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The Correspondence Between Thomas Jefferson and Philip Mazzel 1779-1815

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The Correspondence Between Thomas
Jefferson and Philip Mazzei

1779-1815

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Thesis

Submitted in Partial Fulfillment of the
Requirements for the Degree of
Master of Arts in the Faculty
Graduate School of West
Virginia University

by

Mary Theresa Lippucci, A. B.

Morgantown

West Virginia

1939

Telferson and Philip Kassel

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Preface

The present manuscript is a study of the correspondence between Thomas Jefferson and Philip Mazzei, an Italian emigrant.

Being of Italian parentage, I was interested in finding out what Italians have done to aid in the development and progress of their adopted country. Therefore, Philip Mazzei was brought to my attention by Dr. C. H. Ambler, Professor of History, at West Virginia University, as an outstanding Italian emigrant who loved and served the United States. To carry on agricultural experiment work, he came to America just before the American Revolution, but was later sent to Europe on a special mission for the State of Virginia, to borrow money. The story of his progress and failure can be told only by the correspondence between Philip Mazzei and Thomas Jefferson, his dearest friend. That is what I have attempted to do in writing this thesis.

I welcome this opportunity to express my appreciation to Dr. C. H. Ambler, who has directed and advised the work and made many valuable

suggestions and corrections. I also express my thanks to Dr. T. E. Ennis, for helpful guidance, and to Amerigo Cappellari, for having translated Italian letters into English.

M. T. L.

CHAPTER I

1. Life of Philip Mazzei

Philip Mazzei was born at Poggio-a-Caiano, a small town near Florence, Tuscany, on December 25, 1730. Little is known of his youth except that he studied medicine at the hospital of Santa Maria Nuova in Florence, and was dismissed for some minor offence.¹ After the death of his father, Mazzei was forced to earn his own living. He went to live with relatives in Pisa where he began to practice medicine. While living in Pisa he became friendly with Dr. Salinas and Mrs. Salinas, who urged Mazzei to return with them to Smyrna, which was their home. He accepted and left with them in August, 1752. For about three years Mazzei lived with Dr. Salinas and practiced medicine, thus enabling the young doctor to become acquainted with many influential men.

But he did not remain long in Smyrna. About 1756 he went to London, where he lived nearly eighteen years. In London he became a

1. Howard R. Marraro, Philip Mazzei, Virginia's Agent in Europe, p. 5.

teacher of Italian, not only for the money which he could earn, but also for the advantageous connections and acquaintances which he believed he could make in this way. He later organized the firm of Martin and Company², which imported wines, olive oils, etc., into Europe. When his employee died, Mazzei promised to look after his wife and daughter. He later married Mrs. Martin, not because he loved her, but he wished to make home conditions good for the daughter, whom he did love. He did not get along well with his wife.

In 1765 he made a brief visit to Italy, but was banished from his native country by the Inquisition, on the charge of importing into Tuscany certain books banned by the Church. However, he was later reinstated.

Mazzei returned in 1767 to London, where he continued his connections with Martin and Company. It was about this time that he commenced to become interested in America. His first contact with outstanding Americans in London was

2. The firm of Martin and Company was really owned by Mazzei, but he was afraid it would hurt his prestige with the influential men he knew if his name were given to the firm; so he called it Martin and Company after the Mr. Martin, who worked for him.

brought about by the Grand Duke of Tuscany, who asked him to purchase two Franklin Stoves.³ This made it possible for him to become acquainted with Dr. Benjamin Franklin, Richard Neave, William Coosley, and Thomas Adams.⁴ It wasn't long after this meeting that some of these men succeeded in getting Mazzei to form a company for the purpose of promoting in Virginia the cultivation of silk worms, olives and grapes, and also building up a wine industry. But before he left for America, he returned to Italy to obtain men and material. He left Italy with his cargo on September 2, 1772, and arrived in Virginia nearly three months later.

In Virginia, he met George Washington, George Wythe, Thomas Jefferson, and other prominent Americans, who aided Mazzei in his new enterprise by forming a company to assist him financially. Thomas Jefferson became one of its members.

However, Mazzei's place in American

3. These Franklin Stoves were designed and manufactured by Dr. Benjamin Franklin in America.

4. Giovanni Sciano, The Italians in America Before the Civil War, p. 160.

history is not one of a great producer of wines, but chiefly that of an envoy to Europe to obtain aid for Virginia in the form of money and supplies during the Colonies' struggle for independence.

Mazzel went to Europe as Virginia's agent in 1779, and after several years of unsuccessful work he returned to America about 1783. He spent some time finishing official business with the State of Virginia and visiting old friends. About June 16, 1785, he sailed for Europe. It was generally believed that he would return to his adopted country after a visit in Europe, but he did not.

Mazzel later became employed by the King of Poland as agent to Paris. Unfortunately, there are no available letters from which can be gathered any facts concerning his life between the spring of 1790 and that of 1796, when he was in the employment of the King of Poland who was later forced to give up his throne and flee to Russia. Mazzel returned to Pisa, where he died on March 19, 1816.⁵

5. Richard Cecil Carllick, Jr., Philip Mazzel, Friend of Jefferson: His Life and Letters, p. 163.

2. Philip Mazzei's Interest in America

At first Philip Mazzei was not very enthusiastic about coming to America. He was afraid the government would be a bad copy of that in England, and therefore freedom in America would be even less. However, such men as Dr. Benjamin Franklin and John Quincy Adams convinced him that there was much freedom and good government in America. He writes in his "Memoirs":

... [they] convinced me that there was no aristocracy, that the people were not blinded by the splendor of a throne, that every head of a family had the right to vote and to be elected to office, that they had their own municipal laws and that only those English laws had been adopted, which were most convenient to them.¹

Mazzei finally decided to come to America as the plans had been arranged for the agricultural experiment. After his arrival he spent a small portion of his time with his agricultural work.

This letter written January 25, 1793,

1. Giovanni Schiano, The Italians in America Before the Civil War, p. 176.

to Albert Gallatin by Thomas Jefferson will explain fully the original reason for Mazzei's coming to America and the alteration of his plan:

Sir, - Mr. Segaurx called on me this morning to ask a statement of the experiment which was made in Virginia by a Mr. Mazzei, for the raising vines and making wines, and desired I would address it to you. Mr. Mazzei was an Italian, and brought over with him about a dozen laborers of his own country, bound to serve him four or five years. We made up a subscription for him of 2,000 sterling, and he began his experiment on a piece of land adjoining to mine. His intention was, before the time of his people should expire, to import more from Italy. He planted a considerable vineyard, and attended to it with great diligence for three years. The war then came on, the time of his people soon expired, some of them enlisted, others chose to settle on other lands and labor for themselves; some were taken away by the gentlemen of the country for gardeners, so that there did not remain a single one with him, and the interruption of navigation prevented his importing others. In this state of things he was himself employed by the State of Virginia to go to Europe as their agent to do some particular business. He rented his place to General Riedesel, whose horses in one week destroyed the whole labor of three or four years; and thus ended an experiment. ... This is the sum of the experiment as exactly as I am able to state it from memory, after much interval of time. ...²

2. Albert Ellery Bergh, The Writings of Thomas Jefferson, Vol. 9, pp. 14-15.

From the Legislature of Virginia Thomas Adams had arranged a grant of five thousand acres of land on which Mazzei was to conduct his agricultural experiments. However, Mazzei refused the grant because it was divided into small pieces apart from one another.

