

= Gilbert du Motier , Marquis de Lafayette =

Marie @-@ Joseph Paul Yves Roch Gilbert du Motier , Marquis de Lafayette (French pronunciation : ? [ma?ki d? la faj?t] ; 6 September 1757 ? 20 May 1834) , in the U.S. often known simply as Lafayette , was a French aristocrat and military officer who fought in the American Revolutionary War . A close friend of George Washington , Alexander Hamilton , and Thomas Jefferson , Lafayette was a key figure in the French Revolution of 1789 and the July Revolution of 1830 .

Born in Chavaniac , in the province of Auvergne in south central France , Lafayette came from a wealthy landowning family . He followed its martial tradition , and was commissioned an officer at age 13 . He became convinced that the American cause in its revolutionary war was noble , and travelled to the New World seeking glory in it . There , he was made a major general , though initially the 19 @-@ year @-@ old was not given troops to command . Wounded during the Battle of Brandywine , he still managed to organize an orderly retreat . He served with distinction in the Battle of Rhode Island . In the middle of the war , he returned home to lobby for an increase in French support . He again sailed to America in 1780 , and was given senior positions in the Continental Army . In 1781 , troops in Virginia under his command blocked forces led by Cornwallis until other American and French forces could position themselves for the decisive Siege of Yorktown .

Lafayette returned to France and , in 1787 , was appointed to the Assembly of Notables convened in response to the fiscal crisis . He was elected a member of the Estates @-@ General of 1789 , where representatives met from the three traditional orders of French society ? the clergy , the nobility , and the commoners . He helped write the Declaration of the Rights of Man and of the Citizen , with the assistance of Thomas Jefferson . After the storming of the Bastille , Lafayette was appointed commander @-@ in @-@ chief of the National Guard , and tried to steer a middle course through the French Revolution . In August 1792 , the radical factions ordered his arrest . Fleeing through the Austrian Netherlands , he was captured by Austrian troops and spent more than five years in prison .

Lafayette returned to France after Napoleon Bonaparte secured his release in 1797 , though he refused to participate in Napoleon 's government . After the Bourbon Restoration of 1814 , he became a liberal member of the Chamber of Deputies , a position he held for most of the remainder of his life . In 1824 , President James Monroe invited Lafayette to the United States as the nation 's guest ; during the trip , he visited all twenty @-@ four states in the union at the time , meeting a rapturous reception . During France 's July Revolution of 1830 , Lafayette declined an offer to become the French dictator . Instead , he supported Louis @-@ Philippe as king , but turned against him when the monarch became autocratic . Lafayette died on 20 May 1834 , and is buried in Picpus Cemetery in Paris , under soil from Bunker Hill . For his accomplishments in the service of both France and the United States , he is sometimes known as " The Hero of the Two Worlds " .

= = Early life = =

Lafayette was born on 6 September 1757 to Michel Louis Christophe Roch Gilbert Paulette du Motier , Marquis de La Fayette , colonel of grenadiers , and Marie Louise Jolie de La Rivière , at the château de Chavaniac , in Chavaniac @-@ Lafayette , near Le Puy @-@ en @-@ Velay , in the province of Auvergne (now Haute @-@ Loire) .

Lafayette 's lineage was likely one of the oldest and most distinguished in Auvergne , perhaps in all of France . Males of the family enjoyed a reputation for courage and chivalry , and were noted for their contempt for danger . One of Lafayette 's early ancestors , Gilbert de Lafayette III , a Marshal of France , who had been a companion @-@ at @-@ arms of Joan of Arc 's army during the Siege of Orléans in 1429 . According to legend , another ancestor acquired the crown of thorns during the Sixth Crusade . His non @-@ Lafayette ancestors are also notable ; his great @-@ grandfather (his mother 's maternal grandfather) was the Comte de La Rivière , until his death in 1770 commander of the Mousquetaires du Roi , or Black Musketeers , King Louis XV 's personal horse guard . Lafayette 's paternal uncle Jacques @-@ Roch died on January 18 , 1734 while fighting the

Austrians at Milan in the War of the Polish Succession ; upon his death , the title of marquis passed to his brother Michel .

Lafayette 's father likewise died on the battlefield . On 1 August 1759 , Michel de Lafayette was struck by a cannonball while fighting a British @-@ led coalition at the Battle of Minden in Westphalia . Lafayette became marquis and Lord of Chavaniac , but the estate went to his mother . Perhaps devastated by the loss of her husband , she went to live in Paris with her father and grandfather , leaving Lafayette to be raised in Chavaniac @-@ Lafayette by his paternal grandmother , Mme de Chavaniac , who had brought the château into the family with her dowry .

In 1768 , when Lafayette was 11 , he was summoned to Paris to live with his mother and great @-@ grandfather at the comte 's apartments in Luxembourg Palace . The boy was sent to school at the Collège du Plessis , part of the University of Paris , and it was decided that he would carry on the family martial tradition . The comte , the boy 's great @-@ grandfather , enrolled the boy in a program to train future Musketeers . Lafayette 's mother and great @-@ grandfather died , on 3 and 24 April 1770 respectively , leaving Lafayette an income of 25 @,@ 000 livres . Upon the death of an uncle , the 12 @-@ year @-@ old Lafayette inherited a handsome yearly income of 120 @,@ 000 livres .

In May 1771 , aged less than 14 , Lafayette was commissioned an officer in the Musketeers , with the rank of sous @-@ lieutenant . His duties , which included marching in military parades and presenting himself to King Louis , were mostly ceremonial and he continued his studies as usual .

At this time , Jean @-@ Paul @-@ François de Noailles , Duc d 'Ayen was looking to marry off some of his five daughters . The young Lafayette , aged 14 , seemed a good match for his 12 @-@ year @-@ old daughter , Marie Adrienne Françoise , and the duc spoke to the boy 's guardian (Lafayette 's uncle , the new comte) to negotiate a deal . However , the arranged marriage was opposed by the duc 's wife , who felt the couple , and especially her daughter , were too young . The matter was settled by agreeing not to mention the marriage plans for two years , during which time the two spouses @-@ to @-@ be would meet from time to time in casual settings and get to know each other better . The scheme worked ; the two fell in love , and were happy together from the time of their marriage in 1774 until her death in 1807 .

= = Departure from France = =

= = = Finding a cause = = =

After the marriage contract was signed in 1773 , Lafayette lived with his young wife in his father @-@ in @-@ law 's house in Versailles . He continued his education , both at the riding school Versailles (his fellow students included the future Charles X) and at the prestigious Académie de Versailles . He was given a commission as a lieutenant in the Noailles Dragoons in April 1773 , the transfer from the royal regiment being done at the request of Lafayette 's father @-@ in @-@ law .

In 1775 , Lafayette took part in his unit 's annual training in Metz , where he met Charles @-@ François de Broglie , Marquis de Ruffec , the Army of the East 's commander . At dinner , both men discussed the ongoing revolt against British rule by Britain 's North American colonies . One historiographical perspective suggests that the marquis was disposed to hate the British for killing his father , and felt that a British defeat would diminish that nation 's stature internationally . Another notes that the marquis had recently become a Freemason , and talk of the rebellion " fired his chivalric ? and now Masonic ? imagination with descriptions of Americans as ' people fighting for liberty ' " .

