Franklin Gazette

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Friends of Franklin, Inc., The Franklin Institute, 20th & Benjamin Franklin Parkway, Philadelphia, PA 19103-1194

"A penny saved is two pence clear. A pin-a-day is a groat a-year. Save and have." B. Franklin

From the Desk of Larry E. Tise

It seems that we could go on endlessly with the trail of Benjamin Franklin across time and across the globe. Even as we are preparing to take our traveling entourage of Franklin Friends to London, October 21-27, 1997, we keep getting notice of both Franklin's globetrotting and of how memories of him keep trotting around the world.

1. Portugal. At a newly established annual event in Philadelphia to commemorate Benjamin Franklin's birthday, January 17, 1997, British-born writer and photographer Michael Teague disclosed the recent discovery of some new Portuguese records documenting Franklin's interest in the wines and foods of Portugal. Teague, also Secretary of the American Portuguese Society based in New York, made the discovery while investigating materials on the Abbé Correia da Serra, a distinguished botanist, friend of Thomas Jefferson, and first minister plenipotentiary of Portugal and Brazil to the United States. To celebrate Franklin's 291st birthday, a small group of Friends and other guests, gathered at Philadelphia's historic Samuel Powel House (1765) where Franklin indulged his habits with Philadelphia's Revolutionary Mayor Powel and where daughter Sally Franklin danced the night away with the dashing General George Washington.

2. Russia. We received unsolicited in the mail a while ago a videotape made in Russia, in Russian, and in Russian video format. The thing had written on the side of it, "He Tamed the Lightning." After trying to play it on various available video machines, I took it to a local shop where videos could be reformatted. What came back was a fascinating video story beginning with Benjamin Franklin's Philadelphia and Franklin's historic researches into lightning. This Philadelphia looked mighty Russian and the background music was also clearly Russian. But the story soon swept into the life of a twentieth century lightning scientist, Kokorina, who had--the video argued--finally

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The American Utopia of Dr. Guillotin by Claude-Anne Lopez

The recorded history of Docteur Guillotin's American utopia begins in the summer of 1787. Two young Frenchmen presented themselves at Benjamin Franklin's home in Philadelphia. Franklin, then eighty-one and president of the state of Pennsylvania, had been back from France exactly two years. He received the visitors with pleasure. Just as he had been the *point de ralliement* of the Americans in Paris, he was now the rallying point of the French in America - and it was as true as ever that he was a more important man in the eyes of the French than in those of his countrymen.[1] In the opening days of the Constitutional Convention, Franklin enjoyed all the trappings of prestige - towns and counties were named after him, even a state for a few years, the first state west of the Appalachians - but power had slipped from his hands and he was too politically astute not to know it. His old enemies, the Adamses and the Lees, were now in the ascendant. The two relatively minor favors he asked for, as sole recompense for his triumphant eight-year mission in Paris - that his son-in-law be reinstated in his former job of postmaster-general and that his grandson Temple be given some diplomatic position - were both ignored without any explanation. In a rare outburst of bitterness, he would write to a friend: "I must own I did hope...the Congress would at least have been kind enough to have shown their approbation of my conduct by a grant of some small tract of land in their western country, which might have been of use and some honor to my posterity."[2]

A tract of land in the West is exactly what the two Frenchmen

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Benjamin Franklin's Historic London and England

by Larry E. Tise

AND NOW . . .

The long awaited moment has arrived for one and all to sign up for the long anticipated and frequently requested tour of Benjamin Franklin's Historic London and England. Designed to replicate our exciting trip to Benjamin Franklin's Historic Paris and France in October, 1995, the London tour is scheduled for October 21-27, 1997. That is, the seven formal days of the tour will be inclusive of Tuesday through Monday. And there will be a tantalizing three day trailer on the tour, October 28-30, for those who want to get out of London seriously to places like Bath and Manchester.

