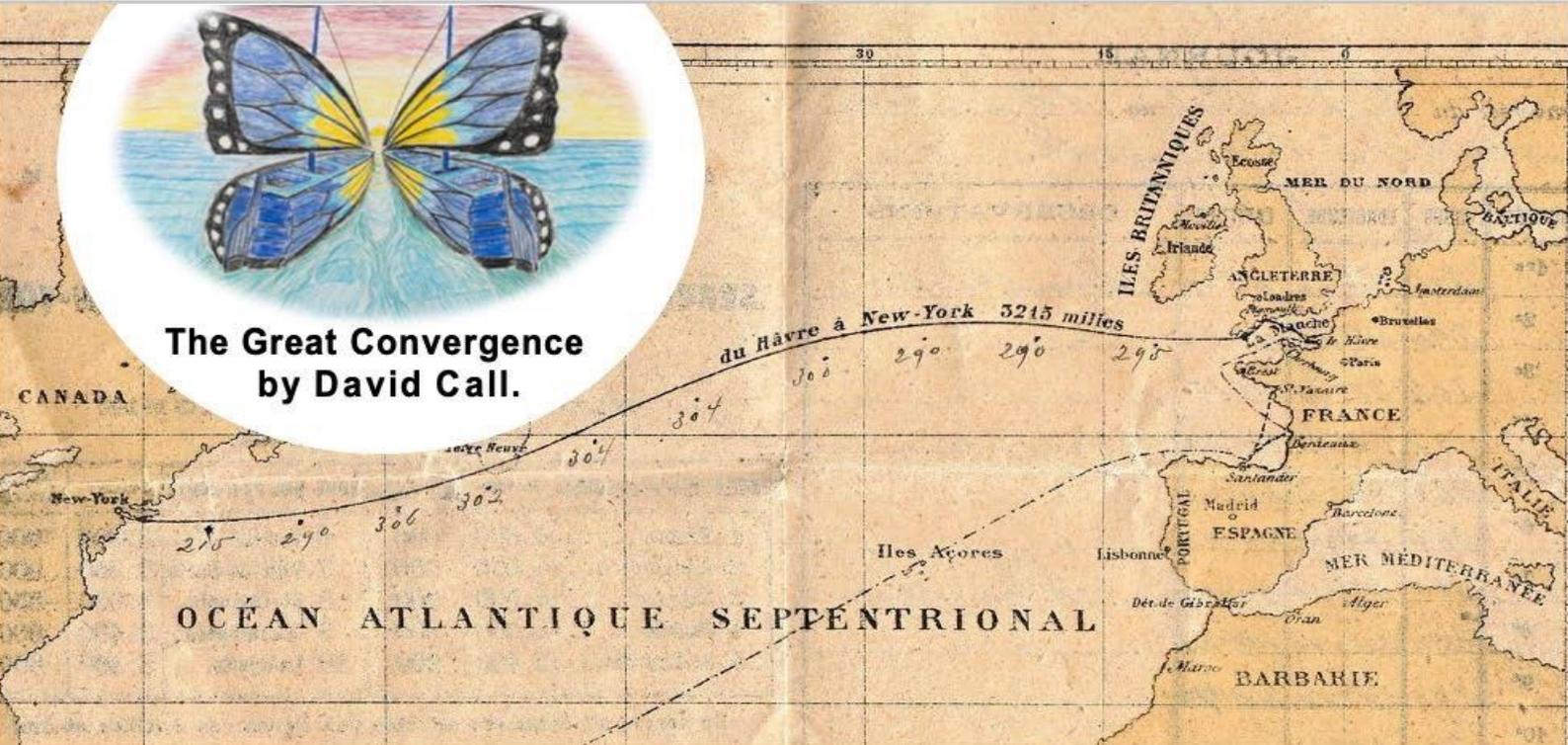


**The Great Convergence
by David Call.**



*Un partenariat franco-américain pour
l'éducation des Sourds toujours d'actualité*

LAURENT CLERC (1785-1869)
THOMAS H. GALLAUDET (1787-1851)

*A Franco-American Partnership in Deaf
Education Still Standing*

Mireille Golaszewski
Christopher A.N. Kurz



BILINGUE/BILINGUAL

+ Guide pédagogique/Teachers' guidance
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Ambassade des États-Unis d'Amérique



Consortium L@CCES- LSF-Pour-Tous



Un partenariat Franco-Américain Pour l'éducation des Sourds toujours d'actualité

« Les Français ont toujours été les amis des Américains et il est à souhaiter qu'ils le soient toujours ! »

Extrait du journal de Laurent Clerc rédigé lors de sa traversée de l'Atlantique.

« Le voyage n'est, ni long, ni dangereux. Si ma vie est prolongée, il aura en moi un ami constant et fidèle ; il en trouvera beaucoup d'autres en Amérique par ses talents et ses vertus. »

Lettre de Thomas Gallaudet à la mère de Laurent Clerc, 28 mai 1816.



A Franco-American Partnership in Deaf Education Still Standing

“The French have always been friends of the Americans and it is to be hoped that they may always be so! “

Laurent Clerc's diary when crossing the Atlantic, July 4, 1816.

“The voyage is neither long, nor dangerous. If my life is spared (as long as I live), he will have in me a constant and faithful friend (and) he will find many others in America on account of his abilities and virtues.”

Gallaudet's Letter to Laurent Clerc's mother, May 28, 1816.



The Great Convergence by David Call.
(Permission received directly from the artist)
Original in RIT/NTID Deaf Studies Archives

Le voilier français transportant la langue des signes française (LSF) a rencontré un autre voilier transportant la langue des signes de Martha's Vineyard (MV). Une belle convergence se produisit lorsque les bateaux se rencontrèrent et accostèrent sur le continent américain où l'ASL est née.

The sailboat from France carrying Langue des signes Française (LSF) met up with another sailboat carrying Martha's Vineyard (MV) sign language. A beautiful convergence had happened when the boats met together and went on to the American mainland where ASL was born.

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FOREWORD By Laurent Clerc Holt



Everyone has a different path to self-discovery or connection to our family and collective community histories. One never knows who will be a catalyst or when a spark will ignite long dormant feelings, personal connections and important history.

My first real appreciation of Laurent Clerc and Thomas H. Gallaudet's unique relationship and impact on Deaf Education was sparked by a visit to Laurent Clerc's birthplace in La Balme-les-Grottes, France in 2001. Up to that point and especially during my youthful days, requests for appearances at dedications, anniversaries, or other events representing Clerc's family were always pleasant, but also somewhat obligatory. My visit to La Balme changed that and my perceptions of Laurent Clerc forever. It was like I was finally let in on a secret that so many other people knew, that Laurent Clerc's contribution to America and France was unique and incredibly inspiring. Overwhelmed by the reception I received in La Balme, by the warmth and enthusiasm from the Association Laurent Clerc and through their emotional tributes to a man gone for more than a century, it finally crystalized for me. Walking the path to his home and listening to stories of Laurent Clerc's impact on their lives, for the first time I felt a great excitement for the accomplishments of my great-great-great-great grandfather - Louis Laurent Marie Clerc.

Personally, the years passed and I found myself busy with other things. However, around the world Laurent Clerc's contributions continued to be talked about, written about and repeatedly analyzed. Then, in January 2021, deep in the isolation caused by the Covid-19 pandemic, another spark crossed the Atlantic from France and arrived at my doorstep in the form of Mireille Golaszewski.

Working with the American School for The Deaf (ASD) the Cogswell Heritage House Museum, in Hartford, the National Technical Institute for the Deaf, (NTID) in Rochester and the Institut

National de Jeunes Sourds de Paris, (INJS) Mireille has embarked on a “Call for Projects” study granted by the American Embassy in Paris to resurrect Laurent and Thomas’ amazing connection and lifelong friendship. Mireille has chosen to take on the monumental task, through an exciting new Franco-American collaboration, of refocusing our two countries on the Clerc/Gallaudet approach to early education in the Deaf Community. Mireille’s enthusiasm has ignited French and American experts and teachers, both hearing and Deaf, to help revive Clerc’s story. More importantly, her work includes a Teacher’s Guidance chapter with material that can be used in today’s classrooms, bridging the gap of “then” and “now.”

Much like Clerc’s journey with Gallaudet, Mireille has started a new voyage of understanding and knowledge between our two great countries. I am personally very excited and honored to be part of her book of exploration and history. She has been our family’s new flame for caring for Laurent Clerc’s legacy. We owe her and Christopher Kurz, who shared the work with her, a great debt of gratitude for her perseverance in bringing this work to life, to further educate ourselves and the world about Laurent Clerc’s great contribution to Deaf History and Culture.

“Gratitude is the memory of the heart.”

Jean Baptiste Massieu, Friend and Mentor of Laurent Clerc

Laurent Clerc Holt

INTRODUCTION

This collective work is part of a call for projects launched by the United States Embassy in Paris for the year 2020-2021 (U.S. Department of State, U.S. Embassy France, Public Affairs section). The L@cces-lsf-pour-tous Consortium responded to this call and submitted a project concerning one of the proposed themes:

Common values and interests: Activities which promote the long history of Franco-American relations and forge links between the American and French peoples, including, but not limited to, commemorations of historical events and commemorative programs.

The objective of this research work is to underline the historical links existing between the United States and France, around the development of their sign language and the education of the Deaf, initiated by Laurent Clerc and Thomas H. Gallaudet, friends, advocates and defenders of a linguistic and cultural minority, and also to promote shared values of tolerance and respect through education and inclusion. There are many similarities between their two countries of origin, but also some cultural differences: the American approach and the French approach correlate each other and thus continue the work begun in the 19th century by Laurent Clerc and Thomas H. Gallaudet throughout contemporary times.

This book, *Laurent Clerc and Thomas H. Gallaudet, A Franco-American Partnership in Deaf Education Still Standing*, brings together primary resources, archived documents and publications by historians, anthropologists, sociologists, linguists, and educators, who have marked out and followed their journey, from their first meeting (July 8, 1815) to their deaths (in 1869 and 1851 respectively). It also traces their heritage in certain developments in contemporary society where we can see the extensions of their initiatives.

Of course, there are many writings on Thomas H. Gallaudet and Laurent Clerc. Our collection is far from being exhaustive. It is only representative of all data the authors gathered and read (See Bibliography) to select what was directly related to Laurent Clerc and Thomas H. Gallaudet. In the five chapters, the focus is put on their shared story and accomplishments. We are very thankful to librarians: in particular Jean Linderman from Cogswell Museum, American School for the Deaf, Hartford, Joan Naturale from Rochester Institute of Technology Wallace Center, Rochester and lately, Anne Picaud from Institut National des Jeunes Sourds, Paris.

They responded to our many requests and allowed us to have access to hidden documents, primary sources, rare publications and papers. They seemed never tired of providing us with outstanding resources, on demand. We wanted to bring to the fore a very thorough knowledge of both Laurent Clerc and Thomas H. Gallaudet as very few people have it so far. This accounts for the highly documented chapters, and the aim is to bring the readers as close as possible to the two protagonists under study.

This database provides educational documentation that can be used by deaf or hearing teachers, to revive the memory of these two personalities and make them known to the younger generations. This work is written in English and in French (bilingual publication in symmetrical chapters and pairs of units + Power points in the Teachers' Guidance section). Part of the material is translated into LSF and ASL, which is in itself a pedagogical choice and demonstrates the recognition and respect for linguistic differences and cultural diversity. Accessibility makes sharing possible.

While the authors have made every effort to provide accurate web page addresses and other resource information at the time of publication, the authors do not assume any responsibility for errors or changes that occur after publication as they do not have any control over and do not assume any responsibility for third-party websites or their content.

We made every effort to secure permissions to publish images and use images that are free to publish. We thank some authors and contemporary artists for kindly allowing us to borrow from their works, without conditions.

The distinction between “Deaf” (noun) and “deaf” (adjective) has been respected most of the time, but some authors use one or the other indifferently. Similarly, both “abbé” and “Abbé” are used. “Deaf and Dumb” has been taken to be the equivalent of “Deaf-mutes”, which is valid historically, and translated accordingly. A translation of the titles of quoted publications is provided [...] when necessary (from English into French and conversely): it is just a help, nearly word for word, to give access to the meaning of the title.

Reflecting the spirit of the historical links between deaf communities in France and the United States, the joint partnership around the L@cces-lsf-pour-tous Consortium, the project leader has associated the American School for the Deaf in Hartford, CT (ASD) and its Cogswell Heritage House (CHH), the Laurent Clerc Foundation in La Balme-Les-Grottes, Isère, France, the National Institute of Deaf Youth, INJS in Paris, Rochester Institute of Technology (RIT), and academics from institutions welcoming deaf students, including Ohlone College in California, universities with extensive archives such as Yale and Berkeley, former French deaf students at Gallaudet University, deaf artists, teachers who have participated in the bi-annual student exchange program between INJS and ASD, deaf activists, and even a descendant of Laurent Clerc himself – Mr. Laurent Clerc Holt, so devoted to honoring his ancestor's memory and accomplishments.

We warmly thank all the people who have participated in this project. Without them, this research work could not have been accomplished (see Acknowledgments).

Online libraries contain countless documents available to researchers around the world. In his work, *The Archives of the Deaf Community in Paris, What Possibilities for a Broader Perspective? Cahiers d'Histoire, 2019*, Yann Cantin notes the development of deaf studies with a significant gap between the situation in the United States, due to the support of Gallaudet University, and in France where publications are often the fact of passionate volunteers or members of associations. The approach is, first of all chronological, highlighting the main actors whose names are known to the general public. Then, the interest widened to linguistic, cultural and social themes with the emergence of historians and seasoned specialists whose studies and works today constitute a real wealth.

The final product emphasizes major historical developments for deaf communities in both countries to see their languages and cultures recognized and respected. The historical perspective can invite policy makers, civil leaders and influencers to pursue a long-term action for better inclusion of deaf people at all levels of society. The process of de-stigmatizing the Deaf is under way, but much remains to be done.

This work is not a history book, even if it borrows from the masterful publications of great historians of the History of the Deaf and from numerous articles published in specialized journals, such as *American Annals of the Deaf*, *Sign Language Studies*, *Languages*, and other archive documents, which shed light on the slow struggle of the Deaf to bring about the emergence of a deaf identity and culture. It is not either centered on sign languages, which eminent linguists have studied in detail, from their emergence to their existence as a full-fledged language. It is not either a sociological study of the evolution of the deaf community, within the widespread hearing community. The deaf community is strong with a language and a culture that have enabled it to acquire a status and a public recognition still waiting to assert itself more.

This work is a retrospective review of the approaches and actions of two inspired men, Laurent Clerc and Thomas H. Gallaudet. They went out of their way to make their ideas visible into solid buildings that are the first schools for the Deaf in the United States. They dug the foundations and laid the first stones. The deaf schools offer more and more bilingual education around sign language, shaped by these two undisputed masters.

This work is a chronicle over the years of a singular story between two educators, French and American, of their meeting, of their friendship and common interest in bringing the Deaf out of the ignorance in which centuries had kept them. Both believed in the power of education to enable destitute and ignored people, “the unfortunates” as Laurent Clerc called them; to integrate into society. They believed that respect for every person should include available education through schools and their sign language. Yet schools must exist and be accessible to them. These two men, along with Mason F. Cogswell and Lydia Huntley Sigourney, were pioneers in the United States where institutes or institutions for the Deaf were still lacking, in France where some young Deaf people were still out of the eye of decision-makers. They united their skills, transited between France and the United States, where Laurent Clerc, at Thomas H. Gallaudet’s call, “imported” some signs of the LSF which helped contribute to the creation of the ASL. They crossed the Atlantic Ocean together, for fifty-two days, against all odds and there they enriched themselves with the language of the other, thereby demonstrating the benefits of communication through shared “languages”: they wished to make communication possible for the Deaf by offering them the conditions for a natural learning of their first language – sign language. They planted a seed for what was to become later Gallaudet University, as we know it today, “the only university of human sciences for the Deaf in the world, more than a school, the synonym of the emancipation of the Deaf through education.”¹

(https://www.sgb-fss.ch/wp-content/uploads/2015/12/sgb-fss_dossier_fms67.pdf)

It is in their footsteps, through this compilation, that we must, in our turn, cross the Atlantic Ocean (such a symbolical voyage), and embark on the paths leading to other French and Americans, (such as Harry Marcowicz, an American sociolinguist, and Mottez, French), as they set off together in 1977 for a cycle of conferences and meetings in various French cities, similar to Thomas H. Gallaudet and Laurent Clerc traversing the American States together, to continue and

¹ Alliance Française, https://www.sgb-fss.ch/wp-content/uploads/2015/12/sgb-fss_dossier_fms67.pdf

consolidate their work. We know how much Le Réveil Sourd (the Deaf Awakening) in France owes to the initiatives of Laurent Clerc and Thomas H. Gallaudet and their successors throughout the 19th century, and to their fruitful cooperation. The Alliance Française, in Hartford, recapitulates the benefits and legacy:

The career and life of Thomas Hopkins Gallaudet, largely spent in Hartford, are other examples of Hartford's relations with the French-speaking world. Thomas H. Gallaudet (1787-1851) and his heritage illustrate the contribution of the Hartford community to the promotion of universal values, strongly influenced by France and French culture. Descendant of the French Huguenots and having emigrated to the United States, Thomas H. Gallaudet lived in Hartford. In 1817 he founded the American School for the Deaf (ASD) there. Today, the school is the oldest hearing-impaired educational institution in the United States that has never had a hiatus. Initially imitating the National Institute for Deaf-Mute Youth in Paris, which was a pioneer in the field, Thomas H. Gallaudet subsequently succeeded in innovating. Thanks to his great involvement in ASD, he has succeeded in developing, intramural, progressive teaching methods, coupled with the systematization and use of American Sign Language (ASL). Imminent Parisian teacher of Isère origin, specializing in the education of the deaf, Laurent Clerc (1785-1869) left France for the United States and settled in Hartford at the request of Thomas H. Gallaudet, of which he became the principal collaborator; which undoubtedly strengthened and extended the efforts of the founder of ASD. Given the nature of its mission, but also the influence of Thomas H. Gallaudet and Laurent Clerc - a deaf man- on its development, ASL is closely linked to French Sign Language and the Parisian Institute for the deaf and dumb.

www.alliancefrancaisehtfd.org

It is to the conquering determination of these two men, Laurent Clerc and Thomas Gallaudet, that this book wants to pay tribute. It wants to tell this incredible story, which was the prelude to more known actions. Because it is also exemplary on the human level – they learned to overcome many religious, ideological and political obstacles in their time, and gave future generations the confidence to move forward and progress, considering that difference is a richness, that otherness is a founding value and that inclusion goes against any form of discrimination, this violence imposed on some. They answered, well before anyone else, the question asked by Bernard Mottez: "Do the Deaf exist?" (Les Sourds existent- ils?) (Texts collected and presented by Andrea Benvenuto, Paris, L'Harmattan, 2006.) This is the story of the fight of important figures of the deaf and hearing community, after the death of Laurent Clerc (July 18, 1869) and Thomas Gallaudet (September 10, 1851), in their wake, in their footsteps, so that the question no longer arises, at least in such a provocative, disturbing way, by the fact that some answers are now provided. The story of Laurent Clerc and Thomas H. Gallaudet is an initiation (polysemic value of the word) and a decisive beginning.

It is a portrait of Laurent Clerc, whose dazzling career was quickly eclipsed, of this educator of genius that Loida R. does not hesitate to call, in a grandiloquent way, the "Apostle of the Deaf of the New World". The superintendent of the Indiana State School for the Deaf, William J. McClure (*American Annals of the Deaf*, March 1958, volume 103, N°2), personally praised the personality and intelligence of Laurent Clerc in 1958:

While movements to establish in this country were astir in several places between 1810 and 1820 it is doubtful if any of the three permanent schools established during that period would have been so successful if it had not been for the assistance of that brilliant young Frenchman, Laurent Clerc. This young deaf man,

leaving his home to come to America, gave invaluable assistance to Thomas Hopkins Gallaudet, while he was establishing the first permanent American School for the Deaf in Hartford, Connecticut, in 1817. He also educated all the early instructors both at ASD and at other schools. The responsibility fell to him. None of the U.S schools could open without his training.

(...) The personality and intelligence of this man can be better understood when we recall his visit to Congress. (...) For a young deaf man to so impress and influence the Congress of the United States and, as a result, to secure such assistance for two early schools for the deaf is one of the outstanding achievements of all time for a deaf man. We must remember money was far harder to secure then than it is now. We must also remember that this young man was deaf, from a foreign country and English was to him a foreign language.

Loida R. Canlas, superintendent of the Indiana State school for the deaf, William J. McClure, M. A., (*American Annals of the Deaf*, March 1958, volume 103, N°2) [Loida R. Canlas, directeur de l'école pour les Sourds de l'Indiana].

How did this Frenchman, Laurent Clerc, from a small town in France he had not left before, get into Franco-American mythology? How did this American, Thomas H. Gallaudet, passing through Europe, become his friend and draw inspiration from his precepts?

We hope our work is providing some answers.

Mireille Golaszewski
Christopher A.N. Kurz

Note from the authors: The authors provide in the chapters and in the Bibliography a French or English translation of the titles of the works quoted, in parentheses, as an aid to understanding the meaning. These are not necessarily the titles of published translations. Useful links to websites are also exceptionally indicated.

A Short Introduction by Dr Thomas K. Holcomb (signed in ASL and in LSF)



DOCUMENT (ASL)

Consortium – Access for all – LSF/ASL USA/France.

This project proposal was submitted to the U.S. Embassy in Paris, and it was then approved by the U.S. Department of State, U.S. Embassy France, Public Affairs section.

The goal of the U.S. Department of State, U.S. Embassy France, Public Affairs section is:

To strengthen existing historical ties between the United States and France and highlight shared values of tolerance and respect of differences through education and inclusion.

This proposed project will include a book with pedagogical activities in four languages – written English, written French, LSF (Langue des Signes Française), and ASL (American Sign Language).

There are two main themes:

1. Analyzing and further understanding the historical events leading to the establishment of the Deaf Education system in the US through the partnership of Laurent Clerc and Thomas H. Gallaudet.
2. Fighting discrimination through bilingual literacy and inclusion. Illiteracy and oppression continue to be a major challenge for deaf people due to oppression and ignorance.

This project will spotlight bilingualism as a tool to combat this ongoing oppression.

The project outcome is a data bank of relevant resources and tools, available to users in four languages: French, LSF, English and ASL. The bank includes teaching tools, learning materials on Deaf culture, bilingualism, language learning in sign language and written language, and more.

While we have years of studies that show benefits of bilingualism, we need to use them to combat oppressive practice of total oralism. Even today!!

French Sign Language and American Sign Language are known as “cousin languages” due to the importation of French signs by Laurent Clerc. This project invites people from both countries to learn and compare each other’s sign language as well as a sign of cross-culture unity.

While we focus not only language oppression, but also a lack of respect and recognition of deaf people as capable individuals with rich with cultural solutions for inclusion and literacy.

What inclusion means?

Furthermore, the historical perspective will draw attention on important landmarks that have impacted the constitution of these communities. This will result in destigmatizing society’s views towards the Deaf. We believe that in the future, the word and concept of inclusion in every sector of society will no longer be an issue, but a fact of life chosen by deaf individuals, concerning education, as it is about an experience, not a placement.

Chapter 1

Representations of Laurent Clerc and Thomas H. Gallaudet



Laurent Clerc (1785-1869)



Thomas H. Gallaudet (1787 - 1851)

In all ages, and among all people not absolutely sunk in barbarism, monuments and statues have played an important part in public education. Telling, as they do, more or less fully of lofty lives and noble achievements, they stimulate the mind of the beholder, and inspire him with a desire, and often with a purpose, to "make his life sublime.

Edward M. Gallaudet

Address of Acceptance

Third Convention of the Association of the Deaf

Washington, DC, 1889

Death comes to all, but great achievement builds a monument that will endure until the sun gets cold.

Ralph W. Emerson

What you leave behind is not what is engraved in stone monuments, but what is woven into the lives of others.

Pericles

*The monument of a great man is not of granite or marble or bronze.
It consists of his goodness, his deeds, his love and his compassion.*

Alfred Arnaud Montapert

A public library is the most enduring of memorials, the trustiest monument for the preservation of an event or a name, or an affection; for it, and it only, is respected by war and revolutions and surviving them.

Mark Twain

INTRODUCTION

The reputations of L'Abbé de l'Epée² and l' Abbé Sicard³ are firmly established. They have been celebrated many times, and at nearly each International Congress, any gathering of Deaf associations or public anniversaries of the Deaf Communities, their names have been pronounced. In the Proceedings of the 4th Convention of the National Association of the Deaf, Memorial Art Palace, Chicago, 18-23 July 1893:

The eighteenth century closed in the midst of political convulsions. Two men at that time chanced to meet, endowed by Providence with an immense love for liberty. Both had received from Nature a tender and exalted soul, a rare sagacity, a genius equally active and persevering: one, however, was very affable, the other very serious; the former received in his school room, with modesty, ambassadors and kings; the latter, though less honored, was much more proud of his glory. These were L'Abbé de L'Epée and L'Abbé Sicard. L'Abbé de L' Epée lived to pass his life as a river whose waters flow peacefully between the shores of happiness. The life of the Abbé Sicard was more stormy; he was violently snatched way by the Revolution from his adopted family; he was thrown into a dungeon, exiled. Such were the two men, the choice of God for the execution of His designs in favor of a class so long orphaned.

At the preceding Third Convention in Paris, in 1889, L'Abbé de l'Epée was the overwhelming focus of attention, all the more so since it was the 100th anniversary of his death. Delegates from the world over were taken to Versailles, his birthplace.

Laurent Clerc appears in the report of the 4th Convention (1893), in passing, so to speak, in an oration by Robert P. McGregor, the first president of the National Association of the Deaf, (Columbus, Ohio) about deaf teachers:

From the very inception of deaf-mute education in this country, the peculiar fitness of the deaf for the position of teachers has been recognized. The first deaf teacher of the dumb in America was Laurent Clerc, a Frenchman brought over by the Rev. Thomas. H. Gallaudet, the founder of the first school for the deaf, as an assistant. Mr. Clerc enjoys the unique distinction of being the only deaf mute ever imported under contract to instruct the deaf. In these days he would be excluded by the "contract-labor law, " but happily we have no need now to import such teachers, as we are able to supply the world with the best educated and most accomplished deaf teachers to be found anywhere.

In the presentation of the Pantheon Exhibition: "Histoire silencieuse des Sourds du Moyen Age à nos jours" [The Silent History of the Deaf, from Middle Ages to Present Time], (Commissioner:

² L'Abbé de l'Epée (1712-1789), pioneer of specialized education for the Deaf. At the origin of a particular method based on the use of signs to enable the Deaf to communicate (the methodical signs). Signs have always existed among the Deaf, but L'Abbé de l'Epée brought Deaf people together in his school, located at his home, on rue des Moulins in Paris. Abbé Sicard and Laurent Clerc, his brilliant pupil, were his disciples at the National Institute for Young Deaf Youth, (INJS), created in 1791, and set up, in 1794, rue St Jacques in Paris.

³ L' Abbé Sicard, (1742-1822) devoted his life to the education of the Deaf, first at the head of the Bordeaux Institute in 1786, then at the INJS, in Paris where he took over after Abbé de L'Epée, in 1790. He is notably the author of several books on the education of the Deaf.

Yann Cantin⁴) held in Paris (June 18-October 14, 2019) Laurent Clerc's name and actions are mentioned in a footnote:

Laurent Clerc, an instructor and precursor of the method of the Abbé de l'Épée, propagates the legacy and the work of the Abbé in the United States. In 1817, he and Thomas Hopkins Gallaudet created the first school for the deaf in Hartford, Connecticut. The method of the Abbé de l'Épée, and the French sign language will have an impact on the international sign languages. In the continuity of this heritage, the National College for the Deaf, founded in 1834 in Washington, D.C., became Gallaudet University in 1864, the only university, still today, reserved for deaf students.

This exhibition was organized at the Pantheon whose role in paying national homages to leading figures is recalled in the Prologue:



From its origins, the Pantheon has been a political monument dedicated to an educational role [...]. The Pantheon allows everyone to explore the commitment of citizens and understand the ideal of a democratic fraternity of egalitarian origin. It is in such a context that the exhibition "The Silent History of the Deaf" must be considered, as it takes place in the Pantheon, a monument that embodies the struggles of citizenship and that also echoes the struggles of recognition of the Deaf.

http://www.paris-pantheon.fr/var/cm_n_inter/storage/original/application/906c84dee7dad87cd5ee3ab4d6792449.pdf
<https://www.taniahagemeister.fr/museographie/lhistoire-silencieuse-des-sourds/>

Thus, Laurent Clerc was honored in one of the most prestigious monuments in Paris. More generally, in France, his native country, Laurent Clerc is not necessarily regarded as he should be, while his importance in the United States and in the international deaf community no longer needs demonstrating: by "importing" French signs to the United States and more particularly to Hartford in Connecticut, by teaching how to learn and use them, he was among those who were at the origin of the development of an American sign language and the setting up of Deaf schools that have allowed thousands of deaf people to receive an education that had previously been unavailable to them. Of course, Laurent Clerc would not have been able to distinguish himself in this way if he had not met Thomas H. Gallaudet who, with him, established the first permanent school for the Deaf in the U.S. in April 1817. Originally incorporated as The

⁴ Yann Cantin: Historian and Professor at Paris VIII. He works on the history of the deaf community and sign language. Among his numerous publications can be found:

Cantin Yann and Angélique Cantin: *Dictionnaire Biographique des Grands sourds de France, Les silencieux de France, 1450-1920*, Editions Archives et Culture. [Biographical Dictionary of the Great Deaf in France, The Silent People of France].

