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THE BATES BOYS ON THE WESTERN WATERS

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PART I

THERE were seven of the Bates boys and they had five sisters. They were raised on a plantation near the James River in Virginia. The three older children were born in Henrico County, and the rest in Goochland County; but that may not mean that they were not all born in the same place, as Goochland County was once a part of Henrico. Their father had been a merchant, and had retired to the plantation of "Belmont" with what he considered a sufficient fortune to maintain him in independence. The Revolution changed all that. Their mother came of a good old Quaker family, the numerous and respectable Woodsons. Her husband, related to the equally numerous and important Flemings, was also a Quaker, though there is reason to suspect he may have joined the Society of Friends on his wife's account. Over seventy-five years later his youngest son recorded that his father lost his membership in the society by bearing arms at the siege of Yorktown. His letters before that time indicate more interest in wartime

¹ Mrs. Davis, one-time resident of Pittsburgh now living near Tallahassee, Florida, has hitherto contributed the following articles to this magazine: "Fort Fayette," 10:65-84 (April, 1927); "The Letters of Tarleton Bates," 12:32-53 (January, 1929); "By Invitation of Mrs. Wilkinson—An Incident of Life at Fort Fayette," 13:145-181 (July, 1930); and "Elbridge Gerry, Jr., Visits Pittsburgh, 1813," 12:257-262 (October, 1929)—erroneously ascribed to her husband, Elvert M. Davis. She has also contributed a number of articles to the *Michigan History Magazine*, over the name Marion Morse Davis; and the biographical sketch of "Ann Biddle Wilkinson, 1757-1807," in *Notable Women of Pennsylvania*, 76-77 (Philadelphia, 1942).—Ed.

preparations than would naturally be expected of a dyed-in-the-wool Quaker, and there is a letter from a Fleming relative, himself a captain in the provincial troops, that refers to a messenger he was sending to Jefferson who was probably none other than Thomas Fleming Bates.

In 1788, Mrs. Bates evidently withdrew from the society which had expelled her husband for his patriotic activities, for she was disowned on account of "wholly declining" to attend their religious meetings, such expulsion to continue until she "made satisfaction," which she very evidently never bothered to do. Thomas Fleming Bates and Caroline Matilda (Woodson) Bates, his wife, were not to be coerced into compliance with a creed they had outgrown.

Only four of the Bates boys ever journeyed to the Western Waters, but they became of much more importance to their communities than the three who remained in Virginia. Their stories are told by means of the letters which they exchanged with each other and with those left at home. It is probable that few families so widely scattered have so carefully preserved their correspondence of so long a period, and of such an early date.² Nor are many families so blessed in the talent for letter writing. Each of the pioneer brothers found in that far frontier, then represented by Pittsburgh, Detroit and St. Louis, much of tragedy and adventure, and three of them won a measure of fame and fortune. The pioneers were Tarleton, Frederick, James and Edward.

Charles was the eldest of the family, and among the collection are few letters from him. He was evidently a serious-minded, hardworking fellow, who had little time to give to anything but business. He had become a lawyer, whether by the road to the bar very common in Virginia, as Edward describes it, or by some other route, is not clear. This road was by way of apprenticeship to a county clerk, and was the one entered by Tarleton, the third child and second son, though he did not long pursue it. The second child was a girl, Sarah, the Sally of the letters. She was

² Many of the Bates letters and papers are preserved in the collections of the Missouri Historical Society, St. Louis, and some in the Burton Historical Collection in the Detroit Public Library. The material they afford is supplemented here by information gathered by the writer in interviews with Bates descendants in Missouri and with descendants, in Virginia, of people connected with the history of the Bates family. For background all available published works relating to the times and places concerned have of course been consulted.

born in 1775, and died at the home of her youngest brother, in St. Louis, Missouri, in 1859. She never married.

Frederick was just two years younger than Tarleton, and they were congenial comrades. Then came Fleming, whose letters are filled with news of the Old Dominion, which he never left, and after him, Richard, who was the mainstay of his mother and sisters for many years. Susan and Margaret were younger than Richard, and younger yet was James, the brilliant scapegrace who galloped so lightly over fields that others had ploughed. Nancy and Caroline Matilda, next in order, were the consolatory correspondents upon whom Frederick depended during his first years in St. Louis, as Sally had brightened his stay in Detroit. Edward, the youngest, was a baby when Tarleton left home, but upon his shoulders finally fell the entire burden of the household in Virginia. His way to an education had been smoothed by the sacrifices of his older brothers, his character was developed by responsibility, and he rose to greater heights of achievement than any of the others.

TARLETON HEADS FOR PITTSBURGH

Tarleton was the first to leave home. He had been employed as clerk to William Miller, county clerk of Goochland County, and had been staying at Goochland Court House, the county seat. William Miller was evidently a very close friend of Tarleton's father, possibly a relation of the family. It is probable that Charles had already served an apprenticeship with him. For some reason Tarleton was dissatisfied and left his situation abruptly, incurring by this conduct the anger of his father. From an item in a newspaper in Pittsburgh, long years after, it appears that he may have joined the forces that went over the mountains in 1794 to quell the Whiskey Insurrection. Many young Republicans, dismayed by the fact that the Federalists were crowding into the army and thus making it a thoroughly partisan institution, were moved to form companies which were offered to the government, although their sympathies were not alien to the cause of the insurrectionists in their protest against the excise. Tarleton, whose family were friends of the Jeffersons, Randolphs, and Madisons, was an ardent Democrat, as appears in his letters almost from the first word.

It is likely that if Tarleton came to the western country by way of

the invading army, he went at first no further than Carlisle or Bedford or Uniontown, otherwise the manner of his coming would have been better known in Pittsburgh, and would not have been the subject of innuendo. That he was not anxious that his family know the exact circumstances of his arrival is evident from the first letter now available. It is written to his brother Frederick, on July 8, 1795, when he was a few months over twenty years of age. He says:

“From the many different and contradictory accounts which I have troubled you with of my intended pursuits and movements, you will doubtless imagine me to be a most fickle-minded, undetermined, weather-beaten, fate-driven mortal which, when I impartially reflect, I can but acknowledge, is too just an idea of my conduct since I left you. And still I hope you will do me the justice to attribute my inconsistencies not entirely to wild caprice, but in part to my situation with my nearest relation, whose peremptory commands to return generally weighed down ideas of disobedience, and threw me into lethargic irresolution, in which situation, between interest and inclination on the one hand and duty on the other, the impulse of the movement generally determined me. My desire to hear from you, and inform you of my intentions, prompted me to communicate them, incoherently, as they occurred; which for the most part were only applicable in theory; and before I had really reduced them to absolute resolutions. Some ten days ago I wrote to inform my acquaintances of my situation, and lest that should be miscarried, as others have, I will here but sketch it.”

It is indeed but a sketch that he gives, but from this and later letters it is clear that he had been engaged as a clerk to Major Isaac Craig, Deputy quartermaster of state, deputy quartermaster general under the United States, deputy commissary general of the United States, commissary of the military stores, and notary public, were some of this gentleman's titles, according to the *Pittsburgh Gazette* of September 22, 1798. Tarleton received thirty-five dollars per month, and two rations. For his board he paid half a guinea a week, and he had to pay “seventy cents a dozen” for his washing. The custom of partly paying with rations the “gentlemen of the army” (and it is evident that his employment entitled Tarleton to rank with the military establishment) was a vexatious one,

which might be turned to profit, or might involve the recipient in debt and difficulties. He expresses himself as pessimistic about being able to save anything, though the amount had at first seemed quite large to him. He says that he has thoughts of making the western country his home, but his insistence on his not having expatriated himself, his anxiety to hear from home, and his pride in the title to which he still clings, that of a "Citizen of Virginia," suggest that a little relenting on his father's part and a little coaxing from the rest would soon bring him back. This impression of homesickness is emphasized by his delight in having met in the place one of his own clan, T. M. Woodson, "a perfect Virginian," who is on his way from Philadelphia to Wayne's headquarters.