In September 1775 , when Lafayette turned 18 , he returned to Paris and received the captaincy in the Dragoons he had been promised as a wedding present . In December , his first child , Henriette , was born . During these months , Lafayette became convinced that the American Revolution reflected his own beliefs , saying " My heart was dedicated . "

The year 1776 saw delicate negotiations between American agents , including Silas Deane , and Louis XVI and his foreign minister , Comte Charles de Vergennes . The king and his minister hoped

that by supplying the Americans with arms and officers , they might restore French influence in North America , and exact revenge against Britain for the loss in the Seven Years ' War . When Lafayette heard that French officers were being sent to America , he demanded to be among them . He met Deane , and gained inclusion despite his youth . On 7 December 1776 , Deane enlisted Lafayette as a major general .

The plan to send French officers (as well as other aid) to America came to nothing when the British heard of it and threatened war . Lafayette 's father @-@ in @-@ law , de Noailles , scolded the young man and told him to go to London and visit the Marquis de Noailles , the ambassador to Britain and Lafayette 's uncle by marriage , which he did in February 1777 . In the interim , he did not abandon his plans to go to America . Lafayette was presented to George III , and spent three weeks in London society . On his return to France , he went into hiding from his father @-@ in @-@ law (and superior officer) , writing to him that he was planning to go to America . De Noailles was furious , and convinced Louis to issue a decree forbidding French officers from serving in America , specifically naming Lafayette . Vergennes may have persuaded the king to order Lafayette 's arrest , though this is uncertain .

= = = Departure for America = = =

Lafayette learned that the Continental Congress did not have the money for his voyage ; hence , he acquired the sailing ship Victoire with his own funds for 112 000 pounds . He journeyed to Bordeaux , where Victoire was being prepared for her trip , and sent word asking for information on his family 's reaction . The response , including letters from his wife and other relatives , threw Lafayette into emotional turmoil . Soon after departure , he ordered the ship turned around and returned to Bordeaux , to the frustration of the officers traveling with him . The army commander there ordered Lafayette to report to his father @-@ in @-@ law 's regiment in Marseilles . De Broglie , who hoped to become a military and political leader in America , met with Lafayette in Bordeaux and convinced him that the government actually wanted him to go . This was not true , though there was considerable public support for Lafayette in Paris , where the American cause was popular . Lafayette wanted to believe it , and pretended to comply with the order to report to Marseilles , going only a few miles east before turning around and returning to his ship . Victoire set sail for the United States on 20 April 1777 .

The two @-@ month journey to the New World was marked by seasickness and boredom . The ship 's captain , Lebourcier , intended to stop in the West Indies to sell cargo , but Lafayette , fearful of arrest , bought the cargo to avoid docking at the islands . He landed on North Island near Georgetown , South Carolina , on 13 June 1777 .

= = = American Revolution = = =

On arrival , Lafayette met Major Benjamin Huger , a wealthy landowner , with whom he stayed for two weeks before going to Philadelphia . The Continental Congress had been overwhelmed by French officers recruited by Deane , many of whom could not speak English or lacked military experience . Lafayette had learned some English en route (he became fluent within a year of his arrival) , and his Masonic membership opened many doors in Philadelphia . After Lafayette offered to serve without pay , Congress commissioned him a major general on 31 July 1777 . Lafayette 's advocates included the recently arrived American envoy to France , Benjamin Franklin , who by letter urged Congress to accommodate the young Frenchman .

General George Washington , commander in chief of the Continental Army , came to Philadelphia to brief Congress on military affairs . Lafayette met him at a dinner on 5 August 1777 ; according to Leepson , " the two men bonded almost immediately . " Washington was impressed by the young man 's enthusiasm and was inclined to think well of a fellow Mason ; Lafayette was simply in awe of the commanding general . General Washington took the Frenchman to view his military camp ; when Washington expressed embarrassment at its state and that of the troops , Lafayette responded , " I am here to learn , not to teach . " He became a member of Washington 's staff ,

although confusion existed regarding his status . Congress regarded his commission as honorary , while he considered himself a full @-@ fledged commander who would be given control of a division when Washington deemed him prepared . Washington told Lafayette that a division would not be possible as he was of foreign birth , but that he would be happy to hold him in confidence as " friend and father " .

= = = Brandywine , Valley Forge , and Albany = = =

Lafayette 's first battle was at Brandywine on 11 September 1777 . The British commanding general , General Sir William Howe , planned to take Philadelphia by moving troops south by ship to Chesapeake Bay (rather than the heavily defended Delaware Bay) and bringing them overland to the rebel capital . After the British outflanked the Americans , Washington sent Lafayette to join General John Sullivan . Upon his arrival , Lafayette went with the Third Pennsylvania Brigade , under Brigadier Thomas Conway , and attempted to rally the unit to face the attack . The British and Hessian forces continued to advance with their superior forces , and Lafayette was shot in the leg . During the American retreat , Lafayette rallied the troops , allowing a more orderly pullback , before being treated for his wound . After the battle , Washington cited him for " bravery and military ardour " and recommended him for the command of a division in a letter to Congress , which was hastily evacuating , as the British took Philadelphia later that month .

Lafayette returned to the field in November after two months of recuperation in the Moravian settlement of Bethlehem , and received command of the division previously led by Major General Adam Stephen . He assisted General Nathanael Greene in reconnaissance of British positions in New Jersey ; with 300 soldiers , he defeated a numerically superior Hessian force in Gloucester , on 24 November 1777 .

Lafayette stayed at Washington 's encampment at Valley Forge in the winter of 1777 ? 78 , and shared the hardship of his troops . There , the Board of War , led by Horatio Gates , asked Lafayette to prepare an invasion of Quebec from Albany , New York . When Lafayette arrived in Albany , he found too few men to mount an invasion . He wrote to Washington of the situation , and made plans to return to Valley Forge . Before departing , he recruited the Oneida tribe , who referred to Lafayette as Kayewla (fearsome horseman) , to the American side . In Valley Forge , he criticized the board 's decision to attempt an invasion of Quebec in winter . The Continental Congress agreed , and Gates left the board . Meanwhile , treaties signed by America and France were made public in March 1778 , and France formally recognized American independence .

= = = Barren Hill , Monmouth and Rhode Island = = =

Faced with the prospect of French intervention , the British sought to concentrate their land and naval forces in one location , New York City . In May 1778 , the British began to evacuate Philadelphia . On 18 May , Washington dispatched Lafayette with a 2 @, @ 200 @-@ man force to reconnoiter near Barren Hill , Pennsylvania . The next day , the British heard that Lafayette had made camp nearby and sent 5 @, @ 000 men to trap and capture him . On 20 May , General Howe led a further 6 @, @ 000 soldiers and ordered an attack on his left flank . The flank scattered , and Lafayette organized a retreat while the British remained indecisive . To feign numerical superiority , Lafayette ordered men to appear from the woods on an outcropping (now Lafayette Hill) and to fire upon the British periodically . Lafayette 's troops simultaneously escaped via a sunken road , and he was then able to cross Matson 's Ford with the remainder of his force .