Cantin, Yann. *Les Archives de la communauté sourde à Paris, Quelles possibilités d'un regard élargi*, Cahiers d'Histoire vol 37 n°1, automne 2019 <http://id.erudit.org/iderudit/1067961ar> [Archives of the deaf community in Paris]

Cantin, Yann. *The Friend of the Deaf Mutes* (online thesis) [L'ami des Sourds-muets] Thesis presented for the award of the doctorate in history, presented and publicly defended on December 10, 2014.

Cantin, Yann. *Les Sourds-Muets de la Belle Époque, une communauté en mutation* [The Deaf-Mutes of the Belle Époque, A Community in Mutation.], preface by Florence Encrevé, Paris, Archives et culture, 2018.

Connecticut Asylum for the Education and Instruction of Deaf and Dumb persons, today it is known as the American School for the Deaf (West Hartford, CT).

The friendship and association of these two men have left their mark on deaf communities and this chapter seeks to explore how, in a visible way, they have entered into collective memory and History.

Artwork, since the dawn of time, has been a means for man to represent the material and visible world, to show important events or characters: sculptured, engraved, painted, with objects bearing their likeness, they are lasting witnesses of these figures that History has thus been able to preserve and pass on to next generations. Writing has also made it possible to leave traces of them and to find them in a few works that increase their historical and cultural heritage. For deaf people whose sign communication had been mainly oral in the past (not any longer with digital modern devices), leaving written testimonies of their lives or actions is vital too, and this accounts, more particularly, for the great number of letters and autobiographies published every year. Similarly, many speeches and orations for important events can be found in Archives. The nearly impossible way of commemorating famous figures in stone or engravings in "letters of gold" has been underlined by James Denison, a former student and a formal teacher and principal of the Kendall School. Yet, he recognizes its usefulness: how limited it might be, it is a prelude to a long-lasting spiritual homage by all his benefactors:

Yet far be it from us to claim that in erecting this memorial we regard ourselves as having discharged in whole or in part a debt. Not a hundred columns, with their summits among the clouds and their sides emblazoned with letters of gold, could do that. The debt we owe to Gallaudet and Clerc is immeasurable, eternal; not to be paid in things earthly and perishable, stone, or gold. The memory of such lives as theirs will outlast the monuments we have erected. It will glow in the hearts of the innumerable crowd that comes after us long beyond that distant day when these shafts shall have fallen and mingled with the earth beneath.

That action or that life is indeed of trifling importance which depends for its perpetuation in human records upon slab or pillar, obelisk, or pyramid. It was the astute Talleyrand who said: "The sovereign has a little mind who seeks to go down to posterity by means of great public structures. It is to confide to masons and bricklayers the task of writing history." Great deeds are the living lights of history; their undying brightness shines in the darkness of the past and sends rays of hope and encouragement down the vistas of the future. They contain within themselves the source of their own perpetual existence, needing no aid from the handiwork of man.

But, on the other hand, the generation, community, or people that rear a memorial, perishable though it be, whose front catches and reflects this immortal light, shows its appreciation of what is true and noble and great. It discharges a sacred duty; it performs a service to its day and generation in thus making the most prompt, the most public, and the most ample acknowledgment in its power of its obligations.

James Denison – *The memory of Laurent Clerc : Oration Pronounced at the Dedication of the Clerc Memorial*, American Annals of the Deaf, volume 19, n°4, octobre 1874, pages 238-244.

A.- Monuments, sculptures, and engravings

1.- Commemorative monuments

The Deaf, in France and in the United States, have always shown gratitude to Laurent Clerc and Thomas H. Gallaudet. They have wanted to make it visible and materialize it with monuments, such as those erected in memory of great figures: Lincoln⁵, Washington⁶, La Fayette⁷, Joan of Arc⁸ and others, in the United States and in France. Together they are the tribute of a grateful deaf community, more than ever united around these two emblematic figures who allowed them to emerge from the shadows and then to assert their identity in the long fights that went through the end of the 19th century and the beginning of the 20th century.

During the ceremonies gathering many Deaf people at the town hall of Hartford on September 26, 1850, John Carlin⁹, from New York delivered a long speech, among others. He underlined the intention of those who had wished to erect it:

It is a substantial testimonial of our deep gratitude for his disinterested labors in promoting our mental and religious welfare, and of our high appreciation of his sterling worth. And he stressed not without some pride:

The first monument in the world that has ever been erected by a community exclusively deaf and dumb”, thanks to a massive appeal for donations to which all Deaf people in the country, even the most humble ones have contributed. Hearing people were excluded and we can see here a first manifestation of strength and independence, as well as evidence of the human wealth of the Deaf, so long devalued: “(...) Our (the deaf mutes”) warm hearts are not destitute of one of the brightest virtues of man-GRATITUDE!! Oh, may the fact that it is our own work, devised and supervised by our minds, - once darkened, but now disenthralled from the terrible meshes of ignorance - enhance the value of our Institutions in the eyes of the public”. In an eminently rhetorical discourse, he goes on to recall the difference between a cenotaph and a commemorative monument:

⁵ The Lincoln Memorial is a monument in honor of Abraham Lincoln, 16th President of the United States. It was inaugurated in 1922, in West Potomac Park, as an extension of the National Mall in Washington. A large white marble building in the shape of a Greek Doric temple, it houses a monumental statue of seated Abraham Lincoln and the inscriptions of two of his most famous speeches.

⁶ The Washington Monument is an obelisk-shaped tower. It was inaugurated on February 21, 1885, in honor of George Washington (1732-1799), the first president of the United States. It is located in Washington, D.C.

⁷ Marquis de La Fayette. At the end of the 19th century, there was no statue in Paris in honor of the Marquis de La Fayette, who played a decisive role in the American war of independence against British rule and was a major historical figure in the 1789 and 1830 French revolutions. It was at the initiative of the Americans (subscription launched by the American Robert Thompson to students) that it was decided to erect a monument to his glory. Today it is visible in the 8th arrondissement. It was to thank France for presenting the United States with the Statue of Liberty. Nicknamed the "hero of two worlds", he is one of the eight honorary citizens of the United States. He made a triumphant return there in 1824, at the invitation of President James Monroe. He was welcomed and honored in 182 cities in the 24 states of the Union at that time.

⁸ Joan of Arc's equestrian statue was a gift from France to New Orleans, sent in 1958 by Robert Whyte, and it is a replica of the statue of Emmanuel Frémiet, Place des Pyramides in Paris. In 1960, Charles de Gaulle, then President of the French Republic, visiting New Orleans, encouraged some citizens in France and New Orleans to finance its costly realization. In 1972, the statue was finally placed on a 17-foot pedestal in Place de France, then put in 1999 at its current location, Place de France, on Decatur Street next to the French market.

⁹ John Carlin (1813-1891), a talented Deaf artist, poet, and writer. He made a significant contribution to the well-being and cultural life of the Deaf Community.

He went to France where he studied portraiture with the famous professor Paul Delaroche.

His best-known work is his oil painting of Laurent Clerc, during his lifetime (1860-1866). This portrait commissioned by freshmen and alumni of the Kentucky School for the Deaf still stands in place of honor in its chapel.

He was secretary of the committee responsible for financing a monument in honor of Thomas H. Gallaudet. He made a bronze side panel of it, and when the column was unveiled, he gave a speech in sign language.

Source: avictorian.com/Carlin_John.html

“Seeing that the mortal remains of Dr. Gallaudet are not deposited beneath this monument, to which some of us have demurred, it seems appropriate to show in a true light the difference between a cenotaph and a monument - the former is to honor the dead, speaking individually, over whom it is erected; but the latter is to commemorate the deeds of the immortal soul of the person, whose mortal remains are returning to their original dust in the solemn city of the dead or anywhere circumstances may assign for their internment, over which, in many cases, the monument is not erected.

John continued his educational presentation by giving two examples of monuments: the national monument in Washington and the statue of the Duke of Wellington in St James' Park, London. He rhetorically wondered who Thomas H. Gallaudet was to deserve such an honor: “an eminent statesman, a military genius? No. his achievements were of pure benevolence”. His bombastic comparison with Christopher Columbus landing on the newly discovered continent, with Cortes and Pizarro in search of riches in the gold mines of Mexico and Peru allows him to praise Gallaudet to the skies:

Dr. Gallaudet landed here without any imposing array of followers, save one foreigner, and converted the mutes' heathendom into a grand field of benevolence, and he died, rich in faith in his Savior and in our love and gratitude.

John Carlin, 26 septembre 1850, *American Annals of the Deaf and Dumb*, vol.3, 1851

This lyrical flight is up to the importance of two memorials of Thomas H. Gallaudet.

Let us go off on reconnaissance in different places: it is no coincidence that the monument was erected in Hartford and Washington in honor of Laurent Clerc and Thomas H. Gallaudet. Gallaudet spent nearly his whole life there educating young deaf people and then counseled for people with mental health and elderly people. Laurent Clerc arrived there in 1816 and never left. He is buried in the local cemetery, Spring Grove cemetery. This may partly explain why Laurent Clerc is ultimately better known in the United States than in France.

The monumental outdoor sculpture, whatever it is, lends itself to large dimensions which impose and express the value attached to the person. It is permanently visible to all passers-by. Carved in stone, it resists time and is lasting. It strives to represent figures, realistically, by sculpting them in a pause or activity that characterizes them.

1-1 The monument of Thomas H. Gallaudet and Alice, (Founder's statue)



Daniel Chester French¹⁰, *Thomas Hopkins Gallaudet et Alice Cogswell*, 1888 (Fonte 1924), bronze, West Hartford - Hartford History Center, Hartford Public Library

<https://www.nps.gov/mima/learn/historyculture/sculptor-daniel-chester-french.htm>

Thomas H Gallaudet is the figure of the attentive educator who teaches a young pupil, Alice (Alice Cogswell, 1805-1830) to use signs, (the Letter A, first letter of her first name) while the alphabetical letters of Alice's first name are engraved in stone. The two characters, linked by a tender complicity are the emblems of the transmission and acquisition of knowledge. They underline the pedagogical relation between the teacher and the pupil. This monument is an accurate illustration of their history and can easily settle down in the observers' memory. The sculptor here has rendered a familiar scene and he has highlighted this privileged bond between Thomas H. Gallaudet and his little pupil. Deaf people who are in a visual culture enter here, directly into the reality of the teaching process. This sculpture, through the presence of Alice, a deaf little girl, evokes the education of the Deaf. This was a sensitive subject, since until about the middle of the 19th century, the Deaf could only go to school, in specialized institutes, three days a week. Here, the visual image is strong: the Deaf can be educated. The emotional weight and impact are strong.

This monument is a replica of the memorial located on the campus of Gallaudet University. The artist Daniel Chester French, also designed the famous Lincoln Memorial in Washington.

During the official dedication ceremony, the statue was unveiled to Edward Miner Gallaudet. Later, Edwin A. Hodgson, former president of the National Association of the Deaf, said:

The statue does not pay off a debt; it simply recognizes an obligation so great that it won't be possible to cancel it. It is only the outward expression of widespread reverence and love. [...]

The statue, from an artistic point of view, is highly successful. [...] The only thing to be regretted in connection with the whole work is that the committee did not feel justified in entrusting a work of this importance [...] to a deaf-mute artist. No doubt they exercised a wise discretion in placing their order with the well-known sculptor, Mr. Daniel French, as at that time no American deaf-mute sculptor had given evidence of the ability to successfully execute an important work in bronze. [...] This monumental bronze is truly, a fitting memorial of the scholar, philanthropist and teacher [...] but for Gallaudet and such as he [...] we felt like

¹⁰ Daniel Chester French (1850-1931) - born in Exeter, New Hampshire, died in Stockbridge, Massachusetts) is an American sculptor. His best-known work is the sculpture of Abraham Lincoln at the Lincoln Memorial in Washington.

uttering again the hackneyed sentiment: If you seek his monument, look around you!

This memorial is erected by those who know him only by his works, and it is more costly, if not more beautiful and expressive in its simplicity, than the first. Not content with chiseling his name in stone, we have now cast it in bronze. Time has not tarnished his name but has given it a new lustre, for, like virgin gold, the wear and tear of time has only removed the earthly dross and left him more beautiful than ever.

Let us strive to show that we are worthy of him, worthy of the blessings received. He knew that our path is rougher than the common lot of man, and he strove diligently to smooth that path. He knew that we carry a weight, that we are handicapped in the race, and he strove beyond his strength to lighten that weight, though he could not remove it entirely. The rest is up to us.

Shall we falter, shall we halt?

No. A thousand times no.

*A crown to the one who wins and the worst is only a grave,
And somewhere, somewhere still, a reward awaits the brave,
A broken shield without, but a hero's heart within,
And held with a hand of steel, the broken sword may win.*

Edwin A. Hodgson published an article on the Gallaudet Statue in *The Silent Worker*, n°1 - 26 septembre 1889. 1889.

In the following oration at The Third Convention of the National Association of the Deaf, Washington D.C., Robert McGregor, of Ohio, said:

The sculptor has caught her in one of her most artless attitudes, and has most appropriately embalmed her in imperishable bronze, side by side with him whom she loved. There was Laurent Clerc, the "Apostle of the Deaf," who held aloft the torch of experience to light his first steps in the then untrodden path in which he was highly resolved to lead us, and who bore with him the heat and burden of the day. His memorial stands side by side with his master's in Hartford. Then there was "a nearer one, a dearer one yet than all other;" she sleeps side by side with him, awaiting the resurrection morn, when "the ears of the deaf shall be unstopped and the tongue of the dumb shall be unloosed." These were all of us. Like vines clinging to some monarch of the forest, inextricably interlacing its branches in every direction, their lives interlace his in all its ramifications, so that we cannot consider him apart from them if we would, and we would not if we could, for their memory casts a halo around him that renders him doubly dear to us. "We love him, because he first loved us," and we shall continue to love him long after this monument shall have returned unto its original elements. Thirty-eight years ago, "The friend of man, the friend of Truth, the friend of age, the guide of youth, was laid to rest, but this is not the first monument that we have erected to commemorate his deeds in life. Another stands in the grounds of the Hartford School, the scene of his early labors. That was raised two years after his death, by those who knew him personally, by his contemporaries, and is, relatively, a local testimonial to his goodness and worth, but- "Lo! Where with patient toil he nursed, and trained the new set plant at first, the widening branches of a stately tree Stretch from the sunrise to the sunset sea." And since, then a new generation has arisen that has been sheltered beneath its branches and partaken of its fruit. This memorial is

*erected by those who know him only by his works, and it is more costly, if not more beautiful and expressive in its simplicity, than the first.
Not content with chiseling his name in stone, we have now cast it in bronze. Time has not dimmed but added new luster to his name, for, like virgin gold, the attrition of time has only worn off the earthly dross and left it more beautiful than ever.*

A poem adds a visual image too:
Gallaudet and Alice (Three Cinquains)

*I Autumn:
West wind,
Caressingly,
Weaves 'round their feet a rug,
Barbaric, myriad-hued, and gay,
Of leaves.*

*II Winter:
Softly
Descend the flakes
And form two surplices,
Resplendent, from the dazzling white
Of snow.*

*III. Spring:
The song
Of the first bird
Rings forth-ah, joyfully-
From the most hospitable perch-
Her hand.*

Poem by Loy E. Golladay, from “*A is for Alice, poems of love and laughter*”, L.E. Golladay publisher, 1991

1-2 The Founder's Memorial Statue



The Founder's Memorial Statue by Wadsworth

Language, Culture, Communities: 200 years of Impact by The American School for the Deaf, by American School of the Deaf, first printing, April 2017, p.12).

Made by Frances L. Wadsworth¹¹, it is in Hartford. The girl is supported by a giant adult hand and this is reassuring. The statue is a 9 feet high bronze of Alice Cogswell, the first student of the American School for the Deaf. The little girl holding a book in her left hand drops her right arm and touches a larger outstretched hand. The ten fingers symbolize the ten benefactors of ASD and they form the sign of "light", that Gallaudet brought to the Deaf. The girl seems at the same time small, frail, and serene, her face turned straight ahead towards the future, fragile, but in good hands. The hands are almost joined as in a gesture of fervor: the hands of an educator who has faith in his mission. The hands are of course the instrument of sign languages. But they are not tightly joined and do not keep the child who is ready to take off. Maybe we have to see here the representation of the liberation of the Deaf, through sign language and education? Especially since at the feet of the little girl we can see a writing quill partially hiding a book symbolizing that education was once not open to the Deaf. This statue is exquisitely delicate: Alice's flowing dress and curly hair bring about some softness. At the base of the monument, we can read: FRIEND, TEACHER, and BENEFACTOR.

1-3 *The Gallaudet Monument*



The monument, looking like an obelisk, was designed by Albert Newsam (1809- 1864), an accomplished deaf artist based in Philadelphia. Newsam, who worked for a printer, elevated the art of lithography in the United States. Newsam designed a stately soaring monument with two

¹¹ Frances Wadsworth (1909-1978) produced a number of public works of art in Connecticut. She was also a fine arts instructor at the Institute of Living in Hartford, as part of an initiative to introduce art therapy.

granite base units that supported a decorative marble structure. The marble components consist of a lower decorative molding base that elevates a central die. The die has four, cubed, end columns and four panels. An elegant, tapering, central column rises from a small base set atop the lower stones and is capped by a decorative cornice and globe. The relief panel was designed by John Carlin (1813-1891), deaf artist from New York. It depicts the school's first three students: Alice Cogswell, George Loring and Wilson Whiton. It is now set into the wall of the front entrance of ASD new buildings.

The bronze oak-leaf is a companion to one that also adorns the Clerc Monument. These were gifted to ASD from the French delegates for the school's 100th anniversary in 1917 and were affixed to the Gallaudet and Clerc Monuments at that time.

<https://we-ha.com/wp-content/uploads/2020/02/Gallaudet-Monument-Historic-Significance-12.06.19.pdf>

<http://catalog.bostonathenaeum.org/vwebv/holdingsInfo?bibId=420630>

1-4 *The Laurent Clerc Memorial Statue*



The bust above it was made by Carl H. Conrad. The sculpture was cast in 1874 and originally located on the grounds of the American School for the Deaf on Asylum Avenue in Hartford. It was moved to its present location around 1920, when the school moved to West Hartford. The bust is placed on a two-tiered bronze circular base and mounted on a polished granite pedestal. Below, in a horizontal bas-relief panel, a right hand spells the name of Clerc, CLERC, in American Sign Language. Inscriptions are on three sides of the pedestal.

On the front (east) side: LAURENT CLERC, the apostle his Deaf and Mute of the New World.

North Side: LAURENT CLERC was born in La Balme, France on December 26, 1785. He arrived in New York on August 5, 1818. He died in Hartford on July 18, 1869.

South side: Erected by the deaf-mutes of America in memory of their benefactor, the pupil of Sicard, Gallaudet's associate who left his native country to raise them through his teaching and encourage them by his example.

The Laurel branch was added during the visit of a French delegation.

https://www.waymarking.com/waymarks/WMD8HG_Laurent_Clerc_West_Hartford_CT

This is what Henry Winter Syle, a teacher at the New York Institute for the Deaf and Dumb, said in his address of May 11, 1874, to the president and directors of the American Asylum for the Deaf and Dumb, Hartford, CT:

Gentlemen:

The Deaf Mute of the United States desirous at once to provide a public and lasting memorial of the invaluable labors of Laurent Clerc and to attest their own deep sense of gratitude for the benefits of education received by them largely in the first place through his instrumentality-have taken steps toward the erection of a monument to his memory.

Their unanimous and earnest desire is to have it placed in the grounds of the institution of which you gentlemen have charge, and in a position corresponding to that of the monument Mr. Clerc assisted in erecting to his friend and fellow worker, the sainted Gallaudet. Here it would be on the scene of Mr. Clerc's labors in your service during almost the whole of his sojourn in America and within sight of the spot where he massed his declining years and breathed his last.

(...) In the model of the bust just completed, it is universally admitted the best likeness of Mr. Clerc yet produced has been obtained. The whole will, it is believed, form a monument worthy of the honored dead, and fitted to adorn the grounds of the American Asylum.

(...) very respectfully, Your obedient servant, Henry Winter Syle, Secretary.

There is another testimony by James Denison:

And to-day we assemble again. We have come up, as then, from New England hills and vales, from the rivers and lakes of the Empire States, from the City of Brotherly Love and its sturdy Commonwealth, from the Old Dominion, and further down in the regions of the sunny South, from the rolling prairies of the West- a mighty brotherhood- and this time it is to LAURENT CLERC that we rear our memorial.

There it stands-monumental shaft and bust of bronze-on the soil which his feet trod as he went to and from his daily labors and surrounded by mementos of his presence and his work. It will be first among the objects which catch the eager eye of the child of silence as he approaches the portals where the fetters that bind his mind shall be struck off; it will rise before his sight day by day as he pursues his round of duty and of study; it will be among the last of the familiar objects connected with school life to fade on his vision as he leaves his Alma Mater to fight the battle of life. To him, as it is to us all, it will be a reminder of sturdy endeavor, cheerful self-sacrifice, and faithful performance of duty, and of the obligation which conscience and gratitude lay upon him to prove worthy of one who embodied in his character these sterling traits.

But this stone will not only speak of Laurent Clerc's life and his work; it will be eloquent of the love and gratitude of the uncounted thousands whom that life and that work have blessed. It will proclaim that whatever may be their shortcomings, they can remember kindness and cherish the memory of a benefactor. Yet far be it from us to claim that in erecting this memorial we regard ourselves as having discharged in whole or in part a debt. Not a hundred columns, with their summits among the clouds and their sides emblazoned with letters of gold, could do that. The debt we owe to Gallaudet and Clerc is immeasurable, eternal; not to be paid in things earthly and perishable, stone, or gold. The memory of such lives as theirs will outlast the monuments we have erected. It will glow in the hearts of the innumerable crowd that comes after us long beyond that distant day when these shafts shall have fallen and mingled with the earth beneath.

That action or that life is indeed of trifling importance which depends for its perpetuation in human records upon slab or pillar, obelisk, or pyramid. It was the

astute Talleyrand who said: "The sovereign has a little mind who seeks to go down to posterity by means of great public structures. It is to confide to masons and bricklayers the task of writing history." Great deeds are the living lights of history; their undying brightness shines in the darkness of the past and sends rays of hope and encouragement down the vistas of the future. They contain within themselves the source of their own perpetual existence, needing no aid from the handiwork of man.

But, on the other hand, the generation, community, or people that rears a memorial, perishable though it be, whose front catches and reflects this immortal light, shows its appreciation of what is true and noble and great. It discharges a sacred duty; it performs a service to its day and generation in thus making the most prompt, the most public, and the most ample acknowledgment in its power of its obligations.

We glory in proclaiming our lasting indebtedness to Gallaudet and to Clerc. We write it on stone. We shall acknowledge it to future ages in tradition and in the records of the books. But there are other ways yet in which we can show our gratitude. We can prove ourselves worthy of the benefits which we have received. We can make ourselves honored members of society, gaining its respect by our industry and independence, our intelligence, our regard for morality and law. We can make the word "mute" a synonym for all that is desirable and admirable in the neighbor and the citizen. We can continue steadfast in the pursuit of knowledge and in the cultivation of the mind until we make our mark in literature, the arts, and the sciences. We can help to make the world better and purer by sustaining with credit the functions which religion demands of its supporters.

Then the record and influence of our lives will form a memorial which will tell the story of our devotion to our benefactors in the coming ages, when the marble that now bears aloft the names of Gallaudet and Clerc, yielding to the destroy-ing hand of time, shall have vanished forever from mortal sight.

The memory of Laurent Clerc by James Denison: an address delivered at the dedication of the Clerc Memorial, Hartford, Connecticut, September 16th, 1874, in American Annals of the Deaf and Dumb, October 1874, vol 19, n°4.

In 1917, Henri Gaillard toured several places in America to visit Deaf schools. More particularly ASD in Hartford. In his journal, he depicted both The Gallaudet Monument and The Laurent Clerc's monument. We must note how merely descriptive he was, save for a touch of patriotism on evoking Laurent Clerc's monument:

This monument was erected in 1855 with the proceeds of campaign to which each of the American deaf contributed one cent. It generated the sum of \$2, 500, not a very high price at the time since the Association raised about the same amount, \$2, 000, just to restore it. It was designed by a deaf artist, a former pupil of the Philadelphia school, Albert Newsam, but was created by hearing sculptors in Hartford, for there were no deaf sculptors at the time. The deaf painter John Carlin designed the engraving. This bas relief is the principal part of the monument and the only one of real interest. It is seated in the pedestal which holds up a pyramidal shaft topped by a sphere. The dedication to Gallaudet is on the other side of the pedestal. Although by nature a monument, the work gives a rather heavy impression. But the bas relief is very well conceived. Gallaudet is seated, wearing his teacher's coat, and is showing how the letter A is formed to a little girl whom he presses to his side while she copies the handshape. An older boy, his slate under his arm, waits for her to be initiated into the alphabet, and yet another is seated on a bench writing on his slate. All these figures are quite intelligently executed.

The monument to Laurent Clerc is the only one in the world to have been dedicated to a deaf-mute. And since it is a French deaf-mute, we have a cause for national pride. This monument, too, was erected after a fundraising campaign among the American deaf, which yielded almost \$3, 600. A tall, wide granite pedestal supports a bronze bust; the figure's eyes are intelligent, the face shaven with a thoughtful expression. On a bronze tablet at the base of the pedestal, his name is simply given in the letters for the manual alphabet, Clerc.

Henri Gaillard, *Henri Gaillard in Deaf America, A Portrait of the Deaf Community*, 1917, 2002, Gallaudet University.

2 - Busts

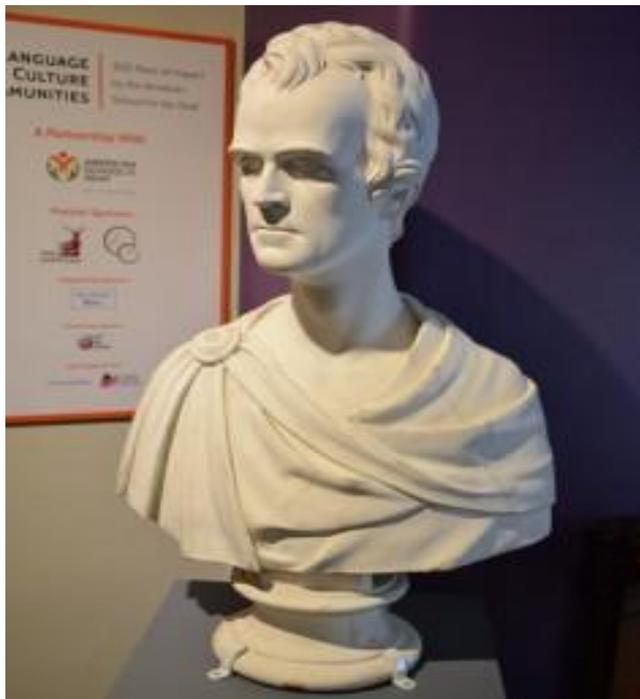
2-1 *The Bust of Laurent Clerc, on the Laurent Clerc Memorial Statue*

Laurent Clerc Memorial Statue,
Language, culture, Communities: 200 Years of Impact by the American School for the Deaf, 2017, p14.



2-2 Bust of Laurent Clerc by Ives (1846)

Sculpted by Chauncey Bradley Ives in 1846. The Connecticut Historical Society owns it. It was given to the society by Daniel Wadsworth.



(Photo by Dahmane Soudani)

2-3 Plaster Bust of Rev. Thomas H. Gallaudet by Eugene Hannan (at Gallaudet)



The bust is a work of the American sculptor Eugene E. Hannan (1875-1945) and donated to ASD by the Ecole St Jacques in Paris.

<https://gallaudet.pastperfectonline.com/webobject/300D423E-BD02-466F-97B9-208750492506>

3. Commemorative plaques

They are like milestones in the history of a community. Set in the middle of cities, they integrate the historical figure among ordinary citizens and testify to his belonging to the local heritage. They are usually put up on the wall of a house or an important building, at the corner of a street or inside a church. Usually, they bear the name of the illustrious figure, the dates of his birth and death and a few words highlighting the reason for his fame.

