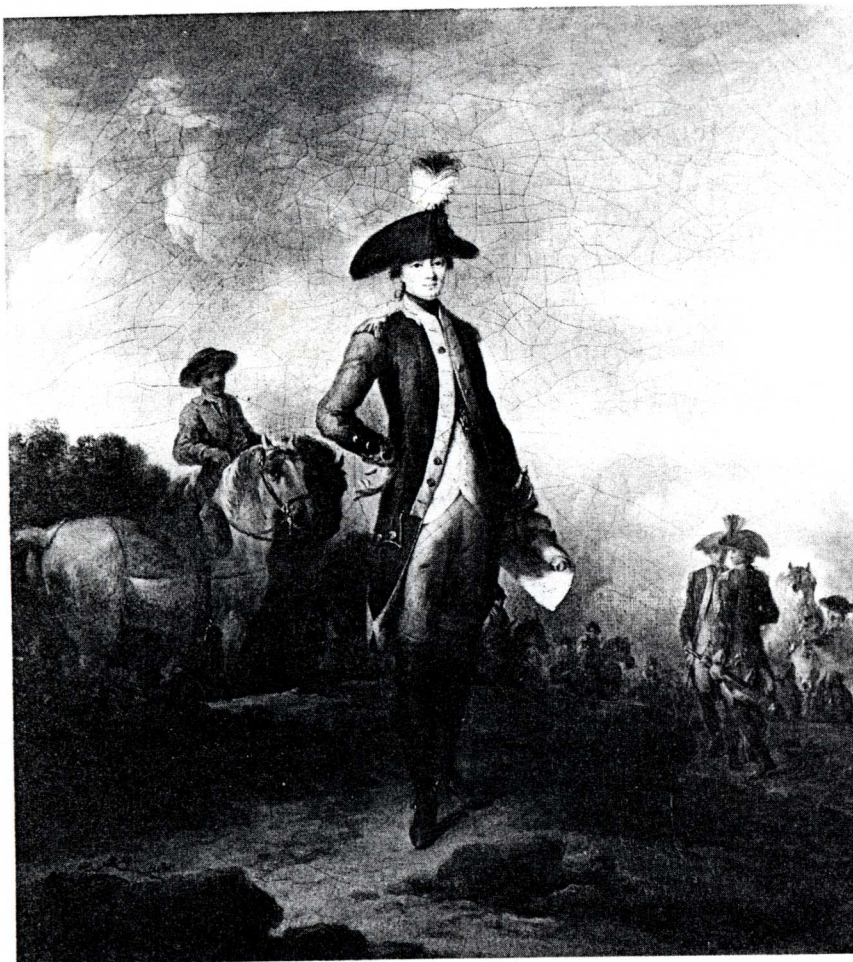


[Lafayette, Marie Joseph Paul Yves Roch
Gilbert du Motier, Marquis de, 1757-1



Lafayette, painted in commemoration of the Virginia campaign, ca. 1781-85

Lafayette in the Age of the American Revolution

SELECTED LETTERS AND PAPERS, 1776-1790

Volume II • April 10, 1778-March 20, 1780

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To Henry Laurens

Valley Forge Camp eight june 1778

Dear Sir

I had the honor of writing you yesterday my sentiments upon the new behaviour of Monsieur de Conway, toward you, and towards every body. You will be after this surpris'd that I write again in his favor. You would be more so had you seen the letter I receive from him.¹ But he is an officer in the french service, and much known by a friend of mine, and let him be mad with you, ungrateful with me, I schall try to be some what useful to him. However as it was impossible to adress myself to you, I desire Clel. Lee to mention my name in case that gentleman was spoken of in Congress.² I am very certain of not succeeding, but I will say at least that I did not neglect him.³ With the highest Regard I am Yours

THE MIS. DE LAFAYETTE

ALS (ScHi: Henry Laurens Papers). "Private" inscribed on the cover.

1. Letter not found.

2. On this date Lafayette wrote on Conway's behalf to Richard Henry Lee in essentially the same terms, adding that as the "warmest friend" and "the first admirer" of General Washington he did not feel prevented from speaking in Conway's favor (R. H. Lee, *Memoir of the Life of Richard Henry Lee and His Correspondence* [Philadelphia, 1825], 2:105).

3. Lafayette's efforts were fruitless. On June 13 Congress voted compensation and expenses in repayment of Conway's services (JCC, 11:624); Conway's last request for a "certificate of good services" was made to Congress on October 17, 1778; Gouverneur Morris reported to Washington with some satisfaction that he opposed the granting of the certificate and the request was tabled (Burnett, *Letters of Congress*, 3:465).

To Allen McLane

Valley Forge camp 12th june 1778

Dear Sir

I have Receiv'd your letter concerning the indians and am sorry to inform you that the greatest part of them is going home to oppose the *Senecas* whose intentions they do'nt trust upon.¹ However some stay with us, but his excellency wants to send them to Colonel *Morgan*. They may join you from there in some days.

I give you joy, sir, for your escape of the other day, and the clever-

ness with which you have dispatch'd the two english dragoons.² I have felt a great pleasure in hearing that your wound is a slight one. With the most sincere esteem and attachement I have the honor to be Dear Sir Your most obedient servant

THE MIS. DE LAFAYETTE

ALS (NHi: McLane Papers).

1. Letter not found. The Indians referred to were the fifty Oneidas who had come from New York to join the Continental army in May. They had been part of the Barren Hill detachment. See Memoir of 1779, above, p. 7. Lafayette felt a particular responsibility for them because he had recruited them. See Lafayette to Gansevoort, June 13, 1778.

