Franklin Gazette

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Content is the Philosopher's Stone, that turns all it touches into Gold.

- Poor Richard Improved, 1758

FROM THE DESK OF LARRY E. TISE

Someone said to me recently after I reviewed a number of things going on in the world of Benjamin Franklin, "Why, Franklin is becoming more popular than ever, isn't he?" "Not than ever," I replied. "Surely there is a lot happening," I continued, "and, true, his popularity seems to grow. But it would be hard to equal the acclaim he got on his residence in France or in the early years of the twentieth century when his work hard and save money aphorisms were showered across the likes of The Saturday Evening Post."

But, here, now let me count the ways Franklin's name and fame have come across our screens over the past few months.

1. Franklin and Submarines: The AMERICAN TURTLE. I attended the very happy fifth anniversary meeting of the Friends of the Franklin Papers (a very good associate organization of the Friends of Franklin, Inc.) on June 10. It was held at the Connecticut River Museum in Essex, Conn., and was hosted by Friend Bruce Yenawine (author of a dissertation on Franklin's will). Twenty-six of the members of a group whose main purpose is to give money to the Franklin Papers Project at Yale arrived for a tantalizing confrontation with the famous Revolutionary War era AMERICAN TURTLE, invented by Essexian and Yale graduate David Bushnell in 1774. The Connecticut River Museum, whose mission it is to interpret history and life in the rich Con-

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News on Symposium

"Benjamin Franklin and Black Americans": Great Symposium Where Friends of Franklin Meet

FOF Board

On two fine spring days, May 5 & 6, seventy Friends of Franklin and other guests gathered to ponder the experiences of Black Americans either in their dealings with Benjamin Franklin or during the era he reigned in America and Europe. Fifteen historians spoke on subjects ranging from "Black Americans in the World of Benjamin Franklin" (Jean R. Soderlund, Lehigh University) to "Fugitive Slaves in Franklin's World" (Billy G. Smith, Montana State University) and from "Franklin, the Constitution, and Slavery" (Paul Finkelman, Virginia Polytechnic Institute) to

Symposium continued on page 5

Benjamin Franklin and the Law of Libel

by Ralph G. Elliot

Benjamin Franklin was a prolific writer, often of pungent satirical pieces anatomizing others. He was a printer, and an owner of other printers' establishments. He was an inveterate letter writer, the more so because of his long absences from the Colonies in England and France and the necessity for his doing so both to learn what was happening at home and to conduct the diplomatic business on which he had been dispatched. He was also one of the great public figures of his time, and as such was extensively written about.

In light of all of this, it is interesting to note that there is no record of Benjamin Franklin ever having sued or ever having been sued for libel. Any man in today's America who possessed the characteristics that Franklin had would, in the course of 84 years, most assuredly have been involved in a libel suit, however specious it might have been, at some time or other in his public career. The suit may have been short-lived.

It may have been brought by or against the figure for tactical reasons only, and for the publicity the bringing of this suit might generate. But it would have been brought, either by the individual or against him.

This thought first occurred to me when I learned of an incident in Franklin's life which presents the classic case of a defamatory falsehood having been published about him which occasioned demonstrable injury to him; and I began to speculate what it would have been like for Franklin had he chosen to pursue a libel action at the time. That rumination, in turn, led to a comparison of what a Franklin 200 years after his death would have faced had he chosen to pursue a libel suit under the same circumstances.

Libel continued on page 5

On the Trail of the Last Franklin

Part XI -Interlude

by Claude-Anne Lopez

From May until September, 1781, grandfather and grandson waited for Congress's reaction to the letter in which Franklin had both offered his resignation and asked for some official support for Temple's career in public service. On the first point the answer was more than satisfactory: not only was the resignation turned down but the Doctor found himself appointed to the peace commission soon to be constituted. When it came to Temple, however, not a word was said.

The Congressional answer was first heard through Spain. William Carmichael, who served John Jay as secretary in Madrid, openly hinted at calumnies spread in America against Temple: "Your Grandfather's enemies, yours and mine, have endeavored to injure you all in their power in the circles which they frequent at Philadelphia. The unfavorable impressions extend to the provinces, and altho' interiorly we may despise malevolent and injust calumnies, we owe to ourselves every honest effort to remove them. . ." And yet Temple, as he had wistfully written to his aunt Sally in 1780, had never sent a word to his father since leaving Philadelphia. "I certainly might have done it without injuring the American cause," he said, "but I thought it might give suspicions, and I was desirous of avoiding them. I have not however been exempt. . ." Indeed, Temple bent over backwards to please Americans of all tendencies. For instance, when the President of Princeton, John Witherspoon, asked Temple to look after his son during a visit to Paris, he answered in such an obliging way as to be almost fawning. And yet Witherspoon had been one of William Franklin's most vociferous enemies. It must have been hard to suppress any expression of solidarity for his father, a man he really was very fond of. Don't the problems of his childhood and adolescence explain to some degree his later conduct, especially his often puzzling emotional detachment? By the end of September, Temple came down with jaundice, giving his grandfather a chance to try his hand at a modest pun in French: "le jeune et jaune homme" (the young and yellow man). To hasten his convalescence, Temple was granted his first vacation in four years, with permission to visit the country estate of their host family, the castle of Chaumont-sur-Loire.