3-1 Commemorative plaque of Laurent Clerc by J Makali Bruton



We can read there:

*America's first deaf teacher of deaf students.
Presented to our alma mater by grateful alumni to commemorate Gallaudet's
transition to university status on October 24, 1986. This bust is a copy of the Clerc
Memorial at the American School for the Deaf.*

Gallaudet University Alumni Association.
Historical Marker Database
www.hmdb.org/m.asp?m=96356

3-2 A bronze plaque was offered to the Laurent Clerc Association by an American delegation visiting his birthplace on October 10, 1980

Having left for the USA in 1816, a pioneer of education, honored by the American Deaf, Laurent Clerc was forgotten in his own country, France. (...) It was not until the 1970s that the French Deaf, participating in the World Deaf Congress in 1971 and following a training session at Gallaudet University in Washington, in 1975, discovered the high intellectual, cultural and professional level of Deaf Americans, and Laurent Clerc.

Our surprise was great when, in 1980, a delegation of the Associations of the Deaf of the United States, came to La Balme-les-Grottes, to pay homage to Laurent Clerc and to France, by offering his native village a commemorative plaque.

Michelle Bonnot et Marc Preignard, *Introduction, Laurent Clerc, sa vie (1785-1869)*
p.8 [Introduction, Laurent Clerc, his life]
L'Association Laurent Clerc. [The Laurent Clerc Association]

3-3 A plaque by the Laurent Clerc Association

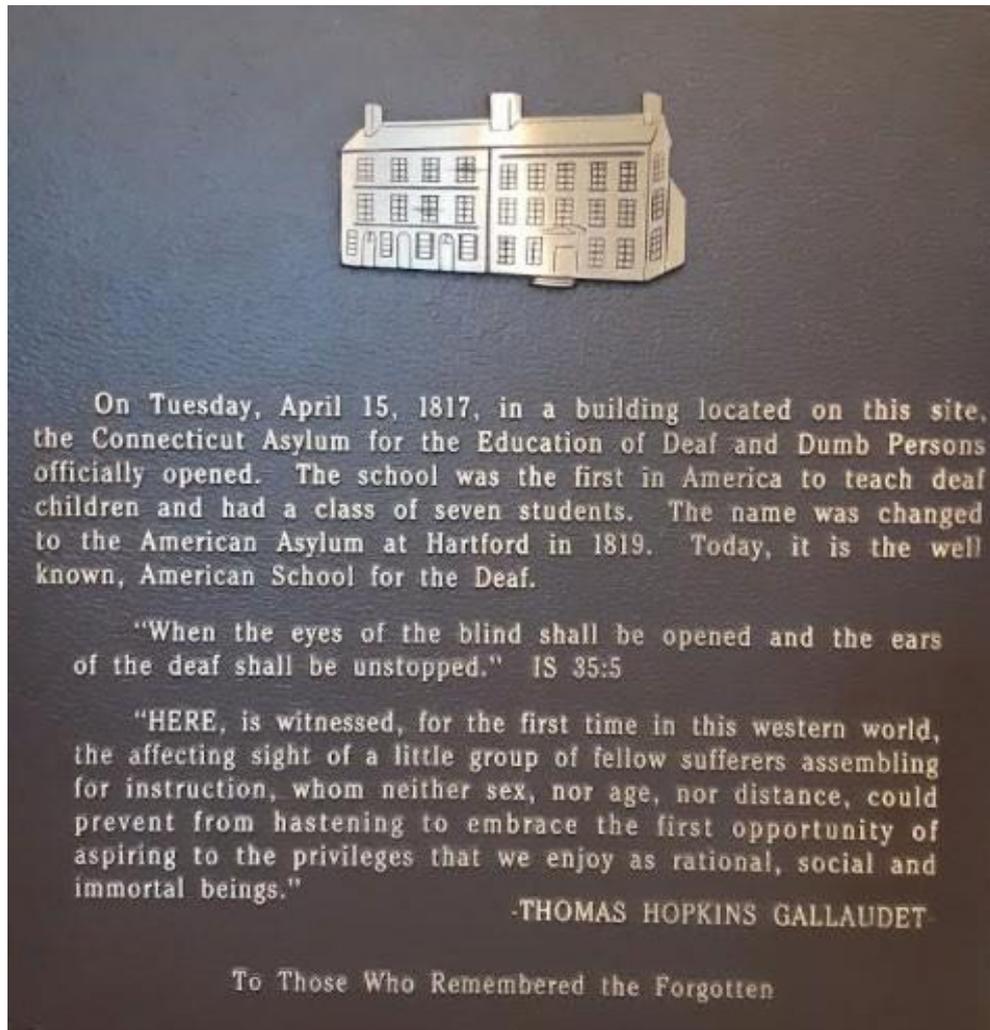
The Laurent Clerc Association had one put on his home house in July 4th, 1987. One can read, in French, and in English:



Plaque on Clerc's family house.

3-4 Bennett City Hotel Plaque

To those who remembered the forgotten.



On the Bushnell Tower on the main street of Hartford
where the first permanent school for the Deaf was located:
The Connecticut Asylum for the Education of Deaf and Dumb Persons

HERE, is witnessed, for the first time in this western world, the affecting sight of a little group of fellow sufferers assembling for instruction, whom neither sex, nor age, nor distance, could prevent from hastening to embrace the first opportunity of aspiring to the privileges that we enjoy as rational, social and immortal beings.

Thomas Hopkins Gallaudet

Language, Culture, Communities: 200 Years of Impact by the American School for the Deaf, American School of the Deaf, première impression, avril 2017, p.12.

4 - Headstones

Tombs with stèles enable engraving the name of the buried person and his dates of birth and death, on a vertical stone slab, which is easily read as one approaches.

The name can be matched with a few words capturing who the person was and what she did if she became famous. An epitaph might be added. On the top part of the slab there is a cross for Christians.

Although the architecture is very simple and rather stereotyped, the engraving, more particularly when there is an epitaph, can be ornamental and tell something of the image the family wants to give of their dead parent.

It is to be noted that Laurent Clerc's tomb is very simple and reflects how humble he was and the utter simplicity of his life. The large cross is there to remind one that he did not lose his Christian faith (it was L'Abbé Sicard's main worry before he left to go to America that Laurent Clerc would convert his religion).



Tomb of Laurent Clerc

July 18, 1869, Death of Laurent Clerc at the age of 84
Spring Grove Cemetery, Hartford, Connecticut,
pp.44-45, *Laurent Clerc, Sa vie* [His life] (1785-1869),
Association Laurent Clerc, 11th edition, May 1919

Laurent Clerc and his wife, Elizabeth, were buried in Spring Grove Cemetery in Hartford. In 1992, a deaf man, Alan Barwiolek¹², visited the graves of the Clercs. He was appalled by the

¹² Alan Barwiolek, who helped found the New York Deaf Theater as part of a lifelong campaign to make things better for those living in the Silent World where he was born, died April 17, 1996. He was 43 years old and was an associate professor of sign language studies at Union College in Plainfield, NJ.

deteriorated and vandalized gravestones and launched a nationwide campaign to restore the gravestones. His efforts have benefited from the support of countless individuals and organizations, including the Laurent Clerc Cultural Fund of the Gallaudet University Alumni Association. Six years later, the honor was returned to the Clercs with the unveiling of new tombstones at their final resting place.

http://www.texva.com/france/laurent_clerc.html
www.assoc-laurentclerc.fr

When visiting several Deaf Schools in America in 1917, Henri Gaillard visited the cemetery and gave this description of the place:

The cemetery, mostly reserved for the affluent, was like a park and gave an imposing monumental impression. Trees, huge shrubs, wide drives, a stream with weeping willows along its banks, vast lawns from which rose, each at some distance from the other, the monuments erected in memory of the dead. Most of these were huge funerary urns, some quite lavish, other with real artistic merit, but very few crosses. There was nothing stuffy, closed in, tangled up, loaded with the mortuary bric-a-brac that you see in Parisian cemeteries. No, here everything was severe and simple, well-spaced and clean, and on the whole so majestic that one did not at all have the feeling of sadness that you might have before a simple grave behind a country church. Then we stood before the graves of the Gallaudets. In the middle of them was the tombstone of Thomas Hopkins Gallaudet, which carried a brief inscription. All around it, in a concentric circle, were spaced small gravestones set in the grass, giving the names of his children, grandchildren, the first wife of Edward Miner, his second wife and, a bit in front, a low cross indicating the final resting place of a clergyman, the Rev. Thomas Gallaudet, the founder of the American church of the deaf. Next to him was the plaque of his wife, a good and well-known deaf woman. The whole family is now reunited there. We deposed our bronze palm on the grass and we bowed our uncovered heads.

Now the automobile was taking us to Clerc's cemetery. An older one, it was located in a distant part of the city, in front of houses that were still occupied and closed off with only an iron gate. The graves were close together as in Europe and were not even situated in a regular pattern. This was the old-fashioned system. In order to locate the tomb of our fellow countryman we had to walk over the grounds. It was marked by a vertical plaque shaped like a pointed church window; it looked old and weathered, but the inscription was still visible. The words born at La Balme (France) moved us. On the sides were the graves of his wife and of a son. We placed our palm on the ground and I picked some leaves from a shrub growing behind the tombstone of Laurent Clerc.

Henri Gaillard, *Henri Gaillard in Deaf America, A Portrait of the Deaf Community*, 1917, 2002, Gallaudet University Press.

Whether they are monumental sculptures or busts, these works in stone, marble or bronze have survived the years. As Kenneth Hoffman rightly wrote:

America... the land of opportunity, whose torch of light and hope is held aloft in the right hand of the Statue of Liberty! A gift from France in 1886, the Statue of Liberty has long been the symbol of opportunity for countless immigrants who have journeyed to America in search of a life of

fulfillment. It was most fitting, therefore, that the first deaf person to light the way for other deaf people should come from France. Such was the happy fortune of Laurent Clerc, whose arrival in New York harbor preceded the Statue of Liberty by 70 years! (...)

At the age of 84, Laurent Clerc breathed his last on July 18, 1869. Several years afterwards, a dedication ceremony in his memory was held at Hartford by his many friends and admirers.

Another alumnus, Gilbert Eastman, who is Director of the Theatre Department at Gallaudet College, spent several months in France researching material for a full-length play, which he completed in 1976. Entitled Laurent Clerc: A Profile, Eastman's play dramatizes the turning points in Clerc's life and it was performed by the Gallaudet College players on the occasion of the formal dedication of the Clerc Residence Hall at the American School for the Deaf. Thus, the spirit of Laurent Clerc lives on-in stone and in bronze, in poetry and drama-and, above all, in the expressive language of signs and fingerspelling which he brought over from France and passed on to us, like the torch of learning and opportunity.

http://www.texva.com/france/laurent_clerc.html

5 - Commemorative Contemporary Event

Exhibition: "*Language, Culture, Communities: 200 Years of Impact by the American School for the Deaf*", by the American School for the Deaf and the Connecticut Historical Society

There was a time, more than 200 years ago, when it was generally believed that people who could neither hear nor speak had no futures. "People thought someone who was deaf did not have the capacity to learn," said Ilene Frank¹³. "It was a sort of giving up on them as a person".

Then, in 1817, the American School for the Deaf opened in Hartford. Over two centuries, that school — the country's first for deaf people and the birthplace of American Sign Language — has been in the forefront of changing minds about the possibilities and promise held by people with deafness.

"The school had a very different way of thinking," Frank said. "Just because you're deaf and don't have speech, you're not 'dumb'."

Frank was the co-curator of the new exhibit at Connecticut Historical Society that celebrated the bicentennial of ASD and the leadership position the school has held in the nationwide Deaf Culture movement.

"On the surface, it might seem that this story only would be interesting to a person who is deaf or has a deaf family member or friend," said Frank. "But it's really a universal story about the need to express yourself, and the creation of a culture and a community."

¹³ Ilene Frank is co-curator of the Connecticut Historical Society's new exhibit that celebrates ASD's bicentennial and the school's leadership position in the national deaf culture movement.

The exhibit examines the history and impact of the school, profiling its founders, teachers, students, and alumni, detailing key moments in the school's history — the invention of ASL, the development of captioned films for the hearing-impaired — and chronicling the rise of Deaf Culture. "Deaf Culture, upper case D upper case C, has been around for decades, but it really rose in the mid-20th century with the publication of the dictionary and with activism, " Frank said. "American Sign Language is the foundation of that culture."

ASD was founded in Hartford because Thomas Gallaudet, a minister here, met his neighbor's 9-year-old hearing-impaired daughter, Alice Cogswell, and felt the urge to teach her. Gallaudet, Alice's father, Mason Cogswell, and other local leaders raised money to send Gallaudet to Europe to learn about deaf education. In Paris, Gallaudet met educator Laurent Clerc and lured him to move to Hartford. On April 15, 1817, Clerc, Gallaudet and Cogswell opened "Connecticut Asylum at Hartford for the Instruction of Deaf and Dumb Persons" inside the Old City Hotel at Main and Gold streets.

On opening day, the student body of three people included Alice Cogswell. By the end of the week, the school had seven students, ranging in age from 9 to 51, the oldest being a painter from Maine who never received any formal education. By the end of the year, the school had 33 students. From the beginning, the school was co-ed and racially mixed, even during the years of the "Black Laws, " which limited African-Americans' access to schools.

The school soon outgrew the hotel and, in 1821, moved to a site on Asylum Street. A century later, it sold that land to The Hartford insurance company and moved to West Hartford, where the school now called the American School for the Deaf remains to this day.

Gallaudet had an overriding motive in educating the hearing-impaired. "They were bringing deaf people into society to be productive citizens, but they were also souls to be saved, " said Ben Gammel, the exhibit developer. "They had religious classes, vocational classes."

Still, the most noteworthy achievement of the early years of the school was the invention of American Sign Language, which occurred by happenstance and grew over time.

"A lot of people view ASL as a version of broken English. It's not. It has its own grammar, " Gammel said.

That grammar grew at the school as the occasion demanded it. One item in the exhibit is a two-cornered hat worn by President James Monroe.

When Monroe visited the school, students saw his hat and improvised a sign for "president" that is still used.

Clerc arrived from France knowing French signing. Students came to the school using hand signals they had developed at their homes. Students from Martha's Vineyard, where deafness was unusually common, came with their own system of communicating. The teachers and students combined all those communication methods to forge a new language. The Vineyard students also brought a unique perspective to the school.

The students, up until then, had lived a life of loneliness, somewhat ostracized, " Gammel said. "Martha's Vineyard students didn't have that experience. They were fully integrated into society. They had jobs."

Both English and sign language were taught at ASD, even during a time, in 1880, when an international conference discouraged the use of sign language, recommending lip reading instead. "They were kind of radical at that moment in time," Frank said.

Underlying everything taught at ASD, Frank said, was a philosophy of "always able."

"They do not view it as a disability," Frank said. "It's part of who they are."

Hartford Courant, Susan Dunne, 2017 May 7th

Language, culture, communities: 200 years of impact by the American School for de Deaf, at Connecticut Historical Society.



**AMERICAN
SCHOOL FOR
THE
DEAF**

ALL ways able.

B - Paintings

Before the advent of photography, (which developed in the mid-19th century), pictures, in the form of paintings, were the means of representing someone as faithfully as possible. Whether they are hung inside private houses, (of the upper middle class at first) or in museums, they endeavor to best convey the reality of a face, of a standing person, of a posture. Fidelity to the original was the first criterion, and the artist was judged first on his ability to perform a likeness. His artistic

talents and his interpretation were to come second only. If he managed to make the inner reality of his model perceptible, it was an added value. The representation of the face in sculpture, and more particularly in busts, is not comparable to that found in painting: sculpture is, so to speak, deprived of the eye and the gaze. Mona Lisa, The Jocund, is famous for her look and for that sketch of a smile that gives expressiveness and life to her face. Many so-called “bust portraits”, three-quarter length, allow us to capture the subject's personality and his gaze.

The portrait shows interest in the individual and strives to preserve the image for posterity. The same person may be the subject of more than one portrait, by different artists, and at various ages in their life.

1 - Portrait of Laurent Clerc, by Charles Wilson Peale



There are several portraits of Laurent Clerc and Thomas H. Gallaudet. That of Laurent Clerc, and his wife Eliza Boardman (1822) by Charles Wilson Peale, is the subject of a video presentation in ASL, by Jeff Bravin, Director General of ASD, at the Wadsworth Athenum Museum of Art: www.thewadsworth.org.

Towards the end of his life, Peale opened a museum in Philadelphia where he collected collectibles (artifacts) relating to the history of the United States. These portraits were included in the museum because, according to Peale: “Laurent Clerc is the first educated Deaf to walk the streets of the New World.”

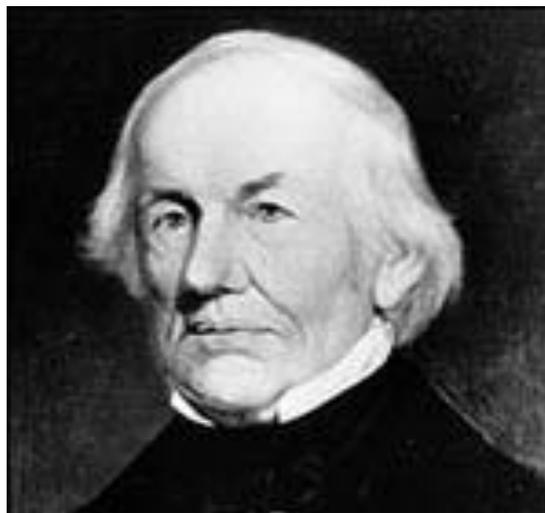
Eliza shows the letter E, the first letter of her name and her daughter Elizabeth's first name.

Source: *American School for the Deaf. Language, Culture, Communities: 200 years of Impact by the American School for the Deaf* (2017).

<https://www.gallaudet.edu/history-through-deaf-eyes/online-exhibition/formation-of-a-community/a-language-shared-by-hand-and-heart/>

2 - Portrait of Laurent Clerc by John Carlin (cf. note 8 p. 22)

One of John Carlin's most famous portraits is that of his teacher, Laurent Clerc. This painting was commissioned to him by the Kentucky School for the Deaf, where it still stands.



John Carlin
(Portrait of the young artist)

*He did not hear his mother at the door,
Nor pay attention to her scolding talk.
His hands were busy, sketching on the floor
Her comely face and form, enlined in chalk.*

*With arms akimbo, glancing down, she smiles,
Then half reluctant, scrubbed it with a mop.
He seemed so gifted, this unhearing child,
But such a mess! She wished that he would stop.
But stop he never did. His portraits graced.*

*The homes of merchant prince and diplomat.
The men, their ladies, crinolined and laced,
They looked alive now, painted as they sat.
One face among them (how his eyes attend!)
Is Laurent Clerc-his teacher, mentor, friend.*

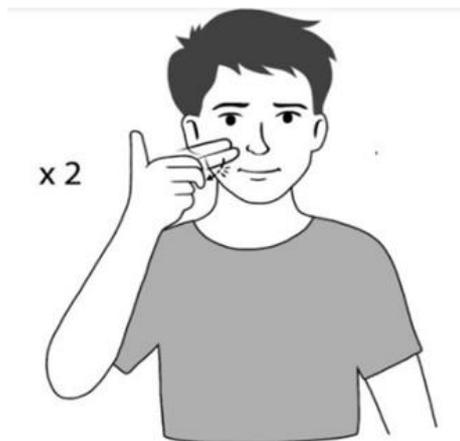
Loy E. Golladay, A is for Alice, poems of love and laughter, 1991

3 - Portrait of Laurent Clerc, 1815, ASD Archives

Oil portrait by an English artist when Laurent Clerc met Thomas H. Gallaudet. It shows a young Laurent Clerc, signing the letter C, the first letter of his last name. His name, in sign language (index and middle finger brushing the right cheek to the corner of the lips) comes from the scar on his face that he retained throughout his life. He is holding a stylus and a book representing his profession as a teacher. According to deaf historians, this is one of the first portraits of a deaf person to sign the initial of their name.



A young Laurent Clerc, signing the letter C
Oil portrait of an English artist



Laurent Clerc's name sign,
drawing by Thomas Tessier¹⁴

Source: *Language, Culture, Communities: 200 Years of Impact by the American School for the Deaf*, (2017

<http://www.injs-paris.fr/page/laurent-clerc-1785-1869>.

4 - Portrait of Thomas H. Gallaudet



Thomas H. Gallaudet posthumous oil painting (1851) by Georges F. Wright

¹⁴ Thomas Tessier: After studying visual arts at the University of Paris VIII, Thomas Tessier holds various positions, notably in communication agencies. Today, he works on many projects as a freelance illustrator, for publishing houses as well as for the press.

5 - Several portraits of Thomas H. Gallaudet and Laurent Clerc by Nancy Rourke¹⁵

The originality comes from the fact that Thomas H. Gallaudet was replaced by Laurent Clerc. Their fingers make the letter "C", the first letter common to their two last names. This brings them a little closer.

<http://www.nancyrourke.com/clercogswell.htm>

Laurent Clerc meets Alice (see Chapter 2)



Laurent Clerc and Alice
Painting inspired by the Gallaudet Statue

¹⁵ Nancy Rourke is an internationally known Deaf artist and activist. She is also a full-time professional artist, she does artist-in-residencies at Deaf schools and promotes De'VIA (Deaf View/Image Art) which is art that examines and expresses the Deaf experience from a cultural, linguistic, and intersectional point of view through art workshops in community settings. She is very involved implementing De'VIA art curriculum for Deaf children. She is a mural artist and had painted over 27 murals at Deaf schools nationwide. She had done her humanitarian aid to a Deaf school in Puerto Rico after Hurricane Maria. She taught De'VIA art in St. Petersburg, Russia, Paris, France and Canada. She had four paintings featured in the September issue 2018 Harper's Magazine. She had given several trauma art therapy workshops using De'VIA art for Deaf students. Nancy graduated from Rochester Institute of Technology with a Master of Fine Arts in Graphic Design and Painting. She resides in Loveland, Colorado.

<http://www.nancyrourke.com>

https://www.amazon.com/Nancy-Rourke-James-Van-Manen/dp/0985698268/ref=sr_1_1?dchild=1&keywords=Nancy+Rourke+Deaf+Artist&qid=1609357594&sr=8-1



Laurent Clerc
Young Laurent Clerc, 2010, Oil on canvas

James W Van Manen, *Nancy Rourke, Deaf Artist Series*. (Empyrean Press, 2014) p. 49.



Thomas H. Gallaudet, Dr Mason Cogswell and Laurent Clerc

This painting associates the three characters. It is surprising that at least Thomas H. Gallaudet and Laurent Clerc were not more represented together beforehand.

<http://www.nancyrourke.com/gallaudetkogswellclerc.htm>



Laurent Clerc

James W Van Manen, Ph.D.: *Nancy Rourke, Deaf Artist Series* (2014, empyreal Press) p. 55.

<http://nancyrourke.com/deafness.htm>

<https://www.nancyrourke.com/laurentclercinamerica.htm>

In the book, devoted to her by James W Van Manen, *Nancy Rourke, Deaf Artist Series*, (Empyreal Press, 2014) we can read at the very beginning of the Preface:

Nancy Rourke is currently one of the most recognizable and prolific deaf artists working in the De'VIA genre (Deaf / sight / image / art). Rourke's works show an immediately identifiable commitment to primary color compositions with some use of black and white. Yet his deepest wish is to speak the truth through visual expression. In addition, she worked to encourage other deaf people to visually express their observations, experiences and worldviews.

Patricia Durr, M.S. Associate Professor at the National Technical Institute for the Deaf / Rochester Institute of technology pp. viii-ix.



First Time Meet, Clerc and Cogswell at Table
<http://www.nancyrourke.com/clercandcogswellatatable.htm>



The Public Lecture, 1815 (Nancy Rourke 2010)
<http://www.nancyrourke.com/clercandcogswellatable.htm>

James W Van Manen, *Nancy Rourke, Deaf Artist Series*. (Empyrean Press, 2014) p. 48.

For detailed description, go to: nancyrourke.com/publiclecture.htm

The 9 people are: Abbé Sicard (long white hair), Jean Massieu (sitting on a red chair with a slate, signing “mind”), Laurent Clerc (signing “L’Education”), Armand Godard (young man aged between 18-21 sitting at the right end of the table), Duke of Orleans (sitting next to Laurent Clerc), Duke of Kent (bald and standing next to Duke of Orleans), Duchess of Wellington (sitting next to Massieu), Thomas H Gallaudet (holding the leaflet) and the mystery woman (sitting next to Godard).

De’VIA
<https://deaf-art.org/deaf-art/devia-posters/homage/>

6 - Painting by Ellen Mansfield¹⁶: The Diary of Laurent Clerc's Voyage



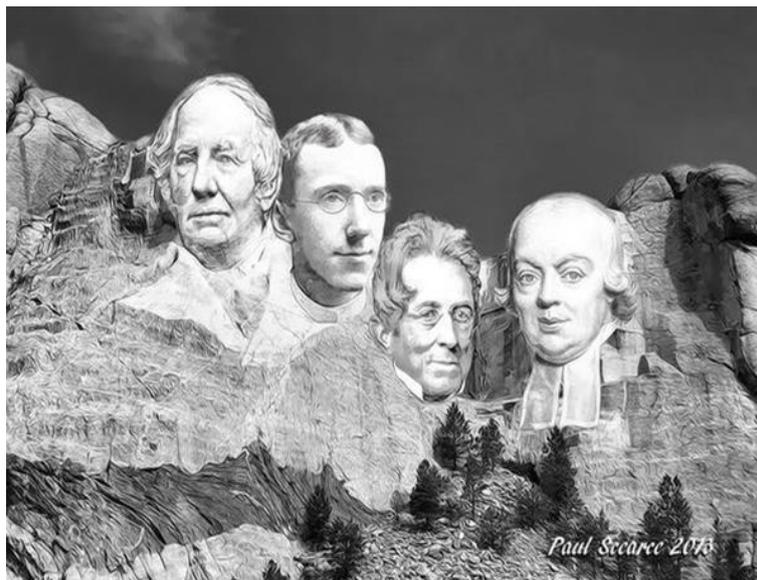
<https://deaf-art.org/profiles/ellen-mansfield/>

This artwork honors Laurent Clerc's anniversary of when he arrived in NYC on August 9, 1816. Clerc had been crossing the Atlantic on a ship from France for 52 days with Thomas H. Gallaudet.

The composition of the painting brings together a boat in the background, an alphabet on the right, and a portrait of Laurent Clerc on the foreground. The colors, grey and light blue with a beige touch, create a very soft atmosphere. The sailing ship, the smallest of the three pieces is a reminder of Laurent Clerc's voyage. It is at the back, already in the past. The alphabet is decorated, like ancient ones, but still present and hanging straight, ready to be used. As to Laurent Clerc, he is busy with a book, the very image of a learned man and teacher. There is a sort of arch shaped design at the back of his head, looking like a dark porch or door, or a mouse hole as a tiny mouse is perched on his right shoulder. Rumor has it that some mice were present in the sailing ship, not to please Laurent Clerc in particular! The artist includes some humor there. Laurent Clerc is crossing a threshold between two worlds. Maybe the dark arch like design above his head stands like a saint's halo: religious connotations have been attached to his name as he was seen as the "apostle of the deaf" in America. He is, definitely, here being associated with sign language.

¹⁶ Ellen Mansfield: Born Deaf in Manhattan, NY, Ellen survived many miserable years in school without sign language. Despite that, she earned a BFA in illustration from the School of Visual Arts in New York City. Ellen has led a life filled with art and experiences, using her background in drawing, painting, batik, ceramics, and many other media. When she moved to Maryland about 35 years ago, she began to recognize just how much her Deaf identity had always been part of her artwork. Life began to blossom as she became surrounded by Deaf culture and sign language, leading to increasingly colorful images in her work, including watercolors, oil paintings, ceramics and tile paintings in her artwork. Ellen owns Ellen's Tile Stroke Studio in Frederick, MD.

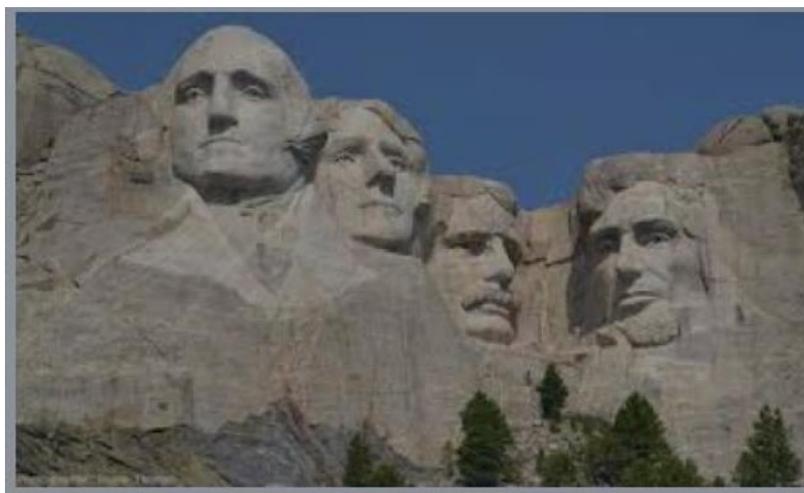
7 - Work by Paul Searce¹⁷



One of his famous works and Mt. Deafmore

The heads of Laurent Clerc, George W. Veditz, Thomas H. Gallaudet and Michel de L'Épée were sculpted on this mountain.