While we have not yet designed each of the days, here are some of the places we will definitely visit:

- Craven Street, the place Franklin lived for most of his years in London
- The Royal Society of which Franklin was a member
- The Royal Society for the Encouragement of the Arts, ditto
- The Medical Society of London, ditto
- The Royal Society of Antiquaries, ditto
- St. Martin in the Fields, just a short block from Franklin's Craven Street address
- The Inns of Court, where William Franklin studied law
- Westminster Abbey, Hyde Park's Speaker Corner
- The Cathedral of St. Bartholomew the Great where Franklin worked as a printer as a young man
- Sir John Soan Museum where Franklin visited

While we are in London, just as we did in Paris, we will provide you with passes to all of the great museums that require admission and tube (subway) passes to get to all of the great museums that are free. And we will provide plenty of time for everyone to see London's great theatre.

And we will get out of town, too:

- A day to Oxford where both Franklin and son William got degrees
- A visit to Ecton where Franklin's ancestors are buried and to Sulgrave Manor from whence George Washington's ancestors came
- An awesome trip to Winchester, its cathedral and the adjacent hall of the Knights of the Round Table, complete with the Round Table, and to the little village of Twyford where the garden house in which Franklin began his Autobiography still stands.
- And we will glide down the Thames to Greenwich for a visit to the National Maritime Museum and the Royal Observatory.

This trip will be historic, entertaining, and enjoyable. We have made all the contacts and have reserved rooms in London's fashionable Sloane Club (thanks to Friends Frank and Gloria Robinson). But some other rooms at an even more economical price will be available at the nearby Sloane Square Moat House.

We expect the tour to fall near the price range of our Paris tour, although we will not be able establish pricing firmly until May 1. In order to reserve your space on the tour, please complete the enclosed registration form and include a $100 deposit. A deposit of $600 will be due May 15 and the balance due August 25.

Traveller One:
Address
City/State/Zip/Country
Daytime phone: Fax: Evening phone: E-Mail:

Traveller Two:
Address
City/State/Zip/Country
Daytime phone: Fax: Evening phone: E-Mail:

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Benjamin Franklin's Historic Paris and France Videotape **from our trip in October, 1995 is available for $17.00 including shipping and handling. Please send the following order form to Kathleen DeLuca, Friends of Franklin, c/o The Franklin Institute, 222 N. 20th Street, Philadelphia, PA 19103-1194**

Please enclose $17.00 (includes shipping and handling). Method of Payment: Visa ☐ M/C ☐ Amex ☐ Check ☐

Acct. #_____ Exp. Date: _____ Amount Enclosed: _____

Name on card:_____

"Benjamin Franklin's Historic Williamsburg and Virginia"
November 6-10, 1996
By Friend of Franklin, Charles Lard

From Wednesday through Sunday, November 6 through the 10th, The Franklin Institute, The Friends of Franklin Inc., and the Friends of the Franklin Papers toured historic Williamsburg and Virginia. Larry Tise and Kathy DeLuca led nearly 30 of us who represented some 10 states and Canada on a wonderful tour.

Franklin had come to this historic area twice where he both left and gained impressions which are represented in his autobiography and writings on issues such as slavery. We were shown places where Franklin visited and received honors. We went behind doors which are usually closed to the public and were welcomed because of our love for Franklin.

Wednesday—Colonial Williamsburg

On Wednesday, November 6, we went to Williamsburg which served as the capitol of Virginia and learned the current topics of debate in 1747.

A surprise awaited us when we visited the Post Office where Mr. William Hunter, who was the postmaster, enlightened us with his remembrances of Franklin's visit to Williamsburg.

Larry gave his observations on Franklin's view of Virginia when he was there to scout the printing business and establish a more efficient postal service.

Lunch was at the historic King's Arm Tavern and then we explored historic Williamsburg on our own. Later that evening, we attended a reception at the Barraud House hosted by Robert Wilburn, President of Colonial Williamsburg.

Thursday—Williamsburg/Yorktown

More of Williamsburg with a visit to the printing office and bookbindery. In the printing office several members of the group got behind the press and actually printed out an original pamphlet. In the bookbindery we learned how they make beautiful leather bound books today.

In the afternoon we bused to Yorktown where Lord Cornwallis surrendered to George Washington in a battle that was engineered in part by Ben Franklin in far away Paris. Franklin got the French fleet to impede the British retreat and this victory was the launching of a free and independent America. That evening, back in Williamsburg we toured the home of Mr. and Mrs. Joseph Hennage, long-time supporter of the Friends of Franklin. We had the opportunity to view many items in the Hennage home including a highboy that Franklin actually owned.