His account of the trip by diligence and by water echoes, as he must have known, that of his grandfather's arrival in Philadelphia fifty-eight years sooner. It was October, once again, but a week later in the month. Temple helped in the rowing since the Loire was running low and the boat kept getting stuck in sand banks. He decided finally to walk along the river and made much better time.

For two glorious weeks after that, he hunted in the golden woods, took part in stage productions, danced, flirted, and rode to his heart's content. Madame Chaumont was like a mother to him and Jacques, the Chaumont son, an amusing brother. Jacques' sister, the wealthy and beautiful Madame Foucault (who had learned chess in order to play with Franklin) sent an English kiss, whatever that may have meant. (Franklin later complained that it had gone cold on the way). As to Mr. Chaumont, who had remained in Paris, he was assured that he was "much beloved in this part of the World. I have heard nothing but his eulogy, from Orleans to the Chateau. 'Le bon homme! Le brave homme! Le bon Seigneur!'"

By the time Temple sat down at this desk again, with its mountain of papers to be copied, bills to be examined before acceptance, and documents to be filed, history had made a leap forward. October 17 had come and gone, the name of Yorktown had entered the world stage and the news of the stunning Franco-American victory was soon to reach Passy.

Between Yorktown and the long hoped-for birth of the dauphin, enough banquets and celebrations were held in Paris to test the mettle of one recovering from jaundice but, as always in Temple's life, a bitter taste was mixed with the rejoicing, the knowledge that for his father this would be the end of the road, the collapse of a life devoted to honor and loyalty as he saw them. William's wife had died in New York, alone, still in her forties, denied even the comfort of a deathbed visit from her husband, in spite of a frantic plea to General Washington, their former friend. The Governor's belongings, transferred to New York when he was exchanged after two years in jail, were all destroyed in a fire. Nothing was left for him but the road to exile and the flimsy hope that England would reward him for his services to her lost cause, rather than seek revenge for wrong headed advice. Temple had known brief but intense happiness under the Governor's roof in New Jersey. Now, in the great Parisian mansions, amid the splendid parties, toasts and glitter, how could he help but feel a pang of sorrow?

In a pattern often to be repeated, Franklin's own star shone brighter while those of his relatives paled. Son-in-law Richard Bache reported glumly from Philadelphia that he had been evicted from his position as Postmaster General not for any personal wrongdoing but because Franklin's enemies, having aimed at his recall from Paris and "finding themselves foiled in that attempt, have struck at me, thinking to hurt your feeling." Still, the important factor was that peace was in the air and the work of peace was about to start.

Glamorous prospects for Franklin, somber ones for his son, and for Temple...what?

To be continued

The Use of Illustrations in Benjamin Franklin's Remarks Concerning the Savages of North America

by Christian Selden

This was written by the son of George Selden, Treasurer of the Friends of the Franklin Papers, while he was a junior at Rollins College, Florida

Who are the savages of North America? After reading this work, the reader is left to decide to whom the title is referring. Dr. Franklin's essay compares and contrasts the manners of the European settlers with those of some Native Americans in the same area, giving concrete illustrations to support each point. Without plainly stating his particular opinion one way or the other, the author allows his illustrations to soundly herald them forth. Dr. Franklin's main point is that manners and attitudes vary among all cultures, making the label of "savage" somewhat presumptuous and relative. Furthermore, in a contest involving politeness, fairness and hospitality, the European settlers in general failed miserably against the Native Americans, if the evidence given in the essay is accurate. The accounts are embarrassing.

The first illustration involves an offer by the commissioners of Virginia to educate six Native American youths from the Six Nations at the college in Williamsburg. The Native Americans' custom was not to answer a serious matter the same day, but to wait until the next. What they came back with the next day was the most diplomatic "no" imaginable. It was prefaced by a sincere "we know you mean well, and you think very highly of this education, but..." What follows is a vivid illustration nested within Dr. Franklin's narrative, telling of what became of some youths who had attended a settler college, and came back unable to cope adequately with the normal hardships of life within the Native American community. After this illustration, the representative offers to allow a dozen settlers' young men to come and be educated by the Native Americans instead. The message of this first illustration is that the education from a European settlers' college is good for nothing in the Native Americans' eyes. They did not come to this conclusion by mere prejudice, they had a first hand experience in the matter, which they candidly shared with the commissioners of Virginia. The essay does not state if any of the settlers volunteered their sons. It is very doubtful any of them did.

