Franklin Gazette

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Friends of Franklin, c/o Dr. Larry E. Tise, Benjamin Franklin National Memorial, The Franklin Institute, Philadelphia, PA 19103

A brother may not be a friend, but a friend will always be a brother.
Poor Richards Improved, 1752

FROM THE DESK OF LARRY E. TISE

Despite the fact that we just mailed a Gazette, there are still plenty of Franklin activites and items to report in this quarterly smorgasbord of news bits.

1. Franklin Television Biography: It has always been strange to me, given the amazing events of Benjamin Franklin's life, that no one has done a feature film on his story. After all Franklin left in his own hand a pretty wonderful script in the form of his Autobiography. Maybe he is just too complex to comprehend in a single film. Nevertheless, Franklin is not too problematic for the Arts and Entertainment Network. Back in early May a film maker from California was in Philadelphia shooting scenes, artifacts, and interviewing people (including our co-editor Claude-Anne Lopez) for a television biography for A & E's new biography series. It will likely play in August or September--so be looking for program schedules and notes. It is in the same series as the Washington biography scheduled for July on A & E. Our appreciation to the film making company, Perpetual Motion and to Arts and Entertainment.

2. The History Channel. Speaking of the wonderful doings of Arts & Entertainment, I should say that they are shortly adding a whole new channel called "The History Channel." At a meeting of historians back in April, I met Dr. Libby Haight O'Connell, historian and history consultant for The History Channel, and learned a great deal about their plans. Among other things the Channel will offer time every day to show videos from history museums, historic sites, and other historical organizations on any topics of history or about the site or museum itself. This is a great opportunity for historical organizations to have free advertising that targets a large audience interested in history. If you want more precise information on how to use the program, contact Dr. O'Connell at The History Channel, 235 East 45th Street, New York, N.Y. 10017, phone (212) 661-4500.

3. The Whereabouts of Dr. William G. Carr. Just so that those of you who have been calling our faithful correspondent and friend, Dr. William G. Carr, will know

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That Bratty Brother Benjamin
by Claude-Anne Lopez

Benjamin was the tenth, the last, son born to Josiah Franklin from his two marriages. Of his nine older brothers there were only three with whom he would relate in adult life, all the others having died in infancy or too soon for him to have really known them. All three (John, Peter and James) were, like him, of the second bed--Abiah Folger's--and three were energetic and intelligent people whom he never stopped trying to impress, as is often the case with younger siblings.

Born in 1690, John, oldest of the second group, was sixteen by the time Benjamin came into the world. At first he followed in his father's footsteps as a soap-maker and tallow chandler, but eventually branched out on his own, became fairly rich and acquired a considerable library for his day (more than six hundred books) which reflected his varied intellectual interests. By 1744 he was the Boston agent for the newly-launched Pennsylvania fireplace, better known today as the Franklin stove.

The following year John found himself the recipient of the kind of jocular letter ("ecclesiastical mathematics" this time) that Benjamin loved sending to his staid Boston relatives, if only to shake them up a bit. The subject was the expedition launched from Boston on March 24, 1745, against Catholic Louisbourg, on Cape Breton Island. Marveling at the length of time it was taking to conquer the French fort, he mused: "You have a fast and prayer day for the purpose; in which I compute five thousand petitions were offered up to the same effect in New England, which added to the number of days since January 25th, make forty-five millions of prayers; which, set against the few prayers of the priests in the garrison, to the Virgin Mary, give a vast balance in your favor. If you do not succeed, I fear I shall have but an indifferent opinion of Presbyterian prayers in such cases, as long as I live." This was followed by a sly hint to the theological point that divided him from the earlier generation: "Indeed, in attacking strong towns I should have more dependence on works than on faith; for, like the kingdom of heaven, they are to be taken by force and violence; and in a French garrison I suppose there are devils of that kind, that they are not to be cast out by prayers and fasting, unless it be their own fasting for want of provisions. . ."

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Do They Remember Me in D.C.?:
Benjamin Franklin in the Nation's Capitol

Join in a rich, behind-the-scenes educational tour of the many treasure houses of Washington, D.C. on Thursday, September 29-Saturday, October 1. An opportunity to visit institutions containing exhibits, furnishings, artifacts, and portraits of Benjamin Franklin. Each visit will give participants a unique and private look into all of the following places: National Postal Museum, Union Station, U.S. Capitol, Library of Congress, National Museum of American History, U.S. State Department, the White House and the National Portrait Gallery.

Friend of Franklin, Dr. William Carr, will speak at the National Postal Museum on Thursday. The title of Dr. Carr's Franklin talk will be "I am, too, Remembered in Washington, D.C." In addition, Professor Ormond Seavey from George Washington University will be the luncheon speaker on Friday at the Library of Congress. He will discuss "Benjamin Franklin: The Historian."

A special Franklinian musical performance by Friend of Franklin Martin Mangold will be Friday evening's entertainment. You will not want to miss this program entitled "Some Franklinian Music". Martin Mangold will be accompanied by soprano Joan McFarland in this musical production.

A video and slide presentation on Benjamin Franklin portraits especially arranged by Friend of Franklin Frederick Dickson will be part of Saturday's focus after our visit to the National Portrait Gallery.

A complete program and registration form will be sent shortly. If you know of any individuals or groups interested in attending this program, please call the Benjamin Franklin National Memorial office, (215)-448-1329.

