

[Accueil](#)[Revenir à l'accueil](#)[Collection](#)

CSULB Donato Center Collection : **Washington's Papers : an history of editions and translations**

[Collection230_Correspondance de Jared Sparks à Guizot : 1829-1853](#)[ItemBoston, November 6 th 1830, Jared Sparks au général Lafayette](#)

Boston, November 6 th 1830, Jared Sparks au général Lafayette

Auteurs : Sparks, Jared (1789-1866)

Les folios

En passant la souris sur une vignette, le titre de l'image apparaît.

4 Fichier(s)

Les mots clés

[Histoire \(Etats-Unis\)](#), [Politique \(Etats-Unis\)](#)

Relations entre les lettres

Ce document n'a pas de relation indiquée avec un autre document du projet.□

Présentation

Date1830-11-06

Editeur de la ficheMarie Dupond & Association François Guizot, projet EMAN
(Thalim, CNRS-ENS-Sorbonne nouvelle)

Information générales

Cote2 bis, AN : 163 MI 42 AP 230 Papiers Guizot Bobine Opérateur 55

Citer cette page

Sparks, Jared (1789-1866), Boston, November 6 th 1830, Jared Sparks au général Lafayette, 1830-11-06

Marie Dupond & Association François Guizot, projet EMAN (Thalim, CNRS-ENS-Sorbonne nouvelle)

Consulté le 25/01/2026 sur la plate-forme EMAN :

<https://eman-archives.org/Guizot-Lieven/items/show/6221>

Copier

Informations éditoriales

Lieu de rédaction Boston (Etats-Unis)

Notice créée par [Marie Dupond](#) Notice créée le 29/03/2024 Dernière modification le 15/04/2024

2nd

(copy)

Boston, November 6th 1830

My dear Sir,

As the subject upon which I now write to you is one, the importance of which I am sure you will fully estimate, I shall offer no apology for making this trespass on your time, even in the midst of your weighty avocations.

It can hardly be unknown to you, that, from various causes there early went abroad a false impression, in regard to the motives, policy & designs of France in the part she took respecting the United States, during the American Revolution. The party opposed to the alliance in this country promulgated suspicions, that the only object of France was to prevent the American colonies from England, that she might the more easily convert them to her own purposes, and promote her exclusive interests. No pains were spared in England, throughout the whole war, to give strength and currency to these suspicions.

The American Plenipotentiaries in Spain, Holland, and Russia, who were long endeavoring to induce those governments to recognize the independence of the United States, but were unsuccessful in their attempts, finally ascribed their ill success to the sinister interference of France, because they believed that France, if well disposed, might easily influence those powers to take the steps they desired. Hence in their letters to Congress, they throw out these insinuations against France, and supported them by what they deemed plausible reasons. All the correspondence of the American Ministers during the whole revolution is now in my hands, & is the property of publication under my superintendence by the order of Congress. Thus the above false view of the acts & policy of the French Court is becoming blended with our history, and apparently supported by the highest authority.

But, Sir, from the examination, which I made in the Archives in Paris, I am satisfied, that this impression is entirely erroneous, and that France in all her relations with the United States, after the treaty of alliance

acted as honorable, generous and disinterested a part, as any nation ever acted towards another under the obligations of a treaty. I have seen much testimony to this fact, so explicit and so often repeated as to leave on my mind not a shadow of doubt; and I am persuaded, that, let the investigation be pursued as far as it may, the same result will be more and more confirmed.

The harmony and prosperity of nations depend much on the recollection of reciprocal benefits conferred and received. Justice should always have her claim, and good intentions should never be misinterpreted or darkened by groundless suspicions. No true American, no friend of liberty, can see without deep regret the permanent records of our history tinged with sentiments, uttered in the highest quarters, which tend to perpetuate an unfavorable feeling in this country towards France, to whose early and substantial aid so much was due for the establishment of our independence, and whose friendship it is desirable ever to cherish & preserve. This subject has seemed to me so important, that I have resolved to write a treatise entitled, "A History of the Political Relations between France & the United States during the American Revolution." In this work it will be my purpose to develop the true state of facts, and to vindicate the French government from those charges, which ignorance, prejudice and narrow party feeling, have so freely and so unjustly invented and sanctioned. But to effect this object, I shall want more materials than I now possess. As I had not this design in prospect when I was in Paris, I did not examine any papers with direct reference to it, although I find among my collections, some particulars that will be valuable to this end.

The purpose of my writing this letter, therefore, is to ascertain from you, whether a further examination may not be prosecuted in the Archives des Affaires Etrangères. The work cannot be executed as it should be without inspecting the papers designated in the following list.

1. Memoires, or Essays, written by Count de Vergennes, Turgot, D'Efflat, and others in the years 1775 & 1776, discussing the general question, whether it was expedient for France to take part with the American colonies.

2. The correspondence of the Government with the French Ambassador in Spain, and with Count d'Aranda in Paris from Jan^y 1776 to November 1783. — and also the records in the office relating to the affairs of Spain and the United States during that period?
3. Correspondence between the French Government and the French Ambassador in Holland, from 1776 to 1783.
4. Correspondence of the French Government with the French Ambassador in Russia, from 1776 to 1783.
5. Any other papers, which relate directly to this subject.

The above list I am inclined to think will cover the whole ground, and here you will understand that it is only with reference to American affairs that they need be examined. No particulars on any other topics are wanted, the object being only to obtain proofs of the policy & doings of France in regard to America.

As far as it affects national character, it more nearly concerns France than the United States, that such a development should be made, and with all the advantages which a full knowledge ^{of facts} can confer. I am prompted to undertake it for the sake of justice to our earliest & faithful ally, as well as out of regard to our own national honor, and because my pursuits and inquiries have probably made me better acquainted with the merits of the case, than any other person. With the lively interest, which you have always felt and must still feel in the history of the period in question, and with the enlarged views which you are accustomed to take of subjects of this nature, I cannot doubt that you will use your influence to procure permission from the proper authority to have the papers examined, and such parts selected as pertain to American affairs.

I shall send a copy of this letter to M. Guizot, whose great experience & skill in historical research & composition will enable him to form an accurate judgment, both of the importance of the work proposed,

and of the necessity of procuring authentic materials from their original sources. I think his sentiments will accord with yours.

As soon as you can ascertain, whether access to the papers above described, will be granted by the minister of the Department in which they are deposited, you will confer a favor by giving me immediate notice.

Meantime I have the honor to be,

Sir,

With perfect respect & affectionate regards,
your much obliged friend,
& most ob^d. serv^t.

Jane Sparks

General Lafayette