That evening was capped off by a candlelight walking tour of several "Legends of Williamsburg". Anyone left standing after the walk must have gone to a local tavern to be revived.

Friday—Jamestown

On Friday morning we bused to Historic Jamestown for a glimpse of the first permanent English settlement in North America. We had a guided walking tour of the Jamestown site and had a special presentation by Eric Deetz, Association for the Preservation of Virginia Antiquities. The site of the original Jamestown fort has recently been found and the Deetz group of archeologists are carefully excavating and analyzing the historic remains.

Just before lunch we arrived by bus at the nearby Sherwood Forest plantation, the residence of President John Tyler. We were welcomed by William B. Tyler, great-grandson of President John Tyler. While we were at the plantation, John Selby of the history department at William & Mary gave a lecture on Franklin's planter friends. It appears Franklin was more impressed with the industrial North than agrarian Virginia.

We arrived back at Williamsburg for a reception hosted by the Insitute of Early American History and Culture at the Swem Library Building, on the William and Mary College campus. We were welcomed by Ronald Hoffman, director, and went to the Swem Library and toured the archives where we saw Franklin's honorary master's degree and several other Franklin materials.

Saturday—William & Mary College

The group met at Wren Building and was led on a tour by the Spotswood Society. We heard from one of our members, Pamela Hartsock, a Ph.D. candidate at the University of Missouri-Columbia, about the history of Franklin's Autobiography. Mrs. Hartsock gave a truly insightful history of the 600 plus different printings of the Autobiography.

After the lecture, we were entertained by 18th century music performed on an original organ in the Wren building chapel. Then Thaddius Tate from the department of history at William and Mary talked about Franklin's Williamsburg and Virginia.

We were shuttled back to Williamsburg for a tour of the Governor's Palace and later we gathered for a reception and tour of the St. George Tucker House. We had a very special glass armonica performance by Dean Shostak of Colonial Williamsburg and a Friend of Franklin.

Later that night we had a farewell dinner at the Williamsburg Woodlands. A special Franklin and Jefferson performance was given by Friends of Franklin, Ralph Archbold (Franklin) and Bill Barker (Jefferson). They explored their close relationship and the performance was loved by all in attendance.

Sunday—Carter's Grove Plantation

The group was transported via bus to the Carter Grove plantation. The guide took us immediately to the reconstructed slave quarters where we explored African-American music, language, and lore.

The tour ended after a lunch back in Williamsburg at the Chowning Tavern. We all raised our glasses to Larry Tise and Kathy DeLuca for a job well done. It was agreed that a tour should be made of Franklin's Historic London in 1997.

Photographs of this historic trip will appear in the next Gazette.

Benjamin Franklin and The Chamber of Time

by Chris Heimerdinger

A Book Review by Francine Britton

Stretch your imagination, if you will, and picture Benjamin Franklin in the year 2020 or even 1993 then ... enter the world of Ben Franklin on the day of his death in 1790. Bedridden by pleurisy, dependent on laudanum for sleep and relief from pain and indebted to his daughter Sally for her ever present and constant nursing care, Ben asks Sally the day and she replies **"April 17th, why do you want to know? Were you planning on going on a picnic? The weather is hardly permitting."**

Much to Sally's surprise and disbelief, BF replies that he simply wanted to know the date of the day he would die.

As Ben rests on his death bed, he ponders an invention he developed two years earlier, now locked behind a downstairs door. Erected with six lengthy lightening rods, a chamber made of iron and silver stood ready for the next violent thunderstorm. This was Ben Franklin's **"CHAMBER OF TIME"**.

Ben recalls with humor, how he put a rooster in it and when he opened the chamber door it was completely disintegrated. After minor adjustments and several more failed attempts, a decrepit family cat survives and comes out of the chamber with restored youth and vigor.