Benjamin Franklin's Use of Scientific Analogues and Metaphors in a Political Context

by Professor I. Bernard Cohen

In Part One of this article Professor Cohen discussed how Franklin, unlike a number of his American contemporaries, did not feel impelled to draw on scientific concepts in his political writings. An established scientist, Franklin had no need to demonstrate his mastery of scientific concepts outside their primary context. Professor Cohen points out that Franklin's prose style was modelled after essayists who structured their texts in a way that did not rely on scientific metaphors. The breadth of Frnaklin's targeted audience also influenced his style, since esoteric references would have limited the appeal and coherence of his argument to a narrow readership. His political writings are, however, rich in images from the kind of scientific discoveries and phenomena that would have been reported in the popular press.

This article is an extract from Professor Cohen's forthcoming book, Science and the Founding Fathers: Science and the Political Thought of Jefferson, Franklin, Adams and Madison, to be published in 1995 by W.W. Norton (New York City).

Part Two

A wholly different kind of bio-medical metaphor was used by Franklin in his so-called Canada pamphlet of 1760.[1] This second methaphor was based on an analogy between the state and the human body considered as a living organism, an analogy which had a long history and is known under the name of the body politic. Franklin, as might be expected, gave this old anlogy a new turn. "The human body and the political," he wrote, "differ in this, that the first is limited by nature to a certain stature, which, when attained, [it] cannot ordinarily exceed; the other by better government and more prudent police, as well as by change of manners and other circumstances, often takes fresh starts of growth, after being long at a stand; and may add tenfold to the dimensions it had for ages been confined to." Nature determines the size of the human body, but there is no similar limitation to the size of political body, to a state or nation. A "mother," of "full stature," Franklin wrote, "is in a few years equalled by a growing daughter." But, in "the case of a mother country and her colonies, it is quite different." In this case, according to Franklin, the "growth of the children tends to encrease the growth of the mother, and so the differences and superiority is longer preserved." The analogy suggests that mother England need not fear the expansion and growth of her daughter colonies in America, since the effect will be to "encrease" rather than decrease the relative growth of the mother."[2] Franklin argues, in particular, that "this island" (England) by increasing its manufactures could "increase and multiply in proportion as the means and facility of gaining a livelihood increase," so that it is "capable of supporting ten times its present number of people" if "they could be employed."

A celebrated example of Franklin's use of a bio-medical analogy to make a political point occurs in a woodcut published by Franklin in the Pennsylvania Gazette on 9 May 1754. According to Carl Van Doren, this was "probably drawn" by Franklin and appears to have been the "first American cartoon." It is a crude picture of a curled snake, divided into eight pieces, marked with abbreviations of seven states (New York, New Jersey, Pennsylvania, Maryland, Virginia, North Carolina, South Carolina) plus New England. It bears the caption: "Join, or Die."[3] The significance of the cartoon was a supposed property of the fabled joint (or "joynt") snake. If broken apart, the snake would die; but if the broken piece were joined, it would continue to live. The political message was obvious.

Another snake that Franklin introduced in a political context was the snake with two heads. he was glad that the constitution adopted by Pennsylvania in 1776 called for a legislature composed of a single chamber, a house of representatives directly elected by the people. A bicameral legislature, he remarked (and later wrote), reminded him of "the famous fable of the snake with two heads." One day this snake "was going to a brook to drink." Along the way she had "to pass through a hedge, a twig of which opposed her direct course." Franklin wrote that "one head chose to go on the right side of the twig, the other on the left." The result was "that time was spent in the contest; and before the decision was completed the poor snake died of thirst."

In 1776, the two-headed snake was only part of a fable and not an item of Franklin's personal encounter with natural history. But a decade later, Franklin had just such a two-headed snake, preserved in a phial of spirits. He showed it to a Massachusetts visitor, Manasseh Cutler, who described a visit to Franklin in his home on Market Street, Philadelphia, on Friday, 17 July 1787. Cutler reported Franklin "a short, fat, trunched old man, in a plain Quaker dress, bald pate, and short white locks, sitting without his hat under the trees." His "voice was low, but his countenance open, frank and pleasing." Franklin introduced him "to the other gentlemen of the company, who were most of them members of the Convention."

Toward the end of the visit, Franklin showed Cutler "a curiosity he had just received, and with which he was much pleased. It was a snake with two heads, preserved in a large vial." Franklin informed him that this snake "was taken near the confluence of the Schuylkill with the Delaware, about four miles from this

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why you get a message that the phone has been disconnected--he has moved. No, he has not settled in some posh Washington retirement home. Nor has he moved to the retirees haven of Florida. In fact, he has moved to Denver, Colorado, reportedly to be closer to the ski slopes and mountain biking trails. While we don't have a new phone number, his address is Parkplace, Suite 1243, 111 Emerson Street, Denver, Colorado 80218. Nor does this mean that he is dropping out of Franklin things. As a matter of fact, Dr. Carr will be the keynote speaker for our next tour of Franklin's Historic Washington, D. C., September 29-October 1. The tour begins on September 29 at the new U. S. Postal Museum. He made the arrangements for us to visit the Postal Museum. And in his note about moving, he also informed me that his speech is already written from beginning to end. Good luck, Bill.

4. Richard Saunders Lives. Among new members of the Friends of Franklin--and a life member at that, one scared up by Ralph Archbold (thanks, Ralph)--is one Doug Hall, founder and majordomo of an organization calling itself Richard Saunders International, Professional Inventors, located appropriately in The Eureka! Mansion at 3851 Edwards Road, Cincinnati, Ohio 45244, phone (513) 271-9911 or fax 271-9966. According to his promotional materials and various articles in professional magazines and The Wall Street Journal, his business is coming up with new ideas that challenge even the largest and most productive companies in the world to constantly invent more creative and productive ways of doing things. Sounds pretty Franklinesque to me. Welcome, Doug. The Friends of Franklin could use some pro bono advice, too.

