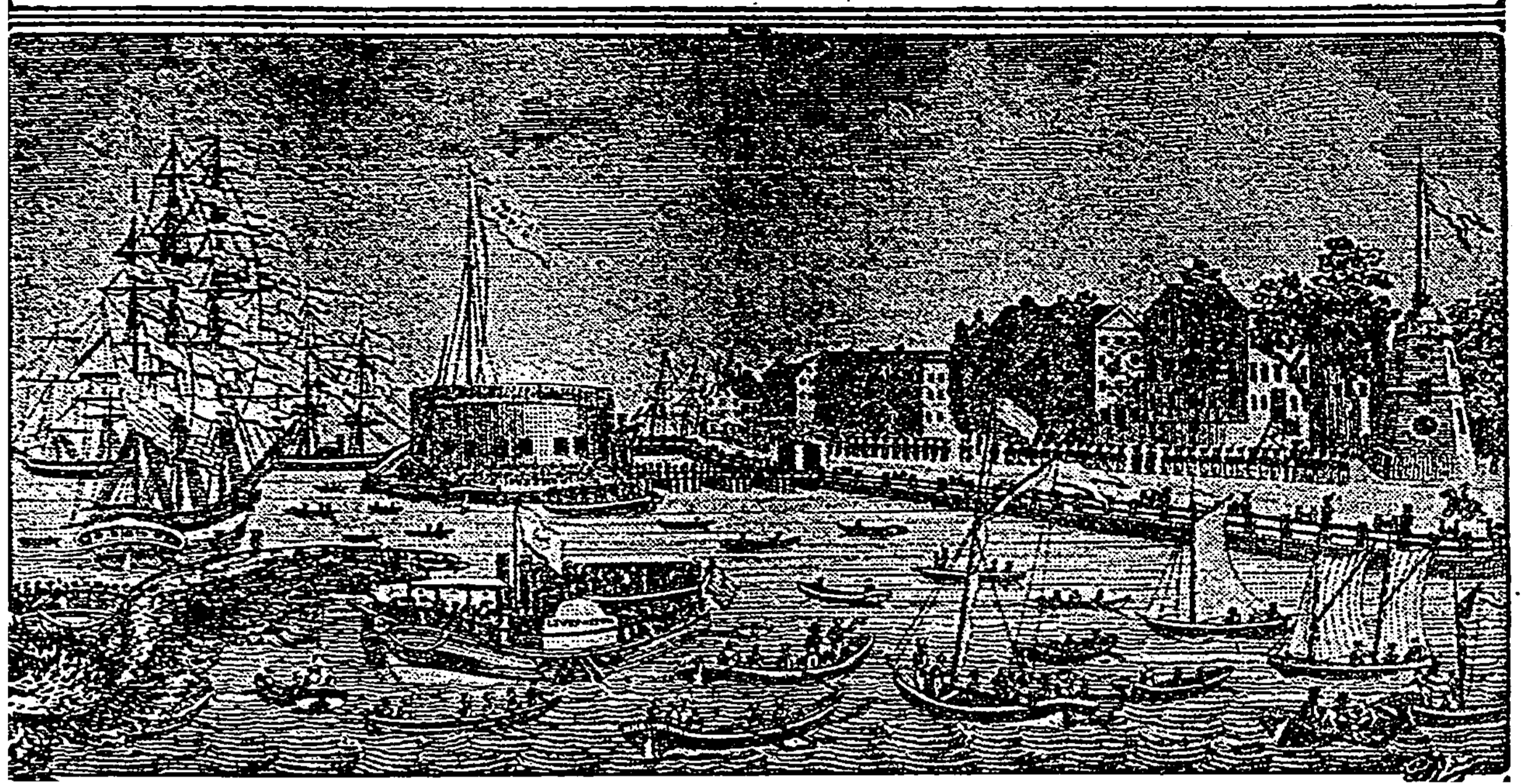
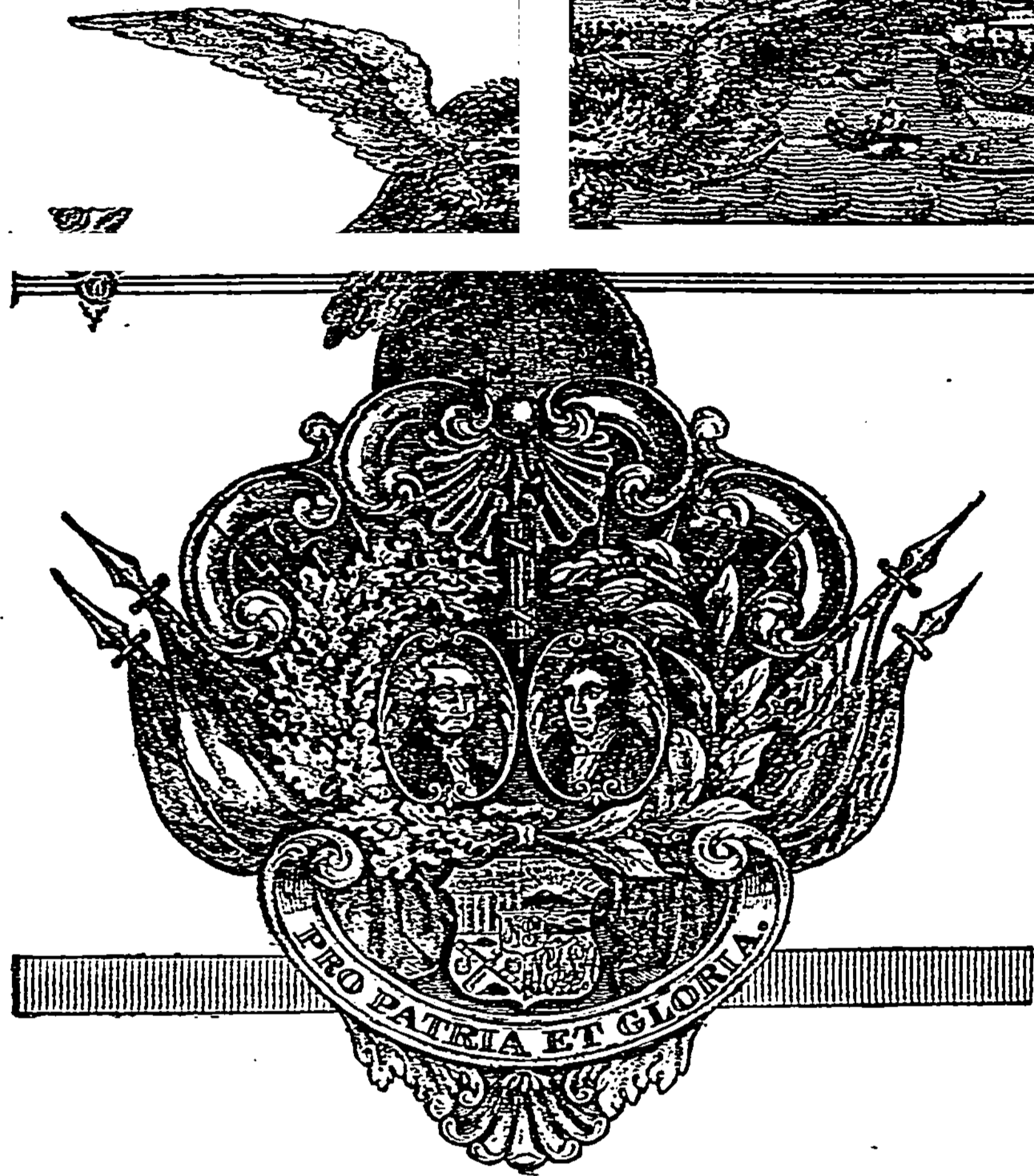


