

Franklin Gazette

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"Beware, beware! he'll deal without scruple who can without fear." — *Poor Richard, 1743*

President's Message

by Ralph Gregory Elliot

A writer of a new television series on Franklin asked me the other day what personage in my lifetime I thought could most closely be compared to Ben. It took me several moments of earnest thought before I said that the only person who came to mind was Winston Churchill, and not all that closely either. The Winston Churchill I had in mind was not the persona of the great wartime leader. It was the intrepid Boer War adventurer and writer, the partisan politician and First World War leader of the British Navy, the accomplished bricklayer of Chartwell, the self-taught and talented painter, and the author of *The Life of Marlborough*, the two volume biography of Lord Randolph Churchill, the *History of the English-Speaking Peoples*, and the multi-volume histories of the First and Second World Wars. And all of this without ever having entered college.

In all of these activities Churchill partook of a type of character that was once prized and is now all too often disdained: the talented amateur, which is precisely what Franklin was, too. Especially in the late nineteenth century, biographies and historical works by the likes of Senator Albert Beveridge, Theodore Roosevelt and Henry Cabot Lodge were read with avidity and helped to explain America, its founders and its past to a vast reading public. Today's footnote-besotted scholars sneer at these "popular" works by men who lacked "serious scholarly credentials" (for which read "Ph.Ds") and whose treatment of the subjects was at best undetailed and at worst uninformed by serious scholarship.

Franklin might well have found it difficult to flourish in his multi-faceted form in our age of the credentialed professional, the specialist, the "expert". For one thing, he only had at best a second grade education. For another, he was not a pure scientist, but rather, a dabbler, a

tinkerer, one whose abounding curiosity, rather than vocational duty, led him to ask questions, conduct experiments and devise inventions — all, while sullyng his hands not only in trade, but also in a host of other commercial and community-service distractions (establishing fire companies, libraries, hospitals, colleges, insurance companies, militia companies and the like).

Franklin, in short, was what the French call "l'homme engagé". He was immersed in all the activities of his time wherever he happened to be living, and one of these activities happened to be what might be called the life of the mind. The curse of the intelligentsia in the academy today is to disdain those who pretend to intellectual prowess and achievements unless they are part of the club, members of the faculty or only professional thinkers and writers. To be an active part of one's society in the non-bookish work of commerce, industry, politics, is thought so to diffuse one's talents that contributions to "serious" matters — the arts and sciences, the world of ideas — must inevitably be compromised in quality.

The talented amateur flourished in the Enlightenment.
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President's Message

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ment, before all callings became professionalized and the inspired amateur began to be viewed as a threat to the status of the guild member. In our own time, it never ceases to amuse me to hear the thinly-veiled contempt with which the historical works of Bruce Catton and Jim Bishop, mere ex-reporters, are viewed by some professional scholars. And yet these writers, each in his own way, probably more effectively informed the lay audience about the events they were narrating than any number of citation-burdened texts by "credentialed" scholars.

The point of this message is not in the least to denigrate the latter or the informed scholarship they represent. It is very much, however, to celebrate the virtues, the contributions, and the continuing need for the encouragement of the talented amateur — the Franklins, the Edisons, the Cattons — in American life. They have given it a richness, a diversity and an element of delightful surprise without which this nation would be the poorer.



Franklin Tidbits

Founding Fathers Rap. The History Channel, in an apparent attempt to reach out to a younger audience, has produced a fascinating and fun interactive web site at <http://historychannel.atomfilms.com> featuring Franklin, Washington, and Jefferson as rappers. Franklin's lyrics are as follows:

I'm getting chilly down in Philly, y'all,
ya know it's my town,
Though I'm as ancient as the mariner
I can still get down
Ya see! I get electric when I'm flyin'
my kite

I'm getting' bigger on the trigger, pop-
pop in a gunfight
Tommy P. gonna kick some common
sense
Roundin' up all the Minutemen gonna
take it on the defense
The sun is rising — it's a sign of our
ascendance
Step to the bass, "We declare our In-
dependence."

The website was a promotion for the Founding Fathers program, which aired on the History Channel the nights of Nov. 27-30, 2000. The website is the wizardry of JibJab Media, Inc., who previously authored a hip-hop version of the presidential candidates.

Aquila Rose. Benjamin Franklin's first known Philadelphia printing job (1723) was a broadside entitled *Elegy on the Death of Aquila Rose*. The elegy was written by Samuel Keimer to commemorate the charismatic figure who developed the literary and cultural side of life in colonial Philadelphia, and who was to serve as a model for Franklin in these respects. Carmen D. Valentino Rare Books and Manuscripts offers this item for sale in Catalogue Fifty. For more information, call 215-739-6056.

Franklin Flashback. The November, 2000 issue of *Philadelphia* magazine chose November 21, 1736 for their "flashback" in history. The one-page article features a humorous illustration of a womanizing Franklin, by Fred Harper, and mentions the new book *Benjamin Franklin and Women* (see review on p. 8) edited by Larry Tise. The short essay also details Franklin's disappointments with his children, and then finally explains the reason for the date: the death of his son Francis, who is characterized as "the one that got away."