Major Craig was a very important figure in the little frontier town. He had charge of the military stores, then kept mostly at Fort Fayette, a new fort about a mile from the old one, and further up the Allegheny, which had been erected under his superintendence in 1791-2. He was a soldier of the Revolution and a self-made man, who had emigrated from Ireland to Philadelphia about 1765. The world outside Pittsburgh is now interested only in the supposition that he was the inspiration of the character of Teague O'Reagan, the Sancho of Hugh Henry Brackenridge's satiric *Modern Chivalry*. He lived in a large frame house on the bank of the Monongahela River near the point where the Allegheny joined it to make the Ohio, and it was there that Tarleton spent the first few years of his stay in Pittsburgh.

The farewell line of Tarleton's letter, "Health and Fraternity," and the address, "Citizen Frederick Bates," serve to gauge the extent to which he had absorbed the Jacobinism of his day. In his new environment, he had fallen among Federalists. But he had evidently not yet perceived the extent to which the lines had been drawn, for they were only then beginning to tighten. He tells of the harmonious Fourth of July celebration which he has just attended at the Sign of the Black Bear, with salutes from Fort Fayette and toasts and oratory, and of the procession through the streets which followed, with huzzas before every respectable house in town. By this (for a change has come in the meaning of the word *respectable*) he means the homes of the more important citizens.

PITTSBURGH IN 1795

It is a distinct loss to Pittsburgh that the two letters referred to by Tarleton as having been written previous to the one quoted are missing. Perhaps in them he gave a better description of the town than any now extant. To get an idea of the town as he found it in 1795, choice lies between the admittedly over-colored description written by Hugh Henry Brackenridge in 1786, and one by Arthur Lee, on the occasion of his visit in 1784, a diatribe that yet rankles in the ears of Pittsburghers.

Mrs. Mary Dewees, a cultured lady who went through in 1787, refers to it as "that gay place," and notes that she will not visit it till her trunks catch up with her party. She is much impressed with one residence, and does not speak slightly of others.

About a year after Tarleton Bates saw Pittsburgh for the first time, a French traveler was in town, and he has left a description and a map that are enlightening. This traveler was Georges Henry Victor Collot, and his motives in making his journey have been questioned. It is evident from his descriptions that he had in mind other things than ordinary sightseeing. He says that the town contains at the most one hundred and fifty houses, some of brick and the rest of wood. The general aspect of the country he calls truly enchanting, the undulating hills on either shore of the rivers adding to the picturesque setting. The walls of Fort Pitt have been used to fill up the trenches, so that he can scarcely trace the outlines of the old pentagon fort. He was always more concerned with forts than with houses and because of that has left the only good description of Fort Fayette that any traveler or chronicler has recorded.

There was published, many years later, a map called "Map of Pittsburgh in 1795." This was made from descriptions, and old deeds and plans of the town. On it many streets are clearly defined that are not indicated at all on Collot's map, and it would seem that they probably existed more clearly on plats than premises. A sketch made by Louis Brantz in 1790 shows only a few houses, warehouses, and some remains of the old fort. It does show that the trees and shrubs had grown up since the time when all the ground around the old fort had to be cleared to keep the Indians from creeping too close, and though the houses have little architectural beauty, the uneven formation of the land gives a pic-

turesque variety to the appearance of the town. A picture of Pittsburgh in 1796, published in Collot's account, shows many more houses than does the Brantz sketch of 1790. In both sketches, the houses are remarkable for their height, giving quite a distinct skyline above the trees. Some of the houses can be identified by form and locality. The buildings stretch irregularly along the high bank of the Monongahela, and present a not unpleasant contour. Mrs. Dewees told of the beauty of the old King's Orchard, on the bank of the Allegheny, and that and the fruit trees and gardens surrounding the houses undoubtedly gave the place a certain charm. It was, however, far from being as beautiful as was the region of Goochland Court House in Virginia, and the homesick lad from the banks of the James must often have returned in fancy to the grounds of "Belmont," his father's old plantation, though he was for many years to see it only in dreams.

With taverns the town was better furnished than with dwellings. From 1770, when Washington stayed at Samuel Semple's, and found it good, a long list of sojourners have lauded one inn or another. In 1804 the taverns were said to be equal to any in New York or Baltimore. The Fourth of July celebration praised by Tarleton was held at the Sign of the Black Bear (he calls it the Sign of the Bear), and this inn kept by Thomas Ferree, at one corner of the Market Square, was one of the best. These taverns were nearly always of two stories, and some of two stories and a half. The early courts were held in the third story of Andrew Watson's tavern. The traders and storekeepers kept store in the ground floor of their buildings, and often lived in the second story, and an attic was an added necessity, partly for storage and partly for sleeping purposes. This may account for the height of the buildings, as seen in all the sketches of Pittsburgh, and in contrast with some frontier towns, where the tendency was to build low rambling structures, easily erected and easily added to as necessity or fancy dictated.

It was characteristic of the brothers that they wrote more of politics than of local or family matters. They were ardently interested in the newly forming government. After a summer spent in getting acquainted with his new surroundings, a letter written by Tarleton to Frederick in November of the year of his arrival is mainly occupied with his theories

as to the necessity of standing armies in a free government. He is unalterably opposed to them. He can say nothing too strong against all the encroachments of aristocracy. Only at the last does he descend to earth and speak of his own comfort. He says this letter would be longer, but he is writing in a "cold room by candlelight without fire." These last few words call up a rather dreary picture; in the old frame building, in the cold, foggy month of November, on the bank of the muddy river, sits the youngster of twenty, far from home and friends, yet more concerned about the future of his country than his own present comfort. The ghosts of the Highlanders who were tortured to death by the Indians after their capture at Grant's Hill may be wandering through the mist outside the old redoubt, but he heeds not the wraiths of the past, he is fearful only for the future. In a fireless attic, by the light of a tallow candle, he writes his strictures, not against the conditions he himself has created, but against the social barriers he had never sensed in his old sheltered existence among his own kith and kin.

Did his railings against aristocracy proceed from any personal chagrin? The later letters will suggest an answer to that question.

NEWS FROM HOME

In the meantime, Frederick had taken his brother's place at Goochland Court House, and among the letters there is a commission, dated sometime in 1796, making Frederick the deputy postmaster there. Mr. Miller, evidently not discouraged by Tarleton's defection, had confidence enough in Frederick to get him an appointment to assist him in the office of postmaster. Frederick must have been but little over nineteen at the time.

Though only about sixteen, Fleming also has started out into the world. He writes from Hanover Court House in October, 1795, to Frederick: "Citizen Brother" (here was another Jacobin); I "don't expect ever to hear from you or any of the family again . . . have not received a letter from any of you since I came down . . . Citizen Todd will in a few days go up to Charlotte . . ."

Charlotte is now Charlottesville, but in the Bates letters it is always Charlotte without the "ville." Fleming, like Tarleton, is anxious for the

neighborhood news. He asks: "Let me know whether the Hymeneal noose is yet applied to the necks of Mrs. Logan and Carey."

Owen Wister is authority for the statement that love affairs interest the Virginian at a very early age. This was certainly true of the Bates boys. In his next letter, dated May 30, 1796, Fleming expresses his satisfaction at the ending of an unsatisfactory love affair of his own (remember he was only sixteen at the time he left home!), although one is forced to the conclusion that it is lack of encouragement from the object of it that has caused his enthusiasm to wane. It is evident that he had planned a visit home, for he writes: "Can't be with you at Whitsunday; Captain Rogers has left us to take a tour to Kentucky."

Frederick must have given Tarleton his fill of the political situation, for in a letter of September 2, 1796, he thanks him for that information, but is exasperated by his brother's vague hints of some domestic gossip "too delicate to be confided to the post." He fully expects to be with them at "Belmont" in October. He is anxious to see the smaller children, though Frederick has predicted he will not know them, they have grown so since he left. He inquires whether his father has forgotten him, and asks after Sally and Richard and Charles. There was a sister of their mother's who made her home with the Bates family; the tradition has come down that she was much more severe in her discipline than their own mother, but Tarleton remembers her only as "our good Aunt Ursula." All the neighbors are included in his inquiries, and he does not neglect an old sweetheart named Jenny. He intimates, however, that there are as charming girls in Pittsburgh as any he has left in Goochland. He promises to bring Volney's *Ruins of Empires* to Frederick.