Nation to Honor Lafayette Next Wednesday

159th Anniversary of Birthday of French Hero of American Revolution Recalls His Triumphant Visit to United States Ninety-two Years Ago.



Landing of Lafayette at Castle Garden, New York City, August 16, 1824.



Medal Presented to Lafayette in 1832, by the National Guard of the State of New York.

LA FAYETTE DAY will be commemorated in this city and in many other parts of the country next Wednesday, Sept. 6, on a more elaborate scale than we have heretofore seen in America. It will be the one hundred and fifty-ninth anniversary of Lafayette's birth, and, by an interesting coincidence, it will also be the second anniversary of the battle of the Marne, which stopped the impetuous dash of the Germans toward Paris.

The memories of the Marne and the heroic efforts put forth by the soldiers of France to regain their conquered territory lend, at this time, a peculiar significance to the double anniversary of the day. This fact was appreciated by the committee headed by Charles W. Eliot, and including Joseph H. Choate, Theodore Roosevelt, Henry Watterson, Judson Harmon, George W. Wickersham, George Haven Putnam, William D. Guthrie, and Charles J. Bonaparte, for, in urging a widespread national observance of the day, the committeemen said:

We are not unmindful that by honoring Lafayette upon his anniversary, a date made doubly memorable by the battle of the Marne, we will be giving expression to the sentiment of fraternal regard for our sister republic which exists among all elements of our people.

In this city there will be a reception in the City Hall during the day and a Lafayette anniversary dinner in the evening at the Waldorf-Astoria, under the auspices of the France-America Society, of which President Nicholas Murray Butler of Columbia University is President. Ambassador Jusserand of France will be the guest of honor. Scores of other cities throughout the country will hold special exercises, among them being Philadelphia, Boston, Washington, New Orleans, St. Louis, Providence,

Louisville, St. Joseph, and Iowa City. Fall River will hold a celebration tomorrow, Labor Day, to unveil an equestrian statue of Lafayette and Ambassador Jusserand will make an address of appreciation on behalf of the French nation.

Ninety-two years ago New York City witnessed the most enthusiastic celebration of Lafayette's birthday in the history of the United States. General Lafayette was here in person, having arrived in New York on Aug. 15, 1824, on his final and memorable visit to the country whose struggle for liberty he so nobly aided during the dark days of the Revolution. Instead of thirteen weak colonies he found twenty-four prosperous States with a population of ten millions of people. Inferior towns and villages had grown to important cities. Lafayette had not been in America since 1784, when he was here for a short time. The forty years had produced great changes. Washington, who was endeared to him from the first when, not quite twenty years of age, he had been commissioned a Major General in the Continental Army by Congress, was gone, with many other companions in arms. A number still survived and the meeting with these Revolutionary veterans was one of the most delightful incidents of his visit.

Early in 1824 Congress had passed a resolution inviting Lafayette, as the friend of America, to visit this country as the nation's guest. President Monroe sent him a personal letter offering to put an American frigate at his disposal. Lafayette accepted the invitation, and, saying that he preferred to come over without national honors, sailed in July from Havre with his son, George Washington Lafayette, in the packet ship Cadmus, which arrived in the harbor on Sunday,

Aug. 15, after a voyage of thirty-one days. Lafayette was taken off at Staten Island and spent the night with Vice President Daniel D. Tompkins at his Summer home.

The next day, Aug. 16, he came up to the city, landed at the Battery, and was escorted in an open carriage drawn by four horses to the City Hall, where he was received by Mayor Paulding and quartered in the famous City Hotel on Broadway. The site is now occupied by the United States Realty Building, between Cedar and Thames Street, just above the Trinity Building.

No foreign visitor to these shores, either before or since, ever received so spontaneous and enthusiastic a welcome, not only in New York, but wherever he went. Lafayette was overpowered by the plaudits of the crowd and the sincere expressions of the love of the people. It is recorded that on several occasions, when about to reply to addresses of welcome, he literally broke down and could scarcely stammer his thanks.

"The illustrious benefactor of America," said one writer in describing the events of Lafayette's entrance into the city, "the soldier, patriot, and statesman of our Revolution, the bosom friend and companion in arms of the immortal Washington, the steadfast friend of liberty all over the world, has come in his old age and full of honors to the country of his youthful glory to receive the congratulations of his surviving compatriots and to become the guest of the nation—the guest of ten millions of grateful freemen."

The day, it was said, presented one of the most brilliant and magnificent exhibitions ever witnessed in the city.

Lafayette came up from Staten Island to the Battery in the steamboat Chancellor Livingston. The flotilla of boats around the Battery was gayly decorated. His boat was followed by four other large steamboats crowded with passengers. Accompanying Lafayette were many of his old army friends, including Colonel Marinus Willett, then 85 years of age; General Clarkson, Colonel Trumbull, Colonel Richard Varick, and General Philip Van Cortlandt, who left his home at Croton-on-the-Hudson at 4 o'clock in the morning to greet Lafayette on his arrival in New York. Business was practically suspended. Every house was decorated and the roofs of the buildings overlooking the Battery and along Broadway were thronged with people. The military of the city acted as his escort and the landing at Castle Garden was greeted by salvos of artillery. At the City Hall, in reply to Mayor Paulding's welcome, Lafayette said:

"While I am so affectionately received by the City of New York and their worthy representatives, I feel myself overwhelmed with inexpressible emotion. It is the pride of my heart to have been one of the earliest adopted sons of America."