Mazzei then started out rather aimlessly to find more suitable land for his experimentation. On his way he stopped at "Monticello", the home of Thomas Jefferson. While talking with Jefferson, Mazzei found that he was much interested in agriculture, and finally Jefferson persuaded Mazzei to buy a small tract of land adjoining his own. He also gave Mazzei about two thousand acres of his own land. Mazzei at once sent for his men and started to work. Jefferson helped him make his plans and looked after the work during Mazzei's absence.

They became good friends and also became intensely interested in the political life of the colonies, especially in that of Virginia. Mazzei and his family lived with Jefferson until the former's home was finished, and upon its completion Mazzei called it "Cello".³

3. Mazzei called his place "Cello", either in contradiction to "Monticello", or because it was built on a small hill, or maybe after Cello, a small town in Italy.

3. Thomas Jefferson's Interest in Philip Mazzei

Thomas Jefferson became intensely interested in Philip Mazzei for several reasons. They had in common many ideas and interests, such as agricultural, political and religious viewpoints. Mazzei became one of Jefferson's closest friends and devoted much of his time to Jefferson. Their chief interest was American freedom from England. They not only discussed this matter between themselves, but also with other outstanding Americans. They wrote many articles which were published and distributed among their friends in order to win them over to their side.

Philip Mazzei suggested to Jefferson that if independence from England were desired, "... it was indispensable that they abandon any admiration they might have for British political institutions [such as, the British Constitution]".¹ Jefferson was surprised at this statement at first

1. Giovanni Schiano, The Italians in America Before the Civil War, p. 162.

but later agreed with Mazzei that it was a good policy.

It was then planned that Mazzei write periodically a number of papers on this subject. They were to be written in Italian and translated by Jefferson into English and were to appear in the Virginia Gazette for the purpose of bringing the idea before the American public. They were published as a series of articles from 1774 to 1775.

It is not generally known, however, that he exerted great influence on the Fathers of the Republic, that he worked incessantly to change the attitude of the American people and their leaders towards British political institutions and that he actually preceded Thomas Paine and Thomas Jefferson in their denunciation of the British Government and in the dissemination of the principles of equality and true democratic government.²

It has been pointed out by historians that some of the very words of the "Declaration of Independence" are found in an article written during this period of 1774-1775 by Mazzei in Italian and translated by Jefferson into English and published in a Virginia newspaper. A para-

2. Ibid, pp. 160-161.

graph taken from one of Mazzei's articles, using words which are found in the "Declaration of Independence" shows the similarity:

All men are by nature created free and independent. Such equality is necessary in order to create a free government. It is necessary that all men be equal to each other in natural law. Class distinction has always been and will always be an effective obstacle and the reason for it is very clear. When in a nation you have several classes of men all must have their share in the government of the country; otherwise one class would dominate the other. But each share cannot be made perfectly equal; and even if it were possible they could not be maintained in perfect balance; and as soon as one exceeds the others the whole must crumble. That is why all ancient republics did not last long. ... I repeat it, a true Republican government cannot exist unless all men from the richest to the poorest are perfectly equal in their natural rights. ... This Government of England, from its earliest times, until the death of Queen Elizabeth was either a despotic monarchy or an intolerable aristocracy or mixture of both.³

Mazzei not only aided the American government with his writings, but while in Europe on his mission also gathered valuable information which he sent in the form of dispatches to Jefferson (discussed in Chapter III).⁴ He secured military and financial aid during the

3. Ibid., p. 165.

4. Ibid., p. 171-172.

American Revolution. He also drew up a plan for the capture of the British army in New York. The same plan, with a few changes, was later used effectively at Yorktown in that it brought about the surrender of Cornwallis.

In 1776 Mazzei helped Jefferson in bringing about many reforms in Virginia, including a revision of the legal code of that state. Together they also discussed religion and slavery, but on the question of slavery they differed. Jefferson desired to free the slaves outright, but Mazzei argued with him that this was a bad policy. He thought that the slaves should be freed gradually because they outnumbered the whites two to one, and this superiority of numbers might give the white man reason to fear the power of the Negro. The Italian convinced Jefferson and others of the advisability of his plan, and, as a consequence, education of the slaves was begun.

Through Jefferson he came into contact with some of the leaders of America. Mazzei loved his adopted country so much that when he was asked to represent the State of Virginia in Europe, he was only too glad to accept. From these interests

which he manifested we can see that Mazzei contributed a great deal in aiding the Americans to gain their freedom. It is believed that only financial conditions caused him to return to Europe and stay there until his death in 1816.

CHAPTER II

1. Philip Mazzei's Mission to Europe

Thomas Jefferson and other leading Virginia statesmen in 1778 had been making plans to send Mazzei to Europe for the purpose of encouraging more immigration to America. This plan was soon abandoned, for at this time a more urgent need for Virginia was that of money and army supplies. It was decided by Thomas Jefferson, Patrick Henry and others, that Mazzei would be of far more use if he were sent to Europe for the purpose of borrowing money from his friend, the Grand Duke of Tuscany, for the State of Virginia.¹

This Italian immigrant to the United States had admirable qualifications for this important mission, because he was of Tuscan birth, a merchant of great experience, a judge of men and their natures, and a writer. He, therefore, was their logical choice, and received his appointment from the Governor of Virginia, Patrick Henry, and the Virginia Council in January, 1779.

1. James Parton, "Jefferson Governor of Virginia", Atlantic Monthly, Vol. 30, p. 175 (August, 1872).

A summary of his instructions was that: "He was authorized to obtain a loan of gold and silver, not exceeding 900,000 and to purchase goods in Italy for the use of the state troops."²

Mazzei desired to have only his expenses paid; he did not ask for a compensation. On April 21, 1779, he signed the oath of allegiance, and on June 19 of the same year he sailed on his mission to serve his adopted country and state.

From the very beginning of his mission Mazzei ran into trouble, which followed him continually. He had so planned and arranged his official commission and instructions that in case of capture at sea they could be easily destroyed. His plan was to put his official papers into a bag with a lead weight and throw them overboard. After several days at sea he found it necessary to carry out his plan when his ship was captured by the British. Mazzei himself wrote of his intention:

I had a diary in which I wrote all the things I had to attend to in the various parts of Europe. The words were abbreviated in such a manner that it was not possible for another to understand

2. Howard R. Marraro, Philip Mazzei, Virginia's Agent in Europe, p. 9.

their meaning. I used the same scheme for my credentials and for my instructions, and I put everything in a small sack weighted with lead, to be sure that it would not fall into the hands of the enemy.³

When captured "I descended to my stateroom, and as soon as the privateer came alongside, I threw overboard, without being observed by anyone the little sack with all my papers."⁴

Mazzei was taken to New York, where he was a prisoner of war for three months. Although he and his family were retained, they were allowed to live on Long Island in a private home. This long delay proved quite expensive to Mazzei, both financially and so far as his mission was concerned.