Benjamin Franklin convinces his grandson (much against his will) to place him in the Chamber of Time on this, his final day on earth. As they await an approaching thunderstorm, Benny anxiously tries to talk his grandfather out of the Chamber and back into his bed. Suddenly the "**Chamber**" is engulfed in light and Benjamin Franklin disappears.

He reappears in several future time zones finally ending up in Illinois in 1993, a young man in perfect health, age 30. BF proceeds to get involved in a family's life and gets immersed in the perils of 20th century adolescents, drug dealing, marital conflicts, much mystery and life in these years and beyond.

This book is an enjoyable read for anyone with a lively imagination.

Ben Franklin and The Chamber of Time **is available for $11.95 at your local bookstore or by contacting Dale Christiansen at PO BOX 2989, Danbury, CT 06813 for $13.00 (includes postage)**

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solved some of the mysteries unknown to Franklin. Oh yes, there were English subtitles, but they were like the kind of English you get with a new electronics product, somewhat indecipherable. Maybe we will get our expert, Phil Krider, to scope out this scientist who has not gotten, according to the video, the recognition he deserves for his new discoveries.

3. Glass Music International, Inc. Just got a letter from Elizabeth Glancy Brunelli (someone whose path I have crossed three or four times over the years), who is now Editor of Glass Music World. The letter contained a copy of the said publication which set forth two very important items. First, the mission statement of Glass Music International "to promote the renaissance of glass music; to educate and to raise the level of awareness of musical glass instruments; to encourage all members, musicians, composers, and scientists in the field of glass music; to research and preserve the history of glass music compositions and instruments; to communicate old and new discoveries in the field to all the world; and to prevent the loss of this art form to our societies. Second, the newsletter contained an announcement and detailed program for the organization's first International Glass Music Festival to be held in Boston April 24-27, 1997. The program includes many glass "harmonicans" (another new word for me) and such non-harmonicans as Friends Roy Goodman, Bill Meikle, and Ralph Archbold. It also includes generous references to Benjamin Franklin's role in inventing and promoting the glass armonica. According to Elizabeth, 35 folk have already signed up for the festival. If you would like to go, contact Elizabeth Brunelli at 40 Westwind Road, #505, Boston, Mass. 02125. Phone (617) 288-6111 or fax (617) 288-1829.

4. Franklin in World Trade and Planning in the Big Apple. Friend J. Watkins Strouss sent us another fax with two notes on Franklin's presence and absence in New York. Right on West 49th Street in November, Franklin Quest, Inc., originators of the Franklin Day Planner, opened a direct sales store for their products. Franklin Quest is twelve years old and in 1995 grossed more than $300 million in the sale of these products and the production of time-management seminars. Both the publications and the seminars are infused with Franklin sayings and admonitions to adopt Franklin's style of work and are intended, Franklin Quest says, to instill balance in urbanites. When they produced a seminar in Manhattan with this message, one participant shouted back, "What would New Yorkers want with inner peace?" All this appeared in the Times Magazine. In the paper itself was an ad for Republic National Bank, specializing in International Trade Financing. The ad has a portrait of Franklin with the saying "God helps those that help themselves . . ." Friend Watty explained in his note the significance of the Franklin image in this manner: "Republic Bank absorbed American Savings Bank, which originally was the Franklin Savings Bank, whose original building at 42nd and Eighth displayed a fine bust of Franklin (prior to its demolition)!" Thanks for that, Watty.

And thanks to all of you who send us your sightings of things about Franklin all over the world. While we can't include everything we receive, we do our darndest trying. Keep those cards, letters, faxes, and e-mails coming.