In October, 1796, Tarleton writes that he is disappointed of an immediate visit home by the fact that Major Craig, with whom he lives, must go to Presque Isle and return. Andrew Ellicott is in Pittsburgh waiting to descend the Ohio, and his presence there is evidently retarding the major's departure. This letter is written to his mother, and he says that he thinks he may be able to start the next month. This journey was long postponed. It was a good many years before he saw "Belmont" again, or his father or his mother.

Frederick could reach "Belmont" easily from the county seat and he

still called it home, for Fleming writes to him in July, 1796, apologizing for having kept so long some books borrowed from "Belmont." Fleming is as interested in politics as any of his older brothers, and gives his opinion as to whether so large a country as the United States will, after its settlement, be governed by a Republican government.

Throughout the Western Country, the "surrender of the posts," long promised, long expected, ardently hoped-for, was a subject of frequent conjecture. Most of the early letters are filled with references to this event. Until it was accomplished, the free navigation of the Mississippi, equally vital to residents on the western waters, took second place in the discussions of those interested.

On August 12, 1796, Tarleton writes jubilantly to Frederick: "On the 11th ult, at 11 A. M. the United Stars were floating on the ramparts of Detroit." But his letter has also a pessimistic strain: "Pittsburgh loses the supplying of the army, New York will be principally benefitted." He has been ill and that illness has tinged his reflections with a somber hue. He is disappointed at having no letter from Goochland, and laments that he has no intimate friends at Pittsburgh. His only amusement is reading. One item of news he gives: "Dr. Bollman of Fayette is here on his way to Kentucky." From other sources comes information indicating that he here refers to the celebrated Dr. Eric Bollman, who had striven to liberate Lafayette, and who was later to be involved in the Burr conspiracy.

A letter from their father, Thomas Fleming Bates, written to Frederick, probably in 1796, expresses the great affection he felt for a dutiful son. He was an excellent penman, and the letter has a clerkly neatness that is reflected in Tarleton's and Fleming's writings, and somewhat in Frederick's, suggesting one reason that these were always held so valuable by their employers. Among other things the father writes:

"I understand by Charles that you are anxious for a little ramble at Christmas time and wish to obtain a horse from hence. Mine are all in bad order, but you must be accommodated with one of the best!" He makes inquiry as to the rule for bound orphans (he evidently had something to do with county or township affairs of that kind) and as to the

forms for apprentices. The last paragraph of the letter is somewhat interesting: "I expect two letters from Philadelphia by the next post. Can you wrap them in the newspapers for—Your affectionate father, Thomas Fleming Bates."

The advantage of having a son who was deputy postmaster is here manifest. So high were the charges for the delivery of letters, always paid by the recipient of the letter, not the sender, that various and subtle methods arose for reducing the costs. In one of Tarleton's letters to his mother, he says that as it does not appear right that letters from and to one not entitled to a frank, should, by being enclosed, avoid the postage, so he has forborne to seal his letter to her (which had probably traveled in one to Frederick, who was entitled to a frank), but he adds that he has not always been, and does not know that he always shall be, so scrupulous. Harlow, in *Old Post Bags*, says that anyone planning a trip of any distance did well to keep the time of his departure secret; otherwise he would be besieged by friends, acquaintances, and even total strangers to carry their mail with him. Custom in this regard dated from experiences in England. It will be remembered that even the scrupulous Jane Austen, who was adamant against traveling on the Sabbath, would accept a frank for a letter from a mere acquaintance.

In a letter written to Frederick in October, shortly after Tarleton's disappointment in starting for Goochland, is a hint of another reason for the visit than a desire to see the family alone; the memory of the charming Jenny has not been erased by absence. But he has little hope for a successful suit. "The chilling hand of poverty must seal my lips forever" is his boyish way of putting it. One somehow feels that as he writes he is thinking more of the phrase than of the girl. He turns readily to his political discussions.

NATIONAL POLITICS

Reference to the "monarchial Adams" and praise of Washington are followed by the statement that only Jefferson is worthy to succeed the latter. As to "P. P. [Peter Porcupine] his name should not be written with Republican Ink, much less by the hand of a Democrat." Here is a curious distinction. It may be noted that Tarleton and Frederick always

call themselves Democrats, never Republicans or Democratic-Republicans, terms often used by others. It is clear that they considered all citizens of the United States *Republicans*, divided as to politics into Federalists and Democrats. Parties were slow in forming, but the Bates alignment was well defined.

There is mention of the local political situation. Tarleton greatly fears that John Woods, a Pittsburgh lawyer (*brother-in-law, by the way, to James Ross, of wider fame later as a United States Senator, but then less important locally*), will succeed the Democratic Gallatin.

There is comment on the dearness of provisions at Pittsburgh. He asks twice in the letter that Frederick will send him "the form-book I copied from Miller's." He is still interested in local news. Evidently Frederick has written something about the beauty of Captain Woodson's daughter, for he observes: "Sally Woodson must be divinely pretty." He closes with: "I long to see my dearest little sisters."

A letter of October 18, 1796, speaks of the annoyance Tarleton has suffered from the interruptions of a fanatic religionist, who has evidently visited him during his letter-writing. As local news, he offers: "two pompeons [*sic*] raised in Pittsburgh, one weighed 137 pounds, one 110 pounds." This reminds one of the famous "pumpkin flood," the date of which is not exactly fixed by annalists, but which inundated the village in an early day, carrying down with it from the overflowed farms along the Allegheny above Pittsburgh such an abundance of pumpkins that the streets [*so says the legend*] were scarcely passable even after the waters receded. If all were of the size that Tarleton tells of, no wonder the freshet was a matter of amazement for so long a time. In this letter, politics and world affairs are not forgotten. He expresses his joy at the French victories.

The brothers loved big words, and their reading had provided them with many. On October 27, 1796, he reproaches Frederick for the failure of "your promised hebdomedal epistles." His own frequent letters at the period must reflect his disappointment at the delay of his visit to "Belmont." He speaks of some mistake he made in copying when working for Miller and which yet disturbs him. He asks again for the copy

of forms he made while at Miller's. It is but fair to observe that he finally got them, but just when is hard to fix. They are among the other papers, and are most beautifully written.

W. G. Sydnor was working also at Pittsburgh in the same department as Tarleton. The first reference to him follows: "Sydnor thinks Brother Charles treated him last winter in Richmond rather cavalierly." It was to Richmond that Charles had gone to found his fortunes in the law.

A letter of November 9, 1796, is addressed to Frederick Bates, Postmaster, so that Frederick must have succeeded Clerk Miller in this office. It was not a profitable one. In 1791, the aggregate pay of all the postmasters in the United States was a little over nine thousand dollars. The place would be chiefly of value to a young man who had little to do, liked to receive letters, and had a large and scattered family to write them. In this letter Tarleton tells that W. D. Sydnor has come down from Presque Isle and brought some wild rumors of a French fleet which is soon to invade Canada. Sydnor is to go to Virginia, and Tarleton is sending their Uncle Frederick [*probably Frederick Woodson*] "a pair of Indian leggings, garters and mocassins—a belt I could not procure." On November 19, he gave Sydnor a letter of introduction to Frederick at Goochland.

On March 19, 1797, Tarleton ventured an essay on the ethics of the postal service. "I have presumed to expect Charles' letter this day. If I enclose letters to you I suppose you will of course charge postage on them before you deliver or forward them—in this case the public will not be defrauded. I think letters coming from Goochland should be only twenty or at furthest twenty-two cents; you mark them (and the Postmaster at Richmond also) twenty-five cents."

"I intimated my intention of forwarding what money I could spare for certain purposes—do inform me whether it will be serviceable and when." From later letters one surmises that this money was intended for the education of the younger children. As he was not reconciled with his father, this was a delicate matter. He says that the pittance will be small indeed, the extent of it will be not over a hundred dollars, added to what Ensign Lewis may have deposited for him. Charles, he thinks, formerly

wrote him that he had of funds belonging to Tarleton about forty dollars.