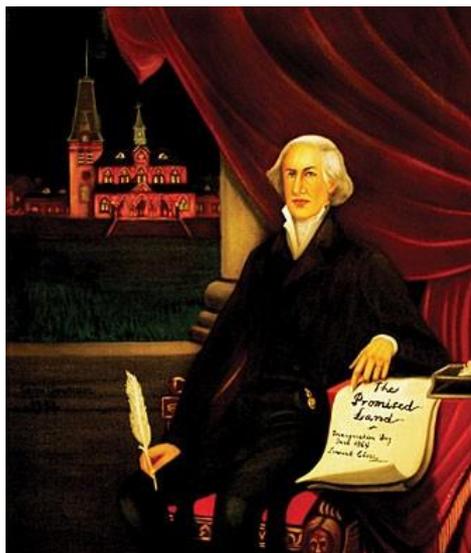
<https://www.pinterest.com/pin/379076493605380886/>



These four titanic Mount Rushmore sculptures, (18 meters high) carved directly into a cliff in the heart of the Black Hills in South Dakota, are the portraits of **U.S. presidents** George Washington, Thomas Jefferson, Theodore Roosevelt and Abraham Lincoln. This memorial consisting of a monumental granite sculpture was built between 1927 and 1941. It traces one hundred and fifty years of the country's history.

¹⁷ Paul Searce: digital artist and deaf photographer, born in 1969 in Chattanooga, Tennessee. He became deaf from meningitis. He was educated at the Washington School for the Deaf (WSD) from 77 to 80 in Vancouver, WA. After a chaotic and rebellious adolescence where he took up drugs and drinking, he was kicked out of his home and in 2014, photography saved his life. After obtaining his first digital SLR camera, he learned light painting, a photographic technique of moving a light source while taking a long exposure photo and began to create digital art and science fiction works and started being interested in deaf culture. He joined the DE VIA movement.

8 - Painting by Jean Boutcher: Laurent Clerc: Visit of the Promised Land



It's a very academic painting: the character is in a pose full of gravity, in front of a purple curtain. This is carefully studied. He holds a feather in his right hand and on his left is a sheet of paper bearing the inscription: "Promised land". It identifies the character, with that religious connotation ("promised land") which heightens his importance and recalls the titles of paintings. Except that here, the title is included in the painting.

This painting is imbued with stiffness and majesty, as befits the circumstances and the character's mission. The biblical reference ("promised land") can also be found in the title of the article by Loida R. Canlas: *Laurent Clerc Apostle to the Deaf People of the New World*. (Chap2, B 4)

<https://clerccenter.gallaudet.edu/national-resources/info/info-to-go/deaf-culture/laurent-clerc.html>

De'VIA <https://deaf-art.org/deaf-art/devia-posters/homage/>

9 - See also FOLDA site (Friends of Libraries for Deaf Action) ¹⁸

KIT FOLDA: *Laurent Clerc and Gallaudet University*, written and compiled in 1990's with Alice L. Hagemeyer.

This kit includes the following information materials and posters:

- (1) 8.5" x 11" Laurent Clerc: Apostle of the Deaf in America
- (2) Laurent Clerc: Some questions you might never have thought to ask
- (3) Why Gallaudet University would not have been possible without Laurent Clerc and Thomas H. Gallaudet
- (4) Gallaudet University: chronological chronology
- (5) The year that changed Kendall Green: Nineteen Fifty-Seven (1957)
- (6) American Gratitude (National Association of the Deaf)
- (7) Abbé Charles-Michel de l'Épée
- (8) Jean Boutcher, Deaf Artist of two posters: Clerc and Abbé**
- (9) Acknowledgments
- (10) Open letter to Dr. T. Alan Hurwitz, 10th president of the University Gallaudet and his response.

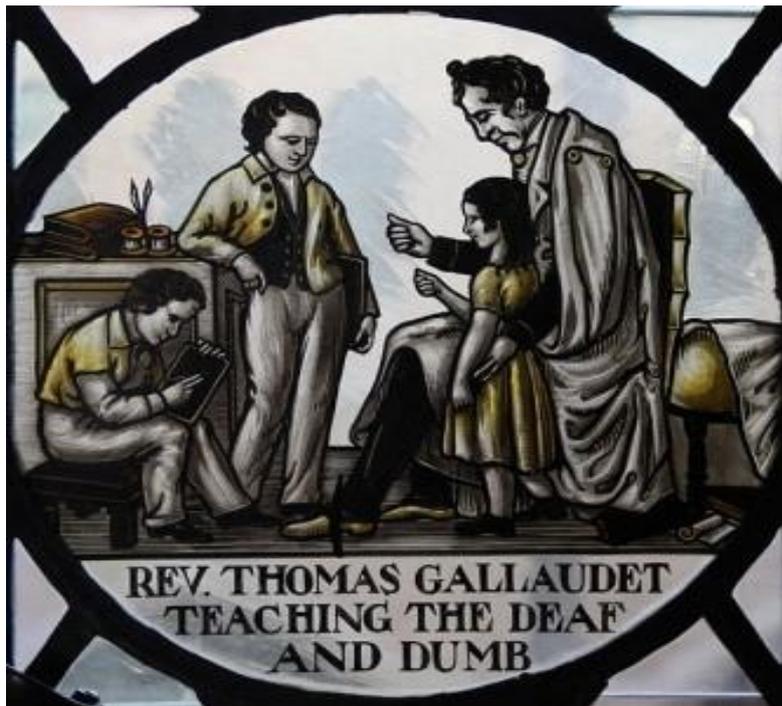
- (1) Poster: National month of the history of the deaf, from March 13 to April 15
- (2) Poster: Clerc-Gallaudet week, December 3-9
- (3) Poster: America deaf reads
- (4) Laurent Clerc poster and
- (5) Abbé de l'Épée poster.

¹⁸ About Library for Deaf Action: The Friends of Libraries for Deaf Action (FOLDA) was founded in 1986 by Alice L. Hagemeyer with her volunteers at the Washington D.C. Public Library. The FOLDA mission is to promote library access and quality Deaf cultural resources for the Deaf community, and for all, nationally and globally.

Alice Lougee Hagemeyer (born 1934) is a deaf American librarian who has worked to make libraries more accessible to deaf people. She graduated from Gallaudet University in 1957. From 1957 to 1991, she worked for the District of Columbia Public Library.

Many publications: <https://www.gallaudet.edu/about/history-and-traditions/alice-hagemeyer/>

C - Stained glass window



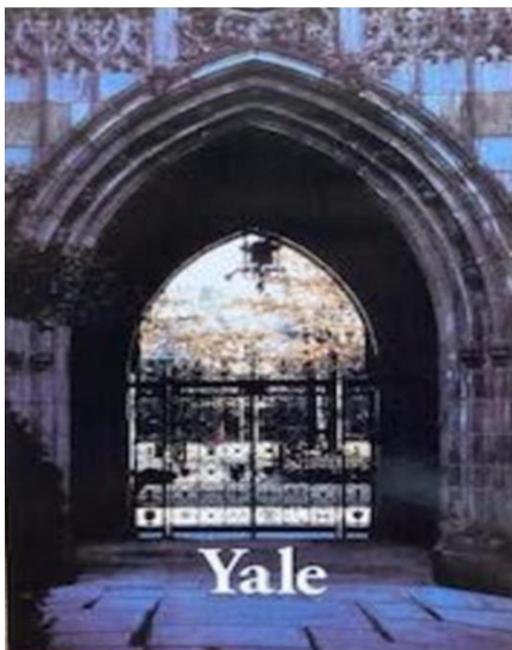
Rev. Thomas Gallaudet Teaching the Deaf and Dumb, stained glass window by G. Owen Bonawit¹⁹, Slavic Reading Room, Sterling Memorial Library, Yale University, c. 1930

Stained glass windows appeared in the Middle Ages with the building of cathedrals and churches. They were mainly windows to let the light in. But they also served as representations of Biblical figures and were telling stories of the life of religious figures that the Church wanted ordinary citizens to imitate. They had a pedagogical function at a time when most ordinary people were illiterate. Writings are very sparse on them, but the Saint's or main character's action designed on them should be clear, easily comprehensible and carry a moral lesson. Of course, some of them were decorating high windows, too high sometimes to be properly seen. The Church also wanted people to raise their heads and eyes as high as possible: physical elevation might lead to moral elevation as well, high above material contingencies. Church goers must reach some spiritual elevation, taking them closer to what should be their spiritual models or mentors. In many Catholic churches, walls are devoid of ornaments hanging within easy reach of viewers.

In this one, the message is clear: "Rev. Thomas H. Gallaudet", a church man, is teaching the "deaf and dumb", those "unfortunate" people as they were being called. Like a Christian apostle dispensing with his knowledge to elevate humble children. The master is gently holding a little girl who imitates his hand gesture to sign, in front of a boy who is standing up and following the lesson, whereas another one is reading a book. It's a very simple iconic representation of the teaching process and, beyond, of education. Education saves people and might save their souls as well: the Church's message is always very clear. The Church is part and parcel of the process of education, especially in ancient times when faith was nourished by basic certainties.

¹⁹ G. Owen Bonawit (1891-1971): his studio created thousands of stained-glass windows for Yale State University (887 items), Duke University, Northwestern and Southeastern Missouri State University, Connecticut College, Bethesda Episcopal Church in Palm Beach, Florida and private homes.

Yale University is definitely the right place to perpetuate this religious precept on education. Yale University is a private American university located in New Haven, Connecticut. Founded in 1701 to provide training for Congregationalist reverends, it is among the oldest institutions of higher learning in the United States.



Post Card, Photo by Thomas P. Benincas, Jr

Sunshine flooding the entrance to Bartlett Tower reminds scholars of Yale's motto: Lux et Veritas (Light and Truth).

Deaf teachers:

George Loring (1825)
Wilson Whiton (1825)

Fisher Spofford (1826)
John David (1831)
Edmund Booth (1832)

Yale teachers (Yale graduates):

Thomas Hopkins Gallaudet (1805)
William Woodbridge (1811)
Issac Orr (1818)
Lewis Weld (1818)
William Turner (1819)
Harvey Prindle Peet (1822)
Charles Rockwell (1826)
Elizur Washburn (1826)
David Bartlett (1828)

Frederick A.P. Barnard (1828)
Joseph Tyler (1829)
Samuel Porter (1829)
Luzerne Rae (1831)
Henry B. Camp (1831)
Collins Stone (1832)
Jared A. Ayres (1835)
Ebenezer B. Adams (1835)
Lucius Woodruff (1836)

Source: Edward, Rebecca A.R. *Words Made Flesh: Nineteenth-Century Deaf Education and the Growth of Deaf Culture*. New York University Press, 2014.

D - Objects: gifts or personal objects as exhibits and relics

Many gifts are items that the recipient can take home and they often end up in museum collections. They show the gratitude of the one who offers them; and there was a time when they were in silver, solid or not. Silver is, in the collective imagination, number two after gold, both in terms of value and rarity, but it remains a safe value. The pitchers and the “aiguyères” had a functional use, to serve water or wine. Over the years they have become decorative objects, in pewter, earthenware or glass.



Gallaudet University Archives

1 - The pitcher and the silver tray

Specially created and offered to Laurent Clerc by the deaf people of Connecticut in 1850. Thomas H. Gallaudet also received a similar gift.

The originality of these pitchers lies in their engraved inscription and makes them unique personalized and commemorative objects. They associate for posterity the name of the recipient and the person who gives them. Their value here may be more in the engraved message than in the material. It seals a belonging to a group whose singularity is recalled here, while emphasizing a strong emotional bond whose origin and strength have not been overlooked.

Here is the speech given on the occasion of the delivery of the pitchers and trays:

A CEREMONY of the highest interest to the former pupils of the American Asylum, and not to them only, but to all who took part in it, was observed at Hartford, on the twenty-sixth of September last. On that day, the Rev. Thomas H. GALLAUDET and Mr. LAURENT CLERC, gentlemen to whom the deaf and dumb of our whole country owe a debt of gratitude which they can never wholly discharge, received from some of those whom they had contributed to bring out of darkness into light. After due consultation, it was decided to procure a massive silver pitcher for Mr. GALLAUDET, and another of the same size and workmanship for Mr. CLERC—each pitcher to be accompanied by an appropriate salver. The articles, when finished, were exhibited at the Fair of the Massachusetts Mechanics Association in Boston where they attracted the admiring notice of all the visitors, as well from the beauty

of their workmanship, as the pleasant purpose for which they were made. We extract the following description of them from the Hartford Courant.

Upon one side of the pitchers is an engraved scene, representing Mr. GALLAUDET going to France in the year 1817, to induce Mr. CLERC to come to America to instruct the deaf and dumb. There are figures of the gentlemen, and ships and waves illustrating the passage across the ocean. The building of the Hartford Institution is likewise represented. On the other side is seen a picture of the interior of the school, with teacher and pupils and apparatus. In front and between these scenes, is the head of the Abbe SICARD, of Paris, the instructor of Messrs. GALLAUDET and CLERC, and said to be a correct likeness. On the necks of the pitchers are chased the different coats of arms of all the New England States; and on the handles are representations of mute cupids, and also closed hands, indicating the sign of the mutes for the first letter of the alphabet.

The inscriptions are as follows.

On the pitcher designed for Mr. GALLAUDET, is engraved:

*PRESENTED TO
REV. THOMAS H. GALLAUDET
FIRST PRINCIPAL OF THE AMERICAN ASYLUM,
AS A TOKEN OF GRATEFUL
RESPECT, BY THE DEAF-MUTES OF NEW ENGLAND.
MOVED BY COMPASSION FOR THE UNFORTUNATE
DEAF AND DUMB OF HIS COUNTRY, HE DEVOTED HIMSELF TO
THEIR WELFARE AND PROCURED FOR THEM THE BLESSINGS OF
EDUCATION.
HARTFORD, CONN. SEPT 26TH, 1850.*

On the salver:

*TO, REV, THOMAS H. GALLAUDET,
FROM HIS FRIENDS, THE DEAF-MUTES OF NEW ENGLAND.
HARTFORD, CONN. SEPT. 26TH, 1850.*

On the pitcher designed for Mr. Clerc, was engraved:

*OFFERED TO LAURENT CLERC, A. M.
AS A PLEDGE OF GRATEFUL RESPECT
BY THE DEAF MUTE OF NEW ENGLAND.
LOVING HIS KIND, HE LEFT FRANCE IN 1816 TO PROMOTE THE EDUCATION
AND WELL-BEING OF FOREIGNERS TO WHO, LIKE HIMSELF, HAS BEEN
REFUSED THE GIFT OF THE WORD.
HARTFORD, CONN., SEPT. 26th, 1850.*

On the tray:

*TO LAURENT CLERC, A.M
FROM HIS FRIENDS, THE DEAF AND MUTE OF NEW ENGLAND,
HARTFORD, CONN., SEPT. 26th, 1850.*

Source: *American Annals of the Deaf*, Vol. 3, No. 1 (October, 1850), pp. 41-64.

In the video presentation of the exhibition [*Culture, Communities: 200 years of Impact by The American School for the Deaf* (2017), p. 63], here is what is said (in ASL and voice-over by the interpreter) in English:

In this display case is a silver pitcher. It was one of the two pitchers that the students had offered to Thomas H. Gallaudet and Laurent Clerc. The one shown here belongs to Thomas H. Gallaudet, we don't know where Laurent Clerc's one is. Next to the pitcher is a silver tray, a gift offered to Laurent Clerc.

<https://www.asd-1817.org/about/history--Cogswell-Heritage-House>

Offering gifts as tokens of Friendships. In 1917 When Henri Gaillard visited Hartford to celebrate the centenary of the ASD, at the Banquet, the toast maker pronounced this speech:

Gentlemen,

I am charged by the American deaf to present to your principal delegate this symbol of esteem which we offer to the deaf of France in commemoration of the centenary celebration of the founding of the first school for the deaf in Hartford. Kindly accept it.

Mr. Michael Lapidès then presented Henri Gaillard with a case containing a pure gold medal engraved with a likeness of T. H. Gallaudet on the one side, and a statement on his life's work on the other. A tiny sapphire, diamond, and ruby, the colors of France, were set in the upper part of the medal, which was strung on a tricolor ribbon. The presentation was applauded. Moved, Henri Gaillard expressed his thanks and stated that the medal would be turned over to the planned Deaf Center in Paris, where in the future the American deaf who visited the French capital would be able to find a token of the century-long friendship of their fathers for their brethren in the country of Laurent Clerc.

Henri Gaillard, *Henri Gaillard in Deaf America*, 1917, chap Banquets, Gallaudet University Press, 2002.

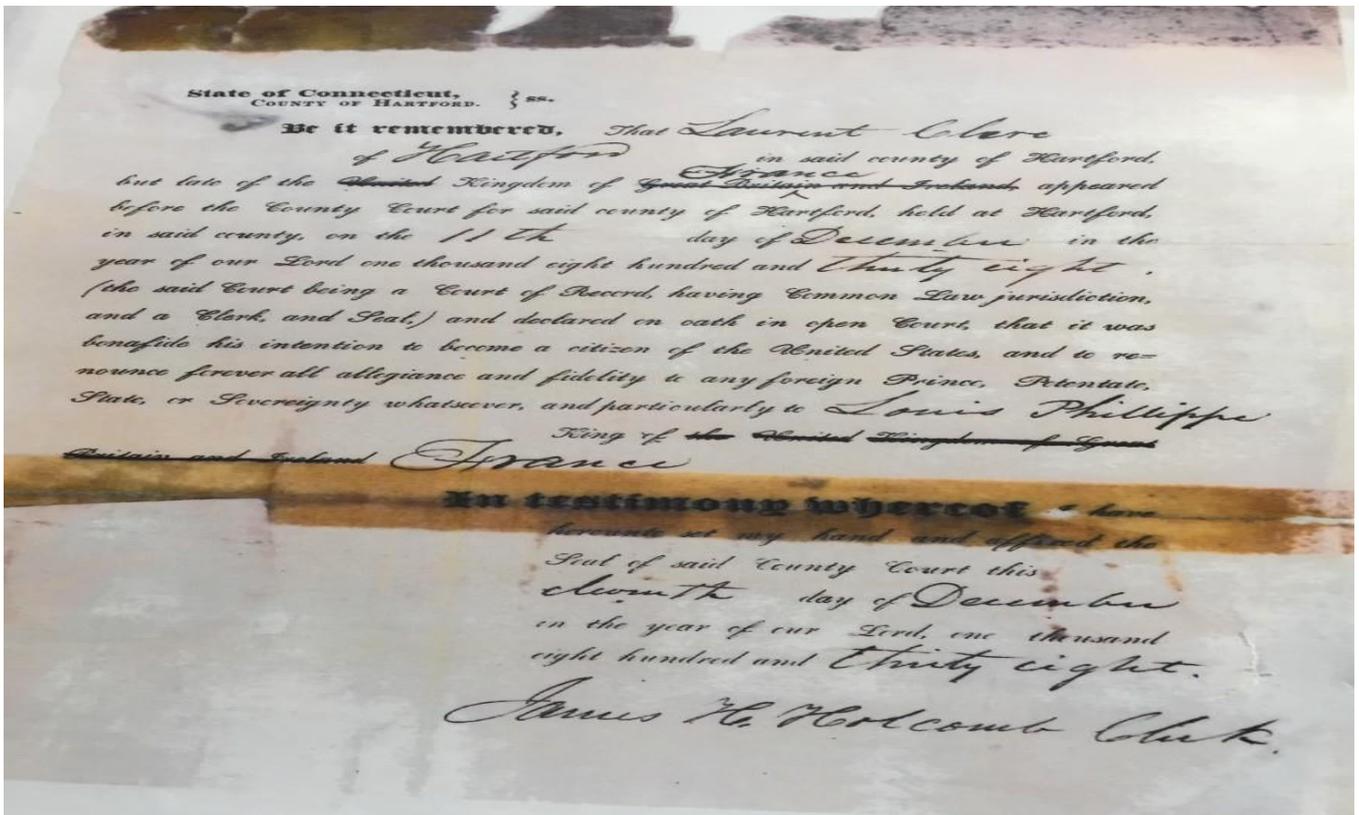
2 - Collectibles / artifacts

The exhibition, in honor of the 200th anniversary of ASD (an exhibition in partnership with the Connecticut Historical Society) shows a large number of objects: (letters, cards, facsimiles, posters, photos, registration registers of students). Take a guided tour through the website whose link is underneath. It is a dive into the culture and history of the Deaf community:

<https://www.thehistorylist.com/events/language-culture-communities-200-years-of-impact-by-the-american-school-for-the-deaf-hartford-connecticut>

Two samples:

- ✓ Letter (facsimile) - (December 11, 1838) about Laurent Clerc's intention to become an American Citizen



Document concerning the application for American citizenship at Hartford County Court, December 11, 1838 denouncing allegiance to France. Cogswell Museum ASD private collection.

"... and declared on oath in open Court, that it was bonafide his intention to become a citizen of the United States, and to renounce forever all allegiance and fidelity to any foreign Prince, Potentate, State, or Sovereignty whatsoever, and particularly to Louis Philippe, king of France".

✓ Momentos

On September 19, 1874, on the occasion of the unveiling of the memorial to Laurent Clerc, The Hartford Current reported:

An eloquent oration was delivered on the occasion by President Denison of the Columbia Institute of Washington. And he gives this information: "Mr. Francis J. Clerc brought to the Asylum a number of documents relating to important incidents in his father's life which were placed on exhibition in the reading room.

"Mementos" are mainly notebooks used to remind the owner of important facts, names, events. In the book about the Exhibition organized jointly by Connecticut Historical Society and the ASD, under the Spanish heading "Momentos" (Spanish for mementos) some personal belongings are gathered.

Laurent Clerc's watch, an autographed card, a shaving box, a Daguerreotype image of Laurent Clerc, a Brass nameplate "Eliza C. Clerc", Thomas H. Gallaudet's carpet bag, 1821, Gallaudet's Bible and Daguerreotypes of Thomas and Sophie Gallaudet can be seen on pages 21 and 44 of ASD's *Language, Culture, Communities: 200 Years of Impact by the American School for the Deaf*.

3 - Postage stamps and envelopes

To go from monumental memorials (commemorative monuments) to the smallest objects showing historical figures, let's turn to philately and to those who were keen to make a collection from the Post Office data.

Stamps carry with them a certain amount of information associated with a portrait of an important figure or some other decorative elements, even if they were indirect taxes first and foremost. Portraits of kings or queens are largely represented on stamps: by traveling all around the country, and abroad, they contribute to disseminate their power as rulers of the country. When the figures are not politicians, they might be famous people in the field of music, literature, sciences. In all cases, international regulations want the name of the country to be written in the Latin universal alphabet. With the exception of Great Britain: on their stamps there is only the kings or queen's effigy. The American stamp underneath (emitted on January 2019) is immediately recognizable with the Union flag.

And France's motto "Liberty, Equality, brotherhood", is a signature identified the world over.



American stamp



French stamp



Stamp Abbé de l'Épée
(to support
the Red Cross' actions)



Thomas H. Gallaudet's stamp



British stamp



Itard – L'enfant sauvage' s
stamp



American stamp



Deaf American sign language 1993

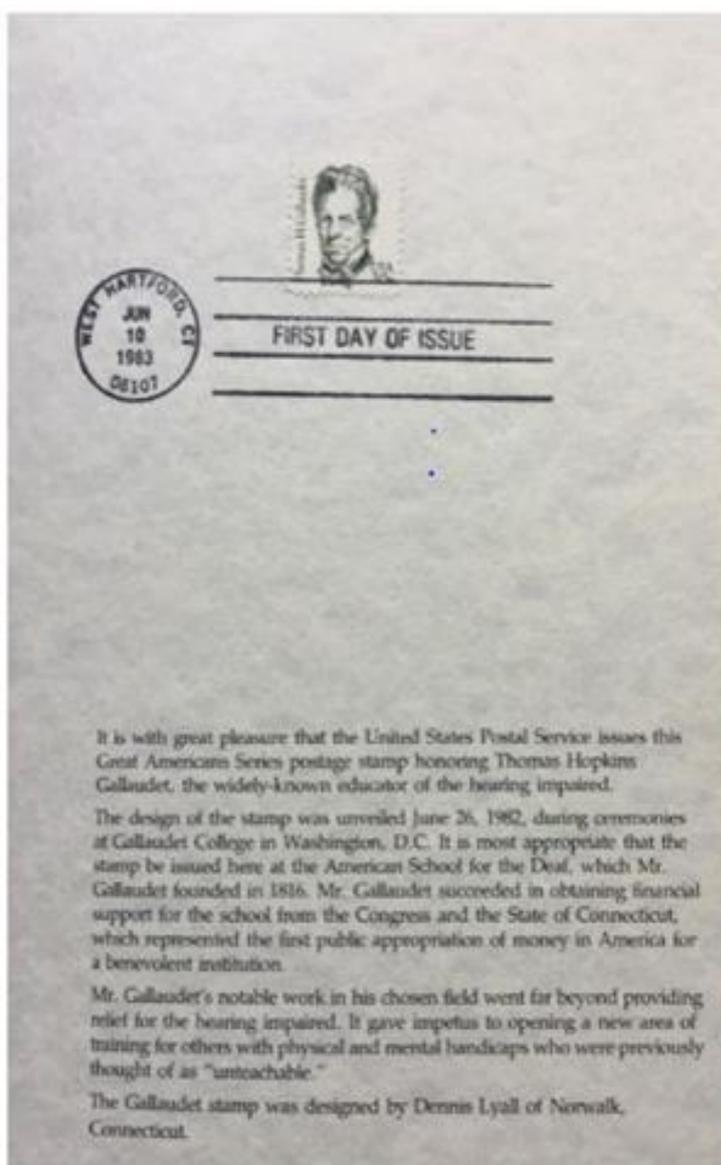
A stamp album has been offered by the French Ministry of Postal Services to his American counterpart as a sign of the Franco-American friendship with stamps celebrating the American Legion and the American Constitution, but also famous paintings and stamps issued for the European Council.

Laurent Clerc has not yet been honored by a stamp, despite numerous requests (9, 669 petitions and personal letters at the end of January 2021):

<https://web.archive.org/web/20000612205048fw/>
<http://members.aol.com/geoski7/clerc/clerc.html>
https://postalmuseum.si.edu/object/npm_1999.2004.180

A current 20-cent stamp in honor of Thomas Hopkins Gallaudet, was issued on June 10, 1983, in West Hartford, Connecticut with a ceremony at ASD. It was part of a series of stamps launched in 1980 bearing the image of Outstanding Americans.

https://postalmuseum.si.edu/object/npm_1999.2004.180



1983, US Postal Service

On the following website, Yves Delaporte²⁰ gives a historical perspective on “Stamps and the Deaf”:

<http://www.2-as.org/site/index.php?cat=phila&page=philatelie>

One can also visit the web site below to watch a video where Kenneth Rothchild, the great international deaf stamp collector browses his collection of stamps dedicated to people or events of deaf culture:

[Kenneth Rothschild Collects Deaf Stamps From Around The World - YouTube](#)

For a stamped cover, go to:

<http://collectpostmarks.com/gallery/category/history-and-regional-postmarks/gallaudet-cogswell-hearing-world/>



We can see an elliptical cutout of the Thomas and Alice statue from the Gallaudet University Campus, associated to a line that the Rev. Jesse Jackson²¹ included in his letter of support to the students (March, 9th, 1988):

The problem is not that the students do not hear. The problem is that the hearing world does not listen.

There is a Thomas Hopkins Gallaudet stamp from the Great Americans series (1861) and one of the two stamps from the American Sign Language issue.

²⁰ Yves Delaporte is an ethnologist and honorary director of research at the CNRS. For twenty years, he has studied Lappish culture, publishing several works such as *Le regard de l'éleveur de rennes* [The reindeer herder's gaze] and *Le vêtement lapon* [Lappish clothing] Since 1994, he has been building an anthropology of surdi mutité and gestural languages. In *Les sourds, c'est comme ça* (2002), he described the cultural productions linked to the deaf experience of the world. With Armand Pelletier, he published in the Terre Humaine collection the story *Moi, Armand, né sourd et muet* (2002), the second part of which, *La question sourde*, retraces the history of relations between the deaf and the hearing. Today, he is exploring a new scientific field, the evolution of signed languages: *Dictionnaire étymologique et historique de la langue des signes française* (2007), [A historical and etymological dictionary of American Sign Language] (with Emily Shaw, 2015). He collects unknown signed dialects in the field, such as those of the girls' district of Chambéry (2012), of Clermont-Ferrand (2020) or of Nogent-le-Rotrou (2021). His long investigations in all the provinces of the "land of the deaf" have earned him the gestural name "He who takes notes". (Many publications: see General Bibliography).