When Mazzei finally arrived in Europe, he was ready to undertake the work for which he had been sent. However, he found that his hands were tied because he was lacking the necessary credentials, having destroyed his official commission and instructions before his arrival. He wrote at once for duplicates, but while waiting

3. E. C. Branchi, Tr., "Memoirs of Philip Mazzei", William and Mary College Quarterly, Second Series, Vol. 9, No. 4, p. 254 (October, 1929).

4. Ibid., p. 254.

for them he was busy collecting useful information from several European countries and sending dispatches to Thomas Jefferson, then Governor of Virginia. These dispatches are very important documents, but they are not to be found in any edition of Jefferson's writings, or in Mazzei's, nor anywhere else.⁵

Mazzei carefully numbered all these reports he sent to Jefferson. He also kept a record which designated who carried his letters, and how and when they arrived at their destination. He made four copies of each letter he wrote, and each was sent by a different route. Mazzei could determine from known ship arrivals in America just which one of his letters had been received.

The following list of his dispatches which Jefferson received show how completely they covered Mazzei's mission in Europe.

<u>No.</u>	<u>From</u>	<u>Dated</u>
1	Nantes	November 27, 1779
2	Nantes	December 5, 1779
3	Nantes	December 12, 1779
4	Nantes	December 18, 1779 and January 9, 1780

5. Howard R. Marraro, Philip Mazzei, Virginia's Agent in Europe, p. 10.

<u>No.</u>	<u>From</u>	<u>Dated</u>
5	Nantes	February 8, 1780
6	Nantes	February 18, 1780
7	Paris	March 2, 1780
8	Paris	March 4, 1780
9	Paris	March 19, 1780
10	Paris	April 4, 1780
11	Paris	April 10, 1780
12	Paris	April 20, 1780
13	Paris	April 21, 1780
14	Paris	May 3, 1780
15	Paris	May 12, 1780
16	Paris	May 19, 1780
17	Paris	May 20, 1780
18	Paris	June 2, 1780
19	Paris	June 15, 1780
20	Paris	June 22, 1780
21	Genoa	August 19, 1780
22	Florence	October 20, 1780
23	Florence	January 5, 1781
24	Leghorn	April 8, 1781
25	Florence	August 8, 1781
26	Florence	October 2, 1781
27, 28, 29, 30, 31, 32		
33	Florence	April 26, 1782
34	Florence	July 19, 1782
	Florence	August 2, 1782
35	Florence	September 6, 1782
36	Amsterdam	December 9, 1782.6

"The Manuscript Division of the New York Public Library also preserves memoranda in the handwriting of Mazzei showing how he forwarded his dispatches to Jefferson. These notes indicate who carried his letters, [as well as] how and when. Since each letter was numbered and four copies were sent by different routes, Mazzei could determine from known ship arrivals

6. Ibid, pp. 10-11.

in America which of his letters had been received.

The memoranda follow:

1st letter	per the Cecile, Cap ⁿ Fridin, via Charles Town the Isabella, Cap ⁿ Trippe, via Baltimore the Kensington, Cap ⁿ Smith, via Philadelphia the Independence, Cap ⁿ Kirk, via Philadelphia
2nd letter,	the Kensington the Betsey, Cap ⁿ Boardman, for Virginia (taken ap. 12) the Sally, Cap ⁿ Coggeshall, for Virginia the Tom Johnson, Cap ⁿ Martin, via Annapolis
3rd letter	the Tom Johnson the Betsey the Sally the Alliance, Cont ^l fregate, Com- modore Jones
4th letter	the Tom Johnson the Betsey the Sally the Alliance
5th letter	the Betsey the Kensington the Sally the Alliance
6th letter	the Betsey the Kensington the Sally the Alliance
7th letter	fav ^r of Marquis de la Fayette the Sally, cap ⁿ Coggeshall the Kensington the Alliance
8th letter	the Kensington the Sally the Luzerne, Capt Bell the Alliance
9th letter	per the Alliance the Committe, Cap ⁿ Brisson, via Philadelphia the Dove, Cap ⁿ McKerdy via Baltimore the Luzerne, Cap ⁿ Bell

10th letter the Alliance
 the Committe
 the Dove
 the Luzerne

11th letter the Alliance
 the Committe
 the Dove
 Luzerne

12th letter the Alliance
 the Committe
 the Dove
 the Luzerne

13th letter the Alliance
 the Dove
 the Committe
 the Luzerne

14th letter the Alliance
 the Dove
 the Luzerne
 the George, Capⁿ Montgomery for
 Philadelphia

15th letter the Alliance
 the Dove
 the Luzerne
 the George

About the beginning of may, we heared that
 the Isabella & the Independence were arrived,
 but I have no certainty of it.

* * *

16th letter p the Luzerne
 p the Dove, Capⁿ McKerdy for
 Baltimore
 p the Duke of Leinster, Capⁿ Stour
 for Philadelphia
 p the Ariel fregate Capⁿ Jones

17th letter p the Luzerne
 p the Dove
 p the Duke of Leinster
 p the Ariel fregate

18th letter p the Kensington, Capⁿ Smith for
 Philadelphia
 p the Ariel fregate
 p the Duke of Leinster
 p the Luke, Capⁿ Clarke for Phila-
 delphia

19th letter	p the Kensington p the Ariel fregate p the Duke of Leinster p the Luke
20th letter	p the Kensington p the Ariel fregate p the Duke of Leinster p the Luke
21st letter	sent to M. John Adams at Paris p the Hercules, Cap ⁿ Keary for Baltimore p the Mars fregate Cap ⁿ Jamson for Boston p Cap ⁿ Robison, passenger on board the ship Marquis La Fayette
22nd letter	Sent to Mr. Adams at Paris p the Hercules p the Mars p Cap ⁿ Robison, as above." ⁷

Mazzel's mission was fruitless. He blamed his failure largely to the neglect and indifference of the State of Virginia. While reading over Mazzel's dispatches and the story of his mission, one sees that the Virginia General Assembly made no mistake in sending Mazzel and if it had supported him a little more than it did, he might have been able to accomplish a great deal more.

Mazzel was rewarded for his services to the State of Virginia. "The Governor called a meeting of the Council on June 10, 1784, and they decided to give me six hundred louis a year from

7. Ibid., pp. 11-12.

January 8, 1779, to April 8, 1884, with one copy of the following resolution signed by Secretary Blair, 'That in all that time Mr. Mazzei had demonstrated activity, assiduity, and zeal; and the bad outcome of that affair was not imputable to him, but to certain special circumstances; and that his behavior deserved the approbation of the Council.' For five years and three months they gave me three thousand one hundred and fifty louis."⁸

8. E. C. Branchi, Tr., "Memoirs of Philip Mazzei", William and Mary College Quarterly, Second Series, Vol. 10, No. 1, p. 10 (January, 1930).