This Ensign Lewis was Meriwether Lewis of Albemarle County, later to become the hero of the Lewis and Clark expedition, and he was a relative of Thomas Fleming Bates's old friend Jefferson. He and Tarleton had evidently become friends during the times when the young ensign was stationed at Fort Fayette, and this friendship was to ripen into an intimacy that continued for many years.

Sydnor again comes into the picture; "Sydnor writes that he has received a letter from Charles that much surprised him. When he was last in Virginia he was chilled with Charles' cold formality in Richmond; but for which there was [*sic*] certainly good reasons." . . . "You 'have felt the force of my observations as to prejudices' and I am also inclined to pronounce it is happy for man that *prejudice* and *vanity* are so liberally blended in their nature; but for the one, how many pleasing delusions should we forego, and without the other—which teaches us to say, 'we thank thee O Lord! that we are not as other men' how should we be enabled to bear the contumely which is in such strict alliance with poverty, the frowns of fortune, and above all the merit of others." . . . "'Tis with pleasure that I anticipate the instruction—literary and moral—which you will receive from James Pleasants, Jr. I have not that desirable advantage, but I hold myself rigidly accountable for the distribution of my time from dark till eleven. . . ."

Frederick was indeed fortunate in receiving instruction from James Pleasants, the man of whom John Randolph said, "James Pleasants never made an enemy nor lost a friend." He was a cousin of Thomas Jefferson, and bore the title of Junior in his own home county of Goochland long after he had become of such importance on the stage of national affairs that his senior was forgotten. He was a member of the legislature of Virginia in 1796, a firm Republican, and was in Congress from 1811 to 1819. He was educated by private tutors, studied law, and was probably glad to help a young and industrious student like Frederick. To his precepts Frederick may have owed a suavity in dealing with difficult situations that was not conspicuous in the high-spirited Tarleton.

Tarleton writes to Frederick on April 7, 1797: "On the 30th ult. Sydnor arrived, and on the [torn] I received by post your letter of the

14th. Your 'liberation from [torn] of servitude', if not 'an unparalleled act of Generosity,' is 'what I little expected.' But for the solution of this enigma I am willing to resort, not to a change in our late Master's philanthropy but to the different degrees of merit in the objects of it. . . . Success with Saint George (not of Cappadocia) I most ardently wish you. It might possibly not be so lucrative as other prospects but it is more independent, more honorable, and who that makes not riches his god would not prefer a rigid competence in the one to affluence in the other situation." This evidently refers to some proposed change in Frederick's situation, involving a removal from Goochland. The explanation comes in later letters. The rest of the letter takes up the political strain, and is concerned with the aggressions of the French against American shipping. Tarleton asserts that devotion to his own country is ahead of any consideration he may have had for the French.

A letter of May 28 could never in kindness have been written by Tarleton had his brother not been in a position of vantage as postmaster of the little Virginia crossroads, for its receipt would have bankrupted the ordinary youth of the day. He earnestly desires his brother's views on many and diverse subjects, the local and state political situations, especially, for it has been rumored in Pittsburgh that Virginia is about to return to a Federalist allegiance. The vice of gambling, the encouragement of lotteries, and the situation of the French nation are discussed, and it is some time before he gets down to the more personal items. He thanks Frederick for two letters, and discusses the news in them.

He refers again to the prospect for Frederick. Miller has evidently withdrawn his promise to release Frederick if Tarleton finds something better for him to do. Tarleton thinks that before Christmas he can find something though perhaps not very lucrative. Sydnor is to act as quartermaster at Presque Isle. The department is being remodeled by General Commanding Wilkinson and Quartermaster General Wilkins, and Tarleton is fortunate enough to have his choice and can remain in Pittsburgh.

The former quartermaster-general, James O'Hara, had been superseded after the death of General Wayne and the appointment of General James Wilkinson as commander-in-chief of the army. In a letter to General Wilkinson, June 4, 1796, Thomas H. Cushing had written

from Washington: "John Wilkins [made] Quarter Master General, which has lengthened O'Hara's face six inches at least and will be the best thing for the army which has yet appeared."

The new appointee was known as John Wilkins, Jr., for he was the son of John Wilkins, Sr., one of the first traders of the town after the Revolution. However O'Hara may have regretted the change, he promptly became a contractor for the army, and probably made as much or more than when he had been officially connected with it. Both he and Wilkins were always known as generals from the temporary holding of the office. There were as many generals in Pittsburgh in those days as there were afterward colonels in Kentucky.

A letter of June 19, commences: "I have little to reply to yours of the 25th ult., but as you, My Dear Frederick, 'receive with avidity and read with pleasure everything from my pen,' I will not be mute." He gives his brother some further hope as to the position he is trying to procure for him. He refers to his break with his father, and the unaccommodating spirit of Miller. "I presume Charles has the smallpox by inoculation. I wonder he does not answer my last. On his birthday I undertook the French, on the tenth inst. I began to translate with the assistance of a dictionary, and in two more months, my master tells me, I shall be able to read and perfectly understand my French book. The pronunciation is the only difficulty. The only certain time I have to attend to this business is from eight to eleven in the evening and on this time not even reading shall infringe until I can translate without a dictionary."

This French teacher was probably M. Visinier, who remained for some time in Pittsburgh. He advertised the following year that his rates were reduced as they had been called too high. Lieutenant Zebulon Montgomery Pike studied French when stationed near Pittsburgh in 1800, probably with this same teacher. Tarleton was not averse to letting his brothers know that he had some opportunities in his new abode that were not so common in Goochland.

The letter is also full of political discussions, a comment on the Ire-dell-Cabell dispute, and ends with the rather personal question: "Who will be Postmaster at Goochland Court House? Postage is with me, and may be with you, an object."

On July 9, he writes another long letter. He has received one from Fleming, whom he fears is a little "synical." Reading in a letter to Fred-

erick from poor Fleming that he "can't attend the wedding of B. O. Winston and Miss Thilman at Richmond on account of poisoning by thunderwood" supplies a more charitable excuse for what Tarleton calls his "wonderfully laconic epistle." Tarleton sets Frederick right as to his own and Sydnor's respective ranks. Their wages are the same, and he considers his situation more agreeable. He is now clerk to the quartermaster, not, it would seem, to the deputy. He pays his respects to a wealthy uncle, brother to his mother, in language that asserts independence or foolish pride, as one may care to interpret it. He has had hopes that his father would be able to help him to advancement through "Mr. Jefferson." This would indicate that there had been a reconciliation with his father and certainly one occurred either at this time or soon afterward. He says that he spent the Fourth very convivially, in a bower on the banks of the Allegheny, with salutes from Fort Fayette to vary the innumerable toasts. [The town was still joining in the same celebration, but there is a hint in the volunteer toasts of a division of sentiment.] He thanks his brother for news of Virginia politics, as he has not yet become a thoroughpaced Pennsylvanian.

FREDERICK COMES WEST

On the eighteenth of August he is able to give definite news of a chance for Frederick with Captain Ernest, deputy quartermaster-general at Detroit. Tarleton is all enthusiasm, and begs an immediate reply. He is sure that the Northwest Territory will soon be set off with a government of its own, and that will be a great opportunity for a young man. He encloses a letter from Captain Ernest, defining the position as nearly similar to that of Tarleton in Pittsburgh. The pay will be thirty dollars a month and two rations. As living is cheaper, this will be better than the same sum farther east. Tarleton offers financial aid to Frederick to buy his release from Miller. "Sally's ring came to this place in a letter from Richmond to W. G. Sydnor at Presqu'île, from whence I have received it though cut asunder apparently to get off a finger over which it had been squeezed—I have gotten it mended and have it now on my finger."

Captain Matthew Ernest, who was destined to play so important a part in Frederick's life, was one of the most attractive figures among the early citizens of Pittsburgh. He had entered the Revolutionary Army

from New York as a private soldier when a mere boy and had finally attained the rank of lieutenant. He was transferred to the regular army in 1787, and had commanded at Fort Pitt until its sale to Trumbull and Marmie.