5. The Influence of Franklin's Will. On April 16, 1994, there was a fascinating story in the Philadelphia Inquirer that ultimately had to be inspired by Benjamin Franklin's audacious will--where he left $1,000 each to Boston and Philadelphia for two hundred years, to be disbersed in 1990. Yes, that one, that we have been reporting about regularly over the past few years in these columns. The story reported on the first page of the Inquirer concerned the will of Henry G. Freeman, Jr., of Philadelphia. Written in 1912, Freeman provided in his will for the establishment of the Henry G. Freeman, Jr. Pin Money Fund which was to pay $12,000 per year "to the lady termed the First Lady in the Land; that is, the President of the United States' wife, or any one representing the president as such." Ordering that the fund "shall continue in force as long as this glorious government lasts," Freeman explained that he was establishing the Fund "because I feel the President of the United States receives such a miserable pittance for a man holding the greatest position on Earth." Although Freeman died in 1917, the first payments were not to be made until his 26 heirs died. With the death of his son in 1931 and with speculation that an initial payment might be made to Mrs. Herbert Hoover, she officially through the U.S. Attorney General declined any interest in the Fund. Actually, the last of the 26 heirs died in 1989, opening the way for Freeman's plan to go into effect. Once the Orphans Court finished its work, that was December 1992, everything was prepared to make payments. Beginning in January, 1993, Hilary Rodham Clinton became the first First Lady to benefit from Freeman's philanthropy and largess. She accepted twelve monthly $1,000 payments during 1993--as was duly reflected in the Clinton's 1993 tax return. I can't imagine that this scheme was not inspired by Benjamin Franklin's century hopping through his own long range philanthropies.

BENJAMIN FRANKLIN'S ENGLAND IN 1994:
An Inspection Report
by Larry E. Tise

Due to a meeting of the new Board of Editors of The Journal of The Franklin Institute at this year's International Symposium on Circuits and Systems in London, I was able to spend a long Memorial Day weekend in England making inspection calls on a number of places frequented by Benjamin Franklin during his three long residences in the United Kingdom--1724-26, 1757-62, 1764-75--a total of sixteen years. Except in one instance--Franklin's residence on his second and third sojourns at 36 Craven Street--these were places new to me and were in addition to the dozen or so other sites, libraries, and societies I had visited on previous trips to England. My visits of inspection were interesting, charming, and illuminating indeed.

Bowood

My first visit was to the great estate of William Petty, the 2nd Earl of Shelburne (1737-1803) who in 1784, due to his service to George III, became the first Marquess of Lansdowne. Located an hour and a half from London by train near the town of Chippenham, Bowood is still today a lavish private estate owned and occupied by Charles Maurice, the current Earl of Shelburne.

William Petty served two stints--one before and one after the American Revolution as prime minister. During these he had extensive dealings with Benjamin Franklin. Just as loving of liberty, enlightenment, and knowledge as Franklin himself and always strongly supportive of American interests, Shelburne (as he is commonly known) found close kinship with the brilliant American scientist and statesman.

And Shelburne was also a great patron of science and learning. It was he who gave Joseph Priestley a job as his personal secretary and librarian in 1772. He also provided funds for Priestley to procure and make the scientific apparatus which the dissenting clergyman/scientist used on August 1, 1774, to isolate oxygen. It was he who supported another scientist, John Ingenhouse, who discovered the process of photosynthesis and an inoculation against smallpox.


Bowood estate House

After the American Revolution, Shelburne as Prime Minister negotiated the peace treaty with Benjamin Franklin between England and America. He made Bowood and his other estate, Wycombe, virtual think tanks for revolution in the 1780's and supported the research and writings of such reformer/revolutionaries as Jeremy Bentham, Mirabeau, Morellet, and Condorcet. In the opening years of the French Revolution, in fact, he maintained a team of English and Swiss revolutionaries in Paris drafting laws and constitutions for the consideration of the National Assembly.

Given his larger than life interests and vast wealth, it is no wonder that Shelburne built up Bowood to reflect his world view. Shelburne hired the eighteenth century's most famous architect, Robert Adam (1728-92), to design a great house complete with hundreds of rooms, a library, enclosed gardens, and even a menagerie for exotic animals. Although the principal house structure was demolished after the Second World War by George John Charles, the 8th Marquess of Lansdowne, the remaining structures are as awesome as they are beautiful.

Developed over the past twenty years or so along the lines of George Vanderbilt's Biltmore House in North Carolina as a historic and recreational park, the several hundred acres making up the estate include vast green meadows for walking, terraced and landscaped gardens of great beauty, a salubrious lake with a Hermit's Cave and a Doric Temple also built by Robert Adam in 1761 that serves as a family mausoleum, all in addition to the still substantial residence. Modern additions enabling Bowood to be a self-supporting private enterprise include Adventure Playground with play items in the scale of a wooden sailing ship and giant climbing towers, garden shops, restaurants, and tea rooms.

But from among all of the halls and exhibits of Shelburne memorabilia covering three hundred years of one of England's most distinguished families there is one room called "the Laboratory" where Joseph Priestley on that August day in 1774 discovered oxygen. Even as I stood quietly in the room reading about Priestley's activities there, I was more than a little moved.

We do not know for sure whether Franklin visited Bowood. He was on such intimate terms with Priestley, not to mention Shelburne, that it is unthinkable that he did not. He associated regularly with Priestley on things scientific, political, and historical. Priestley did extensive oral history interviews with Franklin to write the first definitive history of electricity and, based on the interviews, provided the only description of Franklin's famous kite experiment.