Illustrations, continued on page 3

Paris Update/Optional Tour of Normandy

The participation response for "Benjamin Franklin's Historic Paris and France" tour has been overwhelming. Forty-four Friends of Franklin will travel from different parts of the country to meet in Paris on Monday, October 23, 1995 to begin what we anticipate to be a most inspiring and enjoyable tour as we retrace Benjamin Franklin's footsteps through a country which meant so much to him. Those participating in the trip are:

William and Ruth Anderson, Wichita, Kansas
Ralph and Marie Claire Archbold, Philadelphia, Pennsylvania
David and Beatrice Bishop, Rochester, Minnesota
Seymour and Gertrude Block, Gainesville, Florida
Kathleen DeLuca, Collingswood, New Jersey
Nadezda Dominko, Philadelphia, Pennsylvania
Jean G. Elliott, Toronto, Canada
Ralph G. Elliot, West Hartford, Connecticut
Sandy and Elly Fitzig, Wichita, Kansas
Michael and Jacqueline George, Dallas, Texas
Roy Goodman and Sherry Bufano, Philadelphia, Pennsylvania
Lee E. Knepp, Middleburg, Pennsylvania
E. Philip Krider, Tucson, Arizona
Charles and Jackie Lard, West Hartford, Connecticut
Knox (Bud) and Kathleen Long, Bellingham, Washington
Claude-Anne Lopez, New Haven, Connecticut
Richard Margolis, Teaneck, New Jersey
Gregg and Laverne Orwoll, Rochester, Minnesota
Kenneth Reuter, Dayton, Kentucky
George and Patricia Selden, Mystic, Connecticut
John and Deane Sherman, Washington, D.C.
J. Watkins Strouss, New York City, NY
Larry E. Tise, Philadelphia, Pennsylvania
Anna Coxe Toogood, Wyndmoor, Pennsylvania
Edward and Ethel Twombly, Mystic, Connecticut
Peter and Rosemary Van Slyck, Niantic, Connecticut
Dain K. Waters, Boston, Massachusetts
George F. Waters, Rochester Minnesota
Douglas and Joan Whitley, Batavia, Illinois

An optional excursion to Normandy will begin on Monday, October 30 for those who are interested. Space for this tour will be limited to nine participants due to the size of the van. On this tour, we will view the historic beauties of France as seen by Benjamin Franklin as he travelled to Versailles. We will begin by following the River Seine to the coast with stops at Rouen to see the magnificent cathedral of the city and at various other sites to observe the stately ruins of Norman churches, abbeys, and monasteries. We will reach the beautiful fishing village of Honfleur where we will spend some time enjoying the sites and shopping. We will stay overnight in Deauville and begin our journey mid-morning the next day with a drive by Caen to Bayeux where we will see the incredible Bayeux tapestry, a 28 foot depiction of William the Conqueror's invasion of England. Lunch will take place in the shadows of Bayeux Cathedral where the tapestry has been exhibited from 1066 to the present (except for 2 years when Napoleon absconded with it to Paris as he, too, planned to invade England). When we leave Bayeux we will follow a meandering scenic route through the countryside back to Paris where we will stay overnight. The cost of this optional tour is $200 per person double occupancy (single occupancy add $80). Cost includes roundtrip transportation by van, transportation by same van to all sites mentioned above, one night hotel stay at Du Yacht Club in Deauville, and one night hotel stay at the Trianon Rive Gauche in Paris. All other costs such as admissions, food, etc., are on own.

Illustrations - continued

Public councils are the subject of the next illustration. It is not the record of actual events, but a general description of the proceedings on both the European and Native American sides. The Native American public councils were a model of respect and civility. It was customary to be silent while one of the elders stood and spoke, and then wait five or six minutes in silence after he had finished and sat down. Most of us, in everyday conversation, can barely wait until the other person is through speaking before we want to butt in! Dr. Franklin jokingly understates the proceedings at the "polite British House of Commons," which are a riot by comparison. One gets a clear mind picture of some white-wigged speaker slamming his gavel down and bellowing, "Order!" repeatedly. Dr. Franklin had witnessed this mayhem on more than one occasion, having traveled in Europe as a diplomat himself. He uses cutting sarcasm in the phrase "many polite companies of Europe," when describing how often a person is interrupted. This illustration shows the tremendous discipline, consideration and respect the Native Americans had for their elders, and for each other. One can begin to see the degree of "politeness" Dr. Franklin would prefer.

Diplomacy is illustrated next, with an account of a Swedish missionary with the Susquehanah Indians. Dr. Franklin explains that the Native Americans are so polite and diplomatic that it is difficult to know what they really think or feel. They will nod with assent as you speak, but this is only a custom. The illustration of the Swedish minister shows how willing the Indians were to hear someone out and then figure out an aspect they could agree upon and offend the other party as little as possible. The sad part is that the minister became indignant with them when they told him one of their beliefs. Needless to say, the Indians were offended by his lack of diplomacy. This illustration demonstrated how some of the settlers were quick to offend others and were not willing to refrain from openly rejecting views they did not agree with.