Legal Franklin. The American Association of Law Librarians met in Philadelphia this past summer. They called their convention newspaper *Frankly Speaking* and the masthead featured a portrait of Ben.

In His Own Words:

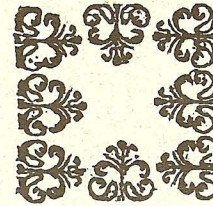
Advice to the IRS

by Claude-Anne Lopez and Kate Ohno

This issue's selection of Franklin's own words dates from a troubled period in his life; he was the United States' first ambassador to France at a time when his country had been engaged in a bitter, expensive, and demoralizing war of independence. France had donated or loaned large sums of money, as well as providing much needed military aid to the young nation. The preliminary articles of peace with Great Britain had been agreed upon, but the definitive treaty was not yet signed. On July 27, 1783, Franklin wrote once again to Robert Morris, the Superintendent of Finance, with whom he had exchanged much correspondence on the details of financing the Revolution. His letter highlights the difficulties of making a democracy work. We were thrilled to find that a draft of this letter in Franklin's own hand, complete with deletions and additions, is at the Library of Congress.

Franklin began with an update of the American mission's finances: "Mr Grand [banker to the U.S. and Franklin's own private banker] and myself were for a long time in a most anxious situation here. Our Funds nearly absorbed, fresh drafts continually appearing, more foreseen, and all our Worrying of the Ministers with Applications for farther Aids from [the French] Government proving ineffectual." At first Franklin continued the paragraph with a detailed report of a recent brush with bankruptcy, which he later deleted, along with this concluding sentence: "In fine we were on the point of failing, we lost our Sleep, & Mr Grand grew visibly thinner." He continued wearily, "We at length however after many Difficulties obtain'd what was wanted from the Loan in Holland. Upon the receipt of your Letters I made the fresh Application directed, but without Success; as you will see by the Letters inclosed; and I hope in God that no more such Orders will be sent me." Franklin was exhausted. He had done all he could. The demands on him to raise money to support the new nation had been unrelenting, and he thought the remedy was for the United States to now take responsibility for its own needs. Here is his solution: "If our People who neither pay Rents nor Tythes, would only pay honestly in Taxes half of what other Nations pay in those Articles, our whole Debt might be discharg'd in a Twelvemonth. But I conceive the great difficulty lies in the Collection of our Taxes, thro' the dispers'd Situation of our Inhabitants; and the excessive Trouble of going from House to House many Miles to collect a few Shillings from each, often oblig'd to repeat the Calls." Under the circumstances, new laws, Franklin thought, might provide an answer. His first idea was that taxpayers be required to bring their taxes to the collector, but he struck out this suggestion, perhaps judging it unworkable, and substituted, "Might not this be helped by some Laws, such as one disabling a Man to take out

any Writ or commence any Action, for receiving any Debt, Damage, Legacy, &c. or to receive any other Benefit or Protection from the Laws of the Society, who does not prove that he has duly contributed to its support, by producing the Collector's Receipt for his last Taxes." Now here's a Franklin that some Americans would not want to lay claim to! Do we need to add to his honors the title of "an original thinker in the area of revenue collection"?



More on Franklin and Women

by Seymour Block

Some years ago I read a review of a book on Franklin which quoted Jefferson saying that Franklin loses all power over himself in the company of women and has little guard over his lips. He would not be resistant to their allurements were such to be employed against his mission. Then is added, "this is in some measure the vice of his age but it seems to be increased by his particular constitution."

This is a strong indictment against Franklin, apparently when, as an old man he was on a very important mission in France. We know, of course, how much he liked the ladies, but from his letters to them he never seemed out of control, as his enemies would have us believe. Yes, he was old, but certainly not in his dotage.

I questioned this quote because, while Jefferson was in France while Franklin was there, and he had the opportunity to observe Franklin, everything I read about Jefferson was in praise of Franklin.

Unfortunately, I did not remember the name of the book or the issue of the magazine in which the review appeared. As I had time, I looked into the works of Jefferson to see if I could find the quote referred to. Finally I found it in a letter to James Madison dated Feb. 14, 1783. This aroused my suspicion because this letter was written before Jefferson left for France. In the letter he refers to Franklin using the shorthand of the day, as "F." In this particular quote, he says "my amanuensis F.". The word "amanuensis," my dictionary tells me, means secretary, and Franklin was not Jefferson's secretary. In a letter Jefferson wrote to Madison on Jan. 31, 1783, I discovered that Jefferson's secretary was Major Franks, a young man, and the reference was to him, but was mistakenly attributed to our friend Benjamin Franklin.

Benjamin Franklin and Music

By Adeline Tomasone

Benjamin Franklin was a busy man. His vast array of skills and talents ranged over such seemingly diverse fields of interest and endeavor as politics, diplomacy, printing, writing, criticism, journalism, invention, science, humor, philosophy, and education. No single pursuit involved so many of these interests and simultaneously employed so many aspects of Franklin's abilities, however, as his involvement with music. Franklin's glass instrument, the armonica, has received plenty of attention, and many readers already will know of his lifelong ballad-writing exploits. But one of the least discussed and perhaps the most provocative aspect of Franklin's musical life was his role as music critic.