Moreover, just a few short weeks after Priestley's amazing discovery, Franklin wrote a series of four letters to scientists of his acquaintance in Belgium, Holland, and Germany to serve as letters of introduction for Priestley and Shelburne. The pair, scientist and patron, traveled through Europe in the fall of 1774 demonstrating the method of isolating oxygen and taking in the liberating principles of revolution even then crisscrossing the continent.

Since I have been writing about Shelburne, Priestley, and Franklin over the past year in my current book project--and about all of the liberating ideology that propelled forth from Bowood--this was an inspiring visit, memorable to the core. I recommend Bowood as a great place to visit.

Oxford University

On Sunday, May 29, I proceeded from London to Oxford, a train ride of only 40 minutes or so, in anticipation of a meeting with the publisher of The Journal of The Franklin Institute. Pergamon Press, recently consolidated into Elsevier Science, Ltd., is the largest publisher of scholarly and scientific journals in the world. With some pretty swank quarters at Oxford, they also have a very cozy guest house that became my hostel for the next couple of days.


Ship at Adventure Playground - Bowood

Although I had been to Oxford before, I never had the time to take a look at the place and to see it as Franklin would have viewed it when he arrived there on April 30, 1762, to receive an honorary degree, Doctor of Civil Laws. Actually Franklin arrived there with his son William Franklin also in tow. At the same ceremony honoring the father, William was given a Master of Arts degree.

Preceded by the beadles (ushers for both religious and civil ceremonies) Franklin was escorted into some unnamed hall by Dr. William Seward, fellow of the College of St. John the Baptist, and by him presented to the vice-chancellor of the university who conferred the degree. Thomas Nowell, fellow of Oriel College, then presented William Franklin to receive the Masters' degree. A flowery Latin citation listed off Benjamin Franklin's amazing accomplishments.

All of that was well and good. But the best story of the day came after the ceremonies. University officials told the elated Franklin that he would have gotten a degree several years earlier except for the fact that William Smith, Provost of the University of Pennsylvania and bitter political enemy of Franklin, had sabotaged his reputation in 1759 with a sorely damaging letter. Franklin demanded a copy of the letter and took it

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back to London where he cornered Smith at the home of William Strahan. Franklin went over the letter line by line, demanding explanations from the stammering Smith. Smith finally acknowledged that the letter "contained many Particulars in which he had been mislead by wrong Information, and that the whole was written with too much Rancor and Asperity." Although he agreed under pressure to write a new letter to Oxford correcting the errors, he never did. When he showed up at Oxford in February, 1763--less than a year later--he recanted his promise to set matters right. John Kelley, Oxford professor of medicine reported to Strahan and Franklin, "He denied the whole, and even treated the Question as a Calumny." See Papers of Benjamin Franklin, X, pp. 76-78.

As I sauntered around the alley ways, cycle paths, and green quadrangles at Oxford observing such wonders as the Radcliffe Camera (actually a special library reading room), the Bodlean Library, Christ Church Cathedral, and a passel of the colleges that make up this most special university, I could only muse about the combined adulation and anger Franklin must have felt the day or days he walked those same byways. Would the ceremony have been here or there? As it was Memorial Day and the colleges of the University were closing down for the year, there was really no one to ask or way to ascertain exactly which buildings might have witnessed the granting of degrees to father and son followed by the explosion of the father over matters political.

Franklin's House at Twyford

Twyford

After a couple of days devoted to my main business--The Journal of the Franklin Institute--there was one day left to check out other Franklin sites. The one that interested me the most of any Franklin site was Bishop Jonathan Shipley's (1714-1788) house in Twyford, near Winchester, where Benjamin Franklin conceived, outlined, and then wrote the first twenty-seven pages of what he described later as "the History of my Life" or what became known as the Autobiography.

In that Franklin's Autobiography became one of the greatest selling, widely translated, and actually read books in the English language and in human history, I need not belabor the honor it was to see the spot where he dreamed up this endlessly fascinating piece of literature.

I trained in the morning to Winchester and, after making gracious bows at the famous Winchester Cathedral and at the nearby Great Hall containing King Arthur's round table, I was taken by retired General Giles Mills (native Virginian, decorated British officer, veteran D-Dayer, and ripe candidate for knighthood--and presumably thereby Arthur's table) on a detailed tour of the village of Twyford.

Some five or six miles out from Winchester into the countryside we went until we arrived at a very green and utterly neat village at the juncture of two roads. General Mills and his wife Emily have a very charming cottage in Twyford and directly across the street from Bishop Shipley's quite grand Georgian house. Bishop Shipley's house and property had exchanged hands in recent years, so that I was quite fortunate to have the name and assistance of Giles and Emily Mills in gaining access.

We walked across the country road and knocked at the door of the old mansion where Benjamin Franklin went twice in the summer of 1771--June 17-24 and again July 30-August 13. On the first visit he fell in love with the charms of Twyford; on the second he became a serious writer. On the first visit as he surveyed Shipley's estate, he discovered a beautiful, tiny summer cottage two hundred feet from the principal house. That cottage became his chosen spot to conjure the outlines of a life's history that presents the Franklin he wanted to be, the Franklin he wanted us to know, and the Franklin he wanted to be remembered.

We walked through the grand mansion and went out a side door into a luscious garden in full spring bloom and across the greenest grass in the entire world, newly mowed and as aromatic as it was green. To and into the cottage we went with its original arched doorway and eight paneled windows. It was bereft of furniture, but the wooden floor, the wood paneling, plaster-vaulted ceiling, rustic fireplace, and two storage closets remained just as they would have been when Franklin sat down there to write his first words: "Twyford, at the Bishop of St Asaph's, 1771," he inscribed his page. Then he began his long chronicle, addressed to his son William, "Dear Son." Five years later he and William would become forever alienated from each other over the course of the American Revolution.