2. Dispatches

November 27, 1779, to March 8, 1782

Mazzel wrote his first official letter to Thomas Jefferson dated Nantes, November 27, 1779. He informed Jefferson of the recovery of his liberty, of the deplorable state of his finances, and of his disappointment for not having found in France the duplicates of his commission and instructions.

I am at a loss what to do for want of my papers. I mentioned more than once to the late Governor, Mr. Page, and Col. Maddison [sic] the propriety of sending several duplicates of my commissions and instructions by the first opportunities. I even did remember it to Col. Maddison in one, of 2, of my letters dated on board the Johnston¹ Smith in Rappahannack, or York River.

In the same letter he mentioned that he had received some cash from Mr. D'Acosta² on account of the letter of credit, and that the whole sum of three hundred louis d'ors would not be paid until that house had received some remittances from America. He stated further

1. Howard R. Marraro, Philip Mazzel, Virginia's Agent to Europe, p. 15.

2. D'Acosta was a member of a banking firm in Nantes, which bore his name, and from which Mazzel was instructed to borrow money.

that in France, American independence was looked upon as certain. He also gave Jefferson general information on the conditions in Europe at that particular time.

In the second letter, dated December 5, 1779, he told Jefferson that we should not expect any benefits because the English were occupied with the Irish commotions. However, he did not give his reasons in this letter, but in a later one.³

In a letter of December 12, 1779, he pointed out that nine days before it had been agreed in the King's Council at Versailles to lend Congress such military arms and other things that they needed, to the amount of sixteen millions of livres. He said that he received this information from a new acquaintance, an elderly man in whom he had much faith and for whom he had a great deal of respect. He never revealed the identity of the man, but often spoke of him in his letters. He told Jefferson the French version of Count D'Estaing's

3. Benson J. Lossing, The American Historical Record, Vol. 1, 1872, p. 73.

defeat and hoped it was not true, lest France withdraw her support.⁴

The accounts are various and confused; but they all seem to signify, that the Count is furious against the Americans; that he was not joined by anything like the number of our troops he had been promised; and that at the fire the Americans ran, and left him in the lurch; etc. D'Esteing [sic] is reckoned a Hero,⁵ and is now the darling of France.

In a letter started December 18, 1779, and finished January 9, 1780, Mazzei related that the Count had at last arrived in Paris and the true story was known from the accounts D'Estaing gave to the French papers. The following story appeared in the French Gazette:

Count D'Esteing finding many of his vessels much damaged by a strong gale, resolved to go no further north, and to undertake the siege of Savannah with the troops he had on board, to whom were joined 2000 men of the United States commanded by Gen. Lincoln. The combined army consisted of 5524 men. ... The 24th of Sept, the Enemy made a sally, and was repulsed with loss. Being impossible to continue the siege for reasons & c., the 9th of October the retrenchments were attacked. The

-
4. Estaing, Charles Hector Theoday, Comte d' was the French admiral in command of the fleet sent to aid the United States against Britain.
 5. Howard R. Marraro, Philip Mazzei, Virginia's Agent in Europe, p. 18.

Enemy informed of the plan of attack by fugitives had prepared the defense accordingly. The french [sic] and Americans attacked with the greatest vigour, and returned 3 times to the charge, but the superiority of number obliged them to desist.⁶

In the same letter he dealt again with his financial troubles and begged Jefferson for aid. In addition he enclosed valuable information about Russia and Poland:

... the very great probability, that Russia will preserve a perfect neutrality for powerful reasons, which hardly admit of any doubt. I shall give you another, which is a fact. The Irish after having made publick rejoicings, in consequence of the liberty of trade already obtained, now insist on liberty of Government independent of the british [sic] Parliament.⁷

Mazzei informed Jefferson in a letter dated February 8, 1780, that at last he was forced to ask financial aid from his friends in Italy. He also wrote about the navies of the various countries of Europe, the number of war ships, their leaders, how well equipped they were, etc. He told of the number which would be sent to aid the American Colonies in

6. Ibid, pp. 21-22.

7. Ibid, p. 25.

their struggle for independence.⁸

On February 18, 1780, the envoy explained the trouble he was having with Mr. Penet, who let him have fifty-three louis and eighteen livres in advance on his letter of credit for three hundred louis d' ors. Mr. Penet refused to give him the full amount until he heard from America. Mazzei now desired to return what he had borrowed and redeem his letter of credit. After much trouble he finally succeeded in fulfilling this obligation.

A letter dated March 2, 1780, from Paris was received by Jefferson from Mazzei. He wrote of his meeting with Dr. Benjamin Franklin and the Marquis Caracciolo⁹, who were in position to introduce him to very influential men. He also said that Marquis de la Fayette, who was returning from his native country, France, to America where he had already spent two and one half years, would be of great help to the American cause. Again he mentioned his financial

8. Wm. P. Palmer, Calendar of Virginia State Papers, Vol. 1, 1875, pp. 335-337.

9. Caracciolo, Marquis Demenico, was Ambassador of the King of Naples to Paris.

troubles, asking for aid, and concluded by reminding Jefferson to send him the duplicates of his commission and instructions.

In a letter on March 4, 1780, he stated that from Rappahannock, or York River, he had written Col. Madison:

... that the season being so far advanced I had a mind not to wait until I got to Italy to propose the exchange of goods on the terms expressed in my Instructions, and that least I should be taken, and of course be obliged to throw my papers over-board. I had interlined in some of my private old papers the cifre and substance of the business intrusted to me in order that I might prepare things as far as possible by the time I should receive the duplicates of my commissions.¹⁰

He told Jefferson that he had done just as he had written Col. Madison; inclosed in it a demonstration of the impracticability of purchasing the goods in France on the terms prescribed to him; signified his hope for success in Italy by a proposed plan through which he hoped to encourage the people to become adventurers in American trade, pointing out the various advantages we would derive from it. He

10. Ibid, p. 339.

added further that his plan had been given approval by Dr. Benjamin Franklin, who also promised him assistance.

On April 4, 1780, from Paris, Mazzei mailed Jefferson a copy of "Mr. Burke's speech on presenting his Plan for the better Security of the Independence of Parliament and the Economical Reformation of the Civil and other Establishments."¹¹

Mazzei wrote in a letter started April 10, 1780, and finished on April 19, 1780, from Paris that England believed that the Russian fleets and armies were to be constantly at her disposal. But Mazzei said that the Empress of Russia had sent out a manifesto, in which she notified the belligerent powers of her firm determination not only to keep the strictest neutrality, but also to protect her trade. She insisted that her trading vessels should not be disturbed by any means. The Empress had sent this manifesto also to Denmark, Sweden, Holland, and Portugal with an invitation to those countries to arm as Russia had to protect the liberty

11. Howard R. Marraro, Philip Mazzei, Virginia's Agent in Europe, p. 35.

of the sea. In the second part of this letter he commented about Ireland and her troubles with England, and of her desire to be separated from that country.