²¹ Jesse Jackson: Jesse Louis Jackson (born October 8, 1941 and died November 2017) is an American political activist, Baptist pastor, and politician. He ran for the Democratic presidential nomination in 1984 and 1988, and was a shadow US Senator from the District of Columbia from 1991 to 1997.

E - Literary works

1 - Poetry

The actions of Laurent Clerc and Thomas H. Gallaudet have also passed down to posterity through writings dedicated to them. Monuments, artefacts can be seen only on places where they have been erected or collected. Literature has been published, and, with modernity bringing technological and digital advances, it is now easily available in libraries online. Many data are at the disposal of all, more particularly researchers the world over.

Let us first quote this poem, written by a former student of an Institution for the Deaf, **Stephen W. Kosiar**. By directly apostrophizing Laurent Clerc, these verses pay a living and moving tribute to his human qualities while establishing some close, almost direct, relationship. We follow the journey metaphor attached to Laurent Clerc, as well as the prisoners images representing Deaf-mutes. The last line stresses his name together with three words epitomizing his status in his former student's memory.

*Forsaken of your friends and native land,
You came to guide our cause-great Servitor!
And in our deep and dark imprisonment,
We hailed you, Clerc-a stranger to our shore.*

*Your heart was steeped in cause of humankind.
You came as one heroic volunteer
To free us from the gall. We know full well
How heart of yours came reaching to us here.*

*You helped us break the fetters of the mind.
You guided us with gestures eloquent
To make us sense and comprehend. And, lo,
Our hands became a speaking instrument!*

*We welcomed you a stranger when you came
To serve and lead us through the trying tide.
And now we cherish you-and evermore-
O Clerc, our benefactor, friend and guide!*

Let's consider another one, dedicated to Thomas H Gallaudet, by **Laura C. R. Searing**, a deaf war correspondent, writer and poet ("Howard Glyndon"), of California.

It is longer, as it unrolls several metaphors blending the material with the spiritual, and gives more amplitude to religious ones. The tone is definitely respectful as the stanzas also carry much gratitude toward "the Lord" (God) who must be thanked for sending prisoners (the Deaf mutes) such a prodigious savior. The scene is dramatized as Thomas H. Gallaudet addresses them to arouse their courage. The poetic craft is at work here to provide a living scene of some intensity. The father-daughter relationship with Alice, at first lightly suggested, reaches a climax in the last but one stanza when "thou, Father of us all!" encompasses all his children and their gratitude. It is encapsulated further in the metonymic and particularly fine phrase "mutely reverent eye".

*Go where glory waits,
Was less than naught to him.
He sought the souls whose day was dark,
Whose eyes with tears were dim*

*And yet his glory rests secure
In many a grateful mind,
First blessed by him with knowledge sweet,
And linked unto its kind.*

*They lay in prison, speechless, poor,
Unhearing thralls of Fate,
Until he came and said "Come out!
It is not yet too late!"*

*He came, and lifted up, and spoke,
He set them in the sun.
The great good work goes on and on
That was by him begun.*

*And in this bronze he lives again,
But more within each heart,
To which he said, "Be of good cheer,
Let loneliness depart."*

*We lift the veil, and see how Art
Has fixed his likeness there.
And placed beside him one whose life
He lifted from despair.*

*She stands there as the type of those
To whom he gave his all.
Whose sorrows touched him, till his love
Went out beyond recall!*

*Ah, well it was, that little light
Was fostered by the Lord!
Ah, well it was, he loved the child
And felt her fate was hard!*

*Ah, well it was, he turned himself
Unto that speechless woe,
Which made the world a lonely road?
One hundred years ago!*

*Rest here, thou. semblance of our Friend,
The while the world goes by?
Rest here, upon our College green,
Beneath the bending sky!*

*Remain, and bless the chosen work
That found its source in thee
'Tis through thy love that we, thy sons,
Are happy, strong, and free.*

*Rest here, thou Father of us all!
And when we pass the eye,
Twill be with bared head -and heart,
And mutely reverent eye.*

*Thank God he gave thee unto us
To free us from our woe,
And put the key into thy hand
One hundred years ago!*

Laura C.R. Searing

The poem below is dedicated to Laurent Clerc's courage. It is a **Shakespearean Sonnet** (with 14 lines) with a rhyming couplet at the end, making a neat conclusion to the 3 quatrains. Its regular rhyming pattern a b, a b : c d, c d : e f, e f : g g (the rhyming 'concluding' couplet) draws together "land" and "grand", evocative of America, whereas the first quatrain, which is about his youth and fire accident, conjures up a pleasant scenery imbued with a soft loving atmosphere with the baby's presence and the lulling music of his mother's voice.

Thus, between the first and the third quatrain, it's Laurent Clerc's whole life, which is spanned, from safety to adventure and his "spirit" (title) of courage is enhanced in the line." He did not flinch to face that far, strange land.

There is a moral to his story, as in ancient fables:

*Who by example and precept has taught
That obstacle, when faced, dissolve to naught.*

The poet, a teacher himself, can very humbly dedicate this moral to all students, while paying homage to Laurent Clerc, the "Master Teacher".

The Spirit of Laurent Clerc

*Fever and fire had scarred his baby cheek,
And burned away sweet scent of flower and tree.
The music of his mother's voice grew weak,
Grew silent.*

*All his life he was to be
Striving to bring the light to those like he
Whose ears were closed.*

*Then came a man to seek
The Master Teacher, who could ease the bleak
And soundless lives beyond the Western Sea.
He did not flinch to face that far, strange land.*

*And we who hear not, count him with us still
Who showed us how, beyond each barren hill,
Life's vistas beckon toward a scene more grand.
Who by example and precept has taught?
That obstacle, when faced, dissolve to naught.*

Poet Loy E. Golladay

A native Virginian, Loy Golladay²², was deafened by spinal meningitis at age 8. He attended West Virginia School for the Deaf and Blind in Romney and entered Gallaudet College when he was only 15. After graduating in 1934, he returned to WVSDB to teach. In 1941, he became editor-owner-publisher of the Cass County Tribune in Wells Fargo, North Dakota. In 1942, he moved to Connecticut, teaching at ASD and editing its publication, *The American Era*, for 20 years. He earned master's degrees from Gallaudet in 1942 and the University of Hartford in 1957, and a doctorate from Gallaudet in 1981. After NTID opened in 1969, Bob Panara recruited him to teach English. During his 15-year stint at NTID, he won several awards, including the coveted Eisenhart Award for Outstanding Teaching (1976). He retired in 1984, a popular, even legendary teacher. He was also a fine poet and storyteller, with a great sense of humor.

https://www.deafpeople.com/history/history_info/golladay.html

2 - Public and private testimonies

2-1 Public homages

Orations or public addresses at the opening of international congresses of the Deaf are common occurrences and might justify an anthology. Both Thomas H. Gallaudet and Laurent Clerc have been labelled "benefactors, saviors". The most recurrent words or phrases are the following:

Thomas H. Gallaudet: praised for his "devotion, generosity, Christian character, noble mind, self-sacrifice, courage, humility", culminating in Edmund Booth's remarks at the Third Convention of the National Association of the Deaf: "Of all the 25 or 30 teachers in the first 30 years of the High School, Thomas H. Gallaudet nearly approached the stamp of Jesus Christ". His being a religious man accounts for many religious connotations attached to his name.

Laurent Clerc: much appreciated, but less in the fore. He forces admiration for his "courage, self-sacrifice, sympathy" and all the human qualities and competences of an excellent teacher. On the last day of the 7th Convention of the National Association of the Deaf in Saint Louis, Missouri, in August 1906, called "Gallaudet Day", in his President's address, Dr. Smith reminded the audience that Laurent Clerc must not be forgotten as he has "qualities of judgement, foresight and courage".

He was of the type of Melancthon, Socrates, Howard, Florence Nightingale, Clara Barton, and Father Oberlin. The world needs storms, hurricanes now and then, and perhaps tornadoes. Mahomet, the first Napoleon, Cromwell, were of that class in the moral and mental world. Mahomet destroyed idolatry and substituted Allah il Allah. Napoleon and Cromwell shattered serfdom and the idea of the divine right of kings. Thomas H. Gallaudet and the others named above were the sunshine, the gentle rain and the dew, that brought forth and promoted growth of the intelligence and the better nature of man. He was of earnest nature, but he was not an ascetic. Genuine kindness, an ever-active intelligence and love of humor, were his leading traits. This last quality displayed itself even on his death-bed. Holding in his hands the certificate of an honorary degree just received from Oberlin College, he remarked that "it came just in time not to be too late." He was so like Father Oberlin that it was proper this honor should come from a college bearing

²² Loy E Golladay (27 Feb 1914-18 August 1999), was the first deaf Professor Emeritus for NTID. He retired from RIT in 1984 after joining the faculty in 1969. He was named RIT Outstanding Staff Member and Staff Humanitarian and was honored with RIT's Eisenhart Award for Outstanding Teaching in 1976. Golladay's career in education spanned more than 45 years.

the name. In short of all the twenty-five or thirty teachers in the first thirty years of the Hartford school, Thomas H. Gallaudet most nearly approached the stamp of Jesus Christ.

Edmund Booth, Oration, Proceedings of Third National Convention of the National Association of the Deaf, June 1889. Edmund Booth of Iowa completed ASD, class of 1832.

2-2 Private homages are equally valuable and moving

In addition to the poems in the Poetry section above, the following ones are worth reading:

- ✓ Edmund Booth, one of Thomas H. Gallaudet's earlier students:

Edmund was impressed with Gallaudet's ability to read the expressions on his students' faces. During their first encounter outside the school, Gallaudet had challenged him with the word accumulate, and he knew immediately that it was a word with which the young deaf boy was not familiar. Edmund described Gallaudet as a man of quick-temper, never in a passion, and who was governed by love, reason and earnest persuasion. He was not born to command but to persuade, and yet to be always in the right. This lack of self-assertion left teachers to act much as they pleased...Genuine and kindly benevolence, active mentality in the perceptive and reflective sense, sincere friendship, and a love of humor where humor was not inappropriate, these were his leading characteristics...Now and then, but rarely, I have seen his face deeply saddened.

Harry G. Lang, *Edmund Booth: Deaf Pioneer*, Gallaudet University Press, 2009

- ✓ Written by Martin Dayan, a Deaf French student at Gallaudet University (2008-2013) :

In France, some deaf people told me «Deaf history is important, we must fight to keep track of it, etc...". I didn't really understand, even though I had heard of the Abbé de l'Épée and Laurent Clerc. But there were hardly any celebrations for them in France, even for Bébien or other famous Deaf people.

From my first days in Gallaudet, my view changed: L'Abbé de l'Épée (to a lesser extent) and especially Laurent Clerc are honored through statues or the naming of some buildings like a dormitory and an elementary school after Laurent Clerc.

At the Gallaudet bookstore, one can find many books retracing the deaf history, and the names of Laurent Clerc and the Abbé de l'Épée are mentioned many times. Including in the library.

In American history and Deaf culture classes, the professor talked about it a lot. It was thanks to him that I finally understood the impact of the Abbé de l'Épée and Laurent Clerc on the development of sign language in the world. We can say that ASL is the daughter of LSF since ASL is made up of 60% old LSF and 40% regional American Sign Language.

(For testimonies of American students, see end of chapter 3)

- ✓ By Berthier (French Deaf teacher at the Paris school and former student of Laurent Clerc) who wrote a biography on Laurent Clerc. His testimony is particularly laudatory:

None of the negative characteristics attributed to Massieu can be found in the few pages Berthier devotes to Laurent Clerc. Indeed, Berthier writes, “he possessed qualities that Massieu did not: polished manners, politeness, an engaging personality, and a knack for choosing good company. He was in these respects the opposite of his schoolmate.” Clerc was especially adept at analyzing and conveying complex concepts: his definitions of the terms mind, matter, reason, judgment, and ingenuousness, for example, are shown to be superior to those offered by Massieu. Berthier goes on to chronicle Clerc’s departure for America with the Reverend Thomas Hopkins Gallaudet and his success in the United States. Highlighting that brief section is a report, included in its entirety, on the establishment and progress of the school for the deaf in Hartford, Connecticut, which was founded by Gallaudet with Clerc’s assistance.

This report was presented to the Institute when Clerc visited to Paris from the US for the first time.

<http://gupress.gallaudet.edu/bookpage/FDEbookpage.html>

<http://gupress.gallaudet.edu/excerpts/FDEtoc.html>

(translated and edited by Freeman G. Henry).

✓ By John Hotchkiss

He wrote a memoir of Laurent Clerc when he was a student at ASD and met Clerc on his daily walk. He described what Laurent Clerc looked like. He also told the story of his "lecture" at ASD to deaf students about the importance of writing carefully --- "Living to eat" and "eating to live" have different semantics.

John Hotchkiss became the first deaf professor (literature and English) at the National College for the Deaf.

<p>ASD T. Gallaudet & L. Clerc Tributes</p> <p>April 21, 2017 (scanned)</p>  <p>John Hotchkiss, alumnus of the Connecticut Asylum for the Education and Instruction of Deaf and Dumb Persons (American School for the Deaf) and professor at the National Deafmute College (Gallaudet University), told many great stories about Laurent Clerc in the important 1913 NAD film “Memories of Old Hartford.” There are no films of Laurent Clerc, since moving pictures were invented after his death, making Hotchkiss’ visual testimony of what</p>	<p>Clerc looked-like, walked-like, taught-like, and thought-like priceless.</p> <p>This clip from Hotchkiss’ “Memories of Old Hartford” explain how an elderly Clerc was admiring the plinth monument that was erected at ASD in Thomas Gallaudet’s memory and Clerc’s response when asked if a monument should be established in his memory. Clerc replied that he really didn’t know about that but that if such a monument was to be made he would like it to be erected near the one honoring T. Gallaudet for as in life they worked together so after death may they be remembered together. Years later the Deaf community raised funds (\$3,000 – note how Hotchkiss signs the word for \$ as a coin in the palm of the hand) to have a bronze bust of Clerc made and placed it where he had specified. (Note the monument honoring Thomas Gallaudet no longer exists but the bas-relief of Thomas Gallaudet teaching (designed by Deaf artist – John Carlin and sculpted by</p>	<p>Mr. Argenti in 1854 for the south panel of the original Gallaudet monument) was salvaged. (see below the video box). The monument itself was designed by Deaf artist Albert Newsam, a teacher of Carlin’s. (see below the video box for info on Newsam and Carlin’s work on the Thomas Gallaudet’s monument and a detail of Newsam in an artwork by Nancy Rourke. The bronze bust monument honoring Laurent Clerc remains at ASD)</p> 
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<https://handeyes.wordpress.com>

ASD T. Gallaudet § L. Clerc Tributes

He told many stories about Laurent Clerc in a 1913 film "Memories of Old Hartford". He explains that Laurent Clerc would have liked to be commemorated by a monument erected alongside the monument in honor of T. Gallaudet.

<https://handeyes-wordpress-com.translate.goog/2017/04/21/asd-t-gallaudet-l-clerc-tributes/>

3 - Theatre

In *Laurent Clerc: a Profile*, published by Dawnsign Press, Gilbert Eastman²³ (1934-2006) pays homage to Laurent Clerc:

The deaf Frenchman who left behind his native land to establish the first school for American deaf children. The play sensitively depicts Clerc's sacrifices in deciding to immigrate, joining Thomas Hopkins Gallaudet on a teaching mission that would alter both men's lives and the lives of generations of deaf children and their families.

Published by Dawnsign Press, 1974

The play takes place in Paris (June 13, 1816), then in Hartford (November 13, 1818; March 18, 1819) and features the main characters, including Eliza, the future wife of Laurent Clerc. Divided between returning to France at the end of his contract and staying in America, he chooses to stay to marry Eliza.

The play exposes the concerns of Sicard, who fears that Laurent Clerc will stray from the Catholic religion, the admiration of his students, including Alice, and the religious veneration he arouses: "He reminds me of Moses. He led his people to the promised land. Clerc leads us to the promised land". And some stereotypes: "For Americans Paris is a place of perdition, while for Parisians there are Indians in America". It is strongly emphasized that whatever happens is part of the designs of Providence and that it is "the will of God".

Video of the play: Gallaudet University Theater Arts presents: *Laurent Clerc: A Profile*, part one, part 2, part 3.

<https://media.gallaudet.edu/tag/tagid/gilbert%20eastman>

Laurent Clerc wrote the Preface to the Play *Deaf or Dumb or the Abbé de l'Épée*, written by the French Bouilly²⁴ and he had it performed in Hartford, Connecticut, to help raise funds for the American School for the Deaf.

An annual Deaf-Mute banquet was organized with a selection of live characters. While dinner was served, these characters visited each table and explained their significance in Deaf History. Some examples of the characters involved were Ferdinand Berthier, founder of the Deaf Mute banquets;

²³ Gilbert Eastman is a founding member of the National Theatre of the Deaf and was affiliated with the Gallaudet University Drama Department for over 25 years until his retirement. He has directed many students deaf and explored existing signs. He wrote *Sign me Alice* (inspired by *My fair Lady*) and *Sign Me Alice II*. And *Laurent Clerc: A Profile*, an emotional play about the deaf Frenchman who sacrificed his personal life to lay the foundation for deaf education in the United States by cooperating with Thomas H. Gallaudet.

²⁴ Jean-Nicolas Bouilly (24 January 1763 – 14 April 1842) was a French playwright, librettist, children's writer, and politician of the French Revolution.

This play (first performance on December 14th, 1799) is important as it represents deaf people as intelligent and capable people, far from the stereotyped image of idiots.

Laurent Clerc, the first known Deaf teacher in the United States; Jean Massieu, the first Deaf teacher at the Institut National de Jeunes Sourds de Paris; Pierre Desloges, a Deaf writer who published the first book in defense of sign language; Émile Mercier, a Deaf winemaker from Champagne; Theodore, Count of Solar, the Deaf orphan; Frédéric Peysson, a Deaf artist who painted Last Moments of the Abbé de l'Épée; and Marie Pierre Pelissier, who was a Deaf teacher and writer at the Institut National de Jeunes Sourds de Paris.

Some examples of themes are celebrating 200 years of sign language, celebrating the 90th birth anniversary of Andrew Foster, a Deaf African American who established deaf schools in Africa and Deaf African Americans, the 100th anniversary of the preservation of ASL film developed by George Veditz, and others. Other themes also celebrated were 25 years of deaf art and Arnaud Ballards flag.

Telling Deaf lives: Agents of changer by Diana Moore and Joan Naturale, last chapter: "*Finding hidden treasures: Research help in the Library and Archives*". *Telling Deaf Lives: Agents of Change*, édité by Kristin Snoddon, Gallaudet University Press, 2014. ProQuest eBook Central, <http://ebookcentral.proquest.com/lib/rit/detail.action?docID=3010933>
Created from rit le 2021-03-01 10:55:08.

F - Films and videos

1 - Films

Laurent Clerc:

film by James R De Bee

Documentaries on Laurent Clerc at Berkeley University:

When the Mind Hears. (Series)

When the Mind Hears: An Interview with Harlan Lane is an in-depth interview with the author of the book *When the Mind Hears*. Some of the topics discussed include information that Harlan gathered doing his research but did not or could not include in the book, personal insights and observations, and implications for the present and future. c1995. 55 min.

My New Family. In this film the story of the childhood and education of Laurent Clerc, a pioneer of deaf education, is described. When he was twelve, after being deprived of the opportunity to attend school, he went with his uncle on a weeklong journey to the National Institute for Deaf-Mutes in Paris. It was here that Laurent Clerc spent the next twenty years and met a young deaf man, Jean Massieu. "I knew that I would learn this new deaf language and that these people, this society of the deaf, would become my new family. c1993. 36 min.

The Shepherd and the Symbol. This film examines the life and work of Jean Massieu. It describes Massieu's frustrated pleas to his father to be allowed to attend school, the kindness of a stranger that led to his early education in Bordeaux under the abbe Sicard and several dramatic examples of Massieu's decades-long friendship with and loyalty to the abbe Sicard. Jean Massieu

was not only a friend and mentor of Laurent Clerc, but he was also "the first deaf teacher ever and a symbol worldwide of what a deaf man could achieve through education." c1993. 29 min.

High Theater. This film tells the story of Abbe Roch-Ambroise Sicard, the teacher of Jean Massieu. As the successor to the Abbe de l'Épée, Sicard, along with Massieu, presented a petition to the French National Assembly and obtained a permanent home for the school--Saint-Jacques. Sicard eagerly continued the tradition of public demonstrations and exhibits started by the Abbe de l'Épée. In 1815 Sicard undertook a demonstration tour to London with Massieu, Clerc, and another student. According to Clerc "thus it was that I first came to meet Rev. Thomas H. Gallaudet." 33 min.

The Secret. This film concerns the history of the false education of deaf people. Focus is upon oralism, the concept that the only proper route for educating deaf students is oral instruction. A central figure in the oralist controversy is Jacob Rodrigue Pereire. He claimed to have a secret method for teaching deaf children to speak. This episode is "a record of the efforts of hearing people to supplant the language of the deaf with their language, to replace signs with speech." 33 min.

A Tale Based on Fact. This film focuses on Abbe de L'Épée, and the beginning of worldwide education for deaf people. The chance encounter between Abbe de L'Épée and two deaf sisters launched him on his career with deaf students and inspired the abbe to begin his school. What is remarkable is that this occurred in an age when the majority view was that deaf people had no abstract ideas, no memory and, of course, no language. "Fortunately, L'Épée's independence of spirit kept him from adopting the prevailing views uncritically." 28 min.

Success and Failure. This film centers around two men, Jean-Marc Itard and Baron Joseph Marie De Gerando, who expended great time and energy in futile efforts to transform deaf students into pseudo-hearing students. There were, fortunately, outspoken critics of these efforts...men such as Ferdinand Berthier and Roch-Ambroise Bebian. In the end, both Itard and De Gerando learned the lessons of their failed experiments. 40 min.

Fortune and Misfortune. This film centers on events that lead to the founding of education for deaf students in the United States. Thomas H. Gallaudet, encouraged by Mason Cogswell to learn the European methods of educating deaf students, enrolls at Saint-Jacques. It is here that Gallaudet convinces Laurent Clerc to accompany him to Hartford to assist in founding a school for the deaf in the United States. "You will be a living proof that what has been believed impossible--the education of those born deaf--is indeed possible." 30 min.

Spreading the Word. This film centers around the efforts of Gallaudet and Clerc to establish the American Asylum, recruit students and seek funding for the school and its programs. These efforts involved extensive travel and public lectures, not only to solicit funds, but also to recruit students so the school would flourish. Within a dozen years of its founding, the school was receiving students from half the states in the Union. "This assembly of much of the deaf youth of America

in one place was one of the main forces that created a true society of the deaf with a single language serving to bind them together." 24 min.

[RIT Library](#) :

Info Guides : [Laurent Clerc and Thomas H. Gallaudet Resources](#)

2 - Videos

Laurent Clerc (produced by James De Bee) :

This is a historical documentary about a remarkable deaf man who brought sign language to America from France in 1815. He is known as "Father of the Deaf" for many reasons. He helped create sign language, established the first permanent school for the deaf in America, and taught the founders of almost all the other schools in America. He became first deaf person ever to appear before Congress and the President of the United States. Clerc struggled courageously to break through the barriers of silence. This is a story of how Clerc worked hard to give deaf people the education they so desperately needed, and to tell the hearing world all of the possibilities for deaf people. Finally, this story is an inspiration to all deaf, hard of hearing and hearing people everywhere.

Thomas Gallaudet and Mr. Clerc, by Stephen Baldwin

Video of a live performance of Stephen Baldwin's play "Gallaudet" at the Louisiana School for the Deaf on December 6, 1989. Baldwin provides the introduction to the performance of his play, which is based on selections from Clerc's journal. Following the performance, a dialogue about the play and about Clerc and Gallaudet is held. In addition, an etching on wood of Clerc is presented to the Louisiana School for the Deaf. Donated to Wallace Library, RIT, by the playwright from his personal collection.

G - Association, schools named after Laurent Clerc

1 - Laurent Clerc's Association, La Balme-les Grottes

A guided tour can be organized in Laurent Clerc's native town and around a museum dedicated to him. In the booklet published by the Association, one can see Laurent Clerc's birth certificate and a picture of his house when he was a young boy. He was living in a small place, and nothing much is known about him. However, we can see his marriage act given to Mrs. Clerc in 1820 and a copy of his 1838 application letter to become an American citizen:

He declared on oath in Open Court that it was benafide his intention to become of a citizen of the United States and to renounce forever all allegiance and fidelity to any foreign prince, Potentate, State or Sovereignty whatsoever, and particularly to Louis Philippe, King of France.

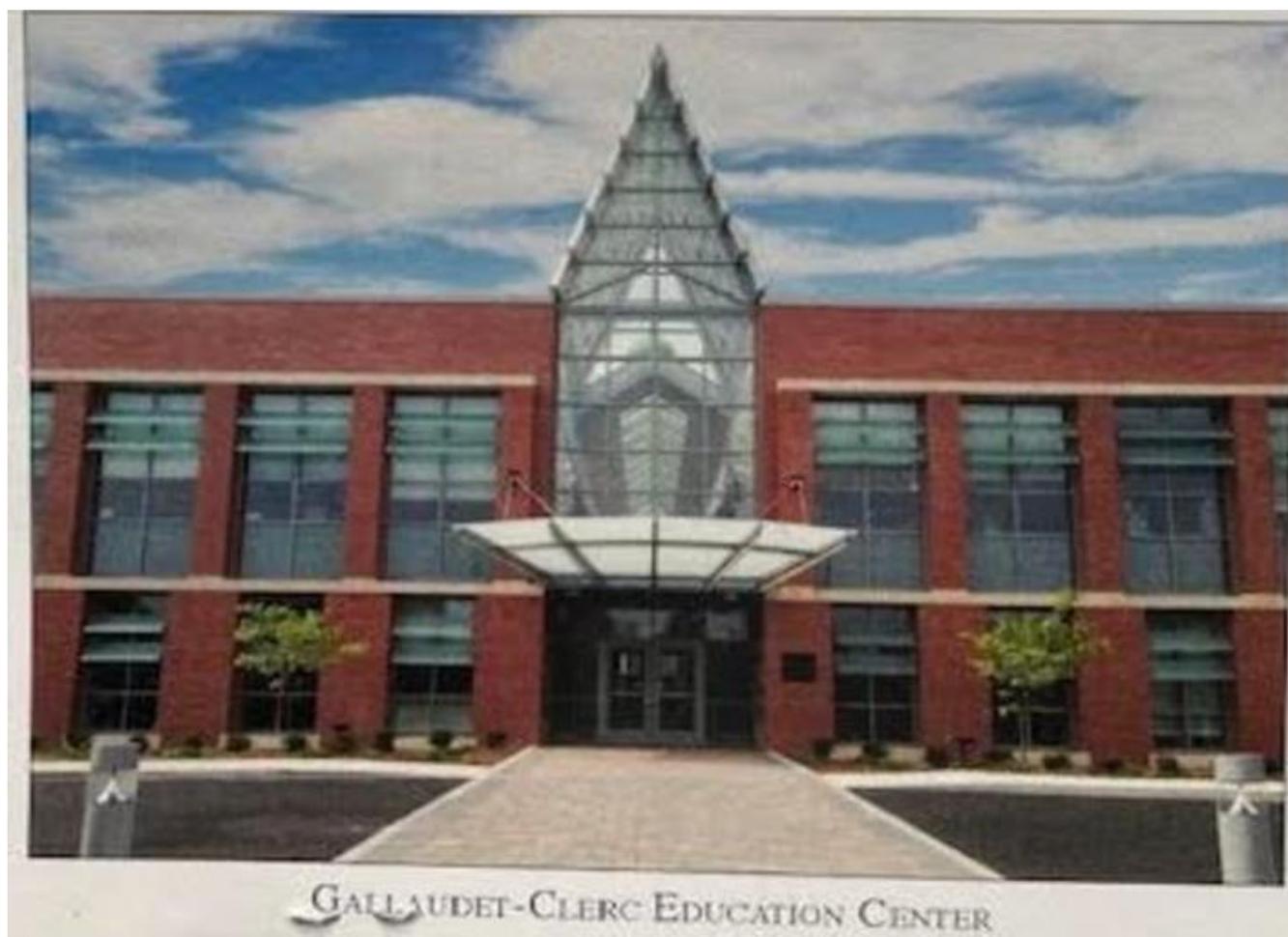
This document is particularly moving as it is evidence of his American citizenship. He left for America in 1816 when he was 31 years old and died there in 1869, so he spent 53 years abroad. No wonder French people hardly know him or have forgotten him.