The final subject is hospitality. Again, the settlers demonstrate practices that are in sharp contrast with the Native American way of treating strangers. There is great generosity shown to a traveler who stays in the Native American village. He is not asked for any money in return for food and shelter. The act of giving seems to be a natural part of the Native American's life. The subject of religion arises again, which the settlers call "the learning of good things." In the Native American's mind, good things are not the lesson since the settlers cheat him after they return from their Sunday church meeting. A Native American asking for food and drink from a white man's house brings a demand for money, and if he has none, he is promptly turned away. He says, "You see they have not yet learned those little good things, which we need no meetings to be instructed in, because our mothers taught them to us when we were children..." In other words, he's saying, "Don't you have any manners or decency?" Obviously, the settlers were not being taught or practicing the golden rule of "Do unto others as you would have them do unto you." This is the most heart-rending illustration of the essay, because the meaning of "savage" blurs from being a description of a culture to being a description of men's treatment of other men. Where the label of "savage" falls is ironic.

Dr. Franklin speaks his own mind very little in this essay. He lets the illustrations speak for him. His skills as a diplomat shine through, since the basic purpose of the essay is to criticize the white man's treatment and labeling of the Native Americans. By weighing the facts presented, the reader is left to decide who the "Savages of North America" are.

LET - continued

necticut River valley, posesses a full-scale replica of this amazing machine of war and research. Bruce Yenawine stood in front of this mysterious device, invented to sink British warships by surreptitiously attaching a bomb with a hand drill from beneath the drink. The piece had a number of incredible innovations--a propeller, a fresh air snorkel, a flotation and diving system, and a directional navigation system. Best of all, as Bruce explained, this whole system during its testing phases was presented for Benjamin Franklin's approval, supposedly during trials off of Ayer's point on the Connecticut River during the summer of 1775. The following year the AMERICAN TURTLE saw action at the bombardment of Fort Lee in the Hudson River. There it also met the dust, or, rather succombed to the drink, when it sank with the sloop carrying it among the flying bombs. This was a great meeting: instructive, pleasant weather, great food, conviviality, etc. For more about the AMERICAN TURTLE or the museum, contact Dr. Bruce Yenawine, Connecticut River Museum, P. O. Box 261, Essex, CT 06426, Phone (203) 767-8269. For more information about the Friends of the Franklin Papers, contact Floyd M. Shumway, Chairman, 37 Temple Court, New Haven, CT 06511, Phone (203) 787-9516.

2. Did Franklin Say . . . ? We get calls all the time from people wanting to know whether Franklin said this or that or something else. Our usual reaction is to say in response, "That sure sounds like something Franklin could have said" or conversely, "That sure doesn't sound like Franklin." Occasionally, we are even able to confirm that he did or did not say something in particular. We have in our offices a variety of publications, mostly now out of date, that list various Franklin sayings by topic or key words. Probably the best and easiest to use and available in many libraries is A Concordance to the Sayings in Franklin's POOR RICHARD, compiled by Frances M. Barbour and published by Gale Research Company. But even that source did not help recently when Melissa Beall of Congressman Todd Tiahrt's (KS) staff called wanting to know if, when, and where Franklin said, "They that can give up essential liberty to obtain a little temporary safety deserve neither liberty nor safety." While she waited on the phone for this rush order to make perfect a speech that was to be just an hour away, I checked my usual sources and sadly reported that I had some sayings that were close, but not on the mark. I photocopied those for her and faxed them over. I asked her to let me know how it worked out. Well, the next day, faithful Melissa faxed back that they had found the source in their own office--straight from the 16th edition of Bartlett's Familiar Quotations. There it is reported that Franklin said the exact words they were seeking in something called Historical Review of Pennsylvania in 1759. So much for our fancy professional foot work. Stick with the basics, maam. Or as Franklin said in the 1754 Poor Richard's Almanac, "The cat in gloves catches no mice." Source: Bartlett's, 16th ed., p. 310.

3. Grolier Club Historic Print of Duplessis' Franklin. Eagle eye Friend Watty Strouss of New York and one of the most faithful attendees of our tours and symposia passed along to us information on an opportunity to get a print from a rare copper plate etching commissioned by New York's Grolier Club in 1898. It seems the club asked master printmaker, Henri LeFort in 1898 to prepare copper plates to reproduce a print of the famous J. S. Duplessis portrait of Benjamin Franklin owned by the New York Metropolitan Museum of Art (all hands agree that this was the most faithful portrait of Franklin). The Grolier Club sold a limited edition of 300 prints from that project in 1898. Fortunately, the copper plates for that edition were recently found--not canceled, as usually is the case. The Grolier Club had the plates cleaned and for the holiday season of 1994 produced a new set of prints from the historic plates. Unfortunately the pre-printing price of $95.00 per print expired on January 26, 1995. But according to Watty and

Craven Street

information from the Grolier Club, there are still some copies available to interested souls for $125.00. The order form asks interested parties to submit orders for "Portrait of Benjamin Franklin" in whatever quantity desired. It also says "Send no money with this order; you will be billed. Sales tax, where applicable, and a modest charge for shipping will be added." Orders can be sent to The Grolier Club, 47 East 60th Street, New York, NY 10022. Or you can call for further information at (202) 838-6690. Ask for Nancy Houghton.