Two days later on April 21, 1780, Mazzei, still writing from Paris, explained to Jefferson that Dr. Benjamin Franklin had informed him that he had unsuccessfully tried in Genoa to raise money for Congress at six per cent, and that the opinion of Dr. Franklin was that the United States could not obtain money in Europe on those terms while European powers offered much higher rates. Mazzei, however, had hopes of succeeding, and he intended to set out for Italy as soon as his finances would permit. He repeated the necessity of having his powers enlarged, and desired, in case the terms on which Congress would choose to obtain a loan should not be agreeable to Virginia, that that state give him leave to act for Congress.¹² He continued that Dr. Franklin objected to his mission very much, saying that "so many people had come to Europe from every state on that kind of busi-

12. Benson J. Lossing, The American Historical Record, Vol. 1, 1872, p. 106.

ness that they had ruined our credit, and made money men shy of us."¹³

On May 3, 1780, from Paris, Mazzei expressed his desire to persuade Italians to send to America on their own account and at their own risk such goods as the Americans needed most. This plan had been approved by many in Italy, but Italy could not act openly for several reasons. However, only one of these reasons was given in the letter: "They cannot take the lead of Prussia, Russia and the Emperour."¹⁴ Mazzei outlined a plan by which Italian adventurers might bring their goods into America. He had asked Dr. Franklin to introduce him to ministers who might be able to help him work out his plan. Dr. Franklin at first promised him these introductions, but several weeks passed, and he failed to show any signs that he would carry out his promise to Mazzei.

On May 12, 1780, from Paris he wrote to Jefferson giving information concerning the number of vessels and men in the French fleet which had sailed for America ten days before

13. Ibid., Vol. 1, p. 33.

14. Wm. P. Palmer, Calendar of Virginia State Papers, Vol. 1, 1872, p. 348.

under Rochambeau. These vessels were carrying arms and clothing to Washington's army. The second division of the French fleet was expected to sail early in June, and the Spanish fleet had sailed on April 28. The English fleet, for one reason or another, had put back into port for the third time. Mazzei was certain that the French and Spanish fleets together could conquer the British fleet, even though England had a much stronger fleet than those of Spain and France combined. He pointed out that he saw England's supremacy of the sea declining and that of France and Spain on the increase; for France had no trouble getting young men to enlist, while England had to resort to impressment.¹⁵

On May 19, 1780, from Paris Mazzei made the following requests for information:

It is obvious that the European adventurers cannot, during the war, fetch from America but a small proportion of their capital. my [sic] intention has always been to persuade them to leave the greatest part of it in our funds; which would be the means of interesting them in our welfare, and of

15. Richard Cecil Garlick, Jr., Philip Mazzei, Friend of Jefferson: His Life and Letters, p. 64.

taking a great deal of paper money out of circulation. the [sic] late resolutions of Congress, tending to so great, and I hope advantageous, alteration in our finances, put me now entirely at a Stand. I am not only unfit to propose anything, but likewise unable to give satisfaction to any question on the on the Subject until you favour me with a Clear and thorough information of the whole, which I wish may Soon be the Case. ... It is highly necessary that I should be acquainted with it as well as with any new establishment of the kind, if there should be any hereafter in the Country.

I shall take it as a particular favour if you will take the trouble of informing me with the new laws relative to Emigrants, and in short, with every article of our constitution, and new Code of laws, apt to satisfy the minds of those who may incline to become our countrymen.¹⁶

The next day Mazzei related to Jefferson his efforts to correct the rumor that the American Colonies might reunite with England. He also said that he had made efforts to induce France to send America effectual assistance against their common enemy. Mazzei enclosed his plan to defeat the British in America, a plan which was later used to defeat Cornwallis at Yorktown.¹⁷

16. Howard R. Marraro, Philip Mazzei, Virginia's Agent to Europe, pp. 53-55.

17. Ibid., pp. 52-53.

Mazzei sent Jefferson on June 15, 1780,
a clipping from the Leyden Gazette,

because it contains several interesting accounts relative to various insolvent and ignominious actions of the British subjects at sea, and the disposition of the maritime powers to prevent such an Evil, which they are determined to do by an effectual and lasting remedy.¹⁸

He remarked of the King of Naples' plans for building up his navy and of his having the aid and guidance of very capable men.

Mazzei wrote Jefferson again on June 22, 1780, and on June 26, 1780. He expressed the disappointment he had felt after reading in a London paper of the loss of Charleston. He continued that all Americans in Europe felt sad about this loss. On June 26 he resumed this letter by writing,

I could not finish this letter before, having been ever since I wrote the above, almost constantly employed in public and private companies to ease the minds of our friends about the loss of Charleston. that [sic] unlucky event has brought me to the certain knowledge, that the number of our hearty friends is infinite, and I have been exceedingly affected by their feelings for our just and glorious cause.

18. Ibid, p. 56.

I have been considered as an angel descended from heaven among them for having assured them that such a loss would not materially affect our operations, and that it is trifling in comparison to the unshaken Constancy of the Americans.¹⁹

He added that Mr. Adams had been working as he had in Europe to restore faith in the United States. He also related that Mr. Adams was much more eager to help him than was Dr. Franklin, who still insisted that the State of Virginia had no right to borrow money individually. Mazzei desired to work with Mr. Adams, but wanted Jefferson's approval of this arrangement.

After an elapse of about six months Mazzei wrote from Florence on January 5, 1781:

Being still deprived of the honour of an answer from you, I think it a duty to inform you of it. You may probably have sent me before now, either new Commissions and Instructions, or the duplicates of my first, and expect that I have received them. Until I do I shall trouble you every now and then to remind you, that to my great sorrow I am, and must continue to be a useless servant to the State.²⁰

19. Ibid. p. 57.

20. Ibid. p. 59.

He also asked Jefferson to send his commissions and instructions to a Mr. Mark Lynch in Nantes²¹, to Mr. John Adams, or to a Mr. Favi²². He made this request because he believed that his mail was being stolen, and if it were sent directly to him, he would not receive these papers.

Then from Florence on April 8, 1781, he acknowledged the receipt of Jefferson's commands and also the following papers:

Copy of a letter from the Board of trade [sic], dated at Williamsburg, 9th 13th, 1779.
 Your private letter dated Williamsburg, April 4, 1780.
 Three official ones, dated Richmond, one May 12, and two May 31, 1780.
 Copy of my Commission, dated April 22, 1779, and certified by your Excellency at Richmond the 16th of May 1780.
 Copy of my instructions relative to it, dated and certified as above.
 Copy of my Commission, dated April 24th certified as above.
 Copy of my instructions of the same date, certified as above, and deficient of the Invoice therein mentioned.
 Two bundles of my private papers, as mentioned in the same private letters.²³

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21. Lynch, Mark, a member of a banking firm in Nantes, who befriended Mazzel upon his arrival in Europe.
 22. Mr. Favi was agent for the Grand Duke of Tuscany in Paris.
 23. Howard R. Marraro, Philip Mazzel, Virginia's Agent to Europe, pp. 60.