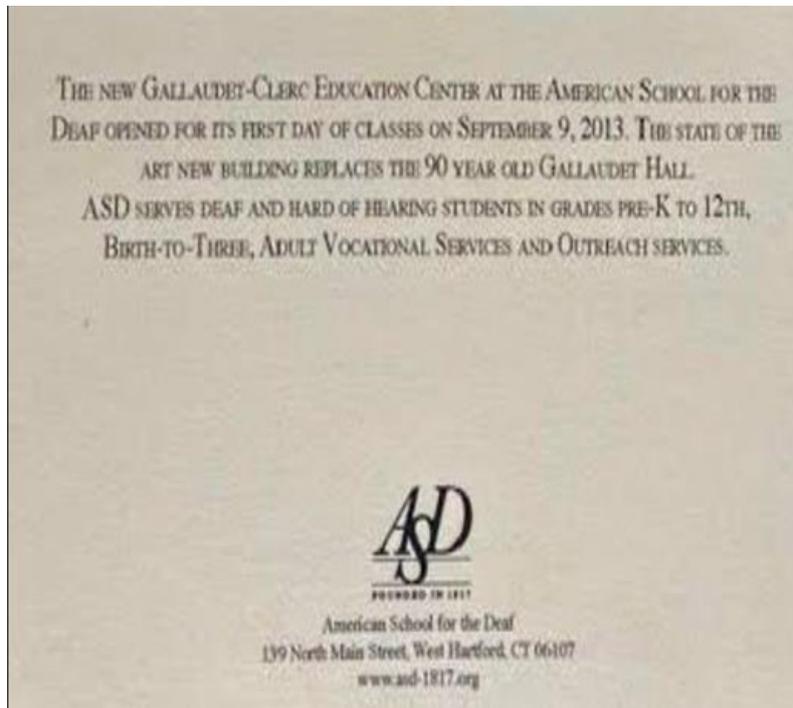
But on May 23-24, 2015 for the 30th anniversary of the association and the 230th anniversary of Laurent Clerc's birth, the Laurent Clerc association organized some celebration and among guests of honor were Jeff Bravin, Executive Director of ASD and Laurent Holt, Laurent Clerc's grandson by 6th generation. It was the occasion for Laurent Holt to discover the importance of Laurent Clerc.

2 - Laurent Clerc Center at Gallaudet University

The Laurent Clerc National Deaf Education Center at Gallaudet is a federally funded center with exemplary elementary and secondary education programs for deaf and hard of hearing students and is tasked with developing and disseminating innovative curricula, instructional techniques, and products nationwide, while providing information, training and technical assistance for parents and professionals to meet the needs of deaf and hard of hearing students from birth to age 21.

3 - Gallaudet-Clerc Education Center at American School for the Deaf





The building opened its doors on September 9, 2013. It was “designed to address the unique learning style of deaf and hard of hearing children. This includes state-of-the-art amplification equipment, specific levels of lighting, a visual public address system and the latest educational interactive whiteboard technology.” The building has science and life skills labs, speech, occupational and physical therapy workspaces, library, and a student health center. American School for the Deaf continues to serve students ages 3-21 years from New England and overseas.

4 - ASD Cogswell Heritage House (Museum)

The Cogswell Heritage House was named after one of the school's founders, Dr. Mason Fitch Cogswell (the father of the first student, Alice Cogswell). It is called CHH for short.

The founders of the American School for the Deaf (ASD) were well aware of the ground-breaking importance of their mission. They – and their successors – saved a great many letters, reports, teaching aids, illustrations, art, books, furnishings, and other objects. This has evolved into one of the most important historical collections relating to Deaf education anywhere in America. ASD’s archives are preserved and displayed in the original Principal’s House on the school’s campus – now called the Cogswell Heritage House.

Built in 1926, the house embraces the school’s history and offers a welcoming space for tours and study, drawing regular visits from authors, researchers, students, and descendants. For many, the attachment to this history is deeply personal. These items represent the people who persevered, battling society’s ignorance and holding fast to the belief that deafness should be no barrier to education.

Among the thousands of items in the archives are:

- The oldest book on signing in the world, *Chirolugia*, dated 1644.
- Other 17th and 18th and 19th century books on Deaf education.

- Personal papers of Thomas H. Gallaudet, Laurent Clerc, and Mason F. Cogswell, and students Alice Cogswell and George Loring.
- Original documentation relating to the founding of the first professional journal in the field, The American Annals of the Deaf and Dumb, first published at the school in 1847.
- A Congressional Bill dated 1819 and signed by President James Monroe – the first grant of Federal aid for special education in this country.
- Complete collection of ASD's Annual Reports, beginning in 1816.
- Complete collection of ASD's Board of Directors' meeting minutes, beginning in 1815.
- Record Books of Admission, from 1817 to present.
- Painting of the earliest known depiction of a Deaf person (Laurent Clerc) signing, dated 1815.
- 1815 flier advertising Abbe Sicard's demonstration of methods used to educate Deaf students in France.
- Records of Julia Brace, America's first deaf-blind student to be educated (at ASD).
- Alice Cogswell's bible, given to her by the school upon admission.
- Alice Cogswell's hand-written catechism notebook.
- Collection of religious and education books written by Thomas H. Gallaudet.
- Thomas H. Gallaudet's spectacles and carpetbag.
- Laurent Clerc's passport, birth certificate, razor, lap desk, and a pocket watch given to him by Jean Massieu upon Clerc's departure for America in 1816.
- Silver pitcher given to Laurent Clerc in 1821 by the trustees of the Pennsylvania School for the Deaf.
- Extensive holdings of Deaf artists and artisans.
- Sophia Fowler's wedding dress and slippers dated 1821.
- Large collection of 19th century ear trumpets and hearing devices.
- 1870 lantern slide projector used in ASD's classrooms.
- Thomas H. Gallaudet's chair, used during his years as ASD's Principal, 1817-1830.
- Hartford Bank Note featuring a vignette of ASD and a portrait of Thomas H. Gallaudet, ca. 1860.
- Oliver Wolcott (Governor of Connecticut) "Proclamation" dated 1818, allowing ASD to solicit funds from "religious societies" in the state for support of the school.
- Many exquisite furnishings, most of which were made by ASD's students in woodshop classes in the mid-1800s.

<https://www.asd-1817.org/about/history--Cogswell-heritage-house>
<https://www.ctmq.org/103-american-school-for-the-deaf-museum/>

Other museums have been opened in France too, such as Theophile Denis's Universal Museum for the Deaf in Louhans-Chateaufort, Ferdinand Berthier's birthplace, where many objects were collected. But it closed in 1910 and its collections were dispatched to other places, such as le Musée d'arts et de culture des Sourds de Louhans Cuiseaux. Ferdinand Berthier Culture and Sign Language Association - <https://www.clsfb.com/ferdinand-berthier/>

CONCLUSION

In memoriam: Obituaries, elegies and eulogies for Laurent Clerc and Thomas H. Gallaudet

On July 23, 1869, Thomas H. Gallaudet wrote a letter to the editor of *The Churchman* in which he spoke of Laurent Clerc whom he assisted on his deathbed and recalled the impressive service. He concluded his letter by saying:

Trusting that God will so order events that the death of his aged servant may prove a spiritual blessing to the entire deaf-mute community of our country.

Several obituaries were published in papers (New York Tribune, July 1869, among them) and all Deaf Institutes held ceremonies with orations followed by friendly banquets, to pay their respects for the memory of one who had been to them a great benefactor.

At the 7th Convention, Saint Louis, Missouri, 1906:

Rev. Mr. Mann made a brief address urging the deaf not to forget, in their tribute to Thomas Hopkins Gallaudet, to give a place to Laurent Clerc, who brought the sign language to America and who was the first deaf teacher of the deaf in this country.

*What's in a name?*²⁵

Thomas H. Gallaudet's Letter to Laurent Clerc's mother:

But it remains for you, madam, to make an even greater sacrifice, and I would not ask for it, if I did not believe that it would be very advantageous for your dear son. He will receive a reward, I believe very just and honorable, he will see a very interesting part of the new world; he will improve his English language, he will make many respectable acquaintances; he will acquire a name.

Moreover:

There is a Latin inscription in the Church of St. Paul's, in London, referring to Sir Christopher Wren, which reads: "If you would behold his monument, look around you, " which may be applied in a far more comprehensive sense to Gallaudet's work. If you would behold the results of his labors, of his system of education, look around you. Not upon the magnificent buildings for the accommodation.

Robert McGregor of Ohio, *Oration, 3rd Convention of the Association of the Deaf, Washington, DC, 1889.*

²⁵ "What's in a name? That which we call a rose,
By any other name would smell as sweet."
Shakespeare, *Romeo and Juliet*, Act 2 Scene 2.

And also:

Poems and plays are presented at programs in schools for deaf children almost every April and December to honor Clerc and Gallaudet. A high-rise dormitory at Gallaudet College also bears his name. But his best memorials are in the deaf people of America whose lives since 1817 have been influenced by Clerc. Thus, a poor deaf boy, born in an obscure village in France, has made a difference.

Loy E. Golloday, L.E., *Laurent Clerc: Pioneer Deaf Teacher in America*, "Gallaudet Today", Summer 1975.

Testimony by Laurent Clerc Holt, one of his living descendants:



Laurent Clerc and his great great great great grandson, Laurent Clerc Holt
(cf Family chronology chap 2)

Franco-American enduring friendship: Laurent Holt's FOLDA Travelogue. Laurent Holt is remembering his trips to Laurent Clerc's hometown and the 2013 ceremony for the opening of a museum by the Laurent Clerc's Association.

Laurent Holt then went to La Balme les Grottes, Laurent Clerc's hometown two times: once on a private tour, in 2011, and the second one for the opening ceremony of the museum (July 6th 2013) (his traveling expenses were paid by FOLDA), at the invitation of The Laurent Clerc Association. Each time, he was welcomed as a friend.

Before I review with you my experiences [...] and tour to Louhans and La Balme, I wanted to give you some background on my experience being named for my great, great, great, great grandfather, Laurent Clerc.

On July 4th, 1957, my father, Stanley Pennock Holt (Laurent Clerc's great, great, great grandson) with the support of my mother, Marjorie Morgan Holt, named me after Laurent Clerc. I was given Laurent Clerc's name as the second son. My older brother, Timothy Matlack Holt was named after Timothy Matlack, an officer in the American Revolution who is known (or unknown) for being a prosecutor of the traitor Benedict Arnold and as a clerk to the President of the Continental Congress. He actually penned the Declaration of Independence, apparently because of his good penmanship but did not sign the document. Clearly my parents felt that Timothy Matlack had more impact in history and saved Laurent Clerc for their second male child. Somehow, I think that they were mistaken.

As a young child I remember little about any connection with Laurent Clerc. Apparently, I attempted to write my name, Larry at that time, on the back cover of one the cherished copies of the "Diary of Laurent Clerc's Journey to America" that lay around my grandparent's home in West Hartford, Connecticut. I also vaguely remember my grandfather, Guy Bryan Holt (Laurent Clerc's great, great, grandson), talking to me about the importance of Laurent Clerc in Deaf history. Guy B. Holt was very interested in our family's connection to Deaf history and was for a long time involved in the American School in West Hartford. He served as board member for twenty-two years and president of that board for thirteen years ending in 1968. He has a boys residence named for him at the school. I am sure that he was influential in my parent's choice of my name and am sure it was his hope that Laurent Clerc's name and accomplishments would not be forgotten in our family.

As a young teenager I was acutely aware of the fact that I had been given a very strange and unusual name. I had not met another man named Laurent until my trip to La Balme after the [...] conference. I could not understand how to pronounce it and marveled why my parents named me after a man who had a name that sounded like the name of a girl. Of course, my peers had a field day with it and were not going to let me forget that I had it.

Then there was the beginning of my awareness that this name was connected to a person that was special and who had done something important. My awareness that my parents had chosen it, not just because it was a beautiful and unusual name but had chosen it to make a connection to an important individual in our family history. I remember being involved in Laurent Clerc ceremonies throughout my teenage years. First there was the dedication of the Guy Bryan Holt Boys Residence at the American School. After my grandfather's death in 1975, I remember attending the dedication of the Laurent Clerc Hall or dormitory at Gallaudet University in Washington, DC. I remember vividly attending a production of the National Theatre of the Deaf while at Gallaudet. I remember being asked to stand up to applause when I had not really done anything. Sometime around this period

I also remember a ceremony to unveil the Laurent Clerc portrait at the American school. But my mind was elsewhere in those days and I did not take the time to fully understand who Laurent Clerc was and why the Deaf community treated me with such kindness.

[...]

While on my first trip [to France, in September 2001 for a cycling tour] I had decided that I would make the attempt to visit the birth site or hometown of my great, great, great, great grandfather Laurent Clerc. For those of you that are not FOLDA members or aware of Deaf history, Laurent Clerc was a French deaf teacher that came to Hartford, Connecticut to start the first organized school for teaching the deaf. He brought with him French Sign Language that would become the foundations for American Sign Language. This opened up enlightenment to Deaf people and today he remained a much-revered man.

Now I want to take a moment to tell you that about this time I am wondering just why fifty people would show up to see me give a lame greeting and stand around smiling. What I did not know at the time was how important Deaf history was to them and that I represented the flesh and blood of a man that was a role model to many and by immigrating to America had a profound effect on the Deaf community there.

The intensity of Laurent Clerc's legacy was beginning to impact me greatly.

[...]

The most exciting moment of the day was when I was able to meet Alice, my friend and benefactor. I was very excited to finally meet her and begin to talk about her experiences as a Deaf woman and librarian. She had such a warm smile and I felt immediately comfortable with her. She also slowly began to introduce me to her friends. They were to become my pals for the week and during our tour of the countryside.

At the conference, full of anxiety, he delivers a speech:

At first the interpreters could not follow at the speed I was talking and I had to begin again, compounding my fear. But I got through it and everyone seemed delighted by whatever I said.

[...]

As the conference progressed I settled into my role as ancestor and representative of the Laurent Clerc family. I increasingly became comfortable with the idea that I represented for this community a concrete link to Laurent Clerc, to some of his living flesh and blood. I was glad to do it, to be at all helpful to the spirit of the gathering and for a connection to the history of Laurent Clerc. At other times, the uneasiness would return. Through all the pictures, handshakes and eventually even autographs it was hard to believe that I was somehow contributing something important. I felt dwarfed by the image and memory of such a great man and all he had accomplished. My image of myself as an unemployed burnt-out social worker from the tiny state of Vermont kept punching through the reality of such an immense and intense gathering as this conference. But as time progressed the

excitement and warmth I felt from everyone help me enjoy what I was able to contribute.

As the conference came to an end I began to get the feeling that I might be called upon to give another appearance on that brightly lit stage. Sure enough. I was honored to receive, all with all the real workers and organizers of the conference, a framed DHI-5 tile. It presently is displayed in the home of my father, who would have enjoyed but could not attend the ceremonies related to his great, great, great grandfather. I don't have a clue what I said in thanks but I was much honored to be there and greatly enjoyed all the wonderful people that I met. This ceremony was completed with a tour of the Saint Jacques School of Deaf Mutes. This was a fantastic experience for me as it was the place of residence for Laurent Clerc for 22 years of his life. It was a very powerful experience for me personally to work around the grounds and buildings where my ancestor played and studied. I am not one for these types of experiences but when walking alone on the same stairs that he tread I felt that I could almost feel his presence. During my family therapy studies in school, we were exposed to theorists that believed that family values and beliefs transcended the generations and impacted our choices in the present. I began to wonder if Laurent Clerc's legacy was behind some of my grandfather's, father's and my own choices to seek out the helping professions.

Alice and I, along with several others managed to slip away to the American Library in Paris. Here Alice presented Deaf resources to the library, hoping that someday they would assist deaf persons to discover their heritage. It was a moving moment, especially for Alice and the mission of FOLDA.

[...]

(a day return to La Balme-les Grottes):

I wasn't sure what to say but had settled on first wishing that this event would be another way to connect the United States and France during recent difficult times. Next I wanted to talk about my grandfather, Laurent Clerc's great, great grandson. It was he, Guy Bryan Holt, who represented the best of what Laurent Clerc brought to our family. My grandfather was, throughout his life, involved with the American School in West Hartford, Connecticut. It was he who made the most effort to keep our family's connection with Laurent Clerc's past alive. I could only really think about how he might have felt seeing a museum opened honoring a relative dear to him. Lastly, I thanked the Association Laurent Clerc for their work on the museum and wished them great success. This was followed by the unveiling of a wooden bust of Laurent Clerc that is now located in the museum. I was grateful to be chosen to do the honors. It was another very special moment for me. Many more photographs with all sorts of people. I was even able to arrange a picture of myself and all the Laurent's from the play. From the young Laurent through to the older one. A favorite of mine. [...]

So that is Laurent's adventure into Deaf history and into the life of his namesake. It will remain a powerful experience for me in the future. It made me realize that I am also responsible for keeping the memory of Laurent Clerc alive [...] to support Laurent Clerc or great, great, great, great granddad. [...]

(Published with the author's permission).

Thus, Laurent Clerc and Thomas H. Gallaudet are enshrined in our visions and memory.

Gratitude is the remembrance of a service which we have received, with a heart penetrated with a deep sense of respect and affection and an unlimited devotion.
Laurent Clerc.

Gratitude is the remembrance of the heart.
Jean Massieu.

Collection of the most remarkable DEFINITIONS AND ANSWERS of MASSIEU AND CLERC, Deaf and Dumb, to the various questions put to them at the public lectures of the Abbé Sicard, in London, published in 1815.

In all ages, and among all people not absolutely sunk in barbarism, monuments and statues have played an important part in public education. Telling, as they do, more or less fully of lofty lives and noble achievements, they stimulate the mind of the beholder, and inspire him with a desire, and often with a purpose, to "make his life sublime".

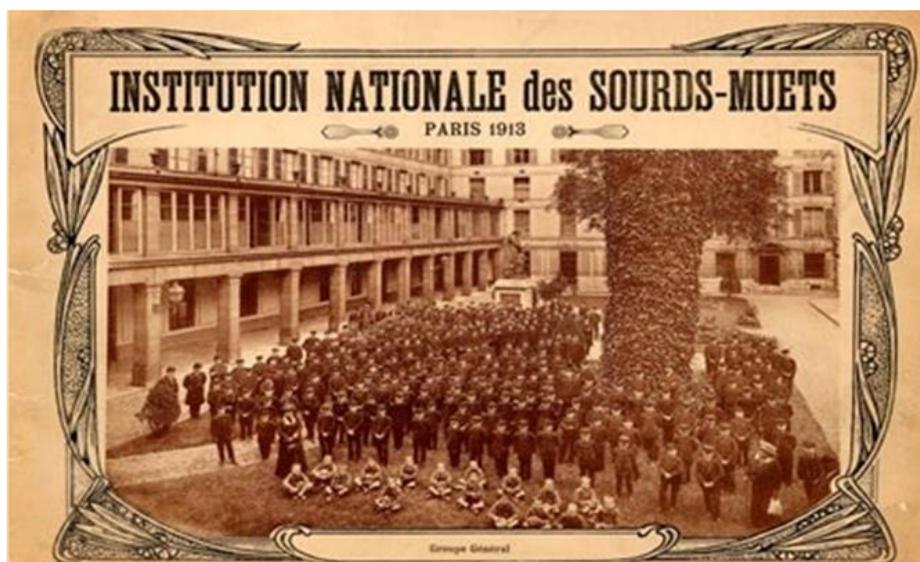
Edward M. Gallaudet, *Address of Acceptance*, following A. Hodgson's oration at the Third Convention of the Association of the Deaf, Washington, DC, 1889.

Chapter 2

The Life and Works of Laurent Clerc and Thomas H. Gallaudet Biographies and Life Writings



American Asylum for the Deaf and Dumb, Hartford, Connecticut



Students at INJS, 1918 (INJS private collection, Paris)

History is not another name for the past, as many people imply it. It is the name for stories about the past.

A.J.P Taylor

Great geniuses have the shortest biographies.

Ralph Emerson

Biography is the only true history.

Thomas Carlyle

Read no history: nothing but biography, for that is life without theory.

Benjamin Disraeli

After a certain number of years, our faces become our biographies.

Cynthia Ozick

A biography should be a dissection and demonstration of how a particular human being was made and worked.

H.G. Wells

The secret of biography resides in finding the link between talent and achievement. A biography seems irrelevant if it doesn't discover the overlap between what the individual did and the life that made this possible. Without discovering that you have shapeless happenings and gossip.

Leon Edel

The story of the self is simply the insight into the emotions of the protagonist and how he interacts with the outside world.

Adewale Joel

INTRODUCTION

The authors of *A Journey into the Deaf World* Harlen Lane, Robert J. Hoffmeister and Ben Bahan explain their approach in an introductory chapter and why they have chosen to tell stories: “because a vital part of Deaf culture is stories”.²⁶

Art works and physical representations of Laurent Clerc and Thomas H. Gallaudet (Chapter 1) enable us to visualize them and to know what they looked like in different circumstances. It’s our first contact with them now that they are dead. Yet representations (mainly paintings, monuments and objects) are but the outward superficial images, and we must consider what both characters did to get to know them better.

Appearances are said to be deceptive or misleading. A man is known by his deeds too, disregarding the moral or biblical connotation underlying the sentence.

In this respect, biographies and autobiographies prove useful, as they provide information on actions as well. Private correspondence also brings to the fore authentic facts, if the author does not embellish letters too much to impress his readers. What contemporaries said of famous people, the laudatory tributes they paid to their actions, and the way they present them in public addresses convey a flattering picture as they are spoken highly of. Fiction works follow them step by step, endeavouring to give a comprehensive story that might be more accessible to the public at large and make it possible for them to identify with the protagonist. Novelists are story tellers and their tales must be appealing. This is what happens in children’s books: when telling the folk tale of both Laurent Clerc and Thomas H. Gallaudet whose extraordinary, and improbable crossing of the Atlantic Ocean, among other feats, spurs the imagination, they carry young readers into a world of wonders. Comic strips, though oversimplified, offer a visual story where characters become blood and flesh road companions. Videos have been shot to encompass in film images the whole span of the characters’ life seen through the eye of the director who may draw his inspiration from literature. This is not a primary source entirely.

A huge variety of data testifies to the vitality of Laurent Clerc and Thomas H. Gallaudet’s life experience and feats up to modern times: from reality to myth. The title of a comic strip such as “A French Deaf Pioneer” shows how the concept of the pioneer, so typically American in its historical background, is diverted by being associated with “French”: Laurent Clerc, a man in between two cultures, two histories. The myth of the humble solitary boy climbing up to become a hero celebrated in America is another example of the success story so dear to Americans, though in Laurent Clerc’s case and in Thomas H. Gallaudet’s one as well, becoming a millionaire is not the ultimate goal. Their wealth is to be found elsewhere: that is in their numerous celebrations and enduring praise.

This chapter is tracing the main facts behind the myth by putting together different pieces of the puzzle, by examining some biographies, autobiographies, journals, diaries, correspondence, but

²⁶ Lane, H., Hoffmeister, R.J. & Bahan, B. *A Journey into the Deaf World*. Dawn Sign Press, 1996

also public addresses and fictional works as they all start from the same objective facts. Dates and main actions or events about Laurent Clerc and Thomas H. Gallaudet are listed in a chart. They are historical, irrefutable landmarks, the common basis for all whose concern was to write a story. And in fact, their own story.



The Deaf story is born!
 Bernard Truffaud, Echo de Famille 7 eme année, septembre-octobre 1999
 [Family Echo, 7 year, September-October 1999]

A - Chronology, landmarks and portraits

Basically, a biography is the faithful account of someone's life written by someone else. It's a literary genre at the crossroads between reality and fiction.

As a matter of fact, the author collects genuine dates and events and relies on the most important of them to build a chronological rendering of the person's life, as true to life as possible.

A biography is issued, usually when the person is dead, to revive who he was and what he did to deserve some reputation. It focusses on his main actions, all of them not necessarily known, but likely to fall into oblivion. Considered from this angle, the biographer is an archivist or a historian. But, on the other hand, his selection of particular pieces of information and the way he orders and presents them calls to mind what a novelist does.

Thus, the biographer can be biased and pinpoint what he finds relevant to serve his project and emphasize some of his character's psychological traits. The biography then verges on a subjective story.

The autobiography, or first-person narration of someone’s life, might be more genuine as the author is the actor of the events he recollects.

However self-appraisal must not be disregarded as everyone wants to leave to posterity the best possible picture of oneself. It is a unique creation in many respects. Its singularity lies in its being a single unrivalled production. It is a backward glance at one’s own life, usually by an aged writer, a perspective with a missing piece: the last days of one’s life. In one of *his Letter to Laurent Clerc’s son*, Francis, dated December 18, 1895, Job Turner writes: “I wish I had prepared his autobiography long before God called him away”, after noticing Laurent Clerc was tired and at pains to reach their hotel in Mount Vernon, where they met. The retrospective story is also unique as it is the vision of an experienced old man who knows inside out what happened to him during several decades.

1 - Chart of main landmarks in Laurent Clerc and Thomas H. Gallaudet’s lives.

" Gratitude is the remembrance of kindness received, the memory of a heart penetrated with a sense of profound respect and affection, and with measureless devotion." Thus wrote Laurent Clerc on the 3d of July, 1815, when asked, “What is gratitude?”