After the Revolution, that army consisted of fifty-five men at West Point to guard the stores, and twenty-five men at Fort Pitt. There was no officer of higher rank than captain. Captain John Doughty, the commander, enjoyed the pay and emoluments of a major of artillery. Subsequently a force of seven hundred was raised, eight companies of infantry and twenty-two of artillery. In 1785, when Ernest was in command at Fort Pitt, the headquarters were at Fort Harmar, near Marietta. Politicians clamored vehemently against the enormous standing army. In the magazines at Fort Pitt and Fort Harmar was hardly enough powder to fire the sunset gun.

Captain Ernest, one of the most polished gentlemen in the army, was a general favorite with his fellow officers. He had been unanimously elected battalion paymaster just before his resignation from the army. This resignation had been induced by the inadequate pay and the needs of a growing family. He was now acting as assistant to his brother-in-law, John Wilkins, Jr., and was his confidential agent at Detroit. He must have taken a liking to the young Virginian, "who wrote in Major Craig's office," and was eager to have the brother as an assistant to himself.

One of the few letters from Charles is dated July 10, 1797, and is written to Frederick at Goochland. He is anxious to reach Belmont. "Send my horse by the post, and if he should have changed his lodgings since I came down, write me word that I may know where to find him." It is to be presumed that he means a change of lodgings for the post (i.e. carrier of the mails) rather than for the horse. The sentence is rather involved, and suggests haste rather than legal exactness.

A communication from Tarleton to Frederick on August 25 gives some further particulars of the proposed change, and promises him two hundred dollars by the next post. Frederick must have written an acceptance of the offer made in Tarleton's letter of the eighteenth of August, though Tarleton could not yet have received it. He probably took some former general consent to be sufficient. Captain Ernest had warned him to have Frederick there in time to take the United States

sloop "Detroit" which would be at Presque Isle in October for the last trip before winter set in. Tarleton's letter written on September 29, 1797, is addressed to Frederick, to be opened by Richard if Frederick has started. He is very much worried because he has not heard from Frederick.

Frederick started promptly. By the early part of October he was in Pittsburgh. There was a letter written from Pittsburgh to his father and referred to in the next letter available, but it has not yet been located.

This leaves to the imagination the meeting of the two brothers, so long separated, and so soon to be parted again. For Frederick had to hurry on to Presque Isle to meet the "Detroit," and Tarleton was not able to leave long enough to accompany him on his way.

When Frederick was at Pittsburgh, Tarleton had been living there nearly a year. He must by then have been fairly well acquainted even if he had formed few close friendships. What was the state of society, and what were the circumstances which surrounded him, and which he would detail to his brother much more fully than he could have written them?

EARLY PITTSBURGH "ARISTOCRACY"

Anyone who believes that at that time the town was utterly uncouth and without people of social pretensions has failed to study the situation fully. An Indian trader was not necessarily a ruffian, and among the names of the traders at Fort Pitt, even before the Revolution, are those of men who had had opportunities equal to those of any of the citizens along the seaboard and similar in character. The beginnings of a town had been made around Fort Pitt nearly thirty-three years before; although the land had not then been purchased from the Indians. Even John Wilkins, Sr. (the father-in-law of Captain Ernest), who was much shocked when he arrived in 1783 by the general wickedness and the lack of religious privileges, admitted that there were mixed with the inhabitants a few families of credit. He had later opened a store with Ephraim Blaine, from whom was descended the famous "Plumed Knight." As Wilkins the next year removed his family, consisting of ten motherless children, to Pittsburgh, he could not have considered the place wholly barbarous. On the other hand, of course, being on the way to the frontier and the "new settlements" and constantly threatened with Indian wars, it was the deposit for a great deal of flotsam, and it seemed

necessary for the "few families of credit" to keep themselves to themselves. Thus was formed that aristocracy which is characteristic of new towns; the firstcomers of any degree of gentility who band together to keep out later pioneers until they have proven themselves worthy, and who by social exchange and intermarriage become clanlike in their organization. Having often no particular claims to leadership beyond priority of residence, some amongst them are sure to develop a jealousy which leads them to bar out from their ranks all newcomers, and make of their little circle a dictatorship which sometimes survives the encroachments of talent and even of wealth, though this last is apt to count more than purely intellectual qualifications. The situation at Pittsburgh, which might have followed this course without deviation, was further complicated by the dispute before the Revolution between Virginia and Pennsylvania as to the ownership of the territory surrounding and including it. Thus Connolly the Virginian set up a court at Fort Pitt (renaming it Fort Dunmore in honor of the Governor of Virginia) that drove out all the men who were leaders of the Pennsylvania settlers. He carried things with a high hand for awhile, in spite of the efforts of Arthur St. Clair to evict him. Connolly had partisans, even after he had been driven from the place. He had married the daughter of Samuel Semple, keeper of the tavern where Washington had lodged, and had allied himself with various of the leading men. The Revolution interfered with some of his schemes and urged him to others, and in these latter many of the men resident at Pittsburgh were more or less involved. Even after the Revolution there remained many prejudices traceable to the troubles of that time.

Afterward came the Whiskey Insurrection, with its equally puzzling alignments and the deep scars left by the injustices of the arrests on what was ever after known as the "Dreadful Night." This had sharply divided sentiment, and especially between the town and the country. During the short reign of Alexander Hamilton in the town and the longer stay of Daniel Morgan, the families who could claim any political or family alliances to them had made the most of these, and ever after plumed themselves upon the social exchanges of that short period as might those who have entertained royalty.

When Mrs. Dewees was in Pittsburgh in the fall of 1787, she was entertained by the O'Haras and Tiltons. She especially admired the house

of another lady whom she visited, Mrs. Butler; she says she saw a very "handsome parlour, elegantly papered and well furnished, it appeared more like Philadelphia than any I have seen since I left that place." She admired the O'Hara summerhouse, on the banks of the Allegheny. She took tea also with two French ladies at their homes, Mrs. Audrain (she spells it Odderong) and another whom from the peculiar spelling it is impossible to identify.

William Tilton was one of those who assisted in forming the first lodge of Masons (or rather in reforming it from the old lodge started at the fort by British officers during the war against the French) and was a man of refinement and culture. He did not remain in Pittsburgh many years. Of the O'Hara's we shall hear more as we follow Tarleton's fortunes.

MAJOR ISAAC CRAIG

Major Craig with whom Tarleton was still living at the time his brother passed through the town, had married Amelia Neville, and this had brought him into the "Neville Connection," a close corporation celebrated adversely by the Brackenridges, father and son, and conversely by the son of Major Craig, in a series of books and newspaper articles continued well into the nineteenth century. General John Neville, Amelia's father, had been commandant of Fort Pitt under the Virginia regime just before and during the first year or so of the Revolution. He had acquired land near the town, and after the Revolution he settled on it. Here, in consequence of his appointment as an excise officer, occurred the first overt act of the so-called insurrection. His son, Presley Neville, lived in the town, though he had a country house near his father's farm. He was a general favorite in Pittsburgh, much more popular it would seem than his father. He had had educational advantages which were not common at that day, and set the pace socially for the locality. He was not so conspicuous for business ability. He had married the daughter of Daniel Morgan, who from humble beginnings had risen to high rank in the Revolutionary army and who was in command in the vicinity during the whiskey troubles, remaining there long after all insurrectionary symptoms had subsided, and using tact and courage in dealing with a delicate situation. Mrs. Presley Neville was not robust, and devoted herself chiefly to the care of her family, but as her children came on to

maturity, their beauty and brilliancy assisted in maintaining any pretensions the connection wished to perpetuate.

As clerk to Major Craig, Tarleton's position was that of a subordinate, while as a resident in the household, his intimacy with them was that of an elder brother. All would have been well, had he been, like them, of the Federalist party. For that was the politics, indeed almost the religion of the social leaders of Pittsburgh, and more and more they were using what measures they could to shut out from social equality all who differed with them on this important point. The surrounding country was strongly Republican, and the Federalists were making desperate efforts to hold the town in line by every species of ostracism and every show of favoritism, social and political, that ingenuity could suggest.