The American Utopia of Dr. Guillotin ... Continued from Page 1

had come about: they wanted to reconnoiter down the Ohio as far as they could. The older of the two, M. Picque, was a botanist; the younger, a medical doctor and mineralogist, *un jeune homme de bonne famille,* was named Antoine Saugrain. He had brought a number of letters of recommendation from Franklin's friends. If there was one facet of French society that Franklin disliked, it was the patronage system, the flow of empty, futile recommendations. In this case, though, the letters did not come from the idle aristocrats for whom his contempt was barely concealed, but from his peers - active, intelligent people. Longest and most effusive was the introduction written by Saugrain's own brother-in-law, Dr. Ignace Guillotin,[3] not yet notorious for the instrument of death he eventually came to abhor - the guillotine, which, more appropriately, had come close to being called the louisette after its real inventor, Dr. Louis - but famous enough in Paris to have been chosen as a fellow-commissioner of Benjamin Franklin, three years earlier, in the *enquête Mesmer.* What fun they had had, in Franklin's spacious garden in Passy, the seven members of that commission (which also included Lavoisier, Bailly, and three other distinguished scientists), listening to advocates of mesmerism, seeing them mesmerize a tree, a horse, a hysterical young man! They had concluded that auto-suggestion was at the root of Mesmer's success - and also the *titillations délicieuses* bestowed upon the younger and comelier among his female patients.

Having started with those happy memories, Guillotin's twenty-eight page letter, written in florid French, eventually came around to the matter at hand: "We mean to start an establishment on the banks of the Ohio. You may contribute much to our success through your good offices; indeed, your powerful protection in itself would guarantee a happy outcome." (What music that must have been to Franklin's ears! The French really thought him omnipotent!) To give a whiff of Guillotin's style, here is one of his sentences, slightly shortened in translation: "Vexed with the noise, the agitation, the intrigues and the luxury of our cities; revolted by the chasm between our laws and our customs which often oblige one to choose between being ridiculous or criminal; afflicted by the disheartening spectacle of vice triumphant and of virtue despised and humiliated; frightened by the horrors coldly spawned by Despotism and Superstition, we have resolved to flee this poisoned land where an honest man encounters nothing but anguish and disgust and we have decided to establish ourselves near the Ohio River because, beyond the general assets to be found in the thirteen states - a secure asylum to enjoy peace and freedom - that part of America offers both a mild climate and great distance from the large cities and the seacoast, those founts of commerce and riches, to be dreaded as the sources of luxury and corruption."

The proposed settlement was to comprise about twelve men, some with families, some bachelors, some rich, some not so well off, but all of them friends, willing to share, all of them endowed with "some knowledge of sciences useful to mankind, such as agriculture, architecture, mechanics, physics, chemistry, medicine, surgery, and even belles-lettres, drawing and engraving." They wanted to settle either near Louisville or between the Mississippi and the northern bank of the Ohio where there already existed three French settlements.

The rest of Guillotin's letter, and other recommendations, bestowed special praise on young Saugrain.[4] He came from an old family of printers, related not only to the Guillotins but also to the Didots and the Vernets, and he was well connected with those intelligent bourgeois and artists who had been Franklin's true circle in Paris. While still very young, Saugrain had gone to Louisiana, then to Mexico where he had worked for the Viceroy, Don Gálvez, who had sent him back to France to buy scientific instruments. While in Paris, he had learned of his protector's death - hence his interest in Guillotin's utopian colony. Of the obscure M. Picque it was only pointed out that he had "beaucoup de douceur" - a virtue, no doubt, his sweetness, but perhaps not the best attribute for plunging into the wild West. And that is the heart of the matter: how much *did* those people know about the wild West? What makes their adventure typically utopian is not its tragic dénouement, which has been described more than once and is not altogether unique,[5] but the gap between assumptions and reality. To begin with, what kind of information had Franklin been feeding the French during his years in Paris?

Very optimistic information, on the whole. He saw it as a crucial part of his diplomatic mission to "sell" America to the French, to extol the country's moral and physical climate, its good laws and fertile soil. On one occasion he went so far as to write: "The Conductor of a Newspaper should, methinks, consider himself as in some degree the guardian of his country's reputation, and refuse to insert such writings as may hurt it." He did such a good job of it that he soon had to fight back waves of would-be immigrants, many of them convinced that land in America was for the asking, and cash advances, too. This was too much; to clarify the matter, Franklin wrote his *Advice to those who would remove to America,* stressing that the key question about a newcomer was not "Who is he?" but "What can he do?" In a slim volume, called *Bagatelles* and printed in 1784 on his own press, he spoke about the Indians in very favorable terms. His essay,