2. Captain McLane had escaped a British ambush near Valley Forge on June 8.

To Lazare-Jean Théveneau de Francy^T

Valley Forge camp, June 12, 1778

I have received your letter of the ninth of this month,¹ sir, and I hasten to reply, while apologizing for having forgotten to tell you to whom you should turn for payment of my bill. It is to *M. Gerard, barrister before the Parlement, rue des Boucheries, Paris*, who is in addition my business agent. Nevertheless, I would request that two months before they fall due you also show my bills to Mme de Lafayette, who would give the necessary orders so that the proper sum might be ready at the time it is requested. I know that in your present situation it is important to have your affairs in the greatest order, and this solicitude is a consequence of the considerateness you have so obligingly made me feel in all our arrangements. I hope, however, to be in Paris a long time before the debt falls due.

I have experienced, sir, the greatest pleasure in learning of the arrival of your vessel, and I compliment you very sincerely on it. You make me an extremely tempting offer, and I am quite far from refusing it. Only the departure time of your ship could create a difficulty for me because I see myself obliged to remain here for at least a few weeks.

It is impossible for me to leave before the British have returned to New York, which I hope will not be long, and before the first packet boat has brought the declaration of war. Perhaps it will bring me orders from the king which will settle my plans. If I do not receive any, I shall be free to do what I please. In that case I shall not hesitate to join the French armies wherever in the world I can fight on their side. All things considered, I do not hope to leave before the month of July,

that they eyes of the people are oppened, and every thing prouves that my country means nothing but what is your advantage and true interest.

I am very glad Mr. *Carmichall* is arriv'd. He is a sensible, amiable, virtous, and charming gentleman on every Respect. He wants I believe to be in the army and I hope he will be employed there to his own agrement, as I am sure it will turn to the good of the service. If he has brought some french papers be so good as to send them to me. With the highest Regard I have the honor to be Dear Sir Your most obedient servant

THE MIS. DE LAFAYETTE

Will you be so good as to give me your opinion upon what will be done by Congress in consequence of my letters concerning Monsieur Touzard, Colonel Armand, and the Chevalier de Fayolles?

ALS (SchH: Henry Laurens Papers).

1. The British peace commission had arrived in America on June 6. For Lafayette's earlier response to the news of the appointment of the commission by the North ministry, see his letters to Laurens of April 21 and to Washington of April 25, 1778.

2. Abingdon's March 10 speech in the House of Lords ridiculed and denounced the bills of conciliation that were the basis of the peace commission's offers to Congress. The speech appeared in the *Pennsylvania Gazette* of June 10, 1778.

3. *Bon goust*: good taste.

To [*Peter Gansevoort*]

Valley Forge camp 13th june 1778

Sir

A part of the indians are going à way and the others stay with me whose wives and children I Reccommend to your attentive care. As the husbands are fighting for us, and can not provide for them, they must be furnish'd with provisions. We owe to be gratefull of their friendship, and entertain it by all means in our power. I Reccommend also to you the *Family of Nicolas* and two other french men who have been very useful to Mr. de Gouvion. With the greatest esteem and Regard I have the honor to be Dr. Sir Your most obedient servant

THE MIS. DE LAFAYETTE

ALS (NN: Military Papers of Peter Gansevoort, Jr., vol. 3). Addressed "to the commanding officer at Fort Schuyler."

To *Adrienne de Noailles de Lafayette*^T

Valley Forge camp, June 16, 1778

My dear heart, chance has provided me with an extremely uncertain opportunity for writing to you, but, such as it is, I shall take advantage of it. I cannot resist the desire to say a few words to you. You should have received many letters from me lately; at any rate, if it depends only upon my writing to you frequently, I have every right to expect it. Several ships have sailed, all of them laden with my letters. They must have renewed your suffering (my dear heart) when the grief I expressed was added to yours. How dreadful our separation is! Never have I so cruelly felt how horrible this situation is. My heart is tormented with my own grief and with yours, which I was not able to share. The great length of time that it took for me to learn of that occurrence only makes it worse.¹ Imagine how painful it is, my love, while weeping for what I have lost, to fear for what is left to me. The distance from Europe to America seemed more immense than ever; the loss of our poor child is almost always on my mind. This news came to me immediately after that of the treaty; and while my heart was consumed with sorrow, I had to receive and take part in public celebrations. At the same time I learned of the loss of our (unfortunate) little Adrien.² Because I have always regarded their child as if he were my own, I have grieved about it as I would have grieved for my own son. I have written twice to the vicomte and vicomtesse in order to express my condolences to them, and I hope my letters will reach them. At this time I am writing only to you because I neither know when my letter by this opportunity will leave America nor when it will arrive, and I am led to expect a packet boat that will surely arrive before the letter I am writing to you now.

I have obtained news of you through M. de Cambray and Mr. Carmichael; I hope the first will be advantageously and agreeably placed; the second has not yet reached the army, and I await him with extreme impatience. How I shall delight in chatting with him and talking to him about you! He will return to camp as soon as possible. Every day we await some news from Europe; it is extremely interesting, above all for me, who is offering up prayers for the success and glory of my country (, and who would be quite unhappy about not being a witness to it. It is said that England wishes to appear quite submissive to France, but I hope that they will be left at peace only after we have buried that insolent nation. England's humiliation should delight all good French-