4. West Wycombe Park. Watty also spotted a New York Times travel section piece about another Franklin House in England that I did not visit on my 1994 inspection tour of Franklin Houses (1994, fall Gazette). The article concerned the home of Sir Francis Dashwood who created West Wycombe Park and elaborated a beautiful house in the park. Sir Francis is also known from his parody, the Hellfire Club, which met at the park with members in monk's robes and all the other paraphernalia of mysterious doings that we have mentioned in the Gazette on other occasions. Once Sir Francis had the house in superb Palladian revision, Benjamin Franklin spent part of the summer of 1773 in the house. From the house Franklin wrote son William, "I am in this house as much at ease as if it was my own; and the gardens are a paradise." Odd that Franklin would put it that way, since--as nice as was his house at Franklin Court in Philadelphia--it never came up to any of the palaces he sojourned in across Britain or France. Only his Craven Street house in London would have been of comparable style to Franklin Court. If you are in London and would like to visit this fine house, it is open Sunday to Thursday, June 1 to August 31. Train is the only way to go--from Marylebone Station in London to High Wycombe Station. Taxi three miles to West Wycombe Park. Phone (44 1494) 524411. Thanks Watty.

5. 36 Craven Street. Speaking of Craven Street in London, I am afraid that I have some more lamentable news. We have received a most discouraging letter from The Honorable Jane DeGraff Sloat, Chairman of the American Friends of the Benjamin Franklin House at 36 Craven Street in London. She reports that over the last year her group had identified an American national council to assist in saving the house. They organized a plan to avert a Compulsory Repair Order threatened by English Heritage in late 1994. They also got a commitment of funds to undertake some very badly needed repairs on the house (as we have reported often, the house has been in serious demise for almost twenty years!). But, in the end, they ran into what Mrs. Sloat described as an "insuperable" problem: " We did not feel that the amount of input which the British were willing to give us was sufficient to permit us to insure that the funds we raised in the United States were properly administered."

Regrettably, that has also been the experience and conclusion of the Friends of Franklin, Inc. Sad.

6. Errata. Benjamin Franklin in his Autobiography referred frequently to his own personal errata--goof ups, flubs, miscues, and flops. I have to admit one here too. In the last issue of the Gazette, I had an item in this column attempting to clarify for an inquirer why we celebrate Franklin's birthday on January 17 as opposed to the date in 1706 reported as his date of birth--January 6. Beautiful was my explanation. But in that the title of the item asked why we celebrate Franklin's birthday on January 17th when he was born on January 16 I created more messy numbers. A typo that four sets of eyes missed! Sorry.

Keep those cards and letters coming our way.

THE SAYINGS OF CONFUCIUS AND FRANKLIN

Collected, Compiled, and Edited by
Larry E. Tise, Executive Director
Benjamin Franklin National Memorial

Probably no two individuals in human history have been more important in collecting and reporting commonplace wisdom than the great Chinese philosopher Confucius (551 B.C. - 478 B.C.) and the American printer and publisher Benjamin Franklin (1706-1790). Both of these colossal figures in the history of China, America, and indeed the world listened carefully to the folk about them and recognized that common people everywhere have a traditional way of passing on teachings, principles, and wisdom, i.e., through parables, aphorisms, mottos, adages, and maxims. Confucius collected and passed along the sayings of Chinese folk through his recorded and published Analects. Benjamin Franklin every year collected and published the sayings of American folk in his annual editions of Poor Richard's Almanac between 1733 and 1758.

What follows here is a selection of the sayings of Confucius and of Franklin on the same subjects. Pithy and instructive are they all, sometimes reflecting a parallel wisdom, sometimes just the opposite lesson.

Confucius: Only the humane can like people and can dislike people.

Franklin: If you'd have a servant that you like, serve yourself.

Confucius: Have leaders be leaders, have administrators be administrators, have fathers be fathers, have sons be sons.

Franklin: Let our fathers and grandfathers be valued for their goodness, ourselves for our own.

Confucius: Rotten wood cannot be sculpted; a manure wall cannot be plastered.

Franklin: A strange forest it is that has no rotten wood.

Confucius: Good people should be slow to speak but quick to act.

Franklin: Speak little, do much.

Confucius: As long as you do not know life, how can you know death.

Franklin: A long life may not be good enough, but a good life is long enough.

Confucius: People who do not think far enough ahead inevitably have worries near at hand.

Franklin: The horse thinks one thing, and he that saddles him another.

Confucius: Promote the honest, placing them over the crooked, and you can cause the crooked to straighten out.

Franklin: Honest men in all parties, but wise men in none.

Confucius: If people have no faith, I don't know what they are good for.

Franklin: The way to see by faith is to shut the eye of reason.

Confucius: To be respectful without manners is tiresome. To be brave without manners is wildness.

Franklin: It is ill manners to silence a fool and cruelty to let him go on.