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Remarks on the Politeness of the Savages, has something of Montesquieu's *Lettres Persanes*, being a droll attempt to look at oneself through someone else's eyes. Witness, for instance, his delight in recalling the Indians' reply to an American offer of raising some of their young men among the Whites: "Several of our young people have attended college in your Northern Provinces, and been instructed in all of your sciences. But when they came back to us, they no longer knew how to run, how to live in the woods, how to bear cold and hunger. They were incapable of building a hut, of catching a deer, or killing an enemy...They were absolutely good for nothing." But the Indians politely make a counter-proposal: "If the principal inhabitants of Virginia care to send us twelve of their children, we shall educate them with great care in all the things we know and we shall make *Men* out of them." Indeed, it is known now that many more Whites raised by Indians remained with them, when given a choice, than Christianized Indians elected to stay in the white world.

To justify still further the atmosphere of euphoria in which the two young men set forth, there was a French success story awaiting them five miles from Pittsburgh: a lawyer from Normandy, Lucas des Peintraux, who had consulted Franklin in Paris and been encouraged by him, had found bliss working on a little plantation amidst the woods of Pennsylvania in the company of a beloved young wife.[6] That happy man, Picque and Saugrain met him when they reached Pittsburgh after an eighteen-day trip in October, 1787. They visited his home and found everything idyllic - especially his wife: "Pretty, well-bred, well-educated, and yet a real housewife... The husband sold his produce in town and read for relaxation. They lived on bread, potatoes, beef, eggs, and drank whiskey." This jolly description is by Brissot de Warville who held it from Saugrain.[7]

The only sober note in all this ecstatic oratory had been struck by Thomas Jefferson, back in Paris, in a message written in support of the travelers. He had begged a friend to give them "counsel and protection against imposition in their purchases to which as strangers they will be exposed."[8] Difficulties indeed - if not exactly of that kind - started right away. Picque's letters to Franklin (none by Saugrain is extant) sound dispirited. The travelers found no money upon arrival and, worse, no mail. Inns were expensive, they would have to settle in the country. "We procure a little game from the Delawares who hunt around here. And the few savages who come every day into town provide some entertainment for the foreigners. This small town is really very dull. Everything seems dead." Obviously, Pittsburgh was no Paris."[9]

But was the Pittsburgh of the late 1780's - not quite two hundred houses including the brand-new Academy from which the University of Pittsburgh would later develop - really so deadly? True, "the Town at that time was the muddiest place that I ever was in," reminisced an American traveler, "by reason of using so much coal, being a great manufacturing place, and kept in so much smoke and dust, as to affect the skin of the inhabitants." An early case of pollution, yet it had its charms: "It was noted for handsome Ladies...I had some letters of introduction from ladies of New Jersey to ladies in Pittsburgh. These duties are to business what dessert is to a dinner, it keeps up the spirits, for they are the life of life."[10] One of those very ladies, Mrs. Dewees, who was sailing down the river that fall, took note in her journal of our two Frenchmen with whom a third, M. Ragant (or Raguet?) had joined forces. On November 3, she wrote that the three of them came to dine on board their boat, and four days later she remarked on the excellent pike they had all eaten together. She added wistfully that the young men had come to invite them to a ball held at Col. Butler's, where thirty ladies and gentlemen were to assemble. "It is hardly worth while to say we declined going, as it was out of our power to dress fit at this time, to attend such an Entertainment or else (you know) should be happy to do ourselves the honour."[11] Not Paris, but some social graces.

While Mrs. Dewees and her party pushed on down the Ohio on November 18, 1787, Picque and Saugrain inexplicably tarried. When the river froze, they were trapped in Pittsburgh. Their morale sank still lower. In January, 1788, they moved to Hamilton's Island, two miles below the town. "Our amusement consists in felling trees to make fire." Their boat, recently purchased, was "swept away in a debacle." They were told, as every traveler who has ever ventured from home is told by the local population, that this was the worst winter in more than twenty years. Meanwhile Guillotin, more loquacious than ever, was bombarding Franklin with messages in which he hankered to be with his two pioneers "sous un ciel superbe." Little did he know. To top it off, M. Picque was grounded for three weeks by a terrible attack of sciatica - an endemic disease in that part of the country, he said. Luckily, a wonderful local root by the name of de-jejonkona relieved him both of the sciatica and of his - ever so French - liver trouble.[12]

On March 19, Guillotin was daydreaming in his blissful ignorance: "Our two young travelers will have found an ample harvest...One of them must be on his way back to Europe by now...He will share the treasures of America with us.[13] Actually, March 19 was the day on which they were finally setting off.

