

FOOTNOTES TO WESTERN PENNSYLVANIA HISTORY

1757-1957

*Some fragments from the archives in honor of the 200th anniversary
of the birth of the Marquis de La Fayette*

Marie Jean Paul Roch Yves Gilbert Motier, Marquis de La Fayette (1757-1834), was born at the Chateau of Chavagniac in Auvergne, France, September 6, 1757.

In 1825 Honored Guest of the United States

City Rivalry for the Honored Guest

Letter sent to:

Miss Mary Davis
Care of Mr. John Davis
Water Street
Pittsburgh, Pa.

Cincinnati 18 May 1825

Dear Sister,

Your esteemed letter came to hand 2 or 3 days since. I am gratified to hear you are all well. Agreeably to your request I called at Mrs. Dubary's store for the *Braid*. She has none of the colour of the sample enclosed in your letter. It is all a shade or two lighter. Mrs. Dubary thought it would not suit for hair the colour of yours enclosed. Should I be able to obtain any of the description you require I will send you some—All is bustle here. Gen. Lafayette will arrive tomorrow Great preparations are making for his reception—The most splendid Ball ever given on this side the mountains will be given in honour of the General. The Ball room is decorated in handsome style by a number of patriotic young ladies who volunteered their services for the occasion. You must know that our place stands unrivaled in the quest for "Beauty and fashion and taste." About 600 persons are invited. No doubt but the room will be full to overflowing. Give my respects to all friends. I saw Maria McNair on her way home, but only for a few minutes. I presume all is preparation in Pittsburg in anticipation of Gen. Lafayette's arrival. He will be received by the Military and a deputation from the Citizens and conducted to his quarters in a *Barouche*—a procession will be formed and conduct the general to a suitable place where an address will be delivered to him, etc. He will also visit the *Museum* which will be illuminated—(where or in what

part of your place will he look for a musium) Grand fire works will be exhibited, etc., etc. too tedious to innumerate.

Give my love to my Father, Mother,
Brothers, and Sisters
Yours affectionately
G M C

Mary Davis

Lafayette Visits Pittsburgh May 31-June 1, 1825

From *The Pittsburgh Gazette*, Friday Morning June 3, 1825

The progress of the General through the city to his lodgings, was marked with abundant manifestations of the hearty welcome with which he was received. The streets through which he passed, were filled to overflowing, as also were the doors, windows, and every place where a view could be obtained. Every countenance beamed with pleasure, and every eye sparkled with delight. It was the grateful homage of a free people, flowing from the heart, towards the early, distinguished, and unwearied champion of freedom.

From *The Pittsburgh Gazette*, Friday Morning, June 3, 1825.

ADDRESS OF WELCOME

By the Hon. Charles Shaler, President Judge of the Allegheny County Courts, on behalf of the citizens of Pittsburgh.

General Lafayette,

Having been requested by my fellow citizens to congratulate you on your arrival amongst us, and to express the high sense they entertain of your distinguished and disinterested services; in accordance with the duty devolved upon me, I feel a peculiar happiness in presenting you with their felicitations, and bidding you a cordial welcome to the City of Pittsburgh.

* * * * *

If anything could serve or strengthen the deep sympathies of the present moment; if any thing could serve to heighten the tone of feeling which your presence, aided by our recollections of your pre-eminent services, excites in our bosoms, it would be that the ground on which we now stand, owes its first traces of civilization to French adventure and enterprise; that we can still point to the venerable remains of a fortress, over whose battlement the standard of France once waved in triumph; to fields which recall the traditional tale of French valor

and which have been consecrated to glory by French blood.

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General Lafayette's Answer to the Address delivered in
behalf of the citizens of Pittsburgh

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This city, sir, owing to the felicity of its peculiar situation, had been a conspicuous spot, early in the times when American colonies were but instruments to the selfish and ambitious passions of their respective European governments, in nothing so conspicuous as when, in the vicinity of this place, an opportunity was offered to a young militia volunteer, to display that happy mixture of superior judgment and undaunted valor, which was afterward so providentially evinced in the commander in chief of our revolutionary army. So, in the very time of the revolution, Pittsburgh has proved very interesting to us as a military post, nor can I recall those transactions, without gratefully remembering that my name has been associated with its military existence as a fort; but mark what has since happened; independence, freedom, equal rights, added to its local advantages, have at once made it a wonder of industry, prosperity, manufacturing creations, and improvements; and this, even when compared with the wonders of every kind, which have marked the progress of these happy United States.

Accept, sir, in behalf of the citizens of Pittsburgh, my ardent and patriotic wishes for the continued and ever-increasing blessings which I am delighted to witness, and my affectionate and respectful acknowledgements.

The General Acknowledges Some Bakewell Glass

Pittsburgh May 31st 1825

Gentlemen

The patriotic gratification I have felt at the sight of your beautiful manufacture is still enhanced by the friendly reception I have met from you and by the most acceptable present you are pleased to offer me. Accept my affectionate thanks, good wishes, and regards.

Lafayette

Messrs. Bakewell Page and Bakewell

(Photostat)