He wrote away with the grace and charm that would only have been possible to a man relaxed and happy. Twyford offered what every author needs--beauty, the sounds, scents, and sonorous views of nature. From his writing table he looked out of the cottage toward Bishop Shipley's mansion. But looking just to his right he saw the flowering, teeming gardens. Just to his left, through trees and over hedges he could see a distant vista across rich meadows as far as the eye could discern.

When he took breaks to assemble his thoughts, he needed to walk only a hundred yards down a tiny lane by the village rector's house to the church of St. Mary the Virgin. The foundations of the church were originally laid out to hold a Druidic temple, noted in the Domesday Book as Tviforde--two fords. The Saxon church gave way to a Norman church in or about 1200; that gave way to a reconfigured church in the 14th century; and that to a Victorian configuration in 1876. But elements of all stages of evolution are easily evident.

The church and grounds would have been for Franklin another place of solitude and contemplation. He certainly walked by to see the gigantic yew tree gracing the church grounds. It was already 250 years old when he visited there. He surely also heard the peal of the eight beautiful Twyford Bells placed in the church tower in 1754 and rung morning and night every day (except during WWII) from that time to the present.

Going on down the lane from the church one comes to the two fords across a stream producing, General Mills proclaimed, the best trout in all of England. There Franklin surely relived the story included in the Autobiography of his "first Voyage from Boston" when the passengers "set about catching Cod & hawl'd up a great many." Franklin had been a vegetarian prior to that time, not eating "animal Food." But when the fishermen opened up some of the fish and found smaller fish within, Franklin concluded "Then, thought I, if you eat one another, I don't see why we mayn't eat you."

A more salubrious setting one could not imagine. As we settled down at the Mills house for lunch, I could only marvel over and again that Franklin had found a most heavenly spot to leave that permanent record of his amazing life. For the next four years, in letter after letter, Franklin thanked the Shipleys for providing the time and place for him to begin his

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Inspection - continued

memorable project. Try as hard as he might, however, he was not able to go back there to continue his project. It would be put off until he was in Passy in 1784 about ready to return to America for retirement. Then it was again put aside until 1788. Fortunately, what was conceived at Twyford finally came to fruition.

36 Craven Street

All is well at Bowood, at Oxford, and at Twyford. But at 36 Craven Street, the home of Mrs. Margaret Stevenson where Franklin lived as a boarder during almost all of his time in England, things are not at all well.

I made two visits to 36 Craven Street on this trip. Once late at night; the other on a bright, sunny Sunday morning. The place is empty, boarded up, shored up with scaffolding. The front wall is leaning four inches into the street. From roof to basement the place is almost a wreck.

Its lamentable condition is underscored by the fact that the house is on a street where every other old building has been restored or is being restored, along with quite a few new buildings as well. So tightly sealed is the historic house at present that no one can go into it or be safe upon entry. Even when I first visited there in 1990--and did tour the house--it was not in a safe condition.

All of this and the need for funds was highlighted at a reception held on June 1 at the Cafe Royal in London. Countess Mary Bessborough, Honorary Chairman of the Friends of Benjamin Franklin House, and Stephen Sinnott, Honorary Managing Director of the Friends, organized this magnificent reception featuring a rich assortment of donated wines and cheeses. Perhaps a hundred people attended to hear Lady Bessborough and Sinnott in order describe the crisis situation with the house.

"The House cannot make it through another winter," Sinnott proclaimed, asking for any possible assistance in securing 300,000 pounds sterling before fall.

Lady Bessborough and her late husband, the Earl of Bessborough, have been at this project quite a few years and succeeded in getting the house transferred from the British government to The Friends of Benjamin Franklin House. Ceremonies in 1987 commemorating the bicentennial of the U.S. Constitution were held at the house--which from photos in fundraising materials prepared by the Friends seemed to be in excellent condition at the time. Very ambitious plans were developed by 1989 "to create a living memorial to Benjamin Franklin with a Museum, a Franklin Library and an American Cultural Center for the International Study of Anglo-American Heritage."

According to budget figures in the group's handsome fundraising materials, a total of 3,000,000 pounds sterling (about $4.5 million) are being sought as follows:

For 36 Craven Street
(Franklin's residence)

950,000 pounds	Restoration of House
200,000 pounds	Operational and architectural fees
600,000 pounds	Furniture, accessories etc.
1,750,000 pounds	Total for 36 Craven Street

For 35 Craven Street
(Not associated with Franklin)

250,000 pounds	Purchase of 35 Craven Street
800,000 pounds	Restoration of 35 Craven Street
200,000 pounds	Furniture, accessories etc.
1,250,000 pounds	Total for 35 Craven Street

Corporate donors and individual sponsors are being sought to fund portions of the project by adopting individual rooms, by contributing or purchasing furniture, or by general donations.

Interested parties should contact the Friends of Benjamin Franklin House at the Royal Society for the Encouragement of the Arts at 8 John Adams Street, The Strand, London WC2N 6EZ, United Kingdom, phone 071-839-7717.

I urge all friends of Benjamin Franklin to take notice of this project and get in touch with the Friends of Benjamin Franklin and with Lady Bessborough, Stephen Sinnott, and other officers of the group. I suggest that interested individuals ask specifically how they can help out and offer to contribute toward specific items of the project.