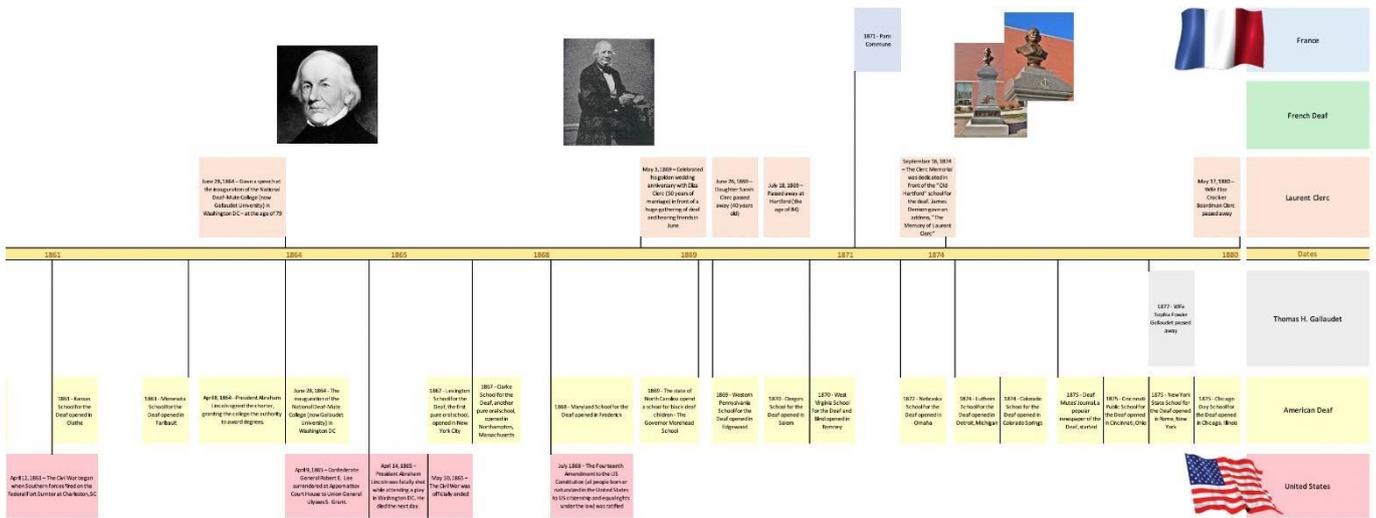
Laurent Clerc (LC)	Dates	Thomas H. Gallaudet (THG)
December 26, 1785 – born in La Balme-les Grottes, France	1785	
	1787	December 10, 1787 – born in Philadelphia, PA, USA
Entered the Royal Institution for the Deaf and Dumb (INJS) in Paris; Jean Massieu was his first teacher	1797	
	1800	Moved to Hartford with his father
Completed his education in 8 years	1805	Graduated with a bachelor’s degree from Yale
Became a tutor and teacher at INJS	1806	
	1808	Graduated with a master’s at Yale Became member of Hartford Church
	1814	Graduated from Andover Theological Seminary (2 years) ; Became minister May 25, 1814 – Met Alice Cogswell
Spring, 1815 – Went abroad to England with Abbe Sicard, Jean Massieu, and a deaf scholar to escape the political troubles from Napoleon’s coup	1815	Went abroad to study deaf education (Scotland, London, Paris)
July 8, 1815 - Introduced to THG by Abbe Sicard in London, England		July 8, 1815 - Introduced to LC by Abbe Sicard in London, England

A few weeks later, returned to France after Napoleon was exiled		
	1816	Had no success with the institutions of Watson and Braidwood
June 18 – August 9, 1816 – Sailed for ocean crossing with THG on the Mary Augusta from Havre, France to New York City		June 18 – August 9, 1816 – Sailed for ocean crossing with LC on the Mary Augusta from Havre, France to New York City
August 10 – 22, 1816 – Arrived Hartford; Visited Dr. Mason Cogswell and Met Alice Cogswell		August 10 – 22, 1816 – Arrived Hartford; Took LC to Dr. Mason Cogswell’s house
August 1816 – March 17, 1817 – Started the fundraising and marketing tour with THG and Mason F Cogswell in the Northeast (Boston, MA; Salem, MA; New Haven, CT; New York City; Albany, NY; Philadelphia, PA)		Started the fundraising tour in the Northeast (Boston, MA; Salem, MA; New Haven, CT; New York City; Albany, NY; Philadelphia, PA)
August 19, 1816 – Addressed people in NYC.		
September 9, 1816 – Addressed to an assembly of gentlemen in Boston and then women the next day		September 9, 1816 – Interpreted for LC with his public address to gentlemen in Boston (and then women in Boston the next day)
April 1817 – Gave an address at Hartford Church	1817	
April 15, 1817 – Connecticut Asylum for the Education and Instruction of Deaf and Dumb persons opened at City Hotel, 120 Main Street in Hartford with Alice Cogswell being the school’s first student. By the end of the week, a total of 7 students enrolled at the school		April 15, 1817 – Connecticut Asylum for the Education and Instruction of Deaf and Dumb persons opened at City Hotel, 120 Main Street in Hartford with Alice Cogswell being the school’s first student. By the end of the week, a total of 7 students enrolled at the school
May 20, 1817 - Eliza Crocker Boardman (future wife of LC) enrolled at the school as the 17th student to be admitted to the school (at the age of 24) Her classmate was Sophia Fowler (future wife of THG)		April 20, 1817 - Delivered a sermon delivered at the opening of the Connecticut Asylum for the Education and Instruction of Deaf and Dumb Persons: at the request of the directors, on Sunday in the Brick Church in Hartford
January 1818 – Visited Washington, DC, with one of the school directors; Met President Monroe for the third time, gave an address before US Congress; and Met with Henry Clay, Speaker of the House; eventually received federal aid a year later – the first federal land grant program	1818	

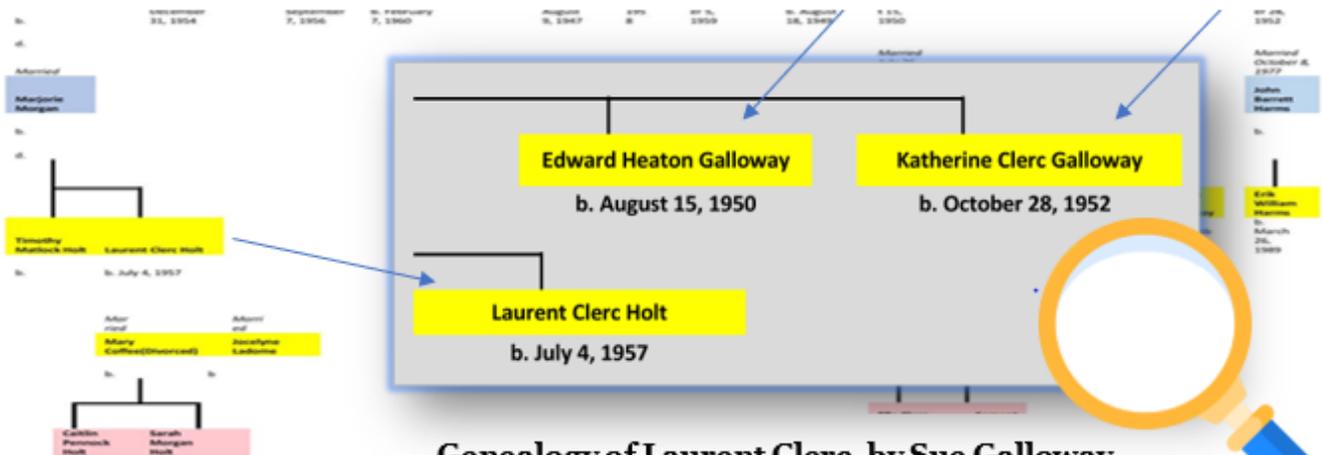
May 28, 1818 – Gave an address at a public examination of the pupils to be held in Center Church, Hartford		
April, 1919 – Eliza Crocker Boardman completed her 2-year education.		
May 3, 1819 – Married Elizabeth Crocker Boardman at Cohoes Falls near Watertown, NY. He was 34, and she 26. They eventually had 7 children.	1819	
March 25, 1820 – Daughter Elizabeth Victoria Clerc was born		
April 1820 – one month after Elizabeth's birth, went back to France for one year after one month after Elizabeth's birth	1820	
August, 1821 – Became principal of the Pennsylvania School for the Deaf for several months before returning to Hartford; reorganized the school and introduced the sign language and methods of teaching		Married Sophia Fowler. They had 8 children.
Charles Wilson Peale painted a portrait of LC and a portrait of his wife Eliza and daughter Elizabeth in Philadelphia	1821	
February 1822 – Daughter Helena Alina Clerc was born		June 3, 1822 – Son Thomas Gallaudet was born
July 20, 1822 – Daughter Helena Alina Clerc passed away (~5 months)	1822	
April 18, 1823 – Son Francis Joseph Clerc was born		February 1, 1824 – Daughter Sophia Hunter Gallaudet was born
	1823	
	1824	
January 13, 1826 – Son Charles Michael Clerc was born		Son Peter Wallace Gallaudet was born
		November 13, 1827 – Daughter Jane Hall Gallaudet was born
	1827	November 21, 1827 – Delivered an address on female education at the opening of the edifice erected for the accommodation of the Hartford Female Seminary
August 10, 1828 – Fraternal Twin: John Boardman Clerc and Sarah Byers Clerc were born		Published A Father's Letters
	1828	
	1829	Son William Lewis Gallaudet was born Published The Teacher's Book

	1830	Resigned from the Hartford school
March 4, 1831 – Son John Boardman Clerc passed away (2 years old)	1831	April 3, 1831 – Daughter Catherine Fowler Gallaudet was born
	1833	September 15, 1833 – Daughter Alice Cogswell Gallaudet was born
Visited France for the second time for a year; brought his oldest son, Francis, who stayed in France for 3 years of study	1835	
	1837	February 5, 1837 – Son Edward Miner Gallaudet was born
Received an honorary Master of Arts degree from Washington College (now Trinity College) in Hartford		Became a chaplain to the Connecticut Retreat for the Insane
Visited France for the third time (and last time) for a year; brought his other son Charles, who stayed in France for three years to study; Met and said the last farewell to his first teacher Jean Massieu in Lille where he founded a school with his wife.	1845	
Published three parts of “Visits to Some of the Schools for the Deaf and Dumb in France and England” in American Annals of the Deaf	1847	
September 26, 1850 – Presented with a silver pitcher and tray at a special ceremony by deaf people in New England	1850	September 26, 1850 – Presented with a silver pitcher and tray at a special ceremony by deaf people in New England
	1851	Received an honorary Doctor of Laws degree from the Western Reserve College of Ohio
August 27-29, 1851 – Attended and presented his his paper, “ <i>Some Hints to Teachers of the Deaf and Dumb</i> ”, at the Second Convention of American Instructors of the Deaf and Dumb, held at the ASD, Hartford, CT		September 10, 1851 – Passed away at Hartford (63 years old)
21, 1852 – Son Charles Michael Clerc passed away (26 years old)	1852	
September 6, 1854 – Gave an address, giving a brief account of THG’s labors and services with deaf students and of some traits of his characters.	1854	September 6, 1854 – The Gallaudet monument was erected at ASD.

April 28, 1858 – Gave his retirement address at ASD. Retired from teaching (41 years at Hartford and 11 years at INJS) – at the age of 73	1858	
June 28, 1864 – Gave a speech at the inauguration of the National Deaf-Mute College (now Gallaudet University) in Washington DC – at the age of 79	1864	
May 3, 1869 – Celebrated his golden wedding anniversary with Eliza Clerc (50 years of marriage) in front of a huge gathering of deaf and hearing friends in June	1869	
June 26, 1869 – Daughter Sarah Clerc passed away (40 years old)		
July 18, 1869 – Passed away at Hartford (the age of 84)		
September 16, 1874 – The Clerc Memorial was dedicated in front of the “Old Hartford” school for the deaf. James Denison gave an address, “The Memory of Laurent Clerc”	1874	
	1877	May 13, 1877 - Wife Sophie Fowler Gallaudet passed away
May 17, 1880 – Wife Eliza Crocker Boardman Clerc passed away	1880	



3 - Genealogy of Laurent Clerc



Genealogy of Laurent Clerc, by Sue Galloway with focus on living descendants by Katherine

Le mensuel des sourds

ECHO magazine

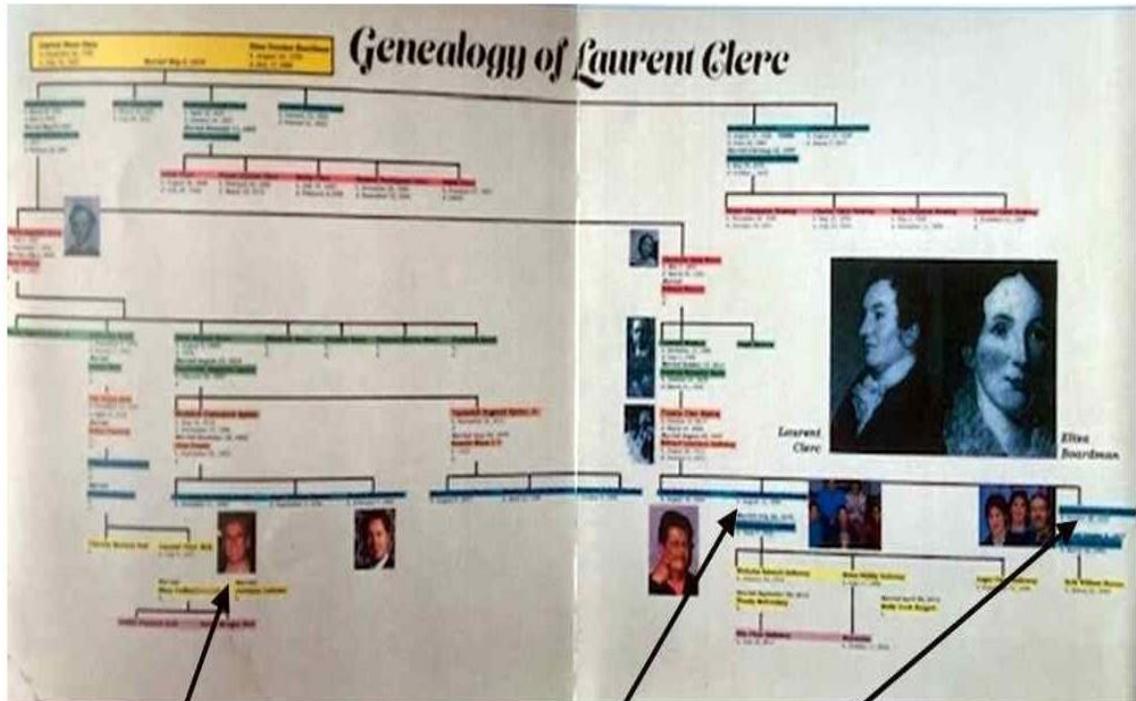
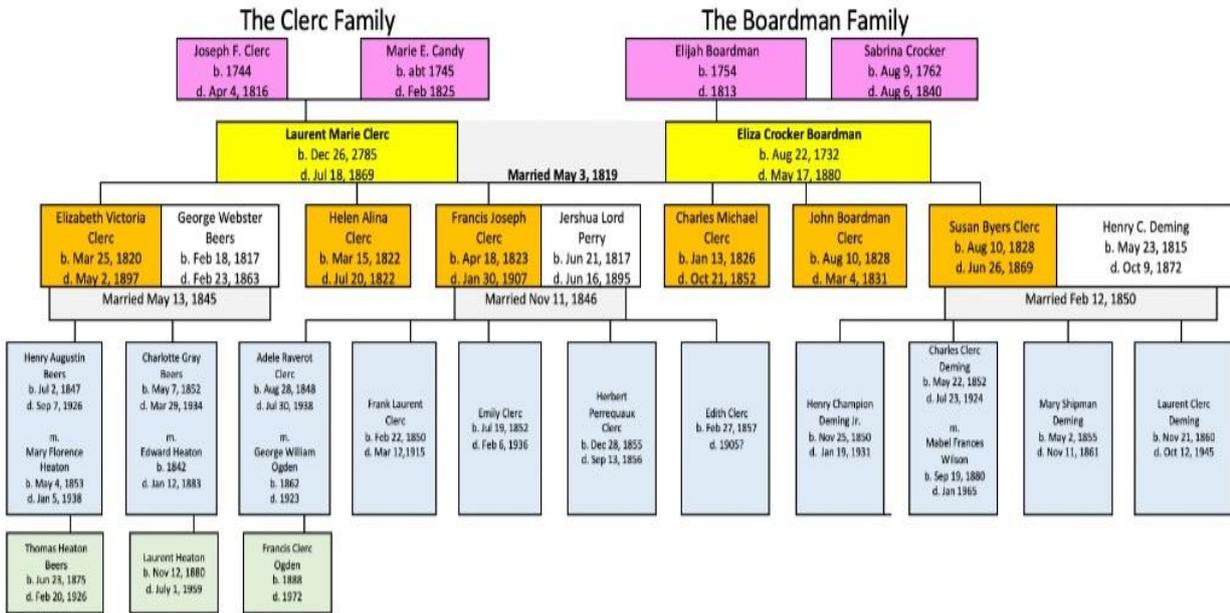
www.echo-magazine-sourds.fr

n°823 - Juillet · Août · Septembre 2015 - 6 €



Laurent Clerc, descendant of the 7th generation of Laurent Clerc, Sue Galloway and her sister Katherine Harms, descendants of the 6th generation.

The Union of Laurent Clerc and Eliza Crocker Boardman



Laurent Clerc Holt
b. July 4, 1957

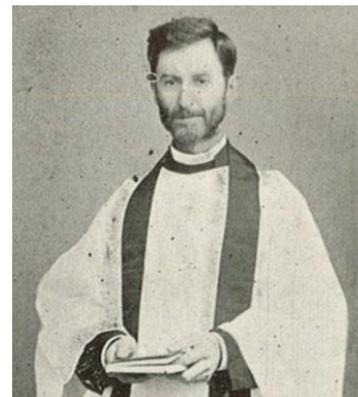
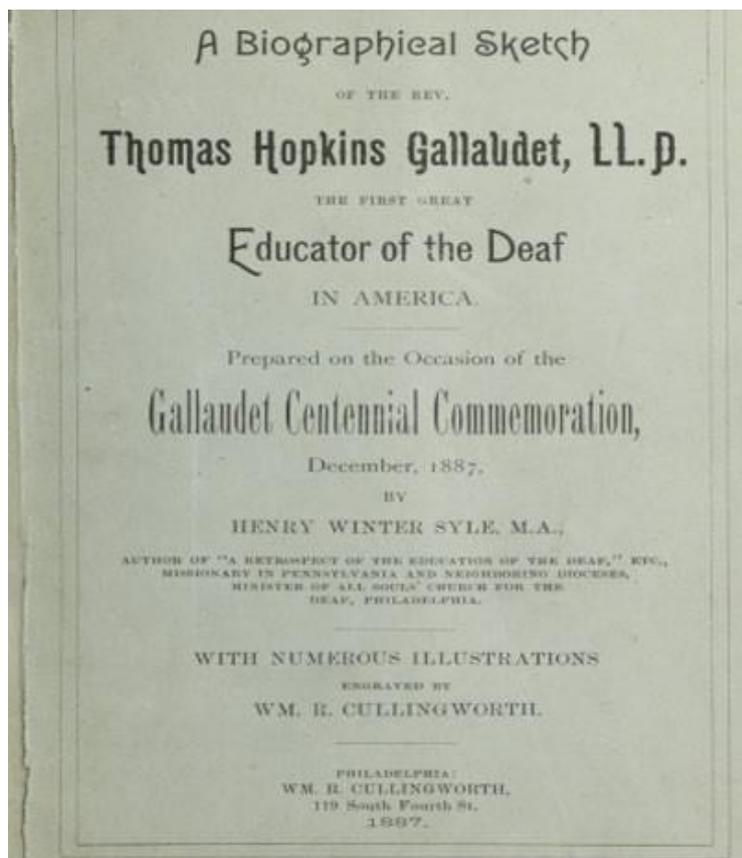
Edward Heaton Galloway
b. August 15, 1950

Katherine Clerc Galloway
b. October 28, 1952

GENEALOGY of LAURENT CLERC, by SUE GALLOWAY

(focus on living descendants)





The author Henry Winter Syle was the first deaf person to be ordained a priest in the Episcopal Church in the United States. He published this biographical sketch to celebrate the centennial anniversary of Thomas H. Gallaudet's birthdate.

4 - Biographies on institutional web sites

The institutional biographies or monographies of important characters enrich the websites of places where their notoriety was established: foundations and museums on their birthplaces, institutions where they were students or teachers, university departments named after them. Of course, here they appear under the most flattering light as their own glory is reflected on the institutions that speak of them. This is why they lack originality.

4-1 *Foundation Laurent Clerc, La Balme-les-Grottes*

The Laurent Clerc Association aims at rehabilitating, perpetuating his memory and enhancing the place of the Deaf in French society. The presentation highlights that Laurent Clerc was "the pioneer" of Deaf education.

In the booklet entitled *Laurent Clerc His Life (1785-1869)*, a workshop called *The Deaf Tell Their Story*, organized by the Etienne de Faye Association for Deaf, young people is mentioned (p. 51). Source: Michelle Bonnot and Marc Pregniard, 11th edition, 2019.

4-2 ASD, Hartford, Connecticut

History and Cogswell Heritage House, American School for the Deaf.

The emphasis is on school and education. The website retells the story of Laurent Clerc and Thomas H. Gallaudet's founding of the school. Laurent Clerc is presented as being "a young talented and deaf teacher".

www.asd-1817.org

<https://www.asd-1817.org/about/history--cogswell-heritage-house>

4-3 National Institute for Deaf Youth (INJS), Paris

Laurent Clerc was a student there before being a teacher. Yet he is overshadowed by L'Abbé de l'Épée, his instructor, whose methodical signs and teaching methods he borrowed. In the entrance area facing the main building L'Abbé de l'Épée's majestic statue welcomes the visitor. Yet, the INJS website provides a short biography of Laurent Clerc, set in a historical background.

Laurent Clerc was born in La Balme-les-Grottes in Isère, to a family of notables. He says he suffered a fall when he was one year old, which caused his hearing and his sense of smell to be lost. At 12, he was sent to the Paris Institution where his first teacher was Jean Massieu. From 1807 he was employed as a teacher. Once a month, public sessions are organized. Jean Massieu and Laurent Clerc, answering all the questions correctly, caused a sensation. In 1815, during the Hundred Days, Sicard took refuge in London with Jean Massieu and Laurent Clerc. It was on this occasion that Laurent Clerc was introduced to Thomas Hopkins Gallaudet, a hearing pastor, who had come to seek an education method in Europe in order to find a school for deaf children in the United States. Then, in 1816, a visit from Gallaudet to Paris convinced Laurent Clerc to leave with him for the United States. They founded together, in the state of Connecticut, a school for deaf children, "the American Asylum for the Deaf and Dumb". Laurent Clerc then became the first deaf professor in the United States, a country he would never leave until his death in 1869.

<http://www.injs-paris.fr/sites/>

www.injs-paris.fr/files/clerc.pdf

4-4 Gallaudet University

The biography of Laurent Clerc is more detailed here and, unsurprisingly, Thomas H. Gallaudet is present. The main facts of his life are commented somehow and what he might have felt is expressed. The strong point is that Laurent Clerc and Thomas H. Gallaudet are together here.

Would you believe that the first outstanding deaf teacher in America was a Frenchman? His name was Laurent Clerc. He became a friend of Thomas Hopkins Gallaudet and together they founded America's first school for the deaf.

Laurent Clerc was born in a small village near Lyons, France, on December 26, 1785. He was born hearing, but when he was one year old, he fell into a fire. As a result, he lost both his hearing and his sense of smell. The right side of his face was badly burned and was scarred for his whole life. However, in later years, the scars only made him look more distinguished. The sign for his name was even based on the scar.



Designed by Thomas Tessier

At the age of 12, Laurent entered the Royal Institution for the Deaf in Paris where he excelled in his studies. After he graduated, the school asked him to stay on as an assistant teacher. He was a dedicated teacher; and consequently, was promoted to teach the highest class.

Meanwhile, in America, Thomas Hopkins Gallaudet was studying to be a minister when he met a young deaf girl, Alice Cogswell. He was upset to learn that there were no schools for the deaf in America. He was very concerned about the lack of educational opportunities for the deaf. Therefore, in 1815, Gallaudet sailed to London, England to seek ideas on how to teach deaf people. However, he was unable to get help and he became frustrated. While he was there, he met a French educator of the deaf who invited him to go to Paris to spend three months learning at the Royal Institution for the Deaf, the school where Laurent Clerc was teaching. Gallaudet accepted the offer, and went to the Royal Institution for the Deaf, where Clerc became his Sign Language teacher. The two worked and studied well together. When the time came for Gallaudet to return to America, he asked Clerc to come with him. Clerc accepted on one condition: that he would stay in America only a short time.

The two men set sail on June 18, 1816. The voyage across the Atlantic Ocean took 52 days; however, Clerc and Gallaudet put the time to good use. Clerc studied English, and Gallaudet studied sign language. They discussed the school for the deaf which they planned to open. On the long trip, they had many conversations about education and deafness. The year after they arrived, they founded a school for the deaf in Hartford, Connecticut.

At the school, Clerc led a busy life. He taught signs to Principal Gallaudet; he taught the pupils; and he taught hearing men who came to the school to study deaf education. At that time, the state would only pay for each student to stay at the school for five years. Therefore, Clerc had to teach his pupils as much as he could as quickly as possible. He and Gallaudet also assisted in founding other schools for the deaf.

Once, Clerc came to Washington, D.C. because he was asked to appear before the Congress of the United States. He met President James Monroe, who became interested in Sign Language when he observed Clerc signing.

In 1819, Clerc married Eliza Crocker Boardman, one of his pupils. They had six children. He retired from teaching in 1858. Although he had intended to return to France, he never did. He died on July 18, 1869, in the United States.

Adapted from: Goodstein, A. and Walworth, M. (1979). *Interesting Deaf Americans*. Gallaudet University. Used with permission of Gallaudet Association of Alumni, Revised by Vivion Smith.

Thomas H. Gallaudet

The legend goes like this: In 1814, Thomas visited his family in Hartford, Connecticut. Looking out the window, he noticed that his younger brothers and sisters were not playing with another child. When he went out to investigate, he learned that this young woman, Alice Cogswell, was deaf. Not knowing sign language, Thomas attempted to communicate with Alice by pointing to his hat and writing H-A-T in the dirt. She understood him and he was inspired to teach her more. Her father, Mason Cogswell, a wealthy doctor, subsequently financed Thomas' trip to Europe since there were no schools for deaf children in the United States at that time.

Thomas first traveled to England, where he ran into roadblocks with the Braidwood family. This family operated many schools for deaf students in England that focused on the oral method of education, meaning students were expected to master lip reading and speech. They weren't too willing to share their methods with a young upstart from America, especially since Thomas wasn't able to pay the fees they requested. At the same time, he was not satisfied that the oral method produced desirable results. However, while in England he met Abbe Sicard, the director of the Institut Royal des Sourds-Muets in Paris, France, and two of his faculty members, Laurent Clerc and Jean Massieu, both highly educated graduates of the school. Thomas Hopkins Gallaudet accompanied them back to France to learn more from them there. However, before long he ran out of funds to support himself. Recognizing that he still wasn't ready to set up a school on his own, he called upon Clerc to accompany him back to America. On the way back, Clerc taught Thomas sign language and Thomas taught Clerc English, and together they established the American School for the Deaf in 1817. Laurent Clerc became the first deaf teacher of deaf students in the United States.

Gallaudet later married one of the graduates of the school, Sophia Fowler, and they had eight children. The youngest child was named Edward Miner Gallaudet. At the age of 20, Edward Miner Gallaudet journeyed to Washington, D.C., to run a school for deaf children there. Seven years later, in 1864, President Abraham Lincoln signed the charter to establish a national college for deaf students. Gallaudet University is named in honor of Edward's father, Thomas Hopkins Gallaudet.

www.gallaudet.edu

Usdeafhistory.files.wordpress.com

<https://clerccenter.gallaudet.edu/national-resources/info/info-to-go/deaf-culture/laurent-clerc.html>

5 - A sample of portraits



Sometimes they focus on Laurent Clerc or on Thomas H Gallaudet, separately. Sometimes they associate them and the title of the paper where they are embedded sheds some light on the author's viewpoint or concern. Thus, John Crowley's use of "Monsieur" is very telling: it is, of course, a French word to underline Laurent Clerc's geographical origins but also a respectful attitude as "monsieur" is used also in French when speaking of a great man. Margerite Blais' s thesis is dealing with Deaf culture and identity quest and her inclusion of Laurent Clerc and Thomas H. Gallaudet here situates them both in a large cultural and historical context. Edna Edith Sayers and Diana Gates show consideration for Laurent Clerc and Thomas Gallaudet, but they are mainly depicting Lydia Huntley Sigourney, whose decisive part has been obscured by her being a woman in a society where educated people were men and Yale alumni more particularly. (Thomas Hopkins Gallaudet, Dr. Cogswell and Daniel Wadsworth).



After her death, John Greenleaf Whittier composed a poem for her memorial tablet:

*She sang alone, ere womanhood had known
The gift of song which fills the air to-day:
Tender and sweet, a music all her own
May fitly linger where she knelt to pray.*

All excerpts below go back to the beginning of the story and insist on the crucial part played by Thomas H. Gallaudet and Laurent Clerc in introducing and teaching sign language in school.

5-1 Clerc, Monsieur Laurent, by John Crowley, Disability History Museum Staff

This article pinpoints the main landmarks in Laurent Clerc's life (as in biographies) and it also focuses on Laurent Clerc's contract at the Hartford School:

Gallaudet and Clerc worked out a very careful contract, one that guaranteed Clerc freedom of religion (he would be a Roman Catholic in a staunchly Protestant and often anti-Catholic society) and a payment and travel expenses even if the school scheme didn't work out. On the long trip across the Atlantic, Gallaudet learned sign from Clerc, and Clerc learned English from Gallaudet: he kept a lengthy diary in which he describes learning his new language.

According to the contract, Clerc was to work for three years, six hours a day on weekdays, three hours on Saturdays, with Sundays free. As to what he would teach, here's what the contract said:

Mr. Clerc shall endeavor to give his pupils a knowledge of grammar, language, arithmetic, the globe, geography, history; of the Old Testament... and the New Testament, including the life of Jesus Christ, the Acts of the Apostles, the Epistles of St. Paul, St. John, St. Peter, and St. Jude.

Republished from: John Crowley, *Monsieur Laurent Clerc*, Disability History Museum

<http://www.disabilitymuseum.org/dhm/edu/essay.html?id=39>

5-2 *The Deaf Culture, Quests for Identity in the Heart of Communication*

Both Thomas H. Gallaudet and Laurent Clerc were at the origin of sign language communication, enabling Deaf people to develop their culture and build their identity.

It was Thomas Hopkins Gallaudet who first took real action in the mid-19th century to promote the American deaf people. He was a neighbor of Mason Cogswell, a prominent New England surgeon, whose daughter, Alice, had become deaf at the age of two as a result of meningitis. Gallaudet, then a theology student, takes an interest in Alice's situation, often alone and neglected by all. He saw her not as a handicapped person, but as a healthy child who simply needed a new language to communicate. He teaches her how to spell, and since he is gifted in pantomime, invents a code to enter into a relationship with her. Seized by a passion for the Deaf, Gallaudet decided to go to Edinburgh to study the Anglo-Saxon oralist method of the Braidwood family, but they refused to share their secrets with him. He then went to the Institute created in Paris by de L'Épée and obtained the necessary training to teach sign language communication. Back in America with Laurent Clerc, a deaf Frenchman trained by Sicard, he founded in 1817, in Hartford, Connecticut, the first school for the Deaf: the Connecticut Asylum for the Education and Instruction of Deaf and Dumb Persons.

Laurent Clerc, for his part, taught methodical signs, invented signs that correspond to the words of the spoken language and must be used in the syntactic order of the English language. Gallaudet, on the other hand, advocated spatial location to indicate grammatical relationships.

Marguerite Blais. (2006). *La culture sourde, Quêtes identitaires au cœur de la communication*, Les Presses de l'Université Laval, Published online [Deaf culture, Identity Quests at the Heart of Communication]

5-3 *It Takes a Village, by Edna Edith Sayers and Diana Gates*

The establishment of Deaf Education in the United States has traditionally been seen as the heroic act of one inspired hearing man, Thomas Hopkins Gallaudet. As Paddy Ladd writes: “ This is the “Grand narrative “where deaf communities are constructed solely as the individual end product of a lineage of distinguished hearing education” [...] More recently with the establishment of Deaf studies as an academic discipline, credit is increasingly given to Laurent Clerc, the deaf Frenchman from whom Thomas Hopkins Gallaudet learned to sign and who came to America with Gallaudet to help establish the nation’s first school for deaf children in Hartford, Connecticut. This article argues that these two men would never have been called on to play the roles they did without the earlier and necessary contributions of Lydia Huntley Sigourney. Before Gallaudet and Clerc enrolled their first pupil Alice Cogswell in 1817, Lydia Huntley, under the patronage of the wealthy Daniel Wadsworth and with the support of both Alice’s parents had taught the little deaf girl to read and write English.