The corporation of the city requested Lafayette to sit for his portrait, and Samuel F. B. Morse, then a struggling young artist, who a few years later was to become one of the famous men of the land through his inventions in practical

telegraphy, painted the full-length picture which now hangs in the Governors' Room of the City Hall. Lafayette remained in the city only five days then. He was constantly on the go, and as one reads of the illuminations and the brass band playing in front of his hotel at night, it seems almost incredible that the distinguished visitor did not suffer from fatigue. But if these five days were strenuous, they were comparatively tame when contrasted with the honors showered upon him after his return three weeks later from a hurried visit to Boston and other New England towns.

Lafayette returned to New York by way of Long Island Sound, coming down by steamboat from Hartford. For two miles above Fulton Street the East River bank fairly swarmed with people, and thousands greeted him with wild cheering at the pier. The day, Sept. 6, was his sixty-seventh birthday, and the Society of the Cincinnati gave him a great dinner in the evening at Washington Hall, that celebrated meeting place at Broadway and Reade Street, now occupied by the Stewart Building. During his lifetime Lafayette was the guest at many celebrations of his birthday, but it is doubtful if he ever attended one that exceeded in magnificence and personal enthusiasm the affair held in this city ninety-two years ago.

No dinner, it was said, had ever before been given in New York with such magnificent decorations. Revolutionary trophies and banners bearing names of eminent officers hung from the walls. At the head of the room was an immense floral arch, from the centre of which rose an American eagle, bearing scrolls inscribed with the date of Lafayette's birth, Sept. 6, 1757; Brandywine, Sept. 11, 1777, where he was wounded, and Yorktown, Oct. 17, 1781.

Colonel Richard Varick, President of the Cincinnati, who was closely associated both with Lafayette and Washington in the Revolution, presided. Varick Street was named in his honor. The evening was one of the happiest spent by Lafayette during the entire year he was in America, for he met at one time more of his old war-friends than on any other occasion. Patriotic toasts were given and drunk with increasing hilarity until late in the evening. The following was given by Lafayette:

The sacred principles for which we have fought and bled—Liberty, Equality, and National Independence—may every nation of the earth in adopting them drink a bumper to the old Continental Army.

But a still greater tribute was to come. It was the great ball or fête given to Lafayette by the citizens of New York on the evening of Sept. 14 in Castle Garden. That famous building, since remodeled and now serving as the Aquarium, was then a popular amusement resort connected with the mainland by a narrow bridge. Years ago the open stretch of water was filled in, bringing Castle Garden within the limits of the Battery precincts. Tickets to the ball were \$5. General Matthew Clarkson, Cadwalader D. Colden, Dominick Lynch, Henry Brevoort, Abraham Schermerhorn, and General Nicholas Fish, all representative

men, comprised the Citizens' Committee.

The little bridge was roofed over with canvas and adorned with the flags of France and the United States. Over the entrance to the building was a tall triangular arch illuminated with colored lamps and surmounted by a blazing star. Above the circular floor, capable of accommodating nearly 1,000 dancers, galleries were erected for the spectators. From thirteen illuminated pillars, typifying the original Colonies, were suspended flags, banners, floral emblems, and other decorative effects. The West Point band provided the music. For Lafayette a seat of honor was provided under a blue and white marquee opposite the main entrance, and back of it was one of the popular transparencies of the time, with a view of La Grange and the simple inscription, "His Home." Between 6,000 and 7,000 persons attended the ball. Its magnificence actually surprised the managers, and the newspapers frankly admitted their inability to describe it properly.

"Foreign gentlemen present," said one writer, "admitted that they had never seen anything to equal this fête in the several countries to which they respectively belong. The blaze of light and beauty, the decorations of the military officers present, the combination of rich colors which met the eye at every glance, the brilliant circle of beauty and fashion in the galleries—everything in the range of sight was unexpressibly beautiful."

Writing nearly fifty years later, in 1873, the late Thurlow Weed, who was present at the ball and who on the following day was a member of the party that accompanied Lafayette on his tour up the Hudson River to Albany, said, in recalling the brilliancy of this fête and other tributes:

I have witnessed the celebrations of the completion of the Erie Canal and the mingling of the waters of Lake Erie with the Atlantic Ocean, the completion of the Croton water works, the reception of the Prince of Wales, and other brilliant and beautiful pageants, but they all lacked the heart and soul which marked and signaled the welcome of Lafayette. The joy of our city was expressed more by tears than in any other way. It is impossible to imagine scenes of deeper, higher, or purer emotion than the first meeting between General Lafayette and Colonel Marinus Willett, Colonel Ebenezer Stevens, Colonel Nicholas Fish, Colonel Varick, Major Platt, General Anthony Lamb, Major Popham, Major Fairlee, and other officers of the Revolution whom he had not seen in nearly forty years and whom, without a moment's hesitation he recognized and named. But the crowning glory of that series of honors and festivities was the fête at Castle Garden on the evening of the General's departure for Albany. The Castle was expensively, elaborately, and gorgeously fitted up and adorned for the occasion. I remember that even without the aid of gas the illumination was exceedingly brilliant.

Lafayette remained at the ball until 2 o'clock in the morning, when he went on board the steamboat James Kent, with a large escorting party, for the trip up the Hudson. Despite the excitement of the evening, one of the members tells us that Lafayette was up at 6 o'clock in the morning. Three days were spent on the journey to Albany, and it resembled

a triumphal procession. West Point greeted him royally. It was the scene of many of his Revolutionary experiences, and he refused to be hurried away to Newburg until after 7 o'clock at night. It was dark when the boat drew up to the Newburg pier, but the entire population seemed to be awaiting him. He stopped at Poughkeepsie, was entertained at the country home of Governor Morgan Lewis, and then went to Claremont, the Livingston manor home, where he was entertained by the host, Robert L. Livingston, with a dinner in the orangery, followed by a ball, which was opened

over a month, but every day and almost every night had been crowded with activities, and in addition he had made a long tour through New England by carriage. The same scenes, varying in manner and enthusiasm, were repeated wherever he went. He visited every one of the twenty-four States and practically all of the cities and important towns. The wonder of it is that after a year of such laborious traveling and feasting he was not a physical wreck. It was remarked by many then and afterward that no amount of entertaining seemed to weary him. His health proved equal to every demand, and

of the battle. It was a glorious day for Boston, and forty survivors of that fight had places of honor in the parade. Lafayette laid the cornerstone, after which Daniel Webster delivered the oration.

On this last occasion Lafayette remained in the city only a few days, departing for Washington to bid the President of the United States and Congress a final farewell. On his former visit to the capital James Monroe had entertained the nation's guest at the White House. Since that time a Presidential election had been held, and John Quincy Adams was in the White House. Lafayette was a guest there for several days, and the farewell fittingly took place on the eastern steps of the White House on Sept. 6, Lafayette's sixty-eighth birthday. It was an interesting and affecting occasion. President Adams in his words of farewell said that the visit "has been to the people of the Union a year of uninterrupted festivity and enjoyment, inspired by your presence."