I say this advisedly and after many discussions with the officers of both the Friends of Benjamin Franklin House and our own Friends of Franklin, Inc. Those of us who have joined hands under the banner of the Friends of Franklin, Inc., and who are working diligently to promote the study and understanding of Benjamin Franklin are genuinely concerned with the dramatic physical deterioration and near-destruction of 36 Craven Street. The Friends of the Benjamin Franklin House have for the past five years--that I am familiar with--attempted to sell their plan to individual donors, corporations, and, particularly, in Congress--without documented reports of success or annual reports indicating progress. During this time the house has gone from a sound to an endangered condition.

After seeing the sad state of 36 Craven Street yet again in June, I personally feel that if the Friends of Benjamin Franklin House are not able to raise even the funds to stabilize and protect the structure by the end of 1994 that the group should seriously rethink the project in its entirety. At the same time, it seems to me that the group would do well to enter into direct collaboration with other Franklin organizations in both America and the United Kingdom to find a workable plan for saving the property.

To date the Friends of Franklin, Inc., (our group--not to be confused) has provided the Friends of Benjamin Franklin House with all of our mailing lists so that every friend of Franklin we know can be solicited for support. We have suggested the names of other individuals and organizations whom we think might have a concrete interest in helping to save the property. And we have offered both positive and critical advice on scope and realistic feasibility of the currently promoted plan. Finally, we have offered to become more directly involved in looking for a plan that will work.

I think I speak for all friends of Franklin when I urge the Friends of Benjamin Franklin House to proceed immediately with their current plan or move expeditiously to find another one that can be funded and save this unique historic treasure.

On the Trail of the Last Franklin

Part IX - Women

by Claude-Anne Lopez

Elegantly turned out in the latest fashion, an excellent and indefatigable dancer, fluent in the French language and rapidly acquiring French social graces, Temple became very popular with the fair sex. In their ribald letters to him, his male friends (whose correspondence, considered beside the point, does not appear in the Franklin Papers) often express envy as they see him "flying from conquest to conquest."

A cynical tone seems to have been de riqueur among the young set: French husbands are really not ferocious, and to seduce their wives contributed to American glory; bantering, bragging and belittling the female who yielded show up in equal doses in those adolescent boasts. One older woman in particular, dubbed "the bald head and tail countess," was the object of their cruel jokes.

A former college mate of Temple's, George Fox--whose stable near Philadelphia would eventually house Franklin's papers for generations--devoted many pages to discussions of love, referring to La Rochefoucauld's world-weary Maxims and to Pope's saying that "The Woman who deliberates is lost." When Fox left cosmopolitan Paris to be truly obligated to learn French, he promised to keep in mind Temple's remark that "of all the Masters of a Language, a Mistress is the best."

While inviting Temple to a ball--where men, as he surely knew, were to appear clad in satin--Henry Grand, the son of American's first banker in Europe, pledged that pretty women would be "as thick as hops." Even the sober secretary of the Lodge of the Nine Sisters sounded a little apologetic when he had to specify that ladies were not admitted to a certain meeting. Finally, the Franklins' next door neighbor, young Le Veillard, often sighed at his own shyness toward the girls compared to Temple's well-known audacity, reinforced, no doubt, by the possession of some secret formula that rendered him "invulnerable," or so he thought.

When Temple reached his twenty-first birthday in February 1781, Franklin must have decided it was high time to stabilize those "hard to govern passions of youth" that he, too, had experienced in his early twenties and that had led to the inopportune birth of his own son William. This seemed like just the right time to settle Temple in marriage and in a secure position while withdrawing from public life himself, now that he had turned seventy-five and felt discouraged by the never-ending Revolutionary War. He made both moves almost simultaneously in April, tendering his resignation to Congress and asking their protection for his grandson who had loyally served him and America.[1]

The most eligible bride-to-be, in his view, was close at hand, practically a neighbor in Passy: Cunégonde Brillon, the older daughter of a family with whom he had entertained most cordial relations for a good four years. His proposal, addressed in writing to Cunégonde's mother after an unsuccessful talk with the girl's father, opened, it must be said, in a frankly egocentric fashion: having almost lost his daughter because of the distance between them, Franklin hoped to find another one in Mme Brillon and still another in her own daughter to take care of him in his old age if he stayed in France, and close his eyes after he died. He did add, however, that even though paternal bias may have led him to form too flattering an opinion of Temple, he believed that his grandson would become in time a distinguished man.

For all the delicate-to-delirious flirtation she had carried out with Franklin by letter, through music and at the chess table, Madame was thrown into a panic at the idea of such a union and took refuge in the tactful arguments that Temple was not a Catholic and might carry their daughter off to America. Either because he did not understand the French as well as he thought he did (but then, who does?) the old Doctor did not take this polite no for an answer. He argued in a second letter, one of his most heartfelt ever, that all religions are basically the same except for their packaging, and that he would hold on to this official position until Temple became acceptable to the American government as his successor, thus ensuring his permanence in France. This time the refusal was a little sharper: the Brillons would never consider for a son-in-law a man who, not being French, could not succeed his father-in-law in his administrative position. Not French, not legitimate, not seriously grounded in a profession, he was, in truth, a poor matrimonial prospect.

As ususal we don't know how Temple felt about being turned down. But we do know that a few years later he fell in love and was loved in return by the younger Brillon girl, Aldegonde. The Passy circle was all abuzz about this romance but Aldegonde was promptly married off to some wealthy Frenchman and Temple reverted to his pattern of courting only married women, leading a life of erotic fulfillment and emotional poverty. Franklin swallowed his defeat in silence, still friendly with the family but a shade more distant. The collapse of his political plans would be much harder to take.