E.E. Sayers and D. Gates, *Lydia Huntley Sigourney and the beginnings of American deaf education in Hartford: It takes a village*. Sign Language Studies 8, no.4 (2008): 369-411.

The article rehabilitates Dr Cogswell, who had been able to read a book on the topics that he owned, and who sent his daughter Alice to be educated even though she was deaf. And the article dwells on Lydia Huntley Sigourney, who was Alice’s first pupil taught how to read and write English, more particularly the Bible, before Laurent Clerc’s arrival. Alice was literate when the Asylum opened in 1817. Moreover, Lydia Huntley Sigourney is described as a great feminist. She promoted deaf women’s position in writing (articles, letters.) when they were denied speaking in the public sphere. Her poem about a young deaf girl, Julia Brace, was very popular. Alice Cogswell appears in one of her stories *in How to be Happy* (1833) and in her “*Letters to my pupils*”.



Lydia Huntley Sigourney,
Source: Wikimedia Commons

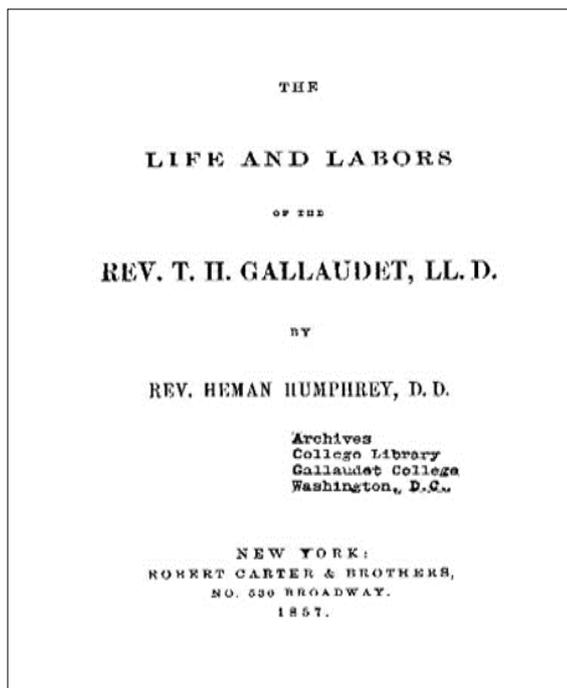
5-4 The Life and Labors of Thomas H. Gallaudet by Rev. Heman Humphrey.

Rev Heman Humphrey was a friend of Thomas H. Gallaudet from Yale College. He compiled Thomas H. Gallaudet's letters, speeches and sermons into a narrative biography.

For him, Thomas H Gallaudet was the best to communicate with Alice by using manual signs.

In the Introduction, the author, a religious man, dwells on the importance of God's plans in ordering Thomas Gallaudet's life in such a way that he could be at the right moment in the right place. This excludes all possibility of chance in the course of his life. Then, as a privileged Yale alumnus and Gallaudet's friend, he explains the importance of keeping records of great men' lives and actions and insists more particularly on the originality of his enterprise.

Biographical memorials of such men as have distinguished themselves by taking the lead in these and kindred alleviations, will always be read with interest, even by those who scarcely think at all of Him who gifted them with their noble faculties, and breathed into them the inspiration which bore them on through every discouragement and obstacle; and how much deeper is the interest, when the moving cause, the "loving kindness and tender mercies of our God», are kept continually in view. Doubtless some published memoirs might well have been dispensed with; but men are endowed with such an infinite variety of gifts; their lives and labors are so exceedingly modified by providential circumstances; that very interesting traits of character are often brought out in memoirs which do honor to human nature; and which serve as examples to stimulate others to noble aspirations, but which would otherwise have been lost to the Church and the world. Without claiming the highest rank for the subject of this memoir, we are persuaded, that not only his numerous friends in all parts of the land, but many others, will be glad to see a more extended notice of his life and labors, than has yet been published.



H. Humphrey, The Life and Labors of Thomas H. Gallaudet. (New York: Robert Carter & Bros, 1867).

[http://self.gutenberg.org/articles/eng/Thomas Hopkins Gallaudet](http://self.gutenberg.org/articles/eng/Thomas_Hopkins_Gallaudet)

B - Monographs and critical analyses

Apart from the websites of the places that are landmarks in Laurent Clerc and Thomas Gallaudet's lives (place of birth, ASD, institutes, university), it is quite interesting now to read the following accounts by renowned historians as they bring some personal light and insight into both characters.

Some of them are substantial in their efforts to be exhaustive. They plunge the readers into the successive events, both private and professional on the one hand, but also, historical, on the other hand. This gives realism to their accounts and demonstrates how strong-spirited Thomas H. Gallaudet and Laurent Clerc were: they knew where they were going and they were going to it straightforward with the sense of a mission they had to accomplish, whatever might happen around them.

1 - Laurent Clerc: Autobiography, reprinted by H. Barnard

[Note: Laurent Clerc wrote it and Barnard republished it later].

Clerc, L. (1852). "Laurent Clerc: Autobiography." In H. Barnard, A Tribute to Gallaudet. (pp. 106-116). Hartford, Conn: Brockett and Hutchinson.

As it is a very thorough autobiography, (and it inspired many others), it is entirely reproduced here. It traces the chronological succession of connected events in Laurent Clerc's life, nearly year after year. It is rich in historical information, particularly on France's political upheavals with bearings on L' Abbé Sicard's actions. The first-person narration enables the author to give some personal comments and viewpoints too. It gives a sense of proximity and the illusion that Laurent Clerc is well and alive and living. In addition, the reader follows the geographical itinerary of the fundraising conferences [towns in boldtype] and travels through the northeastern part of the United States. This adds a certain charm to the narrative.

I was born in La Balme, canton of Crémieu, department of Isère, on December 26, 1785. The village of La Balme is twenty-six miles east of Lyon, on the east side of the Rhone, and is famous for its cave, called "La Grotte de Notre Dame de la Balme". My father, Joseph Francis Clerc, a notary by profession, was the mayor of the place from 1780 to 1814, my mother, Elizabeth Candy, was the daughter of M. Candy, of Crémieu, also a notary. My father died in April 1816 and my mother in May 1818.



Entrance of
La Grotte de Notre Dame de la Balme

When I was about one year old, I was alone for a few moments on a chair by the fire, and it happened, I don't know how, that I fell into the fire, and burned my right cheek so badly, that the scar of it is still visible; and my parents felt that this accident deprived me of my senses of hearing and smell.

When I was seven years old, my mother learned that a certain doctor in Lyon could cure deafness and took me to him. The doctor, after examining my ears, said he thought he could make me hear, provided I called his office twice a day for two weeks. My mother agreed to take me, so we regularly called every day and the doctor injected my ears with I don't know what fluids, but I got no benefit from the operation. And at the end of the fortnight, I went home with my mother, still as deaf as before.

I spent my childhood at home, doing nothing but running and playing with other children. I would sometimes drive my mother's turkeys to the field or her cows to the pasture, and sometimes my father's horse to the watering hole. I was never taught to write or form the letters of the alphabet; nor did I ever go to school; for there were no such schools or academies in our villages as we see everywhere in New England.

When I was about twelve years old, that is to say in 1797, my father not being able to be away from home because of the duties of his office, my uncle, Laurent Clerc, took me to Paris, and the next day I was placed in the establishment for the deaf and dumb. I did not see Abbé Sicard, but I learned later that he was in prison for a political offence. Mr. Massieu, deaf and dumb like me, was my first teacher, and when Abbé Sicard was released and took over the direction of the Institution, he took me into his class, and I was with him forever.

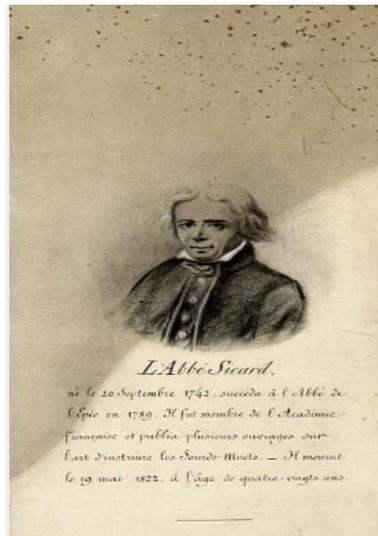


INJS main entrance Rue St Jacques
(INJS Paris private collection)

Outside of class, Father Margaron, one of the assistant teachers, taught me to articulate with some of the other students. We learned to articulate all the letters of the alphabet and many words of one and two or three syllables; but I had a lot of trouble pronouncing da and ta, de and le, do and to, etc. Although Mr. Margaron made me repeat these words over and over again, I didn't do any better. One day

he became so impatient and gave me such a violent blow under the chin, that I bit my tongue, and felt so chagrined, that I would try to learn not to speak again.

I applied myself to other things. I learned to draw and compose at the institution's print shop until 1805, when I was employed as a probationary tutor, and in 1806 appointed a teacher with a salary of about two hundred dollars. In time, M. Sicard thought me capable of teaching the highest class, and I occupied that position when M. Gallaudet came to Paris. But before I speak of him at greater length, let me tell you how I came to know M. G.



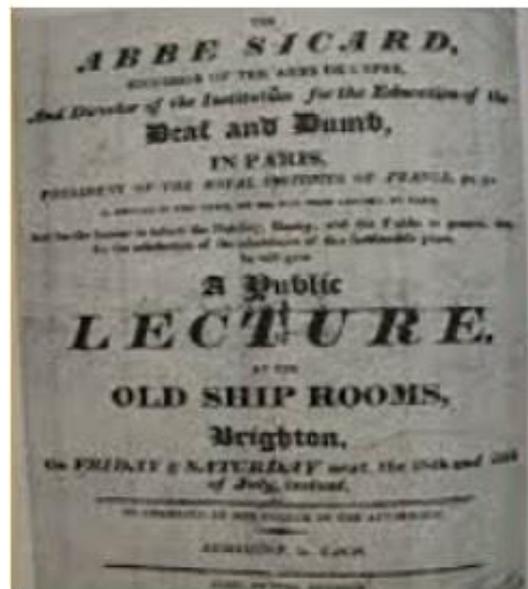
L. Abbé Sicard
(INJS Paris, private collection)

M. Sicard, who was a royalist and adherent of the Bourbon dynasty, sometimes imprudently maintained a secret correspondence with the garrisons of the Count of Provence (since Louis XVIII) then in England. Napoleon, as everyone knows, being generally well informed of all that was going on in Paris and throughout France, knew that such correspondence was taking place; but not considering M. Sicard to be a very dangerous enemy of his, and thinking him, on the contrary, to be very useful to the unfortunate deaf and dumb, he left him alone, but resolved to reproach him with having meddled in politics instead of looking after himself or his own business, never conferring upon him any title of honor which he might deserve. M. S., who had the simplicity to believe that Napoleon was unaware of his intrigues, wondered why he did not receive the cross of the Legion of Honor, an honor not infrequently conferred on persons much less entitled to it than himself. He did not, however, despair of obtaining it at a later date, and to this end he begged some of his friends whom he knew to have free access and great influence over Napoleon to persuade him to visit the institution for the deaf but all attempts and all persuasions failed, for Napoleon constantly refused, not because he did not feel interested in the deaf and dumb, but because of M. Sicard, whom he wanted to punish by not seeing him. Things went on without further extraordinary events until the allied powers entered



Legion of honor
(Wikimedia Commons)

Paris in 1814. Shortly after Louis XVIII was seated on the throne of his ancestors, M. Sicard was among the first to go and congratulate His Majesty on his happy return, and it was not long before the cross of the Legion of Honor, to which he so much aspired, was conferred upon him by the king himself, and gradually the order of St. Wladimir of Russia, by the Emperor Alexander, and another order from the King of Sweden. Mr. Sicard was now convinced that justice had been done to him and desired nothing more. But when Napoleon returned from Elba in March 1815, M. Sicard was so afraid that Napoleon would deprive him of his honors that he accepted an invitation to visit England in order not to be in Paris while Napoleon was there. He took M. Massieu and myself with him. We arrived in **London** during the last days of May. We had our first exhibition on June.



Flyer of A Public Lecture

We gave two a week, and they were generally attended by princes, members of both houses of parliament, and other personalities of both sexes, among them the Duke of Kent, the Duke of Orleans, (since Louis Philippe,) and his grace, the Duchess of Wellington. I had hardly foreseen, at that time, the total defeat that Napoleon would suffer by the united armies of Europe, under the command of her illustrious husband, the Duke of Wellington. I had the mortification of being present in the chamber of lords when the prince regent came in person to announce to both chambers the battle of Waterloo and the flight of Napoleon. I was also a witness to the illumination of the city in the evening, and the joy this event caused the English! Under the command of her illustrious husband, the Duke of Wellington. I had the mortification of being present in the chamber of lords when the prince regent came in person to announce to both chambers the battle of Waterloo and the flight of Napoleon. I was also a witness to the illumination of the city in the evening, and the joy this event caused the English! under the command of her illustrious husband, the Duke of Wellington.

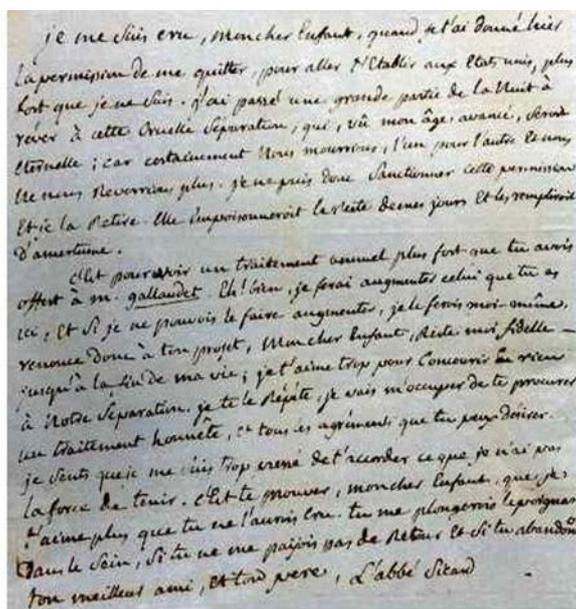
It was at the close of one of our public lectures that Mr. Gallaudet was introduced to me for the first time by Mr. Sicard, to whom he had previously been introduced by a member of Parliament. We cordially shook hands with him, and on being told

who he was, where he came from, and for what purpose, and on being further informed of the ill success of his mission in England, we earnestly invited him to come to Paris, assuring him that every facility would be afforded him to see our Institution and attend our daily lessons. He accepted the invitation and said he would come in the ensuing spring. We did not see him anymore, as we left London soon afterward.

In the spring of 1816, according to his promise, he came to **Paris**, and glad were we to see him again. He visited our Institution almost every day. He began by attending the lowest class, and from class to class, he came to mine which, as mentioned above, was the highest. I had, therefore, a good opportunity of seeing and conversing with him often, and the more I saw him, the more I liked him; his countenance and manners pleased me greatly. He frequented my school-room, and one day requested me to give him private lessons of an hour every day. I could receive him but three times a week, in my room upstairs in the afternoon, and he came with punctuality, so great was his desire of acquiring the knowledge of the language of signs in the shortest time possible. I told him, nevertheless, that however diligent he might be, it would require at least six months to get a tolerably good knowledge of signs, and a year for the method of instruction so as to be well qualified to teach thoroughly. He said he feared it would not be in his power to stay so long, and that he would reflect, and give me his final decision by and by. In the meantime, he continued coming to receive his lesson, and we spoke no more of "how long he would stay" till the middle of May, when taking a favorable occasion, he intimated to me that he wished very much he could obtain a well-educated deaf and dumb young man to accompany him to America. I named two young deaf and dumb men who had left our Institution a few years since, that I knew would suit him, as they both had some knowledge of the English language, whereas I had none at all; but he answered that he had already made his choice, and that I was the person he preferred. Greatly astonished was I, for I had not the least expectation that I should be thought of. After a short pause, I said I would not hesitate to go if I could do it properly. I suggested to him the idea of speaking or writing to the Abbé Sicard on the subject, as I considered myself engaged to the Abbé. He said he would write, and accordingly wrote; but although his letter was never answered, we both inferred that Mr. Sicard's silence was rather favorable than otherwise. But in order to ascertain his views, I was requested to sound him. Accordingly, I called and inquired in the most respectful manner whether he had received Mr. G's letter, and if so, what answer he had returned. I received but an evasive answer to my question; for he abruptly asked me why I wished to part with him. My reply was simply this, that I could without much inconvenience leave him for a few years without loving him the less for it, and that I had a great desire to see the world, and especially to make my unfortunate fellow-beings on the other side of the Atlantic, participate in the same benefits of education that I had myself received from him. He seemed to appreciate my feelings; for after some further discussions on both sides, he finished by saying that he would give his consent, provided I also obtained the consent of my mother, my father being dead. I said I would ask her, if he would permit me to go home. He said I might. Accordingly, I made my preparations and started for Lyons on the 1st of June, after having promised Mr. Gallaudet to return a few days before the appointed time for our voyage. I thought I was going to agreeably surprise my dear mother, for she never imagined, poor woman, that I could come to see her, except during my vacation, which usually took place in September; but I was myself much more surprised when, on my arrival, she told me she knew what I had come for, and on my inquiring what it was, she handed

me a letter she had received from Mr. Sicard the preceding day. On reading it, I found that the good Abbé Sicard had altered his mind...

[one finds his change of mind, in this letter that he also addressed to Laurent Clerc]



Letter from Abbé Sicard to Laurent Clerc telling him he changed his mind
Cogswell Museum ASD private collection

"I saw myself, my dear child, when I gave you yesterday the permission to leave me to go and establish yourself in the United States, stronger than I am. I spent a large part of the night dreaming of this cruel separation which, considering my advanced age, would be eternal; for certainly we would die for each other and we would not see each other again; I cannot therefore sanction this permission and I withdraw it. It would poison the rest of my days and fill them with bitterness [...]"

... and written to dissuade my mother from giving her consent; saying he "could not spare me"! Accordingly, my mother urged me hard to stay in France, but to no purpose, for I told her that my resolution was taken, and that nothing could make me change it. She gave her consent with much reluctance and said she would pray God every day for my safety, through the intercession of La Sainte Vierge. I bade herself, my brother and sisters and friends, adieu, and was back in Paris on the 12th of June, and the next day, after having taken an affectionate leave of the good Abbé Sicard, who had been like a father to me, I went also to bid my pupils good-bye, and there took place a painful scene I can never forget. A favorite pupil of mine, the young Polish Count Alexander de Machwitz, a natural son of the Emperor Alexander, whom I knew to be much attached to me, came over to me and with tears in his eyes, took hold of me, saying he would not let me depart, scolding me, at the same time, for having so long kept a secret my intention to go away. I apologized as well as I could, assuring him that I had done so, because I thought it best. However, he still held me so fast in his arms, so that I had to struggle, to disentangle myself from him, and having floored him without hurting him, I made my exit, and the day following, the 14th of June, I was en route for Havre, with Mr. Gallaudet and our much-honored friend, S. V. S. Wilder, Esq., who, I am happy to say, is still alive, and now resides somewhere in Greenwich, in this state. On the

18th of June, in the afternoon, we embarked on board the ship *Mary Augusta*, Captain Hall, and arrived at **New York** on the 9th of August 1816, in the morning.

Owing to adverse winds and frequent calms which usually occur at sea in the summer season, our passage lasted fifty-two days. It was rather long; but on the whole, the voyage was pleasant. A part of our time on board was usefully employed. I taught Mr. Gallaudet the method of the signs for abstract ideas, and he taught me the English language. I wrote my journal, and as I thought in French rather than in English, I made several laughable mistakes in the construction of my sentences, which he corrected; so that being thus daily occupied, I did not find the time to fall very heavily upon me. We formed plans for the success of the institution we were going to establish; we made arrangements for the journeys we expected to undertake for the collection of funds; we reformed certain signs which we thought would not well suit American manners and customs.

The weather was fair when we landed. Our first steps were directed to the store of Messrs. Wilder & Co., in Pearl Street, thence to the customhouse, and thence we proceeded to the house of Mr. Gallaudet's father, in John Street. I anticipated much pleasure in witnessing his joy at again seeing his parents, brothers and sisters, after so long an absence; but I must acknowledge that I was rather disappointed; for I did not see any greater demonstration of welcome on both sides than the mere shaking of hands; little was I aware, at that time, of the difference between the French and American mode of saluting, especially with respect to the ladies. We staid about ten days in New York. We met, or rather we called on several gentlemen of Mr. Gallaudet's acquaintance, who gave me a cordial welcome to America.

My first impression of the city was admiration of Broadway which appeared to me to be the finest street in the world, and my astonishment was great at seeing so much bustle in the streets, people in so great a hurry and walking so fast.

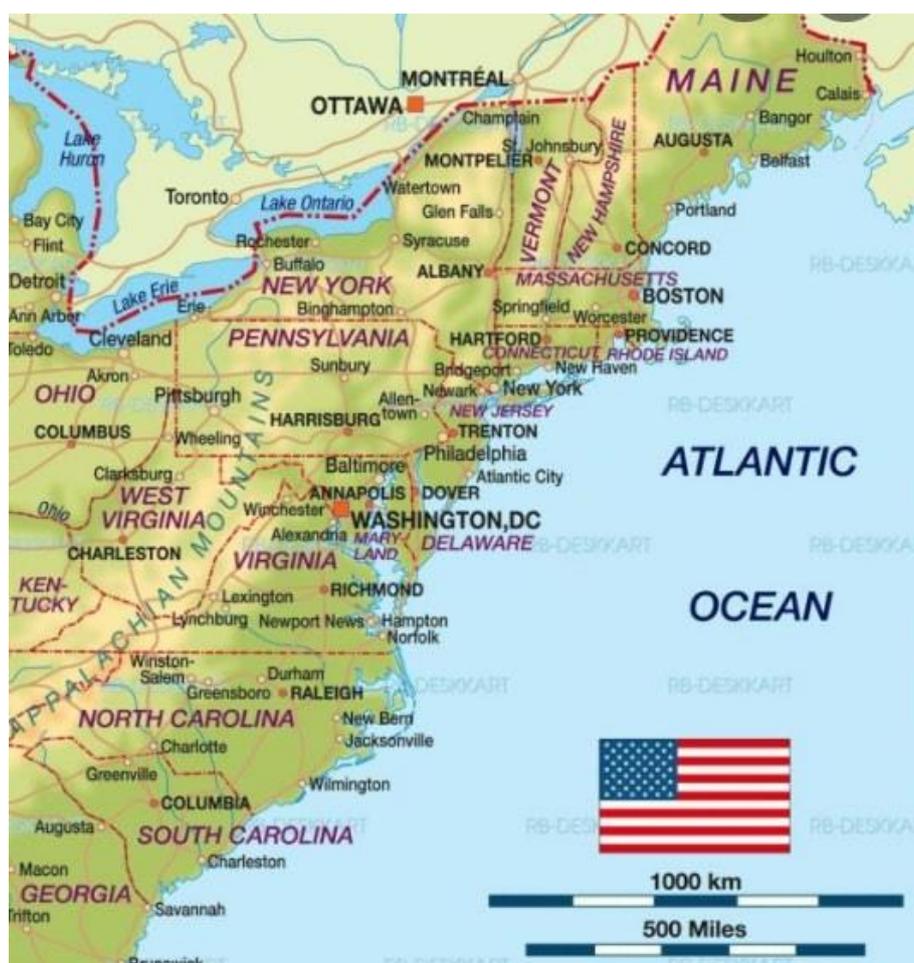
My second impression was the wearisomeness which the uniformity produced. Men, streets, squares, buildings, everything was alike; all looked well, nothing appeared magnificent. I noticed neatness without elegance, riches without taste, beauty without gracefulness. I found that the happiness of the Americans was at their firesides with their wives, children and friends. They had few amusements, few spectacles and very few sublime objects capable of arresting the attention of a European; and such a one could not easily appreciate the extent of the private happiness of a people who were secure and not poor.

At length, we left **New York** for **New Haven**, where we made a short tarry, which I wished had been much longer; for I found it a delightful place. We called on President Dwight and some of the professors, who welcomed us. We visited the college, the library and chapel. The next day, it being very pleasant, we took the stage for Hartford, where we arrived in the afternoon of the 22d of August 1816. We alighted at Dr. Cogswell's in Prospect Street. We found Mrs. Cogswell alone at home with her daughters, excepting Alice, who was then at school under Miss Lydia Huntley, (now Mrs. Sigourney, our lovely poetess.) She was immediately sent for, and when she made her appearance, I beheld a very interesting little girl. She had one of the most intelligent countenances I ever saw. I was much pleased with her.

We conversed by signs, and we understood each other very well; so true is it, as I have often mentioned before, that the language of signs is universal and as simple as nature. I had left many persons and objects in France endeared to me by association, and America, at first, seemed uninteresting and monotonous, and I sometimes regretted leaving my native land; but on seeing Alice, I had only to recur to the object which had induced me to seek these shores, to contemplate the good we were going to do, and sadness was subdued by an approving conscience.

On the 23d of August in the evening, that is, the next day after our arrival at Hartford, we attended a meeting of the directors of the Asylum at the State House, and I was introduced to them individually. By and by, I made the acquaintance of the principal citizens of Hartford and their families, who all received and treated me so kindly, that I felt quite at home.

*On the 3d of September, Dr. Cogswell, Mr. Gallaudet and myself set out for **Boston**, with many letters of introduction, among which was one from Gov. John C. Smith to Gov. Phillips. The object of our coming hither was soon generally known. I was at the Atheneum upon two days of the week and answered a great variety of questions proposed to me by a large company of gentlemen.*



On the second day, that is, on the 9th of September, an address was delivered to the gentlemen, which I had written in the morning. It is proper to remark that I had only studied the English language about three months; no apology, therefore, is necessary for the idiomatic expressions discoverable in my style. Here is my address, the first I ever made in this country:

"Gentlemen—you know the motive which has led me to the United States of America. The public papers have taught you it; but you do not yet know, I believe, the reason why I have come to Boston with Mr. Gallaudet and Dr. Cogswell, and why we have invited you to honor this meeting with your presence.

"It is to speak to you more conveniently of the deaf and dumb, of those unfortunate beings who, deprived of the sense of hearing and consequently of that of speech, would be condemned all their life, to the saddest vegetation if nobody came to their succor, but who entrusted to our regenerative hands, will pass from the class of brutes to the class of men.

It is to affect your hearts with regard to their unhappy state, to excite the sensibility and solicit the charity of your generous souls in their favor; respectfully to entreat you to occupy yourselves in promoting their future happiness.

The celebrated and immortal Abbé de l'Epée invented the art of restoring them to society and religion. It is according to his method that the institutions in Europe have been formed; it is consequently to him that all the deaf and dumb who know how to write and read, owe their temporal and spiritual happiness.

The Abbé Sicard, my respectable and beloved master, was the most distinguished among the disciples of the Abbé de l'Epée, whom he succeeded. The latter had left some things to be designed, the Abbé Sicard has supplied them; but if there had not been the Abbé de l'Epée, there would not have been the Abbé Sicard; thus glory, honor and eternal gratitude are due to those two friends of humanity.

I was about twelve years old when I arrived at the Abbé Sicard's school. I was endowed with considerable intelligence, but nevertheless I had no idea of intellectual things. I had it is true, a mind, but it did not think; I had a heart, but it did not feel.

My mother, affected at my misfortune, had endeavored to show me the heavens, and to make me know God, imagining that I understood her, but her attempts were vain; I could comprehend nothing. I believed that God was a tall, big and strong man, and that Jesus Christ having come to kill us, had been killed by us, and placed on a cross as one of our triumphs.

I believed many other droll and ridiculous things; but as one cannot recollect what passed in his infancy, I cannot describe them. I am sure that the deaf and dumb who are in your country, think as I once did. You must be so kind as to aid us to undeceive them. We shall cultivate their minds and form their hearts; but as the mind and heart cannot live without the body, you will have the goodness to charge yourselves, with your other countrymen, with the support of their bodies. In Europe, each nation, however small, has an institution for the deaf and dumb, and most of these institutions are at the expense of the government. Will America remain the only nation which is insensible to the cry of humanity? I hope not, gentlemen; I hope that you will busy yourselves with the same zeal as your neighbors, the good inhabitants of Connecticut. If the deaf and dumb become

happy, it will be your joy to see that it is the effect of your generosity, and they will preserve the remembrance of it as long as they live, and your reward will be in heaven."

The next day (the 10th of September) we had another exhibition at one of the new court-house rooms for greater convenience. Here I delivered a complimentary address to the ladies, which was as follows:

"Ladies—yesterday we invited the most respectable inhabitants of Boston to meