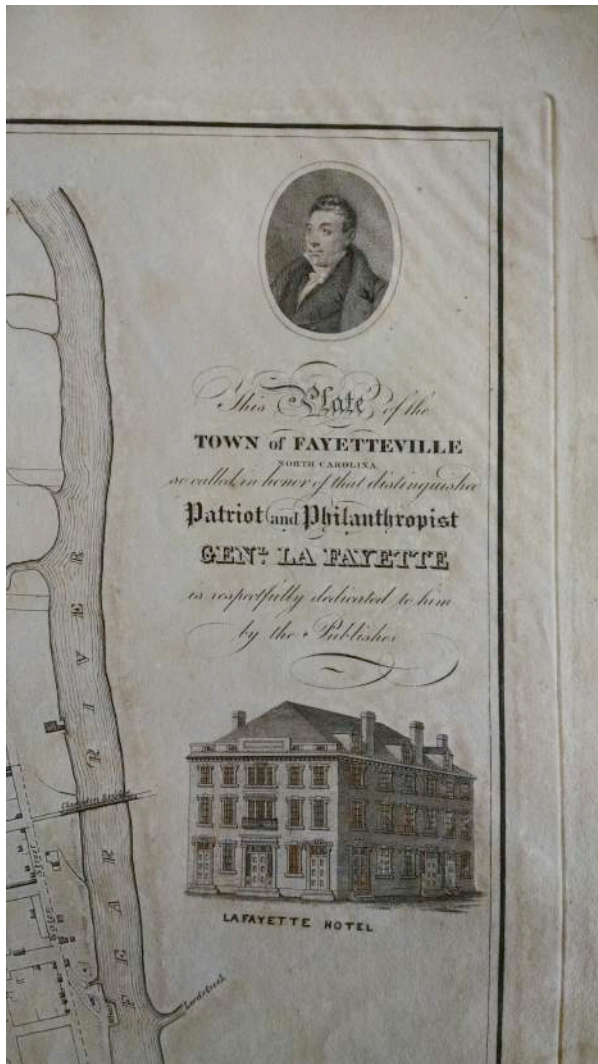


## Fayetteville's Lafayette Map

By Rev. Robert M. Alves

Members of American Friends of Lafayette who attended the 2014 Annual Meeting in Fayetteville, North Carolina may remember a map of Fayetteville featured in the Lafayette exhibit at the Transportation and Local History Museum. Many of the details of the publication of the map, including the exact date of publication, remain a bit of a mystery. To date no publication records have come to light. It is likely that the records were lost in the fire of 1831 that destroyed most of the buildings in Fayetteville that Lafayette would have seen during his visit in March of 1825.

It is probable, due to the evidence on the engraving, that the map was produced to commemorate Lafayette's visit. It is almost certain that the map was adapted from Robert H. B. Brazier's survey of Fayetteville in 1822. The oval portrait of General Lafayette above the legend in the top left corner of the plate is based on the 1822 oil painting of Lafayette by Ary Scheffer that now hangs in the United States House of Representatives. There is no doubt that the map was created to honor Lafayette. The elaborately engraved legend reads *This plate of the town of Fayetteville North Carolina, so called in honor of that distinguished patriot and philanthropist, Gen'l La Fayette, is respectfully dedicated to him by the publisher.*



John McRae is identified as the publisher of the map. McRae was an owner of the Carolina Observer, a newspaper published in Fayetteville, until the paper was sold to Edward J. Hale in the Fall of 1824.

Advertisements in the Carolina Observer reveal that McRae published a sermon for a local church in 1820 and that he owned and operated a circulating library and a bookstore in the early 1820's. John McRae had a close association with the cartographer Robert H. B. Brazier who had been commissioned by the General Assembly to create a new map of Fayetteville in 1822. It is almost certain that the McRae map is based on Brazier's original.

The generally accepted date for the map is 1825 due to the fact that it includes an engraving of the Lafayette Hotel. Robert Donaldson rushed to complete the new hotel for Lafayette's visit, and the Grand Ball, held in the General's honor, took place the new Lafayette Hotel. The 1822 survey of Fayetteville was updated to include the location of the Lafayette Hotel on Hay Street. The presence of the image of the Lafayette Hotel indicates a date of publication no earlier than 1824. While no direct evidence has surfaced linking the map to Lafayette's visit, the connection is probable. An advertisement in the March 3, 1825 issue of the Carolina Observer announces the Lafayette Ball on Friday night, 4<sup>th</sup> of March and states that, "Tickets may be had at \$5 each, at Mr. Hadlock's Book Store, opposite the Lafayette Hotel."

Many questions remain surrounding the map and the purpose for publication of the map. Who was the engraver? Was the plate produced as a souvenir of General Lafayette's visit? Was the plate of Fayetteville produced before 1825 with alterations being made to include the Lafayette Hotel? Was it a publicity piece for the new Lafayette Hotel? How many copies were produced? It is certain, however, that Fayetteville was small enough in 1825 that local residents would not need a map to navigate the town.

The fact that the map is the product of the intaglio printing process using an engraved copperplate indicates that the quantity published was less than 200. The copperplate was almost certainly produced in the north. The style of the engraving bears resemblance to maps produced at the time by H. S. Tanner of Philadelphia, PA. And, we know that McRae and Brazier later teamed up to provide a map of the State of North Carolina that Tanner engraved in 1833.

The probable date of publication is 1824 or 1825 due to the inclusion of the Lafayette Hotel. It is possible that the Lafayette Hotel was added to a pre-existing copperplate engraving of the map which could have been created no earlier than 1822. The fact that no copies of the McRae Map have surfaced without the addition of the Lafayette Hotel argues for a date of publication soon before Lafayette's visit to Fayetteville.

Hal W. Broadfoot, Jr. gave a presentation on the McRae map at the March meeting of the Lafayette Society in Fayetteville. During the presentation, Broadfoot revealed that thirty-three copies of the original map were recently discovered in the estate of a descendent of John McRae. Before the discovery it was believed that fewer than twenty copies of the McRae map survived. The condition of the individual maps varies, but all can be restored and preserved. Broadfoot is the executor of the estate and he will be arranging for the sale of the maps in the near future. Please contact him for information regarding the sale at [hwb@beavercourie.com](mailto:hwb@beavercourie.com).

The Rev. Robert M. Alves  
Rector, St. John's Episcopal Church  
Fayetteville, NC