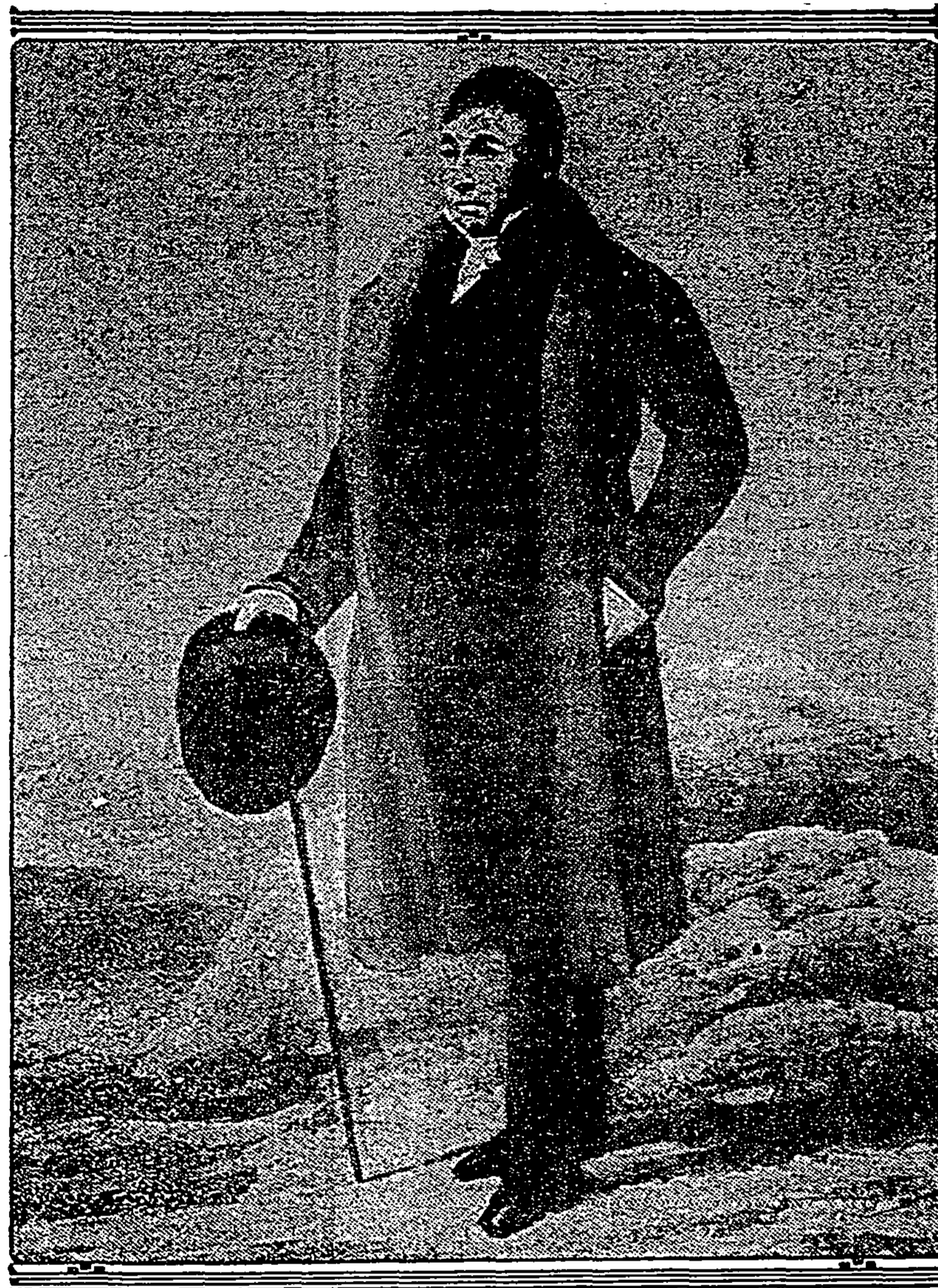
Lafayette went home with national honors. The newly constructed frigate Brandywine was placed at his disposal, and on Sept. 7, 1825, the vessel, a sailing ship, left her moorings below Washington outward bound for France.

The Frenchman was the guest of the nation in every sense of the word. The larger part of his traveling expenses was paid by Congress, and, in addition, Congress presented him with \$200,000 in part payment of his services as a General in the United States Army and a township in Florida of several thousand acres, for which a syndicate paid him \$100,000. The New York merchants gave him a carriage for his tour through New England, and Baltimore presented him with a magnificent equipage for his travels through the South. The sentiment of the public in doing honors to Lafayette is illustrated in an incident recorded by a member of his escorting party through New England. As the carriage with Lafayette approached a tollgate, it was observed that the gate was open, but two travelers were waiting the appearance of the roadkeeper to pay the fee.

"Go on," said the gatekeeper. "Lafayette travels this road today, and no man pays toll."

Fortunately, Lafayette suffered no physical disabilities as a result of the celebrations and feastings tendered to him during the one year and twenty-three days that he was in America. He lived nearly ten years longer. On May 20, 1834, he died in Paris in his seventy-seventh year. News of his death reached America one month later, and on June 25 a memorial service was held under the auspices of the Mayor and Common Council. The church bells throughout the city were tolled, the flags were at half-mast on all the shipping in the harbor, and there was a funeral procession starting from the City Hall and ending at Castle Garden.

"It was the last tribute of New York," wrote Mayor Philip Hone in his entertaining diary, "to the last Major General of the Continental Army, the hero of the American Revolution, the apostle of liberty."



Portrait of Lafayette at Lafayette College.

when Lafayette led out the venerable widow of General Montgomery, who fell in the attack at Quebec in 1775. Catskill and Hudson were also visited, and the banks of the river continually resounded with cheers.

Lafayette returned to New York on Sept. 20, and three days later was escorted across the river to Paulus Hook, now Jersey City, for his long journey through the Southern and Western States. He had been in America a little

he was always fresh, records Thurlow Weed, "cheerful and happy, with the magnetic power of imparting cheerfulness and happiness to others."

In July, 1825, Lafayette was in New York City for the fourth time in his year's tour of the country. He came by way of New England, where, amid a steady round of celebrations, the crowning feature was the laying of the cornerstone of the Bunker Hill Monument on June 17, 1825, the fiftieth anniversary