Confucius: Be respectful at home, serious at work, faithful in human relations.

Franklin: Relation without friendship, friendship without power, power without will, will without effect, effect without profit, profit without value are not worth a farto.

Confucius: Exemplary people understand matters of justice, small people understand matters of profit.

Franklin: A wise man desires no more than he can get justly.

Confucius: Exemplary people concern themselves with virtue, small people concern themselves with territory.

Franklin: Seek virtue, and of that possessed, to Providence resign the rest.

Confucius: To pursue oddities only leads to harm.

Franklin: Mankind are very odd creatures.

Confucius: Cultivated people foster what is good in others, not what is bad; petty people do the opposite.

Franklin: Most people return small favors, acknowledge middling ones, and repay great ones with ingratitude.

Confucius: Study without thinking, and you are blind; think without studying, and you are in danger.

Franklin: Some men grow mad by studying to know much, not by studying to grow good.

Confucius: Enliven the ancient and also know what is new; then you can be a teacher.

Franklin: The ancients tell us what is best, but one must learn of the moderns what is fittest.

Confucius: If you are personally upright, things get done without orders being given. If you are not, no one will obey even if you give orders.

Franklin: He that cannot obey cannot command. If the magistrate obeys the laws, the people will obey the magistrate.

Confucius: Put the officers ahead of yourself, and forgive small errors.

Franklin: To err is human, to repent divine, to persist devilish.

Confucius: If you would be employed by a just country, it is shameful to be employed by an unjust country.

Franklin: Changing countries or beds cures neither a bad manager nor a fever.

Confucius: Clever talk disrupts virtue; a little lack of forbearance disrupts great plans.

Franklin: Great talkers should be cropped, for they have no need of ears.

Confucius: To be extravagant is presumptuous; to be frugal is stiffness. It is better to be stiff than presumptuous.

Franklin: Industry may bring plenty, but frugal care is necessary to keep it.

Confucius: Although your clothes may be ragged, do not be embarrassed to stand alongside people wearing leather and fur.

Franklin: Pride of dress is an empty curse.

Confucius: When biting and painful slander does not affect you, you can be called clear; when it does you can be called perceptive.

Franklin: One slander fifty will beget; / The world with interest pays the debt.

Confucius: It is no problem for me to discern silently, to study tirelessly, and to teach indefatigably.

Franklin: Men must be taught as if you taught them not.

Confucius: If the leaders are courteous, then the people are easy to employ.

Franklin: The good will of the governed is fed by good deeds of governors.

Confucius: If you are exacting with yourself but forgiving to others, then you will put enmity at a distance.

Franklin: Forgiving your enemy sets you above him.

Confucius: Clever talkers who put imperious expressions on their faces have little humaneness indeed.

Franklin: Half-wits talk much but say little.

Confucius: Have nothing to do with those who are free but not honest, childlike but not sincere, straightforward but not trustworthy.

Franklin: He that sells upon trust loses many friends and always wants money.

Confucius: If you act on the basis of profit, you will be much resented.

Franklin: Effect without profit, profit without virtue are not worth a farto.

Confucius: Even if you have fine abilities, if you are arrogant and stingy, the rest is not worth considering.

Franklin: The proud hate pride--in others.

Confucius: Don't worry that other people don't know you; worry that you don't know other people.

Franklin: None know the unfortunate, and the fortunate do not know themselves.

Confucius: Realize that you know something when you know it and that you don't know it when you don't.

Franklin: What does it signify to know names if you know not natures?

Confucius: Cultivated people harmonize without imitating. Immature people imitate without harmonizing.

Franklin: There is much difference in imitating and counterfeiting.

Confucius: If you cannot correct yourself, what can you do about correcting others?

Franklin: To err is human, to repent divine.

Confucius: To be poor without bitterness is easy; to be rich without arrogance is hard.

Franklin: Contentment and riches seldom meet together.

Confucius: Exemplary people are even-tempered and clear-minded. Petty people are always fretting.

Franklin: Discontented minds and fevers of the body are not to be cured by changing beds or business.

Confucius: Virtue is never isolated; it always has neighbors.

Franklin: He is ill clothed that is bare of virtue.

Confucius: To guide a state, be serious and faithful in its affairs; be economical and love the people.

Franklin: He is a governor that governs his passions, and is a servant that serves them.

Confucius: To go to war with untrained people is tantamount to abandoning them.

Franklin: Wars bring scars.

Confucius: They are wise who do not anticipate deception and do not consider dishonesty, yet are aware of them from the start.

Franklin: Who has deceived thee so oft as thyself.

Confucius: Few lose out on account of prudence.

Franklin: Lack of prudence is a misfortune.

Confucius: There are sprouts that do not send up shoots; there are shoots that do not bear fruit.

Franklin: Graft good fruit all or graft not at all.

Confucius: The knowing are not confused; the humane are not worried; the brave are not afraid.

Franklin: The wise and brave dares his own mistakes.

Confucius: Be an exemplary man of learning, not a pedant.

Franklin: Most of the learning in use is of no great use.

Confucius: Cultivated people make justice their sustenance, set it forth with humility, and actualize it by faithfulness.

Franklin: Without justice courage is weak.

Confucius: When you see wise people, think of becoming equal to them; when you see unwise people, reflect inwardly on yourself.

Franklin: Everyone has wisdom enough to manage the affairs of his neighbors.

Confucius: Cultivated people are strict but do not contend; they associate with others but do not join factions.

Franklin: Faction is the madness of many for the gain of a few.

Confucius: When everyone dislikes something, it should be examined. When everyone likes something, it should be examined.

Franklin: One man is not more cunning than everybody.

The principal sources for the foregoing were Thomas Cleary, The Essential Confucius (San Francisco: HarperCollins Publishers, 1992) and Frances M. Barbour, A Concordance to the Sayings in Franklin's POOR RICHARD (Detroit: Gale Research Company, 1974).

Libel - continued

The differences are striking, say much about the development of the law of libel in the 200 years since Franklin's death, and say something, too, about the effect of the law on public discourse and public life wrought by those changes.

The Background

Benjamin Franklin was appointed the Pennsylvania Assembly's Agent to England on February 3, 1757, and arrived in London on July 27 to take up his duties. The purpose of his mission was to negotiate with the Pennsylvania Proprietors, Thomas and Richard Penn, and with officials of the British government on behalf of the Assembly concerning its disputes with the Proprietors, especially on the issue of taxing Proprietary estates in common with other property.

He left a Philadelphia in which he had been extraordinarily active in recent years. Though he had retired from the active printing business in 1748, his involvement in civic affairs had more than taken up the slack. That same year he was elected a member of the Philadelphia Common Council. He continued his experiments in electricity, publishing about them in 1751. That same year of 1751, the Pennsylvania Hospital was chartered, Franklin was elected an Alderman of Philadelphia, and he also took his seat as a member of the Pennsylvania Assembly from Philadelphia. In 1752, a fire insurance company was founded, with Franklin as President. He also performed his kite experiment in Philadelphia. In 1753 he received Honorary Masters degrees from both Harvard and Yale, and was appointed Deputy Postmaster General of North America. He attended the Albany Congress the following year, and the year after that actively supplied General Braddock with horses, wagons and provisions for the first major campaign of the French and Indian Wars, and in 1755 had been elected President of the Managers of Pennsylvania Hospital.

Among his greatest interests, however, was the Academy of Philadelphia (now The University of Pennsylvania). In November of 1749 he had been elected President of the Academy, a position in which he would serve until 1756, continuing thereafter as Trustee until his death. In 1753, he became aware of a 26 year old Scotsman named William Smith, who had come to New York in 1751 as a private tutor. Smith was a frequent contributor to various journals, writing both poetry and prose. One of his pieces attracted the attention of Franklin because it emphasized training for citizenship and recognized the importance of educating for the "mechanic professions" as well as for divinity, law, medicine and public service. Smith visited Philadelphia in May and June of 1753, and Franklin encouraged him to remain. Smith returned to England for ordination, however, that December, and returned in the following spring, when he was elected Rector of the Academy. He became Provost when the Academy was re-chartered as the College of Philadelphia in 1755. He was the dominant figure in the history of the College from that point until 1779.

For reasons not altogether clear, Franklin's original enchantment with Smith quickly abated. He began taking the College in a direction different from the one that had attracted Franklin's original attention and approval. He also began to become more contentiously involved in the politics of Pennsylvania. He became an outspoken supporter of the Proprietary interest of the Penns, became critical of both the Germans and the Quakers, and publicly condemned the Assembly for refusing to take aggressive military measures in the French and Indian War. The interests Smith opposed were, of course, those of Franklin's friends.

This, then, was the situation when Franklin arrived in England in 1757 as the agent for the Assembly. On January 6, 1758, William Smith was taken into custody on order of the Pennsylvania Assembly. The grounds: he had caused a libelous attack on the Assembly by William Moore to be translated and published in a Philadelphia newspaper. Smith was tried before the Pennsylvania House of Representatives, and was recommitted to jail on January 25, where he remained, conducting his College classes from his cell, until about April 11. On February 6, Smith petitioned the King in Council and Parliament to rescind the action of the Assembly. His petitions reached England in late March and were laid before the Privy Council on April 1. On April 10, the Privy Council's Committee for Plantation Affairs ordered the Attorney General and Solicitor General to conduct hearings. Franklin, as Agent for the Assembly, hired attorneys to defend the action of the Assembly, and actively participated in the defense.

Smith himself left for England in December of 1758, arriving in London in January of 1759. He argued that the Quakers had prosecuted him, a good Anglican, because he had urged the need to defend Pennsylvania. He argued as well that the Assembly did not have the constitutional right to punish libel. Members of the Church of England immediately took up his cause, and as a result of their active solicitation and a letter from the Archbishop of Canterbury, he was granted an Honorary D.D. degree by the University of Aberdeen on March 10 and, significantly, by Oxford on March 27. In June of 1759 the Privy Council ruled that the Assembly, in punishing the libels, had acted beyond its authority. The libel had been directed to an Assembly that had expired, and the new Assembly lacked power to prosecute for it. Smith was vindicated on this jurisdictional point.

To be continued in the next Gazette.

Symposium - continued

"The Nasty Contradiction in Pennsylvania's Emancipation Act" (Leslie Patrick-Stamp, Bucknell University). In between these spoke also Richard Newman of SUNY Buffalo, Eric Ledell Smith of the Pennsylvania Historical and Museum Commission, Roderick McDonald of Rider University, and Margaret Hope Bacon of the Pennsylvania Abolition Society.

Our favorites from the Franklin Papers, Barbara Oberg and Claude-Anne Lopez also made star appearances speaking respectively about Benjamin Franklin as an abolitionist and early enemy of slavery. Balancing out the program were a group of stellar historians who served as moderators and commentators: Honorable James R. Roebuck of the Pennsylvania House of Representatives, Emma Lapsansky of Haverford College, Randal Miller of St. Joseph's University, and Jerome Wood of Swarthmore College.

Never have so many authorities on slavery, black history, and Benjamin Franklin gathered in one place. Thanks to our speakers and a lively audience this event was a great and stimulating success. Convener Larry E. Tise announced that participants had been invited to submit revised papers to produce a book on the topic of the symposium.

On the afternoon of May 5, before the symposium got underway, the board of directors of the Friends of Franklin, Inc., held their annual meeting. Present and accounted for were Malcolm Smith, President; Deane Sherman, Vice President; Ralph Archbold, Secretary; Larry E. Tise, Executive Secretary; and board members Ralph Elliot, Roy Goodman, Frank Jones, Claude-Anne Lopez, Barbara Oberg, and George F. Waters. Visiting also was Honorable Jane Sloat to report on the condition of Franklin's house on Craven Street in London.

Various reports were heard. Fund raising goals for the Papers had been set for the next two years with an outright grant of $170,000 and a matching grant of $150,000 from the National Endowment for the Humanities. Friends will be encouraged to assist in matching this generous new grant.

A report by Larry Tise and Kathy DeLuca from the National Memorial indicated that more than forty individuals had signed up for the fall tour of Benjamin Franklin's Historic Paris and France. The tour looks very promising.

The board also made a variety of decisions. The fall tour in 1996 will be to Williamsburg, Virginia, as proposed by Friends living and working there. The board of the Friends will be expanded by three to accommodate additional Friends wishing to assist the organization. Some of those dedicated souls--such as Roy Goodman--offered to put the Friends on the Internet; Ralph Archbold to solicit membership renewals from former members and to do some focused advertising of the Friends activities.

And from this busy session, board members raced to the opening of the symposium.

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Franklin at Yale: Dapper Ben

by Claude-Anne Lopez

Our Friend Aaron Goldman sends us the following extract from the Smithsonian Magazine:

Scholars researching 18th-century clothing may persuade curators at the Museum of American History to give them a look at Ben Franklin's party clothes--a three-piece purple silk suit. It's too fragile to face the public on display, but it's still there--coat, waistcoat, and breeches lying flat, supported by acid-free tissues, in a muslin-lined drawer in a locked cabinet in a room where temperature and humidity are carefully controlled.

Fine tailoring and rows of silk-covered buttons help account for the generally dashing look of the ancient suit. It seems still to express Franklin's tastes. So does its shape. It has a splendid bulge at the midriff, irrefutable evidence of much socializing, many splendid dinners, and unnumbered syllabubs.

When shown this passage, our sartorial expert, Karen Duval, immediately produced some extra information: the tailor's bill for said suit, described as "soie couleur prune" on May 22, 1780, and amounting to 172.4.9 livres tournois. To the price of the silk itself, the tailor added matching Italian taffeta for the lining, linen for the pockets and for what he calls "defect" (the midriff bulge?), plus an item entitled "petits panniers"--meaning horsehair used to stiffen the lining in the flaring part of the coat. Plus a steel buckle and ribbons. All of this to appear in Vol. XXXII of the Yale edition, sent to the Press this spring.

NEW MEMBERS

LIFE

Michael L. George, Dallas, TX
Dr. John T. Kelly, Penn Valley, PA

FRIEND

Dr. Franklin Robinson, Woodbridge, CT

INDIVIDUAL

Kent Johnson, Buena Park, CA
Dr. Michael Loren, Independence, MO

UPCOMING EVENTS

"Benjamin Franklin's Historic Paris and France"
October 23 - 30, 1995

Friends of Franklin Board Meeting
May 3, 1996

Benjamin Franklin Symposium (topic to be announced)
May 4, 1996

Membership Categories

All individuals, institutions, scholars, students, collectors, and others are invited to become members of the Friends of Franklin at the annual membership rates indicated below.

Life Members	**$1,000**
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