Unable to trap Lafayette , the British marched from Philadelphia toward New York ; the Continental Army , including Lafayette , followed and finally attacked at Monmouth Courthouse , in central New Jersey . At Monmouth , Washington appointed General Charles Lee to lead the attacking force . On 28 June , Lee moved against the British flank ; however , soon after fighting began , he gave conflicting orders , causing chaos in the American ranks . Lafayette sent a message to Washington to urge him to the front ; upon his arrival he found Lee 's men in retreat . Washington relieved Lee , took command , and rallied the American force . After suffering significant casualties at Monmouth ,

the British withdrew in the night , and successfully reached New York .

The French fleet arrived at Delaware Bay on 8 July 1778 , under Admiral d 'Estaing , with whom General Washington planned to attack Newport , Rhode Island , the other major British base in the north . Lafayette and General Greene were sent with a 3 @, @ 000 @-@ man force to participate in the attack . Lafayette wanted to control a joint Franco @-@ American force but was rebuffed by the admiral . On 9 August , the American land force attacked the British without consulting d 'Estaing . When the Americans asked the admiral to place his ships in Narragansett Bay , d 'Estaing refused and , at sea , sought to defeat the British fleet . The fighting was inconclusive as a storm scattered and damaged both fleets .

D 'Estaing moved his ships north to Boston for repairs . When the fleet arrived , it faced an angry demonstration from Bostonians who considered the French departure from Newport a desertion . John Hancock and Lafayette were dispatched to calm the situation . Lafayette then returned to Rhode Island to prepare the retreat made necessary by d 'Estaing 's departure . For these actions , Lafayette was cited by the Continental Congress for " gallantry , skill , and prudence " . Lafayette wanted to expand the war to fight the British elsewhere in North America and even , under the French flag , in Europe , but found little interest in his proposals . In October 1778 , he requested permission of Washington and of Congress to go home on leave . They agreed , with Congress voting to give Lafayette a ceremonial sword , to be presented to him in France . His departure was delayed by illness , and he sailed for France in January 1779 .

= = = Return to France = = =

In February 1779 , Lafayette reached Paris . For disobeying the king by going to America , he was placed under house arrest for eight days . This was merely face @-@ saving by Louis XVI ; Lafayette was given a hero 's welcome and was soon invited to hunt with the king . As the American envoy was ill , Benjamin Franklin 's grandson presented Lafayette with the gold @-@ encrusted sword commissioned by the Continental Congress .

Lafayette pushed for an invasion of Britain , with himself to have a major command in the French forces . Spain was now France 's ally against Britain , and sent ships to the English Channel in support . The Spanish ships did not arrive until August 1779 , to be met by a faster squadron of British ships that the combined French and Spanish fleet could not catch . In September , the idea of an invasion was abandoned , and Lafayette turned his hopes to a return to America .

In December 1779 , Adrienne gave birth to a son they named Georges Washington Lafayette . Working with Benjamin Franklin , Lafayette secured the promise of 6 @, @ 000 soldiers to be sent to America , commanded by General Jean @-@ Baptiste de Rochambeau . Lafayette would resume his position as a major general of American forces , serving as liaison between Rochambeau and Washington , who would be in command of both nations ' forces . In March 1780 , Lafayette departed for America aboard the frigate Hermione , from Rochefort . He arrived in Boston on 27 April 1780 .

= = = Second voyage to America = = =

On his return , Lafayette found the American cause at a low ebb , rocked by several military defeats , especially in the south . Lafayette was greeted in Boston with enthusiasm , seen as " a knight in shining armor from the chivalric past , come to save the nation " . He journeyed southwest and on 10 May 1780 had a joyous reunion with Washington at Morristown , New Jersey . The general and his officers were delighted to hear that the large French force promised to Lafayette would be coming to their aid . Washington , aware of Lafayette 's popularity , had him write (with Alexander Hamilton to correct his spelling) to state officials to urge them to provide more troops and provisions to the Continental Army . This bore fruit in the coming months , as Lafayette awaited the arrival of the French fleet . However , when the fleet arrived , there were fewer men and supplies than expected , and Rochambeau decided to wait for reinforcements before seeking battle with the British . This was unsatisfactory to Lafayette , who proposed grandiose schemes for the taking of

New York City and other areas , and Rochambeau briefly refused to receive Lafayette until the young man apologized . Washington counseled the marquis to be patient .

That summer Washington placed Lafayette in charge of a division of troops . The marquis spent lavishly on his command , which patrolled Northern New Jersey and adjacent New York State . Lafayette saw no significant action , and in November , Washington disbanded the division , sending the soldiers back to their state regiments . The war continued badly for the Americans , with most battles in the south going against them , and General Benedict Arnold abandoning them for the British side .

Lafayette spent the first part of the winter of 1780 ? 81 in Philadelphia , where the American Philosophical Society elected him its first foreign member . Congress asked him to return to France to lobby for more men and supplies , but Lafayette refused , sending letters instead .

After the Continental victory at the Battle of Cowpens in South Carolina in January 1781 , Washington ordered Lafayette to re @-@ form his force in Philadelphia and go south to Virginia to link up with troops commanded by Baron von Steuben . The combined force was to try to trap British forces commanded by Benedict Arnold , with French ships preventing his escape by sea . If Lafayette was successful , Arnold was to be summarily hanged . British command of the seas prevented the plan , though Lafayette and a small part of his force (the rest left behind in Annapolis) was able to reach von Steuben in Yorktown , Virginia . Von Steuben sent a plan to Washington , proposing to use land forces and French ships to trap the main British force under Lord Cornwallis . When he received no new orders from Washington , Lafayette began to move his troops north toward Philadelphia , only to be ordered to Virginia to assume military command there . An outraged Lafayette assumed he was being abandoned in a backwater while decisive battles took place elsewhere , and objected to his orders in vain . He also sent letters to the Chevalier de la Luzerne , French ambassador in Philadelphia , describing how ill @-@ supplied his troops were . As Lafayette hoped , la Luzerne sent his letter on to France with a recommendation of massive French aid , which , after being approved by the king , would play a crucial part in the battles to come . Washington , fearing a letter might be captured by the British , could not tell Lafayette that he planned to trap Cornwallis in a decisive campaign .

= = = Virginia and Yorktown = = =

Lafayette evaded Cornwallis ' attempts to capture him in Richmond . In June 1781 , Cornwallis received orders from London to proceed to the Chesapeake Bay and to oversee construction of a port , in preparation for an overland attack on Philadelphia . As the British column travelled , Lafayette sent small squads that would appear unexpectedly , attacking the rear guard or foraging parties , and giving the impression that his forces were larger than they were .

On 4 July , the British left Williamsburg and prepared to cross the James River . Cornwallis sent only an advance guard to the south side of the river , hiding many of his other troops in the forest on the north side , hoping to ambush Lafayette . On 6 July , Lafayette ordered General " Mad " Anthony Wayne to strike British troops on the north side with roughly 800 soldiers . Wayne found himself vastly outnumbered , and , instead of retreating , led a bayonet charge . The charge bought time for the Americans , and the British did not pursue . The Battle of Green Spring was a victory for Cornwallis , but the American army was bolstered by the display of courage by the men .

By August , Cornwallis had established the British at Yorktown , and Lafayette took up position on Malvern Hill , stationing artillery surrounding the British , who were close to the York River , and who had orders to construct fortifications to protect the British ships in Hampton Roads . Lafayette 's containment trapped the British when the French fleet arrived and won the Battle of the Virginia Capes , depriving Cornwallis of naval protection . On 14 September 1781 , Washington 's forces joined Lafayette 's . On 28 September , with the French fleet blockading the British , the combined forces laid siege to Yorktown . On 14 October , Lafayette 's 400 men on the American right took Redoubt 9 after Alexander Hamilton 's forces had charged Redoubt 10 in hand @-@ to @-@ hand combat . These two redoubts were key to breaking the British defenses . After a failed British counter @-@ attack , Cornwallis surrendered on 19 October 1781 .

= = Hero of two worlds = =

Although Yorktown was to be the last major land battle of the American Revolution , the British still held several major port cities . Lafayette wanted to lead expeditions on them , but Washington felt he would be more useful seeking additional naval support from France . In Philadelphia , Congress appointed him its advisor to the three American envoys abroad ? Franklin in Paris , John Jay in Madrid , and John Adams in The Hague , " to communicate and agree on everything with him " . It also sent Louis XVI an official letter of commendation on the marquis 's behalf .

Lafayette left Boston for France on 18 December 1781 . On arrival he was welcomed as a hero , and on 22 January 1782 he was received at Versailles . He witnessed the birth of his daughter , whom he named Marie @-@ Antoinette Virginie upon Thomas Jefferson 's recommendation . He was promoted to *maréchal de camp* , skipping numerous ranks . He was made a Knight of the Order of Saint Louis . In 1782 , with no treaty yet signed ending the war , Lafayette helped prepare for a combined French and Spanish expedition against the British West Indies . The Treaty of Paris signed between Great Britain and the U.S. in 1783 made the expedition unnecessary ? Lafayette took part in the negotiations .

Lafayette worked with Jefferson to establish trade agreements between the U.S. and France . These negotiations aimed to reduce the U.S. debt to France . He joined the French abolitionist group Society of the Friends of the Blacks , which advocated the end of the slave trade and equal rights for free blacks . In 1783 , in correspondence with Washington , a slave owner , he urged the emancipation of slaves and their establishment as tenant farmers . Although Washington declined to free his slaves (though expressing interest in the young man 's ideas) , Lafayette purchased land in French Guiana for a plantation to house the project .

In 1784 , Lafayette visited America , where he enjoyed an enthusiastic welcome ; he visited all the states except Georgia . The trip included a visit to Washington 's farm at Mount Vernon on 17 August . Lafayette addressed the Virginia House of Delegates , where he called for " liberty of all mankind " and urged emancipation of slaves . Lafayette urged the Pennsylvania Legislature to help form a federal union (the states were then bound by the Articles of Confederation) . He visited the Mohawk Valley in New York to participate in peace negotiations with the Iroquois , some of whom he had met in 1778 . Lafayette received an honorary degree from Harvard , a portrait of Washington from the city of Boston , and a bust from the state of Virginia . Maryland 's legislature honored Lafayette by making him and his male heirs " natural born Citizens " of the state , which made him a natural born citizen of the United States after the 1789 ratification of the new national Constitution . Lafayette later boasted that he had become an American citizen before the concept of French citizenship existed . Connecticut , Massachusetts , and Virginia also granted him citizenship .

Through the next years , Lafayette made his house , the Hôtel de La Fayette in Paris 's rue de Bourbon , the headquarters of Americans there . Benjamin Franklin , John and Sarah Jay , and John and Abigail Adams met there every Monday , and dined in company with Lafayette 's family and the liberal nobility , including Clermont @-@ Tonnerre and Madame de Staël . Lafayette continued to work on lowering trade barriers in France to American goods , and on assisting Franklin and his successor as envoy , Jefferson , in seeking treaties of amity and commerce with European nations . He also sought to eliminate the injustices that Protestants in France had endured since the revocation of the Edict of Nantes a century before .

= = French Revolution = =

= = = Assembly of Notables and Estates @-@ General = = =

On 29 December 1786 , King Louis XVI called an Assembly of Notables , in response to France 's fiscal crisis . The king appointed Lafayette to the body , which convened on 22 February 1787 . In speeches , Lafayette decried those with connections at court who had profited from advance

knowledge of government land purchases ; he advocated reform . He called for a " truly national assembly " , which represented the whole of France . Instead , the king chose to summon an Estates General , to convene in 1789 . Lafayette was elected as a representative of the nobility (the Second Estate) from Riom . The Estates General , traditionally , cast one vote for each of the three Estates : clergy , nobility , and commons , meaning the much larger commons was generally outvoted .

The Estates General convened on 5 May 1789 ; debate began on whether the delegates should vote by head or by Estate . If by Estate , then the nobility and clergy would be able to outvote the commons ; if by head , then the larger Third Estate could dominate . Before the meeting , as a member of the " Committee of Thirty " , Lafayette agitated for voting by head , rather than estate . He could not get a majority of his own Estate to agree , but the clergy was willing to join with the commons , and on the 17th , the group declared itself the National Assembly . The loyalist response was to lock out the group , including Lafayette , while those who had not supported the Assembly met inside . This action led to the Tennis Court Oath , where the excluded members swore to not separate until a constitution was established . The Assembly continued to meet , and on 11 July 1789 , Lafayette presented a draft of the " Declaration of the Rights of Man and of the Citizen " to the Assembly , written by himself in consultation with Jefferson . The next day , after the dismissal of Finance Minister Jacques Necker (who was seen as a reformer) , lawyer Camille Desmoulins led an armed mob . The king had the royal army under the duc de Broglie surround Paris . On 14 July , the fortress known as the Bastille was stormed by the mob .

= = = National Guard , Versailles , and Day of Daggers = = =

On 15 July , Lafayette was acclaimed commander @-@ in @-@ chief of the National Guard of France , an armed force established to maintain order , and under the control of the Assembly . Lafayette proposed the name and the symbol of the group : a blue , white and red cockade . This combined the red and blue colors of the city of Paris with the royal white , and originated the French tricolor . He faced a difficult task as head of the Guard ? the king and many loyalists considered Lafayette and those who agreed with him little better than revolutionaries , whereas many commoners felt he was helping the king keep power . On 26 August , the National Assembly approved the Declaration .

On 2 October , the king rejected the Declaration . Three days later , a Parisian crowd , led mostly by women fishmongers , marched to Versailles in response to the scarcity of bread . Members of the National Guard followed the march , with Lafayette reluctantly leading them . At Versailles , the king accepted the Assembly 's votes on the Declaration , but refused requests to go to Paris . At dawn , the crowd broke into the palace . Lafayette took the royal family onto the palace balcony and attempted to restore order . The crowd insisted that the king and his family move to Paris and the Tuileries Palace . The king came onto the balcony , and the crowd started chanting " Vive le Roi ! " When the unpopular queen , Marie Antoinette , appeared there with her children , she was told to send the children back in . When she returned alone , people shouted to shoot her , but when she stood her ground , no one opened fire . Lafayette kissed her hand , leading to cheers from the crowd .