Franklin's most memorable foray into the realm of musical criticism skewered the much-loved Baroque composer of *Messiah* fame, Georg Friedrich Handel. [1] In a letter [2] to his younger brother, Peter, responding to Peter's request for his big brother's opinion of Handel's oratorio, *Judas Maccabeus*, he lampooned every mannerism known to vocal music of the era, both in the writing and performing. Among others, he cited "drawling," "tautology," "stuttering," and the coup de grâce, "screaming without cause." Once again, he reinforced his opinions about clarity of expression and clarity of pronunciation, the ideas that he footnoted so heavily with quotes of Locke in his essay, "The Education of Youth." [3] Once again, he reinforced his ideas of "natural" versus "unnatural" in the witty analogy of real hair made to look like a wig.

In both his letter to Peter (c.1761) and in his 1765 letter to Lord Kames, Franklin cited the old Scottish songs as paragons of simplicity, harmony and melody. In the Kames letter, he began to set forth his theories regarding aural memory's possible influence on the consonance of certain melodies. The subject of these Scottish songs was to arise repeatedly in Franklin's letters, and remained an ongoing subject of interest and endeavor during his stay in France.

This preference has provided some Franklin critics with some ostensible ammunition and warrants some discussion. It is possible that Franklin preferred these songs for some very homely reasons. Franklin wrote often of his distaste for complicated feats of technical mastery, so it may be that he preferred works playable by someone of a dilettante's skill level and wanted to eradicate all else. (One certainly would expect a person of Franklin's accomplishments to be more generous in his regard for someone else's skills, but maybe he was envious—unlikely, but possible.) He may also have thought that the "new" music was rich man's music, perhaps in reaction to the endur-

ing sting of his humble trading-class beginnings which had erupted much earlier in that scathing send-up of Harvard, the Silence Dogood Essay No. 4. It is possible that Franklin was merely looking for theoretical reasons to defend his humble tastes, to prove that the music he loved was "better" than the fancy stuff. Andrew Schiller pursues this approach in an essay from *New England Quarterly*, claiming that Franklin preferred these tunes because he was a prosaic man incapable of sustaining interest in any music that did not employ a "verbal continuum."

But in 1946 [4] a discovery was made that challenged that opinion. A string quartet by Franklin was discovered in some forgotten archives at the Paris Conservatory. Needless to say, it employs no verbal continuum, just the unusual combination of three violins and one violoncello. It also employs an arcane tuning technique called scordatura in which all the strings are tuned to different notes than usual. The result, if the strings do not break first, is that all the musicians play on the open strings only, a technique that would handily suit a group of amateur players. This fuss surrounding the unearthing of one small musical curiosity seems well out of proportion until it is viewed in the context of the discussion of Franklin's "prosaic" nature. In using Franklin's fondness for the Scottish songs to prove his point, Schiller stated: "*The supremacy of tonal over lexical communication is nothing less than the domination of our faculties of reason by the powers of the irrational.*" Schiller asserted that Franklin was unwilling or unable to accept music as an abstract art devoid of concrete or rational connection with "man's world." M.E. Grenander [5] felt that the discovery of the quartet was more than sufficient to nullify that opinion completely. [6]

However, there is another dimension that has been neglected in this investigation. Franklin was most certainly aware of the intangible power of music because he knew how these Scottish songs made him feel. They brought forth all the weepy-eyed sentiment he possessed, and far from being ashamed of his reactions, he described them with a sense of fondness and wonder [7]. He was not obsessed with the songs but in finding out why they made him feel that way. In his experiments in the physical sciences, correspondence with other scientists advanced his work and that of his fellows. Conflicting ideas, even debate, opened up new possibilities. But as often as he brought up the subject of the Scottish songs for input, he received nothing. In 1761, he tried to quantify some of the factors bearing on musical effectiveness in his letter to Peter. In 1765, he wrote to Lord Kames, trying out his 'melody is harmony' theory, and beseeching him to spend some of his time on works of musical criticism. Franklin was searching for a dialectic, for a sounding board. But even though he asked often, he received nothing until, during a visit to Lord Shelburne's estate, Wycombe, in 1772 he met André Morellet.

Morellet had recently published a work claiming that music was a metaphorical language capable of describing emotions and objects. Franklin was immediately taken with the concept, and the pair concocted on the spot a list of fifty terms to describe what might be identifiable in the musical lexicon. [8] If any doubt remains whether Franklin could appreciate or acknowledge the power of abstract, textless music, this list alone should dispel it. Finally, Franklin had found the man and the mind with which to carry on his investigations into the origins of the powers of music.

Perhaps, if Franklin had lived another two hundred years or so, he would have been gratified to find that the answers are beginning to surface. *The New York Times* featured an article in 1995 describing how tonal patterns are imprinted on the brain, and outlining cutting-edge neurological findings about how they are processed. In *The Molecules of Emotion*, the psycho-neuroimmunologist Candace Pert chronicles her seminal work in tagging the chemicals and receptors for human emotions. She describes the body as "the subconscious of the mind" as she bravely bridges the gap between thinking and feeling, between these imprinted tonal patterns and the tears wept upon hearing a beloved song. Incredibly, Franklin was so far ahead of the pack that he sniffed at the heels of these very concepts almost two-and-a-half centuries ago.

Once again, Franklin's unflagging qualities of skepticism and wonder kept him looking for answers to questions which only he had the prescience and courage to ask. Peering deep into the human spirit using his own love of music as a window, Benjamin Franklin made his daring inquiries into the nature and origins of emotion, yet never lost his pleasure and delight in the music that filled his amazing life.

[Editor's note: This article appeared in longer form in *The Journal of Graduate Liberal Studies*, vol. 5, no. 1, 1999, pp.83-94]

NOTES

[1] Nevertheless, Franklin did attend at least one performance of Handel's music, a London performance of *Messiah* which occurred shortly after the composer's death in 1759. See Smyth, Letter #275. His thoughts during that very long presentation will remain forever in the realm of conjecture!

[2] Franklin-Lemay, 782.

[3] *ibid.* 330-334.

[4] Benjamin Franklin, *Quatuor pour trois violons et violoncelle*. Transcription de Guillaume de Van. (Paris: Odette Lieutier, 1946.) *Author's note:* Schiller's failure to include this discovery in his 1958 article is a glaring omission.

[5] Grenander, "Benjamin Franklin's String Quartet." 183-86.

[6] In "Reflections on the String Quartet(s) Attributed to Benjamin Franklin," Grenander notes, "W. Thomas Marrocco, in 'The String Quartet Attributed to Benjamin Franklin,' *Proceedings of the American Philosophical Society*, 116 (1972), 477-85, expresses his deepest regrets for depriving our great statesman-inventor of the authorship of this singularly unusual composition," and leans heavily toward Giovanni Ferrandini as composer. However, Grenander continues above by saying, "we cannot conclude from the additional evidence that Franklin was not the composer." I agree with Grenander's assessment.

[7] Cohn cites Morellet's memoirs: '...Benjamin Franklin tried to illustrate the beauty and power of Scottish song by means of the following story. Some thirty years earlier, while traveling in a remote region of the Allegheny Mountains, he had come upon a poor Scots family: a man, his wife, and their sixteen-year-old daughter. That evening, seated on the front porch, the wife sang for him "Such Merry as We Have Been." Her voice was so pure and sweet and the song so touching that it brought tears to Franklin's eyes. Even after thirty years, he said, the moment was still vivid in his memory.'

[8] Cohn notes that the list, complete with Morellet's translations, is at the APS, and that it is reproduced as an illustration in William E. Lingelbach's "Benjamin Franklin's Papers and the American Philosophical Society," *Proceedings of the American Philosophical Society* 99 (1955): 378.

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Sin of Commission? Sin of Omission? No Sin at All?

by Claude-Anne Lopez

In February 1731, having just turned 25, Franklin was initiated into the Lodge of St. John, in Philadelphia. Freemasonry, which originated in England and Scotland, took root in the American colonies around 1720. Pretty soon, he tried to learn all he could about this movement, for he had always felt that people can accomplish so much more when they band together than when each one stays in his own corner. But it was hard to find out what this association—or confraternity—was really about. Around 1728, an anonymous writer described it in somewhat puzzled terms: "This association is made up of people who either have acquired deep knowledge of masonry and building or are descended from people well versed in those crafts. The members are to be found in every European country where they enjoy a high degree of prestige. Their origin, as they proclaim, goes back many centuries, as far back as the building of Solomon's Temple. Their goal is not quite clear, but as far as we can tell, it is a laudable and virtuous one. They promote charity, mutual assistance and comradeship. Whatever their other qualities may be, it is obvious that their best-practiced one is the art of keeping secrets."

Just what Franklin liked. He had always felt that the way to salvation is through good deeds rather than through prayers. The Lodge's attendance records show that he only missed six of the twenty-eight reunions during his first four years—in part, perhaps, because there was a fine of one shilling for every meeting one did not attend, and Franklin, at that time, was thrifty.[1]

His zeal was soon rewarded. After a year and a half he was appointed to a committee on by-laws entrusted with revising some of the rules. Of course, he had plenty of ideas about improvement. He recommended the purchase of instruments and books as well as the serious study of both architecture and mathematics. While he was at it, he suggested doing away with those bothersome fines but the idea was promptly turned down.

He started climbing the ladder of Freemasonry. At 27, now a married man settling into life, he was made a warden, and two years later, on June 24, 1734, he was honored with the title of Grand Master of the Grand Lodge of the Ancient and Honourable Society of Free and accepted Masons. The term "accepted" goes back to the seventeenth century, in the course of which the Lodges of England "accepted" the participation of members other than real masons and bricklayers, people of means and education such as judges, clergy, merchants, professors. Pretty soon those new members outnumbered the genuine masons and eventually replaced them, but they kept

the original tools as symbolic imagery. At the same time, the topics discussed evolved from concrete to abstract. The "operative" masonry became the "speculative" masonry. Franklin could qualify in both categories, having long worked with his hands in the printing trade, before moving on to scientific research.

On special occasions, entertainment held in the best taverns, such as the Tun Tavern on Water Street, could be quite elegant. As he noted in the *Pennsylvania Gazette*: "The Proprietor, the Governor, the Mayor of this City, and several other Persons of Distinction honour'd the Society with their Presence."

In his capacity as Grand Master, he was soon called upon to open a correspondence with the supreme authorities in England. Brother Henry Price was designated by his London Lodge to be the Provincial Grand Master of New England and Dominions and Territories thereunto belonging—in other words, his authority was to cover all British North America. Franklin begged him to confirm the Brethren of Pennsylvania in the privileges they enjoyed, to wit choosing their Grand Master, Wardens, and other officers. The local Grand Master was to yield his chair only when the Grand Master of all America was installed in place. In response to that, perhaps, he was made Grand Master for all of Pennsylvania, thus reaching the top of his masonic career.[2]

As all was going well, tragedy struck. It happened in 1737, the result of a cruel joke played on a simple-minded boy. His name was Daniel Rees. He was the apprentice of the chemist Dr. Evan Jones at the Golden Paracelsus' Head in Philadelphia. The boy's dream was to become a Mason. With several cronies, one a renegade Mason, Jones set up a burlesque initiation ceremony, complete with obscene practices and a scandalous oath of allegiance to Satan. John Remington, a lawyer, had composed that oath. On February 13, Daniel Rees was "initiated" in the garden of Jones's house with meaningless and ludicrous "signs" and ceremonies, pledging his loyalty to the Prince of Darkness, and drinking from a "sacramental" cup which contained a strong purgative.[3]

Jones had so much fun with his joke that a few months later, on June 13, he invited a number of people to the cellar of his house, to watch Rees receive another "degree" in Free Masonry. One Sullivan, dressed in a cow's hide with horns, impersonated the devil. Through the bluish flames of a bowl of brandy, which Jones ignited, the faces of those officiating appeared ghastly and hideous. Young Rees seems to have regarded the performance too stolidly for the amusement of his audience, so Jones, to make things livelier and more frightening, raised the flaming bowl and, grimacing through the haze, approached the boy. Suddenly he threw, or accidentally spilled the burning spirits, and Daniel Rees died of his burns two

days later.

Such is the gist of the account that Franklin published in the *Pennsylvania Gazette* eight months after Daniel's death. Much had happened meanwhile. The Masons immediately disavowed any connection with the happening or the participants. A coroner's inquest found it only an unfortunate accident, but the grand jury, receiving evidence that Jones had thrown the spirits willfully, indicted both him and Remington for murder. Andrew Bradford, Franklin's competitor in journalism and an enemy of the Masons, took the opportunity to attack all of them in his *American Weekly Mercury*.

When the trial took place in January, 1738, Franklin appeared as a witness for the prosecution. Jones and Remington were found guilty of manslaughter. Jones was burned on the hand, and then released. Remington was granted a limited pardon.

During the following days, the *American Weekly Mercury* called attention to Franklin's conduct. It asserted that he had read the blasphemous oath several days before the fatal June 13 and that he had expressed his approbation of it by a most hearty laughter. Furthermore, the article said that Franklin had kept the text of the oath and subsequently amused himself by reading it in several companies. Not only that, but that after the first stage of Daniel's so-called initiation, the one in the garden, he had saluted the boy by using the term "*Brother*" and congratulated him on being admitted into the *Brotherhood*. It even insinuated that he had given Daniel a Masonic sign. [4]

The very day following what he called "those false and scandalous aspersions," Franklin set out to defend himself. He explained in the *Pennsylvania Gazette* that on the Saturday morning before the tragedy, he was sitting in a tavern with two friends, plus Dr. Jones and Mr. Remington, all of them waiting for a Mr. Smith who was late. To divert them, Dr. Jones and Remington told about the gullible boy who wanted to be a Free-mason and what a jolly time they had while fooling him.

And it is true that I laughed, and perhaps heartily, as my manner is, but when they came to their giving him a violent purge and administering to him the diabolical oath which Remington read to us, I grew indeed serious. Nor did anyone of the company, except Dr. Jones and Remington, seem in the least pleased with the affair. I told them that *when the young man came to know how he had been imposed on, he would never forgive them*. But Jones and Remington went on to inform us

that they designed to have yet some further diversion on pretense of raising him to a higher degree of Masonry. Remington said it was intended to introduce him blindfolded and stripped into a room where the company, being each provided with a rod or switch, should chastise him smartly; which Dr. Jones opposed and said he had a better invention: they would have a game of Snap-Dragon in a dark cellar, where some figures should be dressed up, that by the pale light of burning brandy would appear horrible and frighten him d—bly. Soon after which discourse, young Rees himself coming out into the tavern to speak with his master, Dr. Jones pointed at me and said: *Daniel, that Gentleman is a Free-Mason; make a sign to him*. Whether the boy did or not, I cannot tell; for I was so far from *encouraging him* in the delusion, or *taking him by the hand*, or *calling him Brother*, as has been pretended, that I turned my head to avoid seeing him make his pretended sign, and looked out of the window into the garden.[5]

Much as I like and admire Franklin, I felt myself growing tense at this point. He did not speak up forcefully after the hideous scheme had been proposed but chose the evasive behavior of looking silently into the garden. What follows disturbed me still more:

"I was acquainted with, and had respect for the young lad's father, and thought it a pity that his son should be so imposed upon. Therefore I followed the lad down the stairs to the door when he went out, with a design to call him back and give him a hint of the imposition. But he was out of sight and I never saw him afterwards, for the Monday night following, the affair in the cellar was transacted which proved his death."

Why, I wonder, didn't he warn the boy's father, since he knew him? He had all of Sunday and Monday to do so. And is it possible that he could not catch up with the lad down the stairs or on the street? Franklin was in his early thirties at the time, not yet the portly gentleman he was to become. Why the delay?

That is exactly the point that the *Mercury* addressed in its rejoinder on February 21st. Far from hastening after Daniel to warn him, it said, he had tarried in the room for half an hour. (This is reported in Franklin's *Pennsylvania Gazette*, without comment.)

cont. p. 9

Good Reads: Reviews of Franklin Related Books

The First American: The Life and Times of Benjamin Franklin. By H.W. Brands. 648 p. Hardback, \$35.00. Doubleday, 2000. This new biography of Franklin has certainly been making a splash! It's been chosen as a Book of the Month Club main selection, and rumors abound about the possibility of nomination for a major book award. American Studies professor Douglas Brinkley calls it a "truly inspired work by one of America's best historians." It's also been getting consistently rave reviews from reader/reviewers on Amazon.com, who have termed it "wonderful," "even-handed," and "difficult to put down." One even proclaimed that "Brands has rescued ol' Ben Franklin from the dustbin of historical caricature."

Benjamin Franklin and Women. Edited by Larry Tise. 184 p. Softcover, \$18.95; hardback, \$50.00. Pennsylvania State University Press, 2000. This is a volume of essays that grew out of a symposium organized by Larry Tise at the Franklin Institute in Philadelphia. Contributors include Claude-Anne Lopez, Carla Mulford, Sheila Skemp, and Susan Stabile. The essays fall into two groups: those that examine Franklin's relationships with women (sisters, relatives, love interests, and friends) and those that explore more generally the role of women in Franklin's era. Topics addressed include Franklin's theories on relations between men and women, the nature of marriage, the dangers as well as the delights of sex, and the importance of education for women and men.

The Glass Harmonica. By Louise Marley. 335 p. Softcover, \$13.95. ACE, 2000. Another science fiction/fantasy work that features Ben Franklin as a character! This story shifts between two time periods: 1761, where the orphan girl Eilish Eam struggles to survive as a street musician, and 2018, when classical musician Erin Rushton is haunted by visions of a young girl from another time who needs her help. Franklin and Mozart both appear in the plot. Marley, an opera singer and classical musician, in addition to being an author of a number of SF/fantasy novels, has the right knowledge of both music and storytelling to make this an enjoyable read.

In Their Own Words: Benjamin Franklin. By Peter and Connie Roop. 127 p. Softcover, \$4.50. Scholastic, 2000. For young readers, from Scholastic Books' "In Their Own Words" series. This well-illustrated volume covers Franklin's life from birth to death, broken up into chronological chapters with specific themes, such as: Apprentice, Londoner, Scientist, Revolutionary, Ambassador, Representative. Clear and easy-to-read, this volume is a good introduction to Franklin's biography for the middle school set.

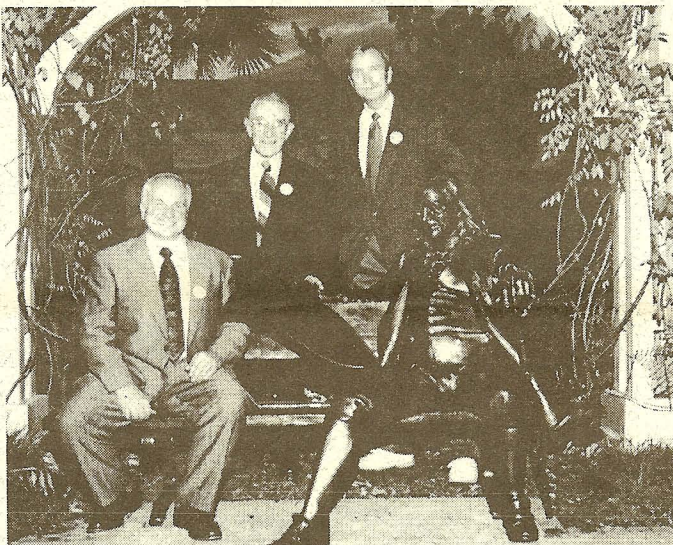
Ben Franklin Down South

Benjamin Franklin traveled to many parts of America and the world, but he was never in Florida. Now he is. Or, at least his bronze likeness is. You may think this statue of Franklin sitting on a park bench is in Philadelphia, on the campus of the University of Pennsylvania. It is. But now it is also in Gainesville, Florida, on the grounds of Barr Systems, Inc., a beautiful industrial plant producing software for the computer printing trade.

Tony Barr, the owner and founder of Barr Systems is a great admirer of Franklin and he had the sculptor who did the University of Pennsylvania Franklin do a copy for the centerpiece of his new plant. It is placed in the center of the building in a special garden designed by Mr. Barr's talented wife, Tatiana Barr.

For the dedication of the statue, Mr. Barr invited the sculptor, George Lundeen of Loveland, CO, to come for the ceremony, which started with a tour of the building and the beautiful murals of the "Temple of Quality," painted by the artist Harmandir Khalsa. This was followed by the unveiling of the Franklin statue by Mr. Lundeen and a brief talk by Tony Barr on his upbringing in Philadelphia and how much he was inspired in his career by the ideals and life of Franklin. Then Prof. Seymour Block of the University of Florida gave a presentation on Franklin and his influence on society.

The statue was first produced for the University of Pennsylvania in 1987 and won the Allied Artists Members and Associates Award. Since then there have been 21 other likenesses of the statue done by Lundeen, which are in various parts of the country. The statue is made in



Tony Barr, Seymour Block, sculptor George Lundeen, and friend

cont. on p.11

What Do YOU Think?:

What problem or issue do you think Franklin would be most interested in if he were alive today? Why?

"For what it's worth, I think BF would be at the forefront of trying to end racism, hate crimes, and sexual bias, because he had such a strong sense of what people could accomplish if only they could work together."

-- Kate Ohno

"If Franklin were alive today (and over the past two weeks) I think that he would put his mechanical genius to work to devise a fool-proof vote-counting machine; his political genius, to devise a way to reconcile the electoral college and the popular vote; and finally his human wisdom, to effect campaign finance reform."

-- Karen Duval

Send your response to the *Franklin Gazette* via fax, mail, or e-mail (see page 2 for all the right numbers).

In Memoriam

Aaron Goldman liked to quote P.G. Wodehouse: "Every author really wants to have letters printed in the paper. Unable to make the grade, he drops down a rung of the ladder and writes novels." Aaron never had to stoop so low. A considerable number of his letters to a variety of papers were published and they covered his range of interests: education, Judaism, the arts, history, philanthropy. His creative work includes a play about Socrates and one about his hero, Benjamin Franklin (*Sunday with Ben*). I'll never forget his enthusiasm on the day The Friends of Franklin were born more than a decade ago, in Philadelphia. I'll also never forget the wonderful postcards I got from Aaron; he was so engaged with Franklin, that he never failed to give me his reaction whenever I published something in the *Gazette*. He was also engaged in the world around him: all his life he fought the good fight against racial and reli-

gious discrimination. If you add to that a successful business career, a warm family life, and an innate *joie de vivre*, you have the portrait of a happy man. Our condolences to his wife Paula who brightened his final years.

-- Claude-Anne Lopez

Franklin's Sin? -- cont. from p.7

Finally, the business of the satanic oath:

"As to the paper or oath, I did desire Remington, when he had read it, to let me see it, and finding it a piece of a very extraordinary nature, I told him I was desirous to show it to some of my acquaintance, and so put it in my pocket. I communicated it to one, who mentioned it to others, and so many people flocked to my house for a sight of it that it grew troublesome, and therefore when the Mayor sent for it I was glad of the opportunity to be discharged from it. Nor do I yet conceive that it was my duty to conceal or destroy it."

The *Mercury* did not believe that. It argued that Franklin's reading the blasphemous oath in company, though with expressions of detestation, smacked more of hypocrisy than sincerity. I must admit that in view of Franklin's relish of conviviality the *Mercury* may have been right. Why would he have circulated that document if he thought it that repulsive? His purpose, I believe, was to provoke a good laugh among his friends—until he realized he was playing a dangerous game.

Whether he really felt so or not, Franklin depicted himself as blameless:

"Being subpoena'd during the trial as a witness for the King, I appeared and gave my evidence fully, freely and impartially, as I think it becomes an honest man to do. And I may call everyone to whom I read that paper to witness that I always accompanied it with expressions of detestation. This

being the true state of the case, I think I may reasonably hope that I am so well known in this city, where I have lived near 14 years, that the false and malicious insinuations contained in the *Mercury* will not do to my reputation the injury that seems intended."

The two friends who were present at the tavern on the day of the conversation with Jones and Remington fully corroborated Franklin's account and swore upon the Holy Evangelists that Andrew Bradford's insinuations in the last *Mercury* were totally false.

After writing this piece, I wondered if anybody else had been repelled, as I was, by Franklin's conduct during the tragic episode. I found that Carl Van Doren simply quoted without comment Franklin's writings in self defense both in his newspaper and to his parents. But the latest biography to appear, H.W. Brands's, also relates the story, and concludes: "It was hardly Franklin's finest hour, and he knew it."

NOTES

[1] Franklin's account with the lodge is published in Leonard Labaree *et al.*, eds. *The Papers of Benjamin Franklin* (PBF) (35 vols. to date, New Haven, 1959-) i, 202-4.

[2] PBF, i, 347n.

[3] PBF, ii, 198.

[4] PBF, ii, 199.

[5] PBF, ii, 200.

[6] PBF, ii, 202n.

[7] *The First American: The Life and times of Benjamin Franklin* (New York, 2000), p.152.



Special Thanks to Our Life Members!