Their dream collapsed in horror six days later: "As we were navigating between the Little and the Big Miami, we were attacked by savages who, after killing one of the horses we had on board, climbed aboard a flat boat and soon caught up with us. Then they fired. I killed one of them but they soon had their revenge since they

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killed one of ours and broke two fingers of my left hand. As we were close to the bank, two of my remaining companions threw themselves into the river and swam ashore. Left alone, I had no choice but to follow suit. The savages swam faster than us and just as I was reaching solid ground, I saw with horror my companion, M. Picque, knifed to death."[14] Writing this to a friend one month after the event, Saugrain goes on to tell how he, too, was caught by the Indians, had his arms tied and was expecting the worst, when he managed to escape, let himself be carried by the current and eventually joined up in the woods with the lone American survivor, a Virginian named Pierce. After a harrowing four days, they were picked up by a boat and brought back to civilization - to Louisville.[15]

In the fuller account he put down later in his *Journal et Notes de Voyage*, Saugrain included more gory details, such as the scalping of poor Picque, and revealed how terribly unprepared the expedition was. Among the four of them (three French, one American) they had only three *fusils*, one of which was not loaded. They committed the blunder of shooting against Picque's advice and entreaties - remember his *douceur? - after* they had raised a white handkerchief. Saugrain was informed, too late, that no one had ever been killed who had surrendered to the Indians without resistance.[16]

How, one wonders, did the French know so little? How could they be such *innocents abroad*? There were hundreds of boats on the Ohio - according to the *Pittsburgh Gazette*: 454 boats, carrying 9,516 people, went downstream between June, 1787 and June, 1788, the very time of the utopian expedition. It was widely known that in the late 80's the dangers of Indian attacks were greater than ever. The Ohio River had been very unsafe throughout the Revolution; peace had brought a respite between 1784 and 1788, but tension had mounted at the end of that period. As the Reverend James Finley put it in his *Autobiography*, "the Indians, fearful of losing their immense hunting grounds from the great tide of immigration constantly pouring in upon them, were wrought up to the highest pitch of fury." It really was a high tide: the first American census, in 1790, gave the population of Kentucky as 73,677; nearly all of those inhabitants had arrived in a twelve-year period.

Possibly because he was ashamed of his rashness, Saugrain did not write to Franklin during his convalescence, and it was from an article in the *Kentucky Gazette* that Franklin eventually learned of the disaster.[17] The information was badly garbled. Except for the drowned M. Raguet, the newspaper did not give the names of the unfortunate Frenchmen, but only stated that one of them had been murdered and the other seriously wounded.

Franklin forwarded the clipping to Guillotin on May 4, with the following embarrassed comment: "It seems they were unprovided with arms to defend themselves. Indeed, traveling on the Ohio has for some years past been thought as safe as on any river in France, so that there was not the least suspicion of danger, many thousands of people having gone down that way to the new settlements at Kentucke...They were two young men of uncommon knowledge and most amiable manners." One month later, Franklin informed Guillotin that he had heard a report to the effect that "the one who escaped wounded was in a fair way of recovery," but he still had no direct news and no idea of which one had survived. Guillotin and the other members of his group, he supposed, "would now be discouraged and drop their Project."[18] They did drop it, but Saugrain, after his return to France, declared that America was his country of choice, in spite of all, and he did come back to it. Franklin's kindness to him never failed to "elicit tears from his eyes."[19]