As leader of the National Guard , Lafayette attempted to maintain order and steer a middle ground , even as the radicals gained increasing influence . On 12 May 1790 , he instituted , along with Jean Sylvain Bailly (mayor of Paris) , a political club called the Society of 1789 . The club 's intention was to provide balance to the influence of the radical Jacobins . On 14 July 1790 , Lafayette , before a huge assembly at what came to be known as the Fête de la Fédération , took the civic oath on the Champs de Mars , vowing to " be ever faithful to the nation , to the law , and to the king ; to support with our utmost power the constitution decreed by the National Assembly , and accepted by the king . " That oath was taken as well by Lafayette 's troops , and also by the king .

Lafayette continued to work for order in the coming months . On 28 February 1791 , Lafayette and part of the National Guard left the Tuileries to handle a conflict in Vincennes . While he was gone , hundred of armed nobles arrived at the Tuileries to defend the king ; however , there were rumors

that these nobles had come to take the king away and place him at the head of a counter @-@ revolution . Lafayette quickly returned to the Tuileries and disarmed the nobles after a brief standoff . The event , later called the Day of Daggers , boosted Lafayette 's popularity with the French people for his quick actions to protect the king .

Members of the royal family were increasingly prisoners in their palace . On 18 April , the National Guard disobeyed Lafayette and stopped the king from leaving for Saint @-@ Cloud , where he planned to attend Mass .

= = = Decline : Flight to Varennes and Champs de Mars massacre = = =

On 20 June 1791 , a plot , dubbed the Flight to Varennes , almost allowed the king to escape from France . As leader of the National Guard , Lafayette had been responsible for the royal family 's custody . He was thus blamed by extremists like Danton for the near @-@ escape and called a traitor to the people by Robespierre . These accusations made Lafayette appear a royalist , damaging his reputation in the eyes of the public , and strengthened the hands of the Jacobins and other radicals . Lafayette continued to urge the constitutional rule of law , but was drowned out by the mob and its leaders .

Through the latter half of 1791 , Lafayette 's standing continued to decline . On 17 July , the radical Cordeliers organized an event at the Champ de Mars to gather signatures on a petition to the National Assembly that it either abolish the monarchy or allow its fate to be decided in a referendum . The assembled crowd , estimated at up to 10 @,@ 000 , hanged two men believed to be spies after they were found under the platform . At the head of his troops , Lafayette rode into the Champ de Mars to restore order ; they were met with gunshots and thrown stones . When a dragoon went down , the soldiers fired on the crowd , wounding or killing dozens . Martial law was declared , and the leaders of the mob , such as Danton and Marat , fled or went into hiding . In September , the Assembly finalized a constitution , and in early October , with a semblance of constitutional law restored , Lafayette resigned from the National Guard . Immediately after the massacre , a crowd of rioters attacked Lafayette 's home , attempting to harm his wife . His reputation among the common people suffered dramatically after the massacre as they believed he sympathized with royal interests .

= = = Conflict and exile = = =

Lafayette returned to his home province of Auvergne in October 1791 . France declared war on Austria on 20 April 1792 , and preparations to invade the Austrian Netherlands (today 's Belgium) began . Lafayette , who had been promoted to Lieutenant General on June 30 , 1791 , received command of one of the three armies , the Army of the Centre , based at Metz on December 14 , 1791 . Lafayette did his best to mold inductees and National Guardsmen into a cohesive fighting force , but found that many of his troops were Jacobin sympathizers and hated their superior officers . This emotion was common in the army , as demonstrated after the Battle of Marquain , when the routed French troops dragged their leader to Lille , where he was torn to pieces by the mob . One of the army commanders , Rochambeau , resigned . Lafayette , along with the third commander , Nicolas Luckner , asked the Assembly to begin peace talks , concerned at what might happen if the troops saw another battle .

In June 1792 , Lafayette criticized the growing influence of the radicals through a letter to the Assembly from his field post , and ended his letter by calling for their parties to be " closed down by force " . He misjudged his timing , for the radicals were in full control in Paris . Lafayette went there , and on 28 June delivered a fiery speech before the Assembly denouncing the Jacobins and other radical groups . He was instead accused of deserting his troops . Lafayette called for volunteers to counteract the Jacobins ; when only a few people showed up , he understood the public mood and hastily left Paris . Robespierre called him a traitor and the mob burned him in effigy . He was transferred to command of the Army of the North on July 12 , 1792 .

The 25 July Brunswick Manifesto , which warned that Paris would be destroyed by the Austrians

and Prussians if the king was harmed , led to the downfall of Lafayette , and of the royal family . A mob attacked the Tuileries on 10 August , and the king and queen were imprisoned at the Assembly , then taken to the Temple . The Assembly abolished the monarchy ? the king and queen would be beheaded in the coming months . On 14 August , the minister of justice , Danton , put out a warrant for Lafayette 's arrest . Hoping to travel to the United States , Lafayette entered the Austrian Netherlands , the area of present Belgium .

= = Prisoner = =

Lafayette was taken prisoner by the Austrians near Rochefort when another former French officer , Jean @-@ Xavier Bureau de Pusy , asked for rights of transit through Austrian territory on behalf of a group of French officers . This was initially granted , as it had been for others fleeing France , but was revoked when the famous Lafayette was recognized . Frederick William II of Prussia , Austria 's ally against France , had once received Lafayette , but that was before the French Revolution ? the king now saw him as a dangerous fomenter of rebellion , to be interned to prevent him from overthrowing other monarchies .

Lafayette was held at Nivelles , then transferred to Luxembourg where a coalition military tribunal declared him , de Pusy , and two others to be prisoners of state for their roles in the Revolution . The tribunal ordered them held until a restored French king could render final judgment on them . On 12 September 1792 , pursuant to the tribunal 's order , the prisoners were transferred to Prussian custody . The party travelled to the Prussian fortress @-@ city of Wesel , where the Frenchmen remained in verminous individual cells in the central citadel from 19 September to 22 December 1792 . When victorious French revolutionary troops began to threaten the Rhineland , King Frederick William II transferred the prisoners east to the citadel at Magdeburg , where they remained an entire year , from 4 January 1793 to 4 January 1794 .

Frederick William decided that he could gain little by continuing to battle the unexpectedly successful French forces , and that there were easier pickings for his army in the Kingdom of Poland . Accordingly , he stopped armed hostilities with the Republic and turned the state prisoners back over to his erstwhile coalition partner , the Habsburg Austrian monarch Francis II , Holy Roman Emperor . Lafayette and his companions were initially sent to Neisse (today Nysa , Poland) in Silesia . On 17 May 1794 , they were taken across the Austrian border , where a military unit was waiting to receive them . The next day , the Austrians delivered their captives to a barracks @-@ prison , formerly a college of the Jesuits , in the fortress @-@ city of Olmütz , Moravia (today Olomouc in the Czech Republic) .

Lafayette , when captured , had tried to use the American citizenship he had been granted to secure his release , and contacted William Short , United States minister in The Hague . Although Short and other U.S. envoys very much wanted to succor Lafayette for his services to their country , they knew that his status as a French officer took precedence over any claim to American citizenship . Washington , who was by then president , had instructed the envoys to avoid actions that entangled the country in European affairs , and the U.S. did not have diplomatic relations with either Prussia or Austria . They did send money for the use of Lafayette , and for his wife , whom the French had imprisoned . Secretary of State Jefferson found a loophole allowing Lafayette to be paid , with interest , for his services as a major general from 1777 to 1783 . An act was rushed through Congress and signed by President Washington . These funds allowed both Lafayettes privileges in their captivity .