William D. Anderson, Jr.;
Wichita, KS

Jackson C. Boswell;
Arlington, VA

Elly Fitzig; Wichita, KS

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DESTINATION BELGIUM AND THE NETHERLANDS: PLANS ADVANCE FOR THE FRIENDS OF FRANKLIN'S NEXT TOUR

30 September-10 October 2001

Benjamin Franklin to Deborah Franklin from Utrecht, Holland, September 14, 1761:

"I wrote to you . . . from Antwerp in Flanders, and am now to acquaint you, that having seen almost all of the principal Places and Things worthy Notice in those two Countries [Belgium and Holland], we are now on our Return to London, where we hope to be next Saturday or Sunday, that we may not miss the Coronation [of King George III]."

After further research into the large and varied number of places visited by Benjamin Franklin in northern Europe, the Friends of Franklin have decided to focus their 2001 annual study tour on Belgium and The Netherlands. There is so much rich history, architectural wonder, and indelible art treasure in these places that ten days will be just enough to sample the vast delicacies.

Brussels and Amsterdam will be the dual home bases for the tour. And to assure that we will see these places in a special manner, we have invited Franklin historian Claude Anne Lopez, a native of Belgium, to join us and share memories and experiences of her homeland.

In addition to touring the historical landmarks of Brussels known to Franklin, we will make our way to Bruges, Ghent, and Antwerp—centers of medieval architecture, and the cloth and diamond trades observed by Franklin. From Amsterdam—which we will get to know intimately—we will range out to Rotterdam, The Hague, Delft, Leiden, Haarlem, and Utrecht—centers of learning, trade,

science, chemistry, and the arts closely examined by Franklin in company with his son, William, and with Richard Jackson, a legal colleague, friend, and frequent traveling companion.

These locales, exotic and charming, are also places from which flowed the arts and crafts that became loved and enjoyed in Franklin's eighteenth century world.

Led by the experienced veterans of Franklin tours from 1990 until the present—historian Larry Tise and event planner Kathy DeLuca—this tour of Benjamin Franklin's Belgium and The Netherlands is sure to be memorable and certainly unique.

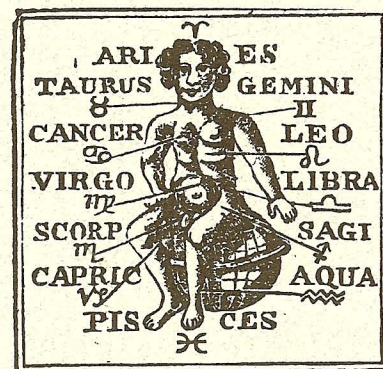
If you have not already reserved your spot on this tour, please forward a reservation fee of \$100 per person. A full tour brochure will automatically be sent to all members of the Friends. Others may request a brochure via e-mail at fof@benfranklin2006.org or by telephone at 215-236-0300.

Statue -- cont. from p.8

22 parts, of different metal combinations and textures to give dull or shiny finishes, including one to mimic satin for the vest. The fine print of the Constitution held by Franklin was hand-lettered by the sculptor. While this statue is like the one in Philadelphia, there is one difference: the Florida Franklin is the mirror image of the Philadelphia original, thus preserving its uniqueness. Lundeen has also produced 50 miniature tabletop models of this statue, measuring 10 X 8 inches in size.

Lundeen has received many awards for his work, including an Honorary Doctorate in Humane Letters from the University of Nebraska (1999) and a special citation for his work from China. Among his many prize-winning sculptures is one of Thomas Jefferson, who, like Franklin, is seated on a bench.

— Seymour Block



Calendar of Events

January 17, 2001. Third annual birthday Celebration! of Benjamin Franklin, Founder. In Philadelphia. Procession to Franklin's grave in the morning, followed by a luncheon and seminar hosted by the Pennsylvania Hospital. Call Franklin Reinhauer at 973-697-7697 for more information.

January 18, 2001. Events to honor the French-American Alliance, including a screening of the film *Tête à tête*, and a reception at the Ritz Hotel. In Philadelphia. Call Charles Cook at 610-687-0359 for more information.

January 27, 2001. Friends of the Franklin Papers' annual gala celebration of Franklin's birthday; featuring Nobel Laureate Dudley Herschbach as speaker. At noon at the New Haven Lawn Club.

March 22, 2001. Friends of the Franklin Papers' luncheon at Mory's Association, New Haven, CT. Noon.

May 17, 2001. Friends of the Franklin Papers' annual meeting. At the Graduate Club, New Haven, at noon.

September 30-October 10, 2001. Friends of Franklin tour to Belgium and the Netherlands. See article to the left for more information, and call Kathy DeLuca at 215-BEN-0300 with any questions or to register.

Join Friends of Franklin!

Would you like to become an official member of the Friends of Franklin organization? Do you have a friend or relative who might wish to join, or who would appreciate a gift membership? All individuals, scholars, students, collectors, and Franklinophiles, as well as institutions, are invited to become members of the Friends of Franklin at the following membership rates:

Life Members	\$1,000	Sustaining Friend	\$100
Institutional Members	\$1,000	Franklin Friend	\$50
Supporting Friend	\$ 250	Student Members (full time only; photocopy id)	\$20
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