



On the 31st of July, 1777, Gilbert du Motier (better known as the Marquis de Lafayette) became a Major-General in the American Continental Army. He was 19 years old at the time.

Loyal to General George Washington, Lafayette was also supportive of the American cause before his country—France—signed a Treaty of Alliance with America (on the 6th of February, 1778).

When Lafayette returned to France, after America's Revolutionary War was over, he was instrumental in drafting "The Rights of Man" for his own country.

On May 22, 2007, the United States Congress passed a resolution to honor Lafayette on the 250th anniversary of his birth. House Resolution 171, of the 110th Congress, contains facts about Lafayette's life (and includes many accolades about him):

Whereas Marie-Joseph-Paul-Yves-Roch-Gilbert Du Motier, commonly known as the Marquis de Lafayette, was born on September 6, 1757, and occupies a considerable place in the history of the United States;

Whereas Lafayette was a man of considerable military skill who expressed sympathy for American revolutionary fighters, decided to aid colonists in their struggle for independence, and was voted by Congress the rank and commission of major general in the Continental Army;

Whereas Lafayette's military service was invaluable to General George Washington during many Revolutionary War battles, earning him the reputation as "the soldier's friend";

Whereas Lafayette's strategic thinking, military skill, and dedication as a general officer serve as a model for present day American military officers;

Whereas Congress appropriated awards and honors in honor of Lafayette's service to the American people, including the commissioning of a portrait that hangs in the House Chamber;

Whereas because of Lafayette's strong belief in freedom, he advocated the abolition of slavery in the Americas, favored equal legal rights for religious minorities in France, and became a prominent figure in the French Revolution;

Whereas, in 1824, at the invitation of President Monroe, Lafayette embarked upon a triumphant, 13-month tour of all 24 States of the then-United States, during which he became the first foreign dignitary to address the House of Representatives, and visited many Masonic bodies;

Whereas because of America's affection for Lafayette, many United States cities, towns, and counties have been named for him;

Whereas Lafayette symbolizes the assistance America received from Europe in the struggle for independence;

Whereas United States aid to France during the world wars of 1917-1918 and 1941-1945 stemmed in part from shared values of democracy and freedom, which Lafayette strongly supported;

Whereas the friendship between the people of the United States and France has not diminished; and

Whereas continued relationships between the United States and France are important to the success of our global partnerships:

Now, therefore, be it Resolved, That the House of Representatives-

(1) honors Marquis de Lafayette on the 250th anniversary of his birth; and

(2) urges the cadets of the United States military academies and military officers participating in various professional military education courses to study Lafayette's impact on the creation of the United States and on the United States military.

Charles Wilson Peale created this portrait of Lafayette. (He also painted a famous work of George Washington, among others.)

Today, Lafayette is more-famous in America than he is in France. Many of Lafayette's papers are now microfilmed and held by the U.S. Library of Congress.

Credits:

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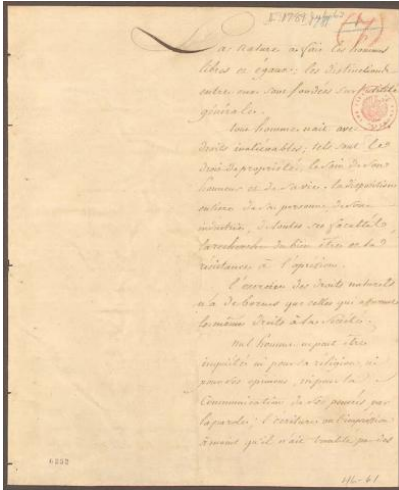
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See Alignments to State and Common Core standards for this story online at:

<http://www.awesomestories.com/asset/AcademicAlignment/Marquis-de-Lafayette>

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Declaration of the Rights of Man

Image, Library of Congress: *Declaration of the Rights of Man*, 1789. Manuscript, page 2.

Information and quote from Library of Congress web site, *Thomas Jefferson Exhibition*.

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