A more direct means of aiding the former general was an escape attempt sponsored by Alexander Hamilton 's sister @-@ in @-@ law Angelica Schuyler Church and her husband John Barker Church , a British Member of Parliament who had served in the Continental Army . They hired as agent a young Hanoverian physician , Justus Erich Bollmann , who acquired an assistant , a South Carolinian medical student named Francis Kinloch Huger . This was the son of Benjamin Huger , whom Lafayette had stayed with upon his first arrival in America . With their help , Lafayette managed to escape from an escorted carriage drive in the countryside outside Olmütz , but he lost his way and was recaptured .

Once Adrienne was released from prison in France , she , with the help of U.S. Minister to France James Monroe , obtained passports for her and her daughters from Connecticut , which had granted the entire Lafayette family citizenship . Her son Georges Washington had been smuggled out of France and taken to the United States . Adrienne and her two daughters journeyed to Vienna for an audience with Emperor Francis , who granted permission for the three women to live with Lafayette in captivity . Lafayette , who had endured harsh solitary confinement since his escape attempt a year before , was astounded when soldiers opened his prison door to usher in his wife and daughters on 15 October 1795 . The family spent the next two years in confinement together .

Through diplomacy , the press , and personal appeals , Lafayette 's sympathizers on both sides of the Atlantic made their influence felt , most importantly on the post @-@ Reign of Terror French government . A young , victorious general , Napoleon Bonaparte , negotiated the release of the state prisoners at Olmütz , as a result of the Treaty of Campo Formio . Lafayette 's captivity of over five years thus came to an end . The Lafayette family and their comrades in captivity left Olmütz under Austrian escort early on the morning of 19 September 1797 , crossed the Bohemian @-@ Saxonian border north of Prague , and were officially turned over to the American consul in Hamburg on 4 October .

From Hamburg , Lafayette sent a note of thanks to General Bonaparte . The French government , the Directorate , was unwilling to have Lafayette return unless he swore allegiance , which he was not willing to do , as he believed it had come to power by unconstitutional means . As revenge , it had his remaining properties sold , leaving him a pauper . The family , soon joined by Georges Washington , who had returned from America , recuperated on a property near Hamburg belonging to Adrienne 's aunt . Due to conflict between the United States and France , Lafayette could not go to America as he had hoped , making him a man without a country .

Adrienne was able to go to Paris , and attempted to secure her husband 's repatriation , flattering Bonaparte , who had returned to France after more victories . After Bonaparte 's coup d'état of 18 Brumaire (9 November 1799) , Lafayette used the confusion caused by the change of regime to slip into France with a passport in the name of " Motier " . Bonaparte expressed rage , but Adrienne was convinced he was simply posing , and proposed to him that Lafayette would pledge his support , then would retire from public life to a property she had reclaimed , La Grange . France 's new ruler allowed Lafayette to remain , though originally without citizenship and subject to summary arrest if he engaged in politics , with the promise of eventual restoration of civil rights . Lafayette remained quietly at La Grange , and when Bonaparte held a memorial service in Paris for Washington , who had died in December 1799 , Lafayette was not invited , nor was his name mentioned .

= = Retreat from politics = =

Bonaparte restored Lafayette 's citizenship on 1 March 1800 , and he was able to recover some of his properties . The ruler offered to make Lafayette minister to the United States , but was met with a firm refusal , as Lafayette would not have anything to do with Napoleon 's government . In 1802 , Lafayette was part of the tiny minority that voted no in the referendum that made Bonaparte consul for life . Bonaparte offered to appoint Lafayette to the Senate and to bestow the Legion of Honor upon him , but Lafayette declined , though he stated he would gladly have taken the honors from a democratic government .

In 1804 , Bonaparte was crowned the Emperor Napoleon after a plebiscite in which Lafayette did not participate . The retired general remained relatively quiet , although he made Bastille Day addresses . After the Louisiana Purchase , Jefferson , by then president , asked if he would be interested in the governorship . Lafayette declined , citing personal problems and his desire to work for liberty in France . During a trip to Auvergne in 1807 , Adrienne became ill , suffering from complications stemming from her time in prison . She became delirious but recovered enough on Christmas Eve to gather the family around her bed and to say to Lafayette : " Je suis toute à vous " (" I am all yours ") . She died the next day .

In the years after Adrienne 's death , Lafayette mostly remained quietly at La Grange as Napoleon 's power in Europe waxed , and then waned . Many influential people and members of the public

visited him , especially Americans . He wrote many letters , especially to Jefferson , and exchanged gifts with him , as the Frenchman had once done with Washington .

= = Bourbon restoration = =

In 1814 , the coalition that opposed Napoleon invaded France and restored the monarchy ; the comte de Provence (brother of the executed Louis XVI) took the throne as Louis XVIII . Lafayette was received by the new king , but the staunch republican opposed the new , highly restrictive franchise for the Chamber of Deputies that granted the vote to only 90 @, @ 000 men in a nation of 25 million . Lafayette did not stand for election in 1814 , remaining at La Grange .

There was discontent in France among demobilized soldiers and others . Napoleon had been exiled only as far as Elba , an island in the Tuscan archipelago ; seeing an opportunity , he landed at Cannes on 1 March 1815 with a few hundred followers . Frenchmen flocked to his banner , and he took Paris later that month , causing Louis to flee to Ghent . Lafayette refused Napoleon 's call to serve in the new government , but accepted election to the new Chamber of Representatives under the Charter of 1815 . There , after Napoleon 's defeat at the Battle of Waterloo , Lafayette called for his abdication . Responding to the emperor 's brother Lucien , Lafayette argued :

By what right do you dare accuse the nation of ... want of perseverance in the emperor 's interest ? The nation has followed him on the fields of Italy , across the sands of Egypt and the plains of Germany , across the frozen deserts of Russia The nation has followed him in fifty battles , in his defeats and in his victories , and in doing so we have to mourn the blood of three million Frenchmen .

On 22 June 1815 , four days after Waterloo , Napoleon abdicated . Lafayette arranged for the former emperor 's passage to America , but the British prevented this , and Napoleon ended his days on the island of Saint Helena . The Chamber of Representatives , before it dissolved , appointed Lafayette to a peace commission that was ignored by the victorious allies who occupied much of France , with the Prussians taking over La Grange as a headquarters . Once the Prussians left in late 1815 , Lafayette returned to his house , a private citizen again .

Lafayette 's homes , both in Paris and at La Grange , were open to any Americans who wished to meet the hero of their Revolution , and to many other people besides . Among those whom Irish novelist Sydney , Lady Morgan met at table during her month @-@ long stay at La Grange in 1818 were the Dutch painter Ary Scheffer and the historian Augustin Thierry , who sat alongside American tourists . Others who visited included philosopher Jeremy Bentham , American scholar George Ticknor , and writer Fanny Wright .

During the first decade of the Bourbon Restoration , Lafayette lent his support to a number of conspiracies in France and other European countries , all of which came to nothing . He was involved in the various Charbonnier plots , and agreed to go to the city of Belfort , where there was a garrison of French troops , and assume a major role in the revolutionary government . Warned that the royal government had found out about the conspiracy , he turned back on the road to Belfort , avoiding overt involvement . More successfully , he supported the Greek Revolution beginning in 1821 , and by letter attempted to persuade American officials to ally with the Greeks . Louis ' government considered arresting both Lafayette and Georges Washington , who was also involved in the Greek efforts , but were wary of the political ramifications if they did . Lafayette remained a member of the restored Chamber of Deputies until 1823 , when new plural voting rules helped defeat his bid for re @-@ election .

= = Grand tour of the United States = =

President James Monroe and Congress invited Lafayette to visit the United States in 1824 , in part to celebrate the nation 's upcoming 50th anniversary . Monroe intended to have Lafayette travel on an American warship , but the general felt having such a vessel as transport was undemocratic , and booked passage on a merchantman . Louis XVIII did not approve of the trip , and his officers had troops disperse the crowd that gathered at Le Havre to see Lafayette off .

Lafayette arrived at New York on 15 August 1824 , accompanied by his son Georges Washington and his secretary Auguste Levasseur . On arrival , Lafayette was greeted by a group of Revolutionary War veterans , who had fought alongside him many years before . New York erupted for four continuous days and nights of celebration . When he departed for what he thought would be a restful trip to Boston , he instead found the route lined by cheering citizens , with welcomes organized in every town along the way . According to Unger , " It was a mystical experience they would relate to their heirs through generations to come . Lafayette had materialized from a distant age , the last leader and hero at the nation 's defining moment . They knew they and the world would never see his kind again . "

New York , Boston , and Philadelphia did their best to outdo each other in the celebrations honoring Lafayette . Needing a place to hold a reception for him , Philadelphia renovated the Old State House (today Independence Hall) , which might otherwise have been torn down . Until that point , it had not been usual in the United States to build monuments , but Lafayette 's visit set off a wave of construction , usually with Lafayette , in his capacity as Mason , laying the cornerstone . The arts benefited by his visits as well , as many cities commissioned portraits for their civic buildings , and the likenesses were seen on innumerable souvenirs . Lafayette had intended to visit only the original thirteen states during a four @-@ month visit ; the stay stretched to sixteen months as he visited all twenty @-@ four .

The towns and cities he visited ? including Fayetteville , North Carolina , the first city named in his honor ? gave him enthusiastic welcomes . He visited Washington City , the capital , and was surprised by the simple clothing worn by President Monroe , and the lack of any guards around the White House . In Virginia , he went to Mount Vernon , as he had forty years before , this time viewing Washington 's grave . On 19 October 1824 , he was at Yorktown for the anniversary of Cornwallis 's surrender , then journeyed to Monticello to meet with his old friend Jefferson ? and Jefferson 's successor , James Madison , who arrived unexpectedly . Lafayette had dined with the other living former president , 89 @-@ year @-@ old John Adams , at his home near Boston .

With the roads becoming impassable , Lafayette stayed in Washington City for the winter of 1824 ? 25 , and thus was there for the climax of the hotly contested 1824 election , in which no presidential candidate was able to secure a majority of the Electoral College , throwing the decision to the House of Representatives . On 9 February 1825 , that body selected Secretary of State John Quincy Adams as president ; that evening , the runner @-@ up , General Andrew Jackson , shook hands with Adams at the White House as Lafayette looked on .

In March 1825 , Lafayette began to tour the southern and western states . The general pattern of the trip was that he would be escorted between cities by the state militia , and he would enter each town through specially constructed arches to be welcomed by local politicians or dignitaries , all anxious to be seen with Lafayette . There would be special events , visits to battlefields and historic sites , celebratory dinners , and time set aside for the public to meet the legendary hero of the Revolution .

Lafayette visited General Jackson at his home , The Hermitage , in Tennessee . While he was traveling up the Ohio River by steamboat , Lafayette 's vessel sank beneath him . He was put in a lifeboat by his son and secretary , then taken to the Kentucky shore and rescued by another steamboat . Although it was going the other direction , its captain insisted on turning around and taking Lafayette to Louisville . From there , he went generally northeast , viewing Niagara Falls , and taking the Erie Canal ? considered a modern marvel ? to Albany . Again in Massachusetts in June 1825 , he laid the cornerstone of the Bunker Hill Monument after hearing an oration by Daniel Webster . From Bunker Hill , Lafayette took home soil that would , at his death , be sprinkled on his grave .

After Bunker Hill , Lafayette went to Maine and Vermont , thus visiting all of the states . He met again with John Adams , then went back to New York and then to its rival city , Brooklyn , where he laid the cornerstone for its public library . Lafayette celebrated his 68th birthday on 6 September at a reception with President John Quincy Adams at the White House , and departed the next day . He took with him , besides the soil to be placed on his grave , other gifts . Congress , at Monroe 's request , had voted him \$ 200 @,@ 000 in gratitude for his services to the country , and a large tract

of public lands in Florida . The passage back to France was aboard a ship that was originally called the Susquehanna , but was renamed the USS Brandywine in honor of the battle where the Marquis de Lafayette shed his blood for the United States .

= = Revolution of 1830 = =

While Lafayette was returning to France , Louis XVIII died , and Charles X took the throne . As king , Charles intended to restore the absolute rule of the monarch , and his decrees had already prompted protest by the time Lafayette arrived . Lafayette was the most prominent of those who opposed the king . In the elections of 1827 , the 70 @-@ year @-@ old Lafayette was elected to the Chamber of Deputies again . Unhappy at the outcome , Charles dissolved the Chamber , and ordered a new election : Lafayette again won his seat .

Lafayette remained outspoken against Charles ' restrictions on civil liberties and the newly introduced censorship of the press . He made fiery speeches in the Chamber , denouncing the new decrees and advocating American @-@ style representative government . He hosted dinners at La Grange , for Americans , Frenchmen , and others ; all came to hear his speeches on politics , freedom , rights , and liberty . He was popular enough that Charles felt he could not be safely arrested , but Charles ' spies were thorough : one government agent noted " his [Lafayette 's] seditious toasts ... in honor of American liberty " .

On 25 July 1830 , the king signed the Ordinances of Saint @-@ Cloud , removing the franchise from the middle class and dissolving the Chamber of Deputies . The decrees were published the following day . On 27 July , Parisians erected barricades throughout the city , and riots erupted . In defiance , the Chamber continued to meet . When Lafayette , who was at La Grange , heard what was going on , he raced into the city , and was acclaimed as a leader of the revolution . When his fellow deputies were indecisive , Lafayette went to the barricades , and soon the royalist troops were routed . Fearful that the excesses of the 1789 revolution were about to be repeated , deputies made Lafayette head of a restored National Guard , and charged him with keeping order . The Chamber was willing to proclaim him as ruler , but he refused a grant of power he deemed unconstitutional . He also refused to deal with Charles , who abdicated on 2 August . Many young revolutionaries sought a republic , but Lafayette felt this would lead to civil war , and chose to offer the throne to the duc d 'Orleans , Louis @-@ Philippe , who had lived in America and had far more of a common touch than did Charles . Lafayette secured the agreement of Louis @-@ Philippe , who accepted the throne , to various reforms . The general remained as commander of the National Guard . This did not last long ? the brief concord at the king 's accession soon faded , and the conservative majority in the Chamber voted to abolish Lafayette 's National Guard post on 24 December 1830 . Lafayette went back into retirement , expressing his willingness to do so .