He related that the above papers arrived in France in July, 1780, but they were never given to him. He added that the board of trade in its letter had forbidden him to purchase the goods for the army, on the terms prescribed in his instructions, without empowering him to treat on any other. Certain instructions for executing some business intended at first to be transacted by a Mr. Smith²⁴, as mentioned in one of the Governor's letters, were not in the bundle of papers. Mazzei believed that these letters had been opened and read before he received them. He repeated that without new powers nothing could be done in regard to the loan.²⁵

From Florence on April 26, 1782, Mazzei complained that he had not been officially informed of Benjamin Harrison's election to succeed Jefferson as the first magistrate of Virginia. He stated that this lack of information had humiliated him much more than anything else. He observed that the Grand Duke of Tuscany and other important European figures had more than once asked him if

24. This Mr. Smith cannot be identified with any degree of certainty. He may have been either Captain Granville Smith, Mr. Thomas Smith or Mr. Thoroughgood Smith.

25. Benson J. Lossing, The American Historical Record, Vol. 1, 1872, pp. 148-149.

it were true that Jefferson was no longer Governor. Because he could not answer, he felt that this "was injurious to his credit and honor and therefore requested of this country a public declaration, in order that he might clear his name from suspicion."²⁶

He wrote on July 19, 1782, of his desire to return to Virginia. Again he mentioned his embarrassment for want of money during the time that he had been on his mission.

On March 8, 1782, he sent from Florence his last recorded official letter. Mazzei said that it had been five months since the surrender of Cornwallis and Jefferson had not written him during this period nor had he received any financial aid. For these two reasons his situation in Europe had become very humiliating. He included a short review of all the letters he had sent to Jefferson up to that date and commented on the trouble he had with Dr. Franklin, who failed to cooperate with him in forwarding his mail. He concluded his letter by asking Jefferson to forward his commission without delay so that he could complete his mission and return home.

26. Ibid, p. 151.

CHAPTER III

1. Thomas Jefferson's Letters to Philip Mazzei
November, 1785, to August, 1815

Thomas Jefferson wrote many letters to Philip Mazzei; however, all of them are not available. They have either been destroyed, lost or have been in the possession of relatives who do not desire to have them published as yet. Those which I have been able to obtain are as follows:

In November, 1785, from Paris Jefferson answered Mazzei's request about material for his book, Recherches Historiques et Etats Elnis d' Amerique, that he was writing on the United States. He had asked Jefferson to write him about the American court system, and Jefferson replied, giving his ideas on the origin and object of the American courts of chancery, the limit of their jurisdiction and many other points. He wrote:

The purpose for which you require this obliges me to be concise, as indeed does my situation here, where, as you know, I am without books which might enable me to enter into details,

I shall confine myself therefore to general description only. ... To sketch for foreigners a general idea of this court.¹

About the middle of February, 1787, Jefferson inquired of Mazzei as to the best translation into Italian of certain Latin authors.

On April 4, 1787, this time from Marseilles, Jefferson wrote another letter in which he told Mazzei how very useful his letters of introduction had been on his travel through Europe. Jefferson remarked that he had found several new seeds and plants which he believed would grow in Virginia. He also offered Mazzei financial assistance should he be in need of it.²

Again Jefferson wrote from Marseilles on May 6, 1787. In this letter he described his travels in Europe and the various routes he had taken. He promised to relate in detail to Mazzei all about his journey when they met in Paris. He continued by saying that he had received a letter from the Governor of Virginia, who had informed him to tell Mazzei "that I have remitted him money ... am settling with Mr. Welb and

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1. Paul Leicester Ford, The Works of Thomas Jefferson, Vol. 4, p. 473.
 2. A. E. Bergh, The Writings of Thomas Jefferson, Vol. 19, pp. 32-33.

shall give him a full account soon."³ Jefferson concluded his letter by adding a postscript to a Mr. Grand to pay Mazzei six hundred louis and charge it to Jefferson.

Jefferson inquired of Mazzei on October 17, 1787, if copies of portraits of Americus Vesputius, Columbus, Magellan and Cortez could be obtained at reasonable prices. He wanted Mazzei to let him know if such copies still existed.⁴

Jefferson wrote Mazzei again on May 30, 1795, that he had been busy and for that reason he had been delayed in answering him. He added that as soon as he had had time, he tried to arrange with a Mr. Blair⁵ to sell Mazzei's property. But Mr. Blair had left on a judiciary tour before he could talk to him on the matter. He concluded by telling Mazzei about his friends in Virginia and what had happened to them since the last time he had written, which was about 1787.⁶

On April 24, 1796, Jefferson wrote the "Famous Mazzei Letter" which will be discussed

3. Department of State, MS.

4. Ibid.

5. Mr. Blair is Mazzei's lawyer in Virginia.

6. Department of State, MS. Most of this letter is very difficult to read, thus making it impossible to give full details of its contents.

fully in the Section 2 of this chapter. He did not write again to Mazzei until some time later, the date of his next letter being July 18, 1804. He excused himself for not having written for some time, and gave for reasons the pressure of official duties and the likelihood of his letters to miscarry, be opened, and made an ill use of. He concluded that:

... the great body of our country are perfectly returned to their ancient principles, yet there remains a phalanx of old tories and monarchists, more envenomed, as all their hopes become more desperate. Every word of mine which they can get hold of, however innocent, however orthodox even, is twisted, tormented, perverted, and, like the words of holy writ, are made to mean everything but what they were intended to mean. I trust little therefore, unnecessarily in their way, and especially on political subjects.⁷

In his friendly letter of March 17, 1801, written from Washington, D. C., Jefferson said that he was sending the letter by a Mr. Short; but since he did not know in what way it would reach Mazzei, he would not be indiscreet about what he wrote. He congratulated Mazzei,

7. George Tucker, The Life of Thomas Jefferson, Vol. 2, p. 169.

who had been married for three years.⁸ He explained:

I perceive by these inquiries in your letter as well as by your express mention, that my latter letters have not reached you. I have regularly written you once a year.⁹

Other matters that he discussed in his letter pertained to finances, business, and friends of Mazzei who were filling important offices in Washington. He closed by stating that he would not sign his name to the letter because "... of the perils by land and sea to which this may be exposed, but you can be at no loss from whom it comes."¹⁰

From Monticello, December 29, 1813, Jefferson narrated the origin and progress of the war with Great Britain. In the same letter he informed Mazzei that from the sale of his house and lot in Richmond he had cleared \$6342.21. He concluded that he wished to invest the money

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8. Mazzei's first wife had died January 10, 1788. He was married again, this time to a young woman. He never mentions his second wife in his letters, and it was only by accident that Jefferson learned three years later of the marriage. In his will he calls her "Antonia Mazzei". She bore him his only child, a daughter.
 9. Paul Leicester Ford, ed., The Works of Thomas Jefferson, Vol. 9, p. 211.
 10. Ibid., p. 212.

in Virginia since the war with England had made it unsafe to send it across the ocean.

On March 6, 1815, he again wrote Mazzei from Monticello that Dr. Barton¹¹ was coming to Europe for a visit and during his travel would stop at Florence and Paris. Therefore, Jefferson informed Mazzei that he was sending this letter by Dr. Barton in order to introduce Mazzei to him. He promised Mazzei that Dr. Barton would tell him all about the late war with England and the present state of things in America.

Jefferson wrote his last known letter to Mazzei on August 9, 1815, explaining in it, as he had in a previous one, the condition in which America found herself after the war. In addition he asked Mazzei for permission to use his money for personal matters, promising to reimburse him within a reasonable time; previously Jefferson had planned to invest the money in government bonds and in private enterprise. He also described to Mazzei the deplorable condition in which the banks of America found themselves after the war because of the deflated currency.

11. Dr. Benjamin S. Barton was a good friend of Thomas Jefferson.

2. The Famous Mazzei Letter, April 24, 1796

The "Famous Mazzei Letter" was originally written by Thomas Jefferson only as information concerning business, in which was inserted a single paragraph of political information as to the state of the country. The paragraph used was as follows:

The aspect of our politics has wonderfully changed since you left us. In place of that noble love of liberty and republican government which carried us triumphantly through the war, an Anglican monarchical and aristocratical party has sprung up, whose avowed object is to draw over us the substance, as they have already done the forms, of the British Government. The main body of our citizens, however, remain true to their republican principles: the whole landed interest is republican, and so is a great mass of talents. Against us are the Executive, the judiciary, two out of three branches of the Legislature, all the officers of the Government, all who want to be officers, all timid men who prefer the calm of despotism to the boisterous sea of liberty, British merchants and Americans trading on British capitals, speculators and holders in the banks of public funds, a contrivance invented for the purposes of corruption, and for assimilating us in all things to the rotten as well as the sound parts of the British model. It would give you a fever were I to name to you the apostates who have gone over to these heresies, men who were Samsons in the field and Solomons in

the Council, but who have had their heads shorn by the harlot. In short, we are likely to preserve the liberty we have obtained only by unremitting labors and perils. But we shall preserve it, and our mass of weight and wealth on the good side is so great as to leave no danger that force will ever be attempted against us. We have only to awake and snap the Lilliputian cords with which they have been entangling us during the first sleep which succeeded our labors.¹

Mazzei, ever eager to make public in Italy news from America, translated the political part of this letter without authority and had it published in an Italian newspaper. This step, however, was only the beginning. On January 25, 1797, the "Mazzei Letter" appeared again, only this time it was another translation in the French newspaper Moniteur. On May 14, 1797, an American newspaper, the Minerva, carried an English translation of the French version. The extensive publication of this letter caused a great controversy in America and Europe.

The Federalists, after reading the English translation, used it as a political weapon against Jefferson, who was at this time vice-

1. Henry S. Randall, The Life of Thomas Jefferson, Vol. 2, pp. 295-296.

president of the United States. They maintained that it had been aimed directly at their party and their leader, George Washington. Jefferson at first did nothing to clear himself, fearing that an explanation would be misconstrued and only make matters worse. However, all this criticism and trouble did not prevent Jefferson's being elected President in 1800.

A story was circulated stating that Washington had severely called Jefferson to account, and that Jefferson had apologized and explained. Jefferson denied that there had ever passed a word, either written or verbal, directly or indirectly, between Washington and himself on the matter.² On the whole, therefore, he thought it best to remain silent; but because he was anxious to consult with his friends, he sent James Madison an invitation to come with James Monroe to "Monticello" for the purpose of discussing what he should do. A resume of the letter that Jefferson wrote to Madison is as follows:

2. John T. Morse, Jr., Thomas Jefferson, p. 164.

He stated that he could not avow the letter as it stood, for there were some material alterations in it, particularly that of the forms of the British government, instead of form; nor could he correct this error without involving himself in a personal difference with every member of the executive, the judiciary, and with General Washington; & that therefore, he suggests, silence would be his best course. It would embroil him also with all those with whom his character is till popular, that is to say, nine-tenths of the people of the United States.³

There was no cooling of friendships between Jefferson and Mazzei because of this letter, but from this time on Jefferson was very careful not to sign the next letter he wrote to Mazzei.⁴

Mazzei should never have translated and published the letter without authority. However, he cannot be held responsible for any significant inaccuracy of translation. The only change he made was to translate "In short, we are likely to preserve the liberty we have obtained only by unremitting labors and perils. But we shall preserve them..." into "Insomma conserveremo probabilmente la liberta che abbiamo

3. George Tucker, Life of Thomas Jefferson, Vol. 2, p. 25.

4. Richard Cecil Garlick, Jr., Philip Mazzei, Friend of Jefferson: His Life and Letters, p. 137.

acquistata, col sole mezzo d' incessanti fatiche e pericoli, ma la conserveremo...", the alteration being from "we shall preserve them, to "we shall preserve it".⁵ There was another important change to which Jefferson objected. It occurred in transposing the word "forms" into "form". However, it has been pointed out by historians that Mazzei clearly had le formalita.⁶ Jefferson also complained that the wording of the letter had been changed quite a bit. Many historians have decided that the choice of words was improved by Mazzei. It is remarkable that the letter could have been translated so many times and still be so much like the original.

The rest of this manuscript is of little importance. It deals with financial matters which Jefferson was handling for Mazzei. He tells Mazzei about some good squash seeds he is sending, asking Mazzei to put a few seeds in every letter he writes Jefferson.

5. Ibid, p. 137.

6. Henry S. Randall, The Life of Thomas Jefferson, Vol. 2, p. 261.

CHAPTER IV

1. Mazzei's Letters to Jefferson

The following letters comprise the friendly correspondence of Philip Mazzei to Thomas Jefferson over a period of years until the former's death on March 19, 1816.

The first of these friendly letters, as far as is known, was that in which Mazzei wrote on April 4, 1784, to Jefferson of his arrival on November 19 at Hampton and of his journey to Rosewell where he desired to rest for a week or two. He added that as soon as circumstances permitted, he would visit him. He also informed Jefferson that he was visiting in the home of Madison's father and that Madison had told him of the economic and political affairs of the confederation. He promised that he would have much to say in reference to the "necessity and manner in which to set forth and stabilize on good and solid foundations our commerce on this side of Gibraltar, where all the states from New Hampshire to Georgia could find great advan-

tage in the rest of Europe."¹ He told Jefferson that he had a great deal of material on this subject and that instead of writing it in this letter he would save it until he visited Jefferson at a later date.

Mazzei stated that he was displeased to hear that certain occupations in America would be closed to the foreign born. He also regretted that in some countries of Europe only those who were natives were eligible for certain positions. The most important part of this letter was the conclusion in which he discussed his commission:

Since all the relative records of my public commission are lost, as well as my letters written from Europe to the government, I am obliged to recall from memory those which I shall need and from their successors all that which is to satisfy the present memory suggests, I shall be very grateful to you.²

On May 20, 1784, Mazzei mentioned his visit with Patrick Henry. He also informed Jefferson that he learned that Van-Stophorst (referred to in Mazzei's letters to Jefferson as V. S.) was leaving for Europe. Mazzei wrote that this news was a surprising blow because he had hoped to re-

1. Department of State, MS.
2. Ibid.

ceive advice from Van-Stophorst in the difficult situation in which he found himself involved. For a debt of a hundred lires a Col. Whiting had had him illegally arrested because Mazzei already had paid the debt, and he had a record of it in his books and papers which were at Monticello. He asked Jefferson for advice on this matter and the means of obtaining his books and papers.

Mazzei remarked on December 1, 1784, that he should be on his way to Europe, but that he had been detained for various reasons. Several letters of importance had been given him to deliver to "V. S." on his arrival in Europe, but because of his unforeseen delays in departure he mailed them to Jefferson who was at this time Foreign Minister to France, asking him to deliver them for him. He promised that he would write more at a later date, when he would have more time.

On July 9, 1785, Mazzei informed Jefferson that he left New York on June 17 and had just arrived in Europe. He continued that he had with him "many bundles of letters and other papers for V. S. I cannot be in Paris before

the 21 or 22 of this month; ... I deem it proper to bring all the papers myself not knowing that which demands the most urgent attention."³ He closed by saying that he was having trouble with his right hand and therefore could not write too much because of the pain. He postponed telling his friend about America until he visited Jefferson later on in Paris.

On October 26, 1785, Mazzei wrote our Minister to France that he was sorry he must leave for Holland without first having time to see Jefferson. He told him of his visits to a friend, a certain Mr. Williams, whom he was helping financially by giving him a few crowns each day or so. He asked Jefferson to write Mr. Williams and occasionally to send him some money.

The following year on February 6, 1786, Mazzei wrote a long friendly letter to Jefferson about various things. He said that a Mr. Luzas was interested in Mazzei's "Pimastranza dei Dissenzienti", an article written by Mazzei describing the state of affairs in America at that particular time. He also asked Jefferson

3. Ibid.

to send Mr. Luzas some congressional material on the dividing of Virginia into two states. Luzas wanted this information so that he could publish it in order to contradict writers who were insinuating that relationship between the states was in great confusion. He requested that Jefferson write Mr. Luzas a paragraph demonstrating that "the division of Virginia into two states never encountered opposition in the mind of a sensible person."⁴ Mazzei also desired that Jefferson send him an account of the beginning, progress, and fall of Cincinnati.

On February 20, 1787, from Paris, Mazzei sent Jefferson a very short note in which he told him that he had received twenty-five louis of gold from Jefferson, and he promised to pay back six hundred pound sterling at a later date.⁵

Mazzei, on April 17, 1787, thanked Jefferson for his generous offer of aiding him financially. "If you will send me a small amount, I shall use it in case of an emergency, or I

4. Richard Cecil Garlick, Jr., Philip Mazzei, Friend of Thomas Jefferson: His Life and Letters, p. 102.

5. Department of State, MS.

shall return it to you when you return."⁶ He also informed Jefferson about their various friends, one in particular, Marchese⁷, who was ill, and Mazzei begged Jefferson to drop their sick friend a line to cheer him up. He concluded that he had already started having his works⁸ published, and hoped to have them finished soon.

On July 4, 1789, Mazzei wrote to Jefferson that he had heard from reliable sources that the latter was going to visit in America and that he was delighted to learn the good news. He praised Jefferson for his kindness and the good work he had done for the American people.⁹

As citizens of the United States we feel a laudable pride in joining the general voice of our country and of that of the age in which we live in rendering the sincerest tribute of respect to an compatriot so distinguished for his exertions in your particular kindness and attention to every American who has fallen in your way have endeared you to their hearts; and we

6. Richard Cecil Garlick, Jr., Philip Mazzei, Friend of Thomas Jefferson: His Life and Letters, p. 109.

7. Probably La Fayette.

8. The book Mazzei is writing on the United States.

9. Thomas Jefferson was at this time America's Foreign Minister to France.

are sure, as we speak the language which they have often uttered on this subject, that were they all present they would join in this our most cordial acknowledgment.¹⁰

This letter was signed not only by Mazzei, but by a number of men, some of whom were John Paradise, Samuel Blackdon, Tod Barlow, E. Haskell and Th. Appleton.

Jefferson had sent Mazzei a letter in which he told of the death of Mazzei's friend, Bellini.¹¹ Then, on September 12, 1802, Mazzei answered Jefferson, expressing briefly his sorrow at the death of his friend.

He also wished to have printed a volume of Jefferson's works, including his inaugural addresses and other excerpts from his writings. He wrote that he had found the two sculptors about whom Jefferson had inquired in previous correspondence. At the close of the letter appeared the recurring theme: "I shall speak of money transactions between this and

10. Department of State, MS.

11. Carlo Bellini, (1735-1804) was a Florentine. In 1779 he became a professor at the College of William and Mary, teaching French, Italian, Spanish, and German. He came to America to aid Mazzei in his agricultural work.

that country. I ask you to pay close attention because it may become an important subject."¹²

From Pisa on September 18, 1814, Mazzei wrote his last letter to his dear friend. For the second time he requested Jefferson's inaugural speech to Congress. He explained that now he was an old man, eighty-four years of age, and, unless the speech came soon, he might not be able to read it.

He thanked Jefferson for having sold his house and lot in Richmond and remarked that he had received more for it than he expected. Then in the conclusion of this last letter to Jefferson, Mazzei bewailed, as he had done repeatedly, his impecunious condition:

You probably know that the tryanny of Napoleon has ruined all the towns that he has entered, and that the individuals most harmed and tormented were the known or supposed enemies of the regime. Consequently I have been one of those most persecuted; thus my finances have suffered much, and I would be much relieved if I could withdraw immediately the funds from the land in Richmond.¹³

12. Richard Cecil Garlick, Jr., Philip Mazzei Friend of Thomas Jefferson: His Life and Letters, p. 149.

13. Ibid., p. 160.

2. Conclusion

Philip Mazzei's greatest contribution was his struggle for the independence of the young States of America. How he came to these states at the suggestion of Benjamin Franklin and Thomas Jefferson to institute an agricultural experiment and how he later was sent to Europe as Virginia's agent are well known facts. However, the great influence he exerted on colonial readers is hardly appreciated. He worked to build an American republic and to change the attitude of the American people and their leaders towards British political institutions. He was well acquainted with them, for he had lived eighteen years in England. The method he used to influence the people was a denunciation of the British Government and the dissemination of the principles of equality and true democratic government by means of the writing of numerous articles which were published about 1774 to 1775 in a Virginia newspaper. Historians have found from research that some of the very expressions used by Thomas Jefferson are exactly like some

of those which appeared in Mazzei's articles.

Mazzei's mission in Europe as agent for Virginia was considered a failure. He spent three years in Europe as Virginia's agent without receiving funds and without means of securing any. However, this did not prohibit Mazzei from trying to serve his adopted country with zeal and tact. He sent home to Jefferson much information that undoubtedly proved invaluable to the new republic. There is no doubt that he helped strengthen America's position abroad and correct many rumors which might have proved injurious to American credit in France. Mazzei, it must be remembered, aided in securing military and financial assistance from the French government, and also credit is due him for the capture of Cornwallis at Yorktown.

Yet, after all this has been said, one can subscribe to the words of Arthur Hugh Clough¹ when judging this energetic Italian immigrant:

"How pleasant it is to have money!"

1. 1819-1861, Spectator ab Extra.

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