

# Poughkeepsie Journal ~ September 23, 1824

## Report on the Public Reception of Lafayette in Poughkeepsie

### THE JOURNAL.

WEDNESDAY SEPTEMBER 23, 1824.

#### RECEPTION OF GEN. LA FAYETTE.

Intelligence having gone abroad that the National Guest was to arrive here on Wednesday morning of last week, the night preceding was one of unusual bustle and noise. During the whole night the citizens of the county, in carriages and on horseback were flocking in by hundreds, so that by day light on Wednesday morning the village was crowded with people, all anxious to see and welcome the man to whom we are so largely indebted.— They soon learned that the General had been unexpectedly detained in New York, and that he would not arrive here till the next morning. Many of them murmured at this disappointment, but the greater number put the best face upon it. During the day pains were taken to spread the information through the county that he might certainly be expected on Thursday morning. Wednesday night like its predecessor, was also a night of bustle and busy preparation. Carriages bearing to town the expectant inhabitants, could be heard rumbling through our streets at every hour of the night. At three o'clock the drum beat, and the shrill notes of the bugle echoed the call to arms. The military companies which had assembled for the occasion, consisting of the uniform companies belonging to the 7th division, commanded by Maj. Gen. Brush, were soon paraded, and some time before the dawn of day, they had taken their position on the commanding heights a little south of the Steam Boat landing. During these proceedings, news was brought up into the village, that the anxiously expected Steam Boat, with the General and his suit on board, had arrived and anchored in the stream, opposite the lower part of the town. Immediately the streets leading to the steam boat landing, were thronged with all ages and sexes, every one pressing forward, eager to gain a favourable position to see the General on his first appearance, and to welcome his arrival.

Soon after sunrise the Steam boat got under way, beautifully decorated with the flags of various nations, and took a turn up the river, while a salute was fired by the troops stationed on the heights. The General's appearance upon deck, was hailed by the loud and repeated cheers of the thousands who covered the shore and surrounding heights, which were returned on board the boat.

Immediately after firing the salute the troops left the heights, and repaired to the wharf to receive the General on his landing. By the time they had gained the positions respectively assigned them, the boat had arrived at the wharf. The General was then conducted on shore by the Committee of Arrangements, who introduced him to Gen. Brush, as first officer of the day, and then conducted him to an elegant brouche, drawn by four beautiful white horses, which had been provided for his reception. Gen. Lewis was seated by his side, while Gen. Van Courtlandt and Gen. Fish occupied the remaining seats in the carriage.

The escort then took up the line of march in the following order—

Capt. Wekes' troop of Horse—The Music—General Staff—Mounted Officers—Gen. La Fayette, seated as before described, with six officers in uniform on foot upon each side of his carriage. The General's Son and Col. Huger, with several other gentlemen of distinction, the Committee of Arrangements and delegations from Red Hook, Hudson, &c. &c. all seated in successive carriages, four in each. Next came the battalion of Troops under Col. Cunningham, formed in the following order. Music—Officers in uniform—Capt. Bird's Company of Artillery—Captain Skinner's Fusiliers—Captain Smith's Dutchess' Guards—Captain Doughty's Riflemen—the Sheriff and his deputies, and citizens under the direction of a field officer and two assistants.

Thus formed the procession moved up Main-street, to Academy-street, down Academy-street to Cannon street, down Cannon street to Market street, and drew up in front of Forbus' where the General was received by the Trustees, who conducted him to the spacious piazza in front of Mr. Forbus' house, which had been tastefully decorated for the occasion. Here he was introduced to the Clergy, and a number of our most aged and respectable citizens, after which he was addressed by Col. Henry A. Livington, as follows—

“GENERAL.—It is our happiness and honour to be deputed by the Corporation, and Citizens of the Town of Poughkeepsie, to hail the arrival of our illustrious guest, Major General LA FAYETTE.

Very few among us, can claim the merit of a personal acquaintance, but with your transcendent reputation, we are all familiar. In every elementary volume that treats of our revolutionary history, your name is recorded, a name too dear ever to be erased from our hearts.

At the gloomiest period that this country ever witnessed, when an invading power was most overwhelming, you flew to our succor; nor in all the vicissitudes of conflict, once sheathed your sabre, till you beheld the last hostile army lay its standards at your feet.

In this village the immortal Washington was frequently the guest of the venerable George Clinton. In this village that Constitution which is the palladium and pride of United America, was adopted by the Convention of New York, nor were the resplendent talents, and commanding eloquence, of a Hamilton, the wisdom of a Chancellor Livingston, or the sagacity of a Jay displayed in vain. To these prominent ones, permit us to add, as the apex the transactions of this memorable occasion.

The children who are mixed among this crowd, which now surround you, will exultingly tell their children that on this day, they beheld and blessed their country's benefactor and friend.

To this address the General made an appropriate and feeling reply, in the course of which he adverted to his former acquaintance with the village, and to the great and astonishing changes, which in common with our country generally, it had undergone. He also expressed in the kindest manner, his very great satisfaction at the manner of his reception here, and at the various other places which he had visited since his arrival in the United States.

The General was next introduced to a great number of ladies who had assembled in such numbers early in the morning, as literally to fill Mr. Forbus' house to overflowing. He was then escorted below, where the troops had been drawn up in a hollow square, with its points resting on Mr. Forbus' house. Here he was introduced to Brigadier Gen. Davies, who introduced him to the respective officers assembled, and then conducted him along in front of the whole line of troops. After this the General took a position in front of the lower piazza, where he received the citizens, who passed him in sections of four, those next to him being taken by him cordially by the hand.

This reception of the citizens having been completed, about 8 o'clock the General and his suit, the Trustees, Committee of Arrangements, &c. formed in procession and were escorted to Mr. Myer's Hotel, where an excellent breakfast had been provided. Two spacious rooms had been thrown open for the occasion, and fitted up and decorated in the most appropriate and splendid manner, by a number of the ladies of the village, who partaking largely of the general enthusiasm which the expected arrival of the National Guest had produced among all classes, volunteered to perform a labour for which their excellent taste so amply qualified them.

At the head of the principal table, immediately above the seat provided for the General, hung the venerated portrait of our good old political father, Washington, and at the opposite end, the grand banner of St. Tammany.—“On each side of the hall, at suitable distances, were suspended banners, with the arms, name and motto of each state in the union. Over the centre of the table, hung a canopy formed of festoons of flowers and evergreens of various kinds, belted by a ribbon, on which was inscribed the names of the thirteen states. Over the folding doors were the well known words “WELCOME LA FAYETTE,” made with great accuracy, wholly of pink coloured blossoms of china-aster, and on one of the walls, were inscribed in large letters, the names of WASHINGTON and LA FAYETTE, wrought in laurel leaves, and encircled in garlands of flowers. Directly in front of the General's seat stood a representation of the temple of Fame.”

The breakfast table was furnished in a style of superior splendor and magnificence.

At the General's right were placed the Reverend Clergy and on his left the trustees of the village. The opposite end of the table was occupied by Gen. Swartwout, a patriot and soldier of the revolution, who, though in his 93th year, still retains much of the vigour and activity of his youth. The General's suit, the delegations from Hudson, Albany, &c. military officers and aged citizens occupied the remaining seats at the table.

After breakfast had been served, the General was again conducted to his carriage, and the procession being again formed, the whole cavalcade returned to the steam boat wharf in the same order in which it came up into the village. Arrived at the wharf, the General was conducted on board the Steam Boat, when the whole line of troops marched

## Poughkeepsie Journal ~ September 23, 1824

### Report on the Public Reception of Lafayette in Poughkeepsie

past him, and again took post on the heights south of the wharf. As the boat got under way from the wharf, the citizens who had again assembled in immense numbers gave three huzzas that made the welkin ring. The boat took a turn down the river while a national salute was fired from the heights, which was followed by 24 volleys of musketry, and then resumed her course toward Albany.

The number of persons assembled on this occasion to manifest their respect and gratitude to this great national benefactor, was greater than we ever recollect to have seen in this village on any former occasion. And yet good order, sobriety and decorum were every where conspicuous. The extended cavalcade, as it ascended the hill from the river, occupying as it did, nearly the whole width of Main Street, from the river, quite past the court house—the windows of every house filled with well dressed females, testifying by their smiles and the waving of their handkerchiefs, their joy and gratitude in a manner, tho less boisterous, yet as sincerely, as did the multitude below by their joyous shouts and acclamations—presented alto-

On an occasion where all have acquitted themselves so well, it would be an invidious task to particularize. We cannot however forbear noticing the General Staff, who, with a number of other officers of the Division, were all richly dressed in full uniform and elegantly mounted, and made a most striking and officer-like appearance.

After Gen. La Fayette left Poughkeepsie on Thursday last, he called at Gen. Lewis's on his way up the river, and spent the ensuing night at the mansion of Robert L. Livingston, Esq. at Clermout, where a splendid Ball was held, and a most magnificent supper provided by Mr. Livingston. On Friday morning Gen. La Fayette and suit again took passage on board the James Kent, and proceeded up the river.— They called at Catskill where thousands of citizens had assembled to see the General. He went on shore, and being seated in an open carriage, proceeded through the principal streets, when he again embarked and proceeded up the river, his engagements to arrive at Albany, precluding his acceding to the earnest importunities of the citizens to stay and dine.

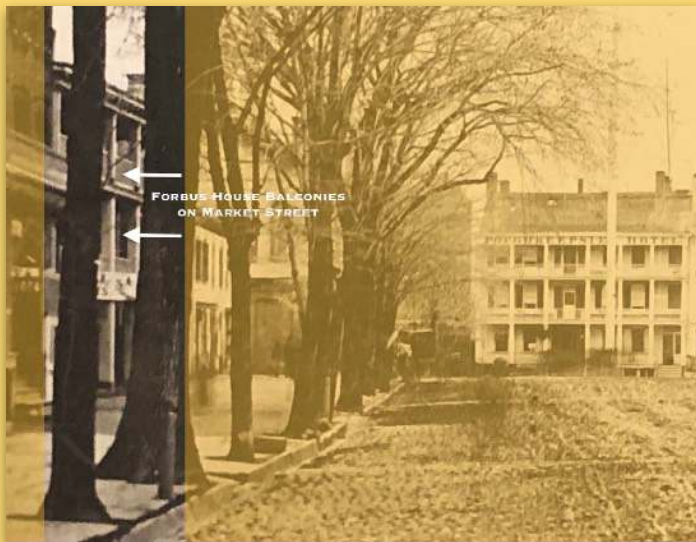
His reception at Hudson was cordial in the highest degree. The most splendid preparations had been made at this place; on landing he was escorted to the court room which had been beautifully decorated for the occasion, and after being introduced to the Civil authorities, military, and a great many inhabitants of both sexes, he was again escorted to the Steam Boat, his anxiety to reach Albany precluding, here as at Catskill, his acceptance of the pressing solicitations of the committee, to remain and partake of an excellent dinner which had been provided for him. Salutes were fired, both at the landing and departure of the general.

Having again embarked on board the boat, the General and his suit proceeded up the river, receiving on their way hearty cheers from the multitudes as-

sembled on the shores and heights, in the hope of obtaining a glimpse of the General as he passed.

Very extensive preparations had been made for the General's reception at Albany. The arrangement was to receive him on shore at the bar, three miles below the city, where a detachment of cavalry had been provided to escort him to the city. With all his anxiety to hasten his journey, the reception at Catskill and Hudson had consumed so much of the day, that night had set in before he reached the city. This no doubt rendered his entrance much less imposing, and less gratifying both to him and the good citizens of Albany than it otherwise would have been. In the evening he attended a ball in the assembly chamber, which had been tastefully and splendidly fitted up for the occasion. Saturday morning he visited Troy, by way of the canal, and returned to Albany in the afternoon. A little before midnight he again embarked on board the James Kent, and on his way down on Sunday, called on Mrs. Montgomery, with whom he spent a few hours, and then proceeded down the river, passed Poughkeepsie, about 5 o'clock in the afternoon and arrived at New York, early Monday morning.

He was to dine with his Masoojic Brethren on Mouday and in the course of yesterday or to-day, would set off for the south, taking the principal towns of New Jersey in his route, and arrive at Bristol, in Pennsylvania on Saturday or Sunday next.



The balconies references at the Forbus House can just barely be seen in this photograph.

The Poughkeepsie Hotel at photo center/center/right is sited where Market Street now continues north past Main Street, where it formerly terminated as this photo shows. DCHS Collections.