= = Final years and death = =

Lafayette grew increasingly disillusioned with Louis @-@ Philippe , who backtracked on reforms and denied his promises to make them . The retired general angrily broke with his king , a breach which widened when the government used force to suppress a strike in Lyon . Lafayette used his seat in the Chamber to promote liberal proposals , and in 1831 his neighbors elected him mayor of the village of La Grange and to the council of the département of Seine @-@ et @-@ Marne . The following year , Lafayette served as a pallbearer and spoke at the funeral of General Jean Maximilien Lamarque , another opponent of Louis @-@ Philippe . Despite Lafayette 's pleas for calm , there were riots in the streets and a barricade was erected at the Place de la Bastille . The king forcefully crushed this June Rebellion , to Lafayette 's outrage . Lafayette returned to La Grange until the Chamber met in November 1832 . He condemned Louis @-@ Philippe for introducing censorship , as Charles X had .

Lafayette spoke publicly for the last time in the Chamber of Deputies on 3 January 1834 . The next month , he collapsed at a funeral from pneumonia . Although he recovered , the following May was wet and , after being caught in a thunderstorm , he became bedridden .

On 20 May 1834 , Lafayette died on 6 rue d 'Anjou @-@ Saint @-@ Honoré in Paris (now 8 rue d 'Anjou in the 8th arrondissement of Paris) at the age of 76 . He was buried next to his wife at the Picpus Cemetery under soil from Bunker Hill , which his son Georges Washington sprinkled upon him . King Louis @-@ Philippe ordered a military funeral in order to keep the public from attending . Crowds formed to protest their exclusion .

In the United States , President Jackson ordered that Lafayette receive the same memorial honors that had been bestowed on Washington 's death in December 1799 . Both Houses of Congress were draped in black bunting for thirty days , and members wore mourning badges . Congress urged Americans to follow similar mourning practices . Later in 1834 , former president John Quincy Adams gave a eulogy of Lafayette that lasted three hours , calling him " high on the list of the pure and disinterested benefactors of mankind " .

= = Assessment = =

Throughout his life , Lafayette was an exponent of the ideals of the Age of Enlightenment , especially on human rights and civic nationalism . Despite the fact that he spent most of his political career in opposition , his views were taken very seriously by intellectuals and others on both sides of the Atlantic .

In the United States , Lafayette 's image , from the time of the American Revolution , derived from his " disinterestedness " in fighting , without pay , for the freedom of a country not his own . As Samuel Adams praised Lafayette , in " foregoing the pleasures of Enjoyment of domestick [sic] Life and exposing himself to the Hardship and Dangers " of war , he fought " in the glorious cause of freedom " . This view was shared by many contemporaries , establishing an image of Lafayette seeking to advance , not the national interest of one country or another , but the liberty of all mankind . As Lafayette took on his roles in the French Revolution , he gained a new role in American eyes : that of an advocate for the virtues of the American republic , seeking to transport them from New World to Old . This was reinforced by his position as surrogate son and disciple of George Washington , who was deemed the Father of His Country and the embodiment of the American experiment .

Lafayette became an American icon in part because he was not associated with any particular region of the country : he was of foreign birth , did not live in America , and had fought in New England , the Mid @-@ Atlantic states , and the South . Thus , he was a unifying figure . His role in the French Revolution , in which he was seen by Americans as steering a middle course , enhanced this popularity . Americans were naturally sympathetic to a republican cause , but also remembered Louis XVI as a friend of the nascent United States . When Lafayette fell from power in 1792 , Americans tended to blame factionalism for the ouster of a man who was , in their eyes , above such things .

In 1824 , Lafayette returned to the United States at a time when Americans were questioning the success of the republican experiment in view of the disastrous economic Panic of 1819 and the sectional conflict resulting in the Missouri Compromise . Lafayette 's hosts considered him a judge of how successful the experiment had been . According to cultural historian Lloyd Kramer , Lafayette (as well as a later visitor to America , Alexis de Tocqueville) " provided foreign confirmations of the self @-@ image that shaped America 's national identity in the early nineteenth century and that has remained a dominant theme in the national ideology ever since : the belief that America 's Founding Fathers , institutions , and freedom created the most democratic , egalitarian , and prosperous society in the world " .

Historian Gilbert Chinard wrote in 1936 : ? Lafayette became a legendary figure and a symbol so early in his life , and successive generations have so willingly accepted the myth , that any attempt to deprive the young hero of his republican halo will probably be considered as little short of iconoclastic and sacrilegious . ? That legend has been used politically : the name and image of Lafayette were repeatedly invoked in 1917 in seeking to gain popular support for America 's entry into World War I , culminating in the famous phrase , " Lafayette , we are here " . This occurred at some cost to Lafayette 's image in America : veterans returned from the front singing " We 've paid

our debt to Lafayette , who the hell do we owe now ? " A longer @-@ term threat was the increasing sophistication of Americans and the lessened need for symbols of patriotism ; by 1971 , according to Anne C. Loveland , " Lafayette no longer served as a national hero @-@ symbol . " In 2002 , however , Congress voted to grant Lafayette honorary citizenship .

Lafayette 's reputation in France is more problematic . Thomas Gaines , in his book about Lafayette , noted that the response to Lafayette 's death was far more muted in France than in America , and suggested that this may have been because Lafayette was the last surviving hero of America 's only revolution , whereas the evolution of the French government has been far more chaotic . Lafayette 's role , especially in the French Revolution , created a more nuanced picture of him in French historiography . To the 19th century historian Jules Michelet , Lafayette was a " mediocre idol " , lifted by the mob far beyond what his talents deserved . In their *Histoire et dictionnaire de la Révolution française* , Jean Tulard , Jean @-@ François Fayard , and Alfred Fierro noted Napoleon 's deathbed comment about Lafayette that , if Napoleon had had Lafayette 's place during the French Revolution , " the king would still be sitting on his throne " . They called Napoleon 's comment " not too excessive " and deemed Lafayette " an empty @-@ headed political dwarf [and] one of the people most responsible for the destruction of the French monarchy " . Gaines disagreed , and noted that liberal and Marxist historians have also dissented from that view of Lafayette . As Lloyd Kramer related in a survey of the French public , just before the Revolution 's bicentennial in 1989 , 57 percent deemed Lafayette the figure from the Revolution they most admired , with Marat and Saint @-@ Just tying for second with 21 percent each : " he [Lafayette] clearly had more French supporters in the early 1990s than he could muster in the early 1790s " .

Marc Leepson concluded his study of Lafayette 's life :

The Marquis de Lafayette was far from perfect . He was sometimes vain , naive , immature , and egocentric . But he consistently stuck to his ideals , even when doing so endangered his life and fortune . Those ideals proved to be the founding principles of two of the world 's most enduring nations , the United States and France . That is a legacy that few military leaders , politicians , or statesmen can match .