. From 1826 to 1836 he was connected with the Philadelphia schools and later was identified with many educational and scientific projects. He was the first sec-

approach to our shores were announced, was not slow in finding its way to the ardent affections of the youth now before you. High therefore as the sentiments of gratitude have risen, and devoted as has been the attachment expressed in every part of our country, you will do me the justice to believe that of the countless multitudes who have crowded around to do homage to the sublime virtues exhibited in your life, none have felt a deeper interest in the welfare, and none a livelier gratitude for the services of their country's benefactor than the citizens of this town and the members of this institution. You behold, sir, in the group before you, some of the youth of both portions of our continent, ardently devoted to those pursuits which may one day qualify them for discharging the high responsibilities imposed by their relation to free government, and by the gratitude to those who have *made them free*. While they ascend the steps of science or tread the paths of literature they are invigorated in the career, not only by the dignity of the pursuit, but also by the recollections of the names of

retary of the American Association for the Advancement of Science. He was a prolific writer, having left no less than fifty papers and reports on scientific subjects and twenty or more on matters relating to education. He died in Washington, D. C., April 26, 1852. A sketch of his life has been published in pamphlet form, being a reprint from "Barnard's American Journal of Education" for December, 1858.



Lafayette Box

those worthies who gave them the inheritance of institutions founded on intelligence and virtue.

We claim to possess a peculiar felicity in having our lot cast on the classic ground of America, amidst scenes which daily and hourly recall to mind recollections as dear to our hearts as they are sacred to patriotism. We visit the mansion that became the temporary refuge of our hostile invaders, and witness the impressions made by the cannon of our countrymen; we view with mingled emotions the indelible stains left by the blood of Revolutionary martyrs around many of the domestic hearthstones in our village, and in the retentive materials that compose this our hall of instruction. In our summer walks we strew flowers on the hallowed sod that covers the patriot soldier's grave; by our winter firesides we listen to the legend of many a patriarch, whose eye pours forth that eloquence of feeling which his tongue refuses to utter—choked by the emotion that swells as it recounts the praises of our country's deliverers. Hence, then, in turning over the page of Grecian and Roman story, our youth seldom grow weary with dwelling on the deeds of ancient heroes, save when they pause amidst these objects that remind them of our great national struggle, to compare those heroes with the liberators of our own hemisphere; with the

Washingtons and Lafayettes of both Americas. Accept, in our sincere congratulations, our earnest prayers for your safe return to the bosom of your family, and our ardent wishes for your lasting welfare and happiness.

To this address the General made a feeling and appropriate answer, and the students were then personally introduced by Mr. Johnson. The General gave each a cordial hand-shake, and when the name of Fernando Bolivar* was pronounced, Lafayette's expression kindled with interest and enthusiasm. This young man was the nephew and adopted son of Simon Bolivar, the so-called "Liberator" of South America, then in the zenith of his fame. The chronicler of the event says that it was difficult to

*Fernando Bolivar states in his autobiography, "Recuerdos y Reminiscencias del Primer Tercio de la Vida de Rivolba" (Bolivar) Paris, 1873. When he was twelve years old, in 1822, he was sent "to Philadelphia and I entered the College of Germantown under Walter Johnson, a man of remarkable qualifications to direct a college. I have always cherished a pleasant memory and respectful remembrance of my first teacher." He also states that when he arrived in Philadelphia he lived with a Mr. Alderson, and he further states that when General Lafayette was in the United States in 1825 and visited Germantown College he was introduced to the General.

say whether the vivid emotion of the hoary veteran or the filial respect and affection of the ingenuous youth was the most remarkable. Lafayette spoke to him with pleasure of the hopes which the friends of liberty and humanity were reposing in the character of his uncle, who until the present moment had advanced with a firm pace in the career pursued by Washington. To this the young man replied in such a manner as to excite the hope that his having been sent to the United States to study her political institution would not be without permanent benefit.

After partaking of refreshments at the Academy, the General and his suite continued on out to the Ridge Road, and returned to the

While at the Germantown Academy he had an offer to go to West Point, which offer he did not accept, as he acknowledged his deficiency in mathematics. From Germantown he went to a college in Virginia. Don Fernando S. Bolivar was born in Caracas, December 9, 1808, being the son of Don Juan Vicente Bolivar, a brother of the "Liberator." Fernando Bolivar returned to South America in 1828, and during a long life was identified with the political and military movements of his native land, serving as deputy to Congress, and as governor of the province of Caracas. He died in Caracas, 1898.

city to attend the dinner to Richard Rush, for eight years envoy to Great Britain.

On the 25th of July Lafayette set out for Wilmington, and M. Lévasseur, in looking back over the nine days in Philadelphia, thus refers to it: "The week we had just spent in Philadelphia, as it were in his own family, had entirely composed the fatigue of the General, and although the heat continued excessive, we undertook our journey to Wilmington to visit the Battle-field of Brandywine." This accomplished, the party moved on to Washington, and were received by President Adams, who then occupied the White House. After a tour of Virginia and farewell dinner with the three ex-Presidents—Jefferson, Madison and Monroe—at Monticello, he was tendered a great public dinner in Washington on September 6th, his birthday. Lafayette started the next day for France, embarking on the frigate *Brandywine*, which had been newly launched. Sailing down the Potomac, they entered the Chesapeake under full sail, as a beautiful rainbow spanned the bay



A. H. Z. 3 12 2 1880

The Germantown Academy

with one arm seeming to rest on the Virginia coast and the other on the Maryland shore. Thus was repeated a phenomenon which had greeted Lafayette on his arrival in the harbor of New York, and which has been noted as a happy omen of his visit.

After a voyage not without some difficulties, Lafayette reached France in twenty-four days and was soon at his beloved La Grange. Here for nine years he lived the peaceful, happy life of a country gentleman, broken only by the Revolution of July, 1830, when he again assumed command of the National Guards, established order in Paris, and was instrumental in placing Louis Philippe on the throne of France. This public service ended, he again returned to his country home, where, on May 20, 1834, he passed to the great beyond.

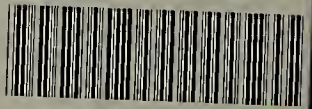
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