1. To be discussed in the next installment.

To Be Continued in the next Gazette

Bratty Brother - continued

The response from New England must have been somewhat abrasive, for in a later letter Benjamin wrote a little sheepishly: "As you hate Prolixity and all his Works you shall have none of them to read this Post from Your Loving Brother." Loving, yes. He took a lively interest in John's plan to start a glass factory in Braintree, employing German immigrants, and to build a little town, with his partners, around that factory. He even purchased eight lots (as did their brother Peter) in Germantown, near Boston, to be developed by the building of "tenements." The venture did not turn out as well as hoped.

When John fell ill in 1752 of the family disease--kidney stones--Benjamin did all he could to ease the pain by procuring him a flexible catheter, an instrument invented in Italy and not in use yet in America. He sat by the silversmith, directing him, until the work was finished and promptly sent it off to Boston. Of course, as men are wont to do, he hid his tenderness and anguish in a welter of technical detail, but one can sense his concern just below the surface. And from then on he was on the lookout for recipes that could help John, "Onion Pottage," lime water, what not. Their parents had died by now, Benjamin was in his late forties and it was time, as he said, that as their relatives disappeared the survivors should love each other "proportionately more."

The formerly irreverent little brother was now in a position to offer his senior the position of Boston postmaster, and he did. He sent him every paper he wrote, be it on meteorology or demographics, and asked for his comments. Even though his brothers and sisters sometimes sounded in awe of him because of their inferior spelling or style, he never failed to stress that there was no reason to feel that way.

It was in the course of his last visit to John, in the closing days of 1754, that Benjamin met Catharine Ray, a spirited young charmer from Block Island who had come to spend some time with her sister, married to John's stepson. They must have spent an exquisite Christmas together, while Catharine made sugar plums and flirted away with this obviously fascinated middle-aged man who was to remain her loyal, platonic friend to the end.

John went downhill after that and suffered much--a preview of what Benjamin would go through some day. When he died, at sixty-six, Benjamin Franklin sat down and wrote to John's stepdaughter, Elizabeth Hubbart, a condolence letter that was soon to be copied and circulated through Massachusetts. "It is the will of God and Nature", it began, "that these mortal bodies be laid aside, when the soul is to enter into real life...a man is not completely born until he is dead." And it ended on a note of serenity: "Our friend and we are invited abroad on a party of pleasure that is to last for ever. His chair was first ready and he is gone before us. We could not all conveniently start together, and why should you and I be grieved at this, since we are soon to follow, and we know where to find him. Adieu."[1]

By a strange twist of fate, this letter, translated into French, found its way into a Parisian periodical where it was praised for its grave beauty. This was soon after the men in power had stopped sending each other to the guillotine.

1. The complete letter is to be found in Vol. vi, pp. 406-7 of the Yale edition of the Franklin Papers.

A Database of Franklin Images

by Roy Goodman

Franklin would be amazed and impressed if he had access to the "Inventory of American Painting," or the "Inventory of American Sculpture." Approximately 250,000 paintings and accompanying photographs for 85,000 of those works are made available through the National Museum of American Art, which is a component of the Smithsonian Institution. The complete information for any given painting can be found under the artist's name, the title of the work, the subject matter, the media, or, if it is a portrait, the name of the sitter. The "Inventory" is a national census of American paintings from the earliest colonial days to works completed by 1914.

For sculpture, the "Inventory" is intended to be a comprehensive listing of works made by American sculptors to the present. In addition to public and private collections, outdoor monuments are included. However, numismatics, decorative arts, minor architectural ornaments, and gravestones are lacking. Phil Greenslet has done us a great service with his recent numismatic work on the Franklin medals.

The record for each sculpture incorporates information about the artist, titles, creation date(s), medium, foundry, version, identification, cast numbers and marks, owner, location, provenance, and subject matter. Information from the University of Delaware's "Index of American Sculpture" has been entered along with historical and conservation notes.

The "Inventory" is maintained as a research database on the Smithsonian Institution Bibliographic Information System (SIBIS). Researchers may have access to the "Inventories" by visiting the office, inquiring by mail, or telephone. The three entries cited below, reflect the diversity and usefulness of such a resource. **Yes Ben, they do remember you in D.C.!**

For forms or information contact: Inventories of American Paintings and Sculpture, Office of Research Support, National Museum of American Art, 8th & F Streets, NW, Smithsonian Institution, Washington, DC 20560. Telephone: (202) 357-2971 or 357-1626.

Search: Portrait Male Franklin, Benjamin

ARTIST:	Aitken, Robert Ingersoll, 1878 - 1949, Sculptor
TITLE:	Benjamin Franklin, (sculpture)
DATE:	1922
MEDIUM:	Bronze
DIMEN:	H. 15 3/4
OWNER:	PricetonUniversity, Art Museum, Princeton, NJ 08544
PROVEN:	Gift of Forgan, J. Russell
SUBJECT:	Portrait male Franklin, Benjamin Portrait male Occupation Politician Portrait male Occupation Writer Portrait male Occupation Scientist Occupation Writer Author Occupation Political Statesman
SOURCE:	Index of American Sculpture, University of Delaware, 1985 Princeton University, Art Museum, 1991
REC ID:	ias 76001790

ARTIST:	Allen, Tom, Jr. 1927-, Sculptor
TITLE:	Frieze of life of Benjamin Franklin, (sculpture)
MEDIUM:	Undetermined
DIMEN:	40 ft.
OWNER:	Poor Richard Club, Philadelphia, Pennsylvania
SUBJECT:	Portrait male Franklin, Benjamin
TYPE:	frieze
SOURCE:	Index 3 of American Sculpture, University of Delaware, 1985
REC ID:	ias 76004832

ARTIST:	Bartlett, Paul Wayland, 1865-1925, Sculptor
TITLE:	Benjamin Franklin, (sculpture)
DATE:	1913
MEDIUM:	Bronze
DIMEN:	Statue: H. 27 1/2 W. 25 1/2 in.; Base: W. 25 1/2 in.
OWNER:	Washington County Museum of Fine Arts, P.O. Box 423, Hagerstown, MD 21741
MARKS:	signed
SUBJECT:	Portrait male Franklin, Benjamin Portrait male Occupation Politician Portrait male Occupation Writer Occupation Political Diplomat Portrait male Occupation Inventor Occupation Writer Author
SOURCE:	Washington County Museum of Fine Arts, 1988
REC ID:	ias 19660065

Benjamin Franklin's Use of Scientific Analogues and Metaphors in a Political Context

continued from page 2

city. It was about ten inches long, well proportioned, the heads perfect, and united to the body about one-fourth of an inch below the extremeties of the jaws." The snake "was of a dark brown, approaching to black, and the back beautifully speckled (if beauty can be applied to a snake) with white." Franklin "supposed it to be full grown, which I think probably appears probable, and thinks it must be sui generis of that class of animals." Franklin assumed that this snake was not "an extraordinary production" of nature, "but a distinct genus," an opinon based on "the perfect form of the snake, the probability of its being of some age, and there having been found a snake entirely similar (of which the Doctor has a drawing, which he showed us) near Lake Champlain, in the time of the late war." According to Cutler, "the Doctor mentioned the situation of this snake, if it was traveling among bushes, and one head should choose to go on one side of the stem of the bush and the other head should prefer the other side, and that neither of the heads would consent to come back or give away to the other." Franklin was on the point of mentioning "a humorous matter that had that day taken place in the Convention, in consequence of his comparing the snake to America." Franklin "seemed to forget that everything in Convention was to be kept a profound secret." But some member of the company present reminded him of "the secrecy of Conventional matters," Cutler concluded, "and deprived me of the story he was going to tell."

A final example is a fanciful tale about a whale, this time the Biblical whale rather than a whale of natural history. Soon, after the signing of the Declaration of Independence in July 1776, Franklin was active in promoting a form of government for the new independent union of the colonies. He had long advocated a strong association of the colonies and had been the chief architect of the Albany Plan of Union in 1754. In 1775 he drew up a proposed "Articles of Confederation and Perpetual Union" for what he designated as "The United Colonies of North America." While his plan met with some approval, others--according to Jefferson--"were revolted at it." Many features were incorporated into a new plan, adopted in 1778, and were later incorporated into the first federal constitution.

On 1 August 1776, about a month after the signing of the Declaration of Independence, during discussions of the form of organization to be adopted, Franklin proposed that each state be represented in the new congress by a number of delegates and votes proportional to the relative size of its population. John Adams reported that Franklin, in support of his motion, tried to assuage the fear that "the great colonies will swallow up the less." He dismissed any such argument, according to Adams's report, by remarking that "Scotland said the same thing at the Union." Jefferson's notes are more complete than Adams's brief summary and give us a sample of the characteristic wit with which Franklin argued his cause. "At the time of the union of England and Scotland," Franklin said, as reported by Jefferson, "the Duke of Argyle was most violently opposed to that measure." Among other things, the duke "predicted that, as the whale had swallowed Jonah, so Scotland would be swallowed by England." However, Jefferson's report continues, "when Lord Bute came into the government, he soon brought into its administration so many of his countrymen that it was found, in event, that Jonah had swallowed the whale." Jefferson noted the effect of Franklin's speech: the congress "laughed itself into good humor."

1. Also known as The Interest of Great Britain Considered, the Canada Pamphlet (text, comment and annotation) has been published in Vol. ix, pp. 47-100 of the Yale edition of The Papers of Benjamin Franklin.

2. Loc. cit., pp. 78-9.

3. The cartoon is published on p. 275 of Vol. v of the Franklin Papers.

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Volume 5, Number 2

Among What You Will See in DC

by Larry E. Tise

As we have firmly established, Benjamin Franklin was (is) one of the most frequently imaged individuals in history. While flipping through Charles Sellers' Benjamin Franklin in Portraiture (Yale, 1962)-a rich resource on early Franklin images-the most unusual rendering of our friend jumped out at me. I excluded the wonderful cartoon images in my search for the oddest. My investigation eventually brought me to the image shown (at right), described in Sellers as follows:

"1782-83. Line engraving, by an unidentified artist. Plate size 4 x 3 5/16 in. Published in Lavater, Essai sur la physiognomie, . . . the dedication of which is dated Zurich, May 31, 1983. No title or inscription."

Sellers also informs us that this is the earliest dated example of this portrait type and that it was engraved specifically to be in this book. It seems to have been derived from an earlier portrait by Jean Baptiste Weyler (1747-91) but was embellished to make Franklin have sharply distinctive lines and a more fashionable coat then most of his earlier images.

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Sept. 29, 1994	FOF Board Meeting, Washington, DC
Sept. 29 - Oct. 1, 1994	Washington, DC Tour - "Do They Remember Me in DC?: Benjamin Franklin in the Nation's Capitol
May 5, 1995	FOF Board Meeting, Philadelphia, PA
May 4-6, 1995	Franklin Institute Awards Convocation and Franklin Symposium
October 22 - 29, 1995	Paris Tour and Symposium

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