One could end the story on the upbeat note of the young physician's successful career in Missouri. Or one could end it on the somber irony provided by still another traveler who, telling of his own capture by the Shawnees, two days after Saugrain's, mentioned "several rich suits of clothes" gaped at by the Indians who had taken them from the French gentlemen.[20] But I would rather end by turning our thoughts to the unfortunate M. Picque, whose sciatica must have felt awful as he plunged in vain into the Ohio's icy waters. He had, in his will, left his whole modest estate to a Madame Lombardie, about whom one likes to believe she was his *amie* and had given him some happy hours. In order to collect her inheritance, however, she needed a death certificate *en bonne et due forme*. Urged to procure such a document, Franklin protested: "This death happening in a wilderness country where there were no settled inhabitants, it is not possible to obtain such a thing as an *extrait mortuaire*." But the French bureaucracy was not to be thwarted by such trivial excuses. Writing two weeks after the fall of the Bastille, a Parisian lawyer, Maître Delaunay des Blardières, insisted politely that he needed not only "a notarized death certificate, but the authentication of said document by two persons, etc., etc."[21]

There is no telling which of the cultures eventually won out.

1. More on this in C.A. Lopez, *Mon Cher Papa: Benjamin Franklin and the Ladies of Paris* (New Haven, 1966) and in C.A. Lopez and E. Herbert, *The Private Franklin: The Man and his Family* (New York, 1975).
2. Benjamin Franklin to Charles Thompson, December 29, 1788. (Here and henceforth, photocopies of all letters, quoted by sender's name and date, are available in the Franklin Collection, Sterling Memorial Library, Yale University.)
3. Ignace Guillotin to Benjamin Franklin, June 18, 1787. See also J.F. McDermott, "Guillotin Thinks of America," *Ohio Archaeological and Historical Quarterly*, XLVII (1938).
4. Louis-Guillaume Le Veillard to Benjamin Franklin, June 13, 1787; Le Veillard to William Temple Franklin, same date; Jean d'Arcet to Benjamin Franklin, June 19, 1787.
5. See especially H.M. Fouré Selter, *L'Odyssée américaine d'une famille française* (Baltimore, 1936), and S.E. Dicks, *Antoine Saugrain, a French Scientist on the American Frontier*, Emporia State Research Studies XXV/1 (Emporia, Kansas, 1976), with their bibliographies.
6. Lucas des Peintraux to Benjamin Franklin, July 28, 1788.
7. J.P. Brissot de Warville, *New Travels in the United States of America*, ed. and trans. M.S. Vance and D. Echeverria (Cambridge, MA, 1964): 213.
8. Thomas Jefferson to G.R. Clark, June 21, 1787.
9. Picque to Benjamin Franklin, October 18, 1787; February 10, and March 2, 1788. A good number of letters must have been lost: Picque and Saugrain did not receive those they expected from France in America, Picque's brother in France complained that his brother had not written to him, and Guillotin complained that he did not hear from Saugrain.
10. Autobiography of Major Samuel S. Forman, *The Historical Magazine* (Boston) VI, 2nd Series, December 1869: 325.
11. Mrs. Mary Dewees, Journal, 1787-1788, *Pennsylvania Magazine of History and Biography*, XXVIII (1904): 325.
12. Picque to Benjamin Franklin, February 10, 1788.
13. Guillotin to Benjamin Franklin, March 19, 1788.
14. Saugrain to De Lassize, April 16, 1788.
15. "Dr. Saugrain's Relation of his Voyage down the Ohio River," tr. E.F. Bliss, *Proceedings of the American Antiquarian Society* II (1897); French original in Fouré Selter, *Odyssée* cit. See also "Saugrain's Notebooks," tr. Bliss, *Proceedings* cit, XIX (1903); French original in Fouré Selter.
16. General background and bibliography in J. Finley *Autobiography, or, Pioneer Life in the West* (Cincinnati, 1853); B.W. Bond, *The Civilization of the Old Northwest* (New York, 1934); J.D. Barnhart, *Valley of Democracy* (Bloomington, 1953).
17. *Kentucky Gazette* April 4, 1899; Benjamin Franklin to Guillotin, May 4 and June 8, 1788.
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19. Le Veillard to Benjamin Franklin, February 21, 1789.
20. T. Ridout, "An Account of my Capture by the Shawnee Indians," *Western Pennsylvania Historical Magazine* (Pittsburgh) XII (1929): 31.
21. Delaunay des Blardières to Benjamin Franklin, August 1, 1789.

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