Tarleton came from one of the most aristocratic sections of Virginia. His family was allied by marriage with the Randolphs, the Woodsons, the Flemings, the Hatchers, the Tarletons, the Pleasants. They were intimate with Carters and Careys and Logans; in short, he was a "Tuckahoe," and bowed the knee to none. To him the Nevilles, the Kirkpatricks, the Daniel Morgans were nothing more than the "Cohes," and their pretensions merely vulgar self-approval. At the same time, while they were priding themselves on their conservativeness, their federalism, he had caught from Jefferson (who was kin to his mother's family) and the other liberal leaders of his community the advanced doctrines of democracy. There, class distinctions had come to be ignored as a remnant of social superstition; it had become aristocratic to be democratic, exclusive to be familiar.

Tarleton was slowly beginning to realize that with his beliefs he could never feel thoroughly at home in the society into which his situation had forced him, and he was becoming convinced that the friends he had so far made in Pittsburgh would not accept him unreservedly while he clung to his democratic creeds.

In this dilemma, his acquaintance with the Wilkins family was a real joy. Although accepted unhesitatingly by the narrow set that was attempting to control the social and political future of the town, the Wilkins family was tolerant of the opinions of others, and drew its own social lines less strictly than did some of its friends. The measure of the senior John Wilkins' breadth of view may be gauged by the fact that in Carlisle, his former home, when he had been confronted with the task

of choosing between the two branches of Presbyterianism (then known as the Auld Lights and the New, just as they are still called in Scotland) he subscribed to both, continuing the same tolerant course in his later residence in Bedford. The son, John Wilkins, Jr., now the head of Tarleton's department, was an object of admiration to the younger man. It was with the greatest confidence that he saw his brother Frederick depart for the new post, surrounded by the safeguard of Wilkins' and Ernest's friendship and patronage.

For himself, he had some friends already among the young officers who were constantly passing from one post to another, who would be the messengers between him and his brother. He was as is indicated by later letters getting some foothold with families more congenial in political opinions than the Craigs and Nevilles, although to the day of his death these first attachments were to guide his destiny. The Scotts had a friendly daughter, and he and she seem to have formed a platonic alliance. Dr. Scott was an old Legionary officer, and had lately set up as a physician and apothecary in Pittsburgh. He was a strong Democrat, and was later to reap the reward of his allegiance. Socially he was a friend of the Butler family and of others of the leaders of Pittsburgh. In a letter to Wayne at Detroit in October, 1796, Col. Thomas Butler, their commandant at Fort Fayette, recommends getting medicines for the army from Dr. Scott at Pittsburgh.

FREDERICK EN ROUTE TO DETROIT

By October 21, 1797, Frederick had gone as far as Presque Isle, for he writes to his father from the house of Mr. Sydnor, "in the garrison" there. He praises the friendly attentions of Sydnor. There were two families there in 1795, those of Colonel Seth Reed and Thomas Rees, but as the country was rapidly filling up, there may have been quite a settlement there two years later when Frederick was awaiting the "Detroit." James Baird was the first purchaser under the new grant, one historian states. It was at Presque Isle, while on a journey to the bride awaiting him in New Jersey, that General Wayne died, on December 15, 1796. He was buried inside the stockade at the foot of the flagpole. A Democrat like Frederick would be likely to refer to this stockade fort as "the Garrison." His party did not believe in standing armies, nor in high-sounding military terms. Frederick describes to his

father the beauty of his journey through the mountains from Belmont to Pittsburgh. "On Sunday eve after my departure I found myself at the house of Major Hand in the Blue Ridge and dined in Winchester on the succeeding day" . . . "stayed a day to hear pleadings in the District Court . . ." The accommodations on the Allegheny were for the most part very good, but he could not say the same for the trip through from Pittsburgh to Presque Isle. He slept by fire on a saddle blanket in his greatcoat—"one night by the side of two Indians." This last was almost as unusual an adventure to Frederick as it would be to a modern boy of his age, as Indians had become a rarity in the well-settled communities around Richmond.

He says that he may go to Fort Erie to get passage, as there is a better chance there. This was true, as other travelers testify. Fort Erie, the British port on the other side of the lake, was a much larger place, and more sailing vessels touched there than at the lonely post at Presque Isle. He has noted the cranberries on the peninsula near the garrison, as did so many of the early travelers, and he also reminds his father that he informed him from Pittsburgh that his leg is well. The letter from Pittsburgh to which he refers is unfortunately lost.

In the meantime, Tarleton has written to his sister Sally to console with her in a matter that might appropriately awaken his sympathies. "[I am] pained to understand by our brother on what footing you are with Father." No explanation of this has been found, and Sally was not long at variance with her parent, but it serves as an illustration of the fact that boys and girls were a little difficult to deal with in the past, as in the present.

On Christmas Day, Tarleton sends hearty greetings to his brother "among your Galli-American Fair at Detroit." He mentions a "soiree" given by the ladies of Pittsburgh at which there were thirty-one ladies and nearly forty gentlemen, proving that it was still the gay place that Mrs. Dewees had dubbed it. He had written on June 19 that three princes of the House of Bourbon, Louis Philippe and his brothers, were in Pittsburgh, on their way to the falls of the Ohio. He writes in this letter that they are still in town, so they must have been there at the same time that Frederick was. They evidently made Pittsburgh their headquarters, lodging with their old friend Chevalier Dubac, who, in despite of his rank, kept a humble store in the town, although it has become

the custom for all of the older families to claim that the three princes lodged with their ancestors, so it is a little hard to give the facts in the matter. From this location, they made excursions into the surrounding country. They had all the thrills that Frederick experienced in a trip to Presque Isle, and from there they went to Canandaigua and thence on foot seventy miles by Indian trail to Elmira, and back to Harrisburg by water. It was a good lesson in perseverance for the young princes, as for the young Virginian, and bore fruit in the future for Frederick and Louis, at least.

The last paragraph of Tarleton's letter reads: "I have just circumnavigated a fair 'heaven-defended citadel,' but have not yet made a formal summons of surrender. But I am resolved to accept of none but" [and here of course interferes that familiar break which the seal so often makes in old letters, leaving only the words] "at discretion. Business conspires with laziness in bidding me say, Adieu, my dearest Brother."

At nine o'clock, on January 12 of the new year, he writes that he has received his brother's letter, and the express will soon start for "your post." The horse that Frederick rode from Belmont he has sold for "nine months, for eighty dollars." Frederick has written that he wants to study law. Tarleton is somewhat scornful of the lawyers at Pittsburgh. He takes occasion to note in one of them, a pupil of Hugh Henry Brackenridge, the characteristics of the master as he had perhaps received them from Major Craig. He later changed his views.

On February 1, 1798, Tarleton discussed Sydnor's difference with "Bissell." These two gentlemen had evidently whiled away the winter months by a series of misunderstandings, which may have been necessary to vary the monotony of life at a place so remote from the world as was Presque Isle. There were two officers named Bissell in the army, but as Captain Russell Bissell was at Presque Isle at the time of Wayne's death, it is likely that Sydnor's fellow-sufferer was this officer. He was from Connecticut, and attained the rank of major before his death in 1803. The Yankee and the Virginian probably differed on many points, and even Tarleton, who was inclined to like Sydnor, once referred to him as "more specious than solid." Sydnor had the best of it, at that, for the same letter records that he is "married to James Baird's sister at Presque Isle"; from then on Sydnor would be sure of one partisan, and an enthusiastic one! Tarleton refers to another mutual acquaintance,

"Ensign David Thompson, than whom there is not a more agreeable, well-disposed, nor honester soul in the army."

Poor David Thompson! He died at Fort Fayette two years later on the first day of September, "after [to quote the notice in the *Pittsburgh Gazette* of September 7, 1799] a painful and tedious illness, which he bore with unexampled fortitude. The vast assemblage of citizens that attended his funeral, evinced the general esteem in which he was held. The brethren of Lodge Number 45 bestowed upon his remains the honors of Masonry and the Garrison the honors of War." He was from Virginia, and had fought with the Legion at Fallen Timbers. As paymaster, he was often called upon to carry letters for the Bates boys between Detroit and Pittsburgh.

AFFAIRS OF THE HEART

On February 19, Tarleton was quite excited over the prospects of war with France or Spain, carrying with it a particularly to be dreaded alliance with England. He can "in nowise account for the silence of Fleming. Father, as I have before written you, is highly offended, but whether with us, or only with me, I cannot tell." After inquiring whether his brother has yet fallen in love with any of the handsome girls at Detroit, he becomes more specific as to the "heaven-defended citadel" mentioned in his Christmas letter.

"I have for sometime visited a little girl who is not very handsome, she is little improved, has seen no company, is too short to be graceful, but is worth (without depending on caprice) at least \$8,000. Under these circumstances I have found her agreeable. But I love another (who I am pretty certain I could never obtain) and you will doubtless smile when I add that this other (though uniting everything that is lovely and fascinating in her sex) is only twelve years old."

From this rather startling confidence he descends to commonplace, and a half-promise to send his brother a couple of shirts, which may be cheaper than any he can get in Detroit.

It is fortunate for the understanding of the later events of Tarleton's life story that this letter survived, for in it are hints of all the complications which were to determine his fate. Without this letter it would be difficult to account for the series of events that led to tragedy.

The description of the little girl whom he had for some time visited, is

probably not as flattering as another would have given. It is that of a lover who does not wish to say too much for fear of ridicule. She was not a beauty, and among his friends, not to be in love with a reigning belle signified something lacking in the lover. So he endeavors to ascribe his admiration for a moderately good-looking girl, whom he later confesses that he really loved, to a desire for her fortune. Undoubtedly, with youthful indiscretion, he confided the same sentiments regarding her to other ears than those of his brother; or his brother may have read the letter to one of his friends. Both boys were very young, and to take a light view of love would seem to them to indicate extreme sophistication. Indications that in some way this estimate of Tarleton's reached the friends of the girl, and that she herself finally heard of it, are too plain to be doubted.

As to his love for the little girl of twelve, this also indicated a contradiction in his nature. Fearful that his brother will penetrate the disguise of his cynical words, and truly think him in love with the first girl he has so unflatteringly described, he pushes forward another image, that of their oft-talked of ideal, a beautiful, fascinating maiden, but — only twelve years old. Thus is forestalled any inquiry from his brother as to why he hesitates for a moment between them; the lovely ideal is too young. Consequently, he can amuse himself with the other lady without censure, and his worldly and blasé mask be worn to the admiration of sophisticates—she is *rich*.

In a few days all romantic thoughts are driven from his head if not from his heart. He has received a letter from Fleming the sense of which he immediately transmits to Frederick. Their father's affairs have reached a crisis. His creditors have waited with a great deal of patience, and now find the prospect of payment no better than it was years ago. There are mortgages and debts of which till now the family had known nothing. Fleming fears the whole estate will far from pay them. Tarleton is heartbroken for his mother and sisters. He proposes that he and Frederick make up between them a hundred dollars a year, while they continue single, to educate James and Edward. One ray of light penetrates the darkness, Fleming has been made postmaster at Hanover Court House, so they need no longer pay postage. This seems a small matter now, but not when we reflect that did they write as often to each other and to their family as they would naturally wish, they would

soon use up the pitiful sum that they were so laboriously to lay aside for the education of the younger brothers.

Even with this calamitous news to impart, Tarleton does not lose sight of political affairs. These are more vital to him than love or family fortunes. He remarks, apropos of the construction of two "gallies" that have been ordered built at Pittsburgh for the Mississippi, that Frederick can ponder on how constitutional it is to form a navy by executive authority only.

By the next letter to Frederick from Tarleton, Frederick's response to the letter about the love affair, or affairs, can be guessed. He has evidently congratulated his brother, for Tarleton warns him not to go too fast in his surmises. Tarleton is a little subdued, he confesses that he cannot discover the smallest predilection in his favor, but he has filed a declaration and will let Frederick know what the results may be.

He gives some more details of the maiden's situation, but he does not give her name. Her mother and father are dead, and she has only an old stepmother to befriend her. He admits that when he wrote of her first he was scarcely serious, but now he is all devotion.

Frederick has probably written how much he differs from Captain Ernest in political sentiments. Frederick is keeping a journal, and Tarleton is eager to see it. [Unfortunately this journal has been lost sight of—perhaps it was never kept beyond the first few months of homesickness]. Tarleton gives some intimation of his own isolation as to politics in Pittsburgh, and he has evidently not yet been in touch with many who believe as he does. There is a reference to Bond, and to Audrain, names which will again appear in the letters and lives of the brothers. Tarleton rather chides the Americans in Detroit for a list of grievances that they have laid before Congress, among them their exclusion from the public assemblies. He calls this a ludicrous and mortifying confession, "that no one will keep company with them."

Again, in a postscript, he promises the shirts, to be sent with a book his brother has asked for. Captain Ernest, who no doubt brought Frederick's letter to Tarleton, is on his way to Washington. Tarleton sends his respects to Ensign David Thompson, and closes with a few lines in French, obviously designed to pique his younger brother to an attempt at conquering that language.

On March 18 he writes again. He discusses at length the chances of France invading England. Then, "excuse my bombast, I've nothing else to give you. . . . I send you two shirts (8\$), 1 pair stockings (3½\$) via Presque Isle. If you do not want them, they are worth their cost." It was thus they then used the dollar sign, after instead of before the figures.

Eight days later he returns to the love affair. A reference to a melancholy accident on the Ohio, the death of "Mr. Sawyer, of Detroit," sets him off in a train of thought for which he thinks some explanation necessary: "What stupidity to cling as we do to this wretched plank when the enjoyment is as uncertain as miserable; as miserable as false; and as false as hell itself. From this you might well believe that I was some slighted, love-sick swain, just about taking the leap of oblivion. But it is no such thing although my Dulcinea may have sprinkled a little cold water upon my feverish soul. I have ever had a strong antipathy to precipices, pistols, daggers, ropes, and all those horrid messengers of the great King's (Death). Neither am I absolutely certain that I shall apply to Justice Laudanum for redress, although I have the greatest confidence in his eminent abilities and all-leveling justice. . . . The sweet little girl whom I adore returned after an absence of one week, instead of five. I believe I should say I *will* not be married, did I not fear you would think *Sour Grapes*. . . . Nothing from Virginia, no, not even from Hanover Court House."

On April 25 he is still complaining of the absence of letters from home. He is discouraged by the coldness of Charles and their father. At this time, when he most needed his family, they were silent.

Soon after this, Captain Ernest reached Pittsburgh on his way back to Detroit from Washington. He urged Tarleton to write to his brother. Only Ernest could realize how forlorn was Frederick's situation. It is too soon after the sending of his last letter for Tarleton to have acquired an extra store of news, so he dates it "St. Tamminy" [May 1] and sends only a greeting.

On the fourteenth he makes further confession as to his romance: "I had no idea I was so imprisoned until I was informed I need not hope. You will smile when I say I tasted nothing but apples for fifty-two hours." A strange cure for love, and so it seemed to one of Tarleton's friends, and to him are to be credited some philosophic reflections on this means of recovery.

There is a reference to the galley, for he well knew that news of it would be welcome in Detroit: "The General Commander-in-Chief is all impatience that it may be about this time (10th or 15th inst.) escorted by *him* to the Mississippi." Tarleton is still taking the shade of his opinions on this affair from Major Craig; there were others than Wilkinson who yearned to take that important galley down the river! "I have once seen but have no acquaintance with E. Wallen," he says in answer to an inquiry of his brother's. Then, "I got no papers this week, I have cab-baged one for you." And in a "P.S." he again reverts to the French: "Je suis tres-malheureuse [*sic*] depuis ma traverse," then lest his brother be not yet familiar enough with the language to get the meaning, "for disappointed I really am."

The Elias Wallen about whom Frederick has inquired was an important figure in early Detroit. What office he held in 1798 is not so easy to determine, but he was the first poundmaster, the first marshal and the first sheriff of Detroit and Wayne County, combining with these the office of collector of the territorial taxes. When he came after the taxes, he needed to take no other officer with him be they real estate or dog taxes that he had in mind.

PITTSBURGH AND POINTS WEST

The letters of both brothers must have been sprinkled with these inquiries about people known to one or the other. These questions show the close relations among the points on the Western Waters. Everyone of influence in Cincinnati, Lexington, St. Louis, Pittsburgh, and Detroit knew everyone else; most of them were continually traveling up and down the rivers and were often in Pittsburgh. The army officers were stationed in each of the different localities long enough to become well acquainted with the principal settlers of each town. The exchange of gossip was more intimate and the social contacts more frequent than between much more closely neighboring cities today.

There is another long letter from Tarleton on May 23. It is well to remember that postage was seldom paid on these letters. They were carried by the writers' friends of the army, or by a postrider sent through with dispatches; often by Indian runners, or by boat. In 1790, General Harmar sent letters from Cincinnati to Danville, Kentucky, thence to Richmond, Virginia, and thence to Philadelphia, to avoid "sending up to Fort Pitt against the stream."

Tarleton refers again to his love affair, is "empassioned, but need not hope." He has had Frederick's letter and is glad he received the shirts. The book, Swift's *Treatise*, he has not yet procured. Frederick must have described a French custom of wearing ruffles that show bravely though there is no shirt attached to them; Tarleton hopes Frederick will never be reduced to such a strategy, and urges him not to neglect his appearance. He is quite concerned because his brother has caught the British fashion of referring to "the States" (leaving out the "United"). He also discusses the dreaded war with France, and the, to him, equally dreaded alliance with Great Britain. He announces the launching of the first galley. General Wilkinson is to go down the Mississippi with it. In case of war, it is expected that the Mississippi will be the scene of action.

Tarleton gives some more advice; he warns his brother against drinking to excess or gambling, but sees no harm in his using tobacco. Since this means the chewing of the weed, we should be properly shocked; later, Frederick was!

He further assures his younger brother (he was himself at the mature age of twenty-three) that assiduity and attention to business promise wealth in due time. Then he turns to answer some questions which Frederick has insisted upon.

"I could and in my last I believe I did tell you the name of the sweet little girl, Betsey Murphy, who to me is heaven and might be more, did she not frown, for frown she did, and does and will I fear continue so to do. I was quite parched with love before I scarcely thought it, and yet she is not handsome nor accomplished. But she is rich and lovely.

'Yet ask me where these beauties lie,
I cannot say in smile or dimple,
In blooming cheek or radiant eye,
'Tis happy nature, wild and simple.'

She said she would not love me but she would give me all she had to give (for heart she had not, but in this she jested, for I well *know* that she had one at least and believe that she had *another*, locked in a case of adamant), *her well wishes!!!* How kind, how condescending this, and yet how little substantial happiness or pleasure or whatever else you please to call it, did those well wishes give. I could in one short hour extract more real bliss from her angelic lips than the fee simple of those empty wishes e'er could give. . . ."

This little Irish girl must have had a charm independent of looks or

intellect, in which attributes he had thought her at first deficient, for she was certainly enmeshing his fancy more and more.

The only mention of the "Belmont family," as he so loved to call them, is of Richard, from whom one of them had probably lately received a letter—"Richard is a clever child."

TARLETON DISAPPOINTED IN LOVE

On June 7, Tarleton begs Frederick not to worry about his indebtedness on the note Frederick had insisted on giving him to cover the amount advanced to him at the time of his departure from Goochland. "You say I never told you the name of my 'fair mistress'.⁵ It was Betsey Murphy, whose name has not changed, but whose divinity has vanished. I adored but she frowned me into reason and indifference. You may remember, I informed you of her country jaunt when she crowded six weeks into one by returning five weeks sooner than [here occurs one of those exasperating torn places—a guess is that 'her friend' in teasing her before Tarleton, said] 'There were three objects in Pittsburgh, one of which she most frequently named as well in her sleep as waking, and that one was Mr. Bates.' Although I had since then received her dismissal, I will acknowledge that the tenderness in my bosom was rekindled when on asking Miss Betsey if I must believe Miss Scott's relation; she replied that she had no recollection of such things having been *spoken*, but *if* she had said them *in her sleep* they must be true. I sincerely loved Betsey Murphy, though she is neither handsome nor accomplished. I wrote her some letters but she deigned not to answer and when I went to the house would rather avoid me. This I could not bear; with some fortitude, a little pride and not a little counter-balancing influence, I have divested myself of her chains. This c.i. (counter-balancing influence) is the same little angel of twelve I formerly mentioned. She is well-grown, tall, genteel, strait as nature could have formed her. The smiles of Venus, the majesty of Juno, the serenity of Minerva, in short every charm, every grace, every fascination that my mind can possibly conceive." This is appropriately signed, "Yours devoutly."

This letter was carried through the wilderness (via Cincinnati, Fort Washington, or else across the lakes according to the route chosen) by Lieutenant Jesse Lukens, whose home was near Pittsburgh.

One phrase in the letter, "and when I went to the house [she] would

rather avoid me," is puzzling till the circumstances are better known. The persistence of Tarleton in going to a house where he may not have been welcome is explained when a study of the local history reveals that the house meant is "The Sign of the General Butler," an inn much frequented at this time by the leaders of the Democratic-Republican party. This inn had attached to it a certain historic fame, connected with the Whiskey Insurrection. During the stay there of the commissioners to negotiate with the insurgents, a mob had erected a liberty pole in front of it to signify their dissatisfaction with the excise tax. The original owner of the tavern, Patrick Murphy, was then alive. His tombstone records the year of his death as 1797, and that he was a "respectable citizen of the town." This would indicate that he was a man of worth. His wife, Molly, who succeeded him in the management of the inn, was an excellent business woman, and of great goodness of heart, but she could neither read nor write. The daughter, Betsey, is supposed by one chronicler to have been an adopted daughter of Patrick and Molly, but from Tarleton's reference to her stepmother and other circumstances it is not hard to believe that she was the daughter of Patrick and his first wife, who was probably a much more refined type than his second. That on the death of Betsey's mother her father should have married the first goodhearted and capable woman he could find would have been quite in keeping with other stories of that day. The position of innkeeper was sometimes one of great social prominence, and it is evident that in spite of her ignorance of letters, Molly inherited to a certain extent the position of her husband, a position which she maintained by her own shrewdness and worth. The daughter was a friend of Miss Scott, whose father had an apothecary shop in the same block as the inn. As many of the families of Pittsburgh lived over the stores or trading-places of their owners, they were near neighbors.

Tarleton had great belief in his powers of composition, as will be indicated later. He inclined to flowery language and classical allusions. This may have been the reason that his letters to Betsey were unanswered; not alone were they over her head, but she perhaps felt that in writing them in such a vein he showed a lack of that sincerity which she already had reason to doubt.

That he should have failed in this suit may have been a most unfortunate thing for his future. Betsey Murphy evidently possessed all the

qualities that would have effectively supplemented his romanticism, and with good sense, she might have guided him along paths that would have led him to power. Her wealth would have been just the help he most needed at the time. But had there remained in his heart any of the reservations so freely expressed to his brother, the union would have been a source of unhappiness to both of them. His pride might never have recovered from the acceptance of a fortune with a wife, and she might never have been free from a suspicion that her heirship had been a deciding factor.

As for the counterbalancing influence, just how strongly that may have affected him, he himself could hardly have gauged. A very great delight in the society of children was characteristic of the Bates family. During his residence with Major Craig, amid the growing family of his employer, he was a prime favorite. Their little cousins, the children of Presley Neville, were thrown into his company very early, as they lived near, and he would naturally have often been included in their family parties. The beauty of the Neville girls was striking, and Emily, perhaps the fairest and most brilliant of them all, might find in the society of the handsome and pleasant young Virginian a delightful companionship, shared by her brothers and her cousins. Girls were allowed to become young ladies very early then; many of them were married at fifteen. There is reason to believe that Emily Neville was the "little angel of twelve" formerly mentioned to Frederick, and enthusiastically described in this letter. Her influence was to counterbalance all other things in life for him, and his love for her to lead him along paths that the affection he had felt for Betsey Murphy would never have betrayed him into following.

Betsey Murphy married a man who must have been a fascinating companion if not a very sedate husband, and her daughter and grandchild inherited the fortune of the illiterate old stepmother after Betsey's money had been lost in various ventures. She has numerous descendants in modern Pittsburgh, who remember their great-grandfather's foreign rank and have probably never heard of their great-grandmother's romantic history, if they even know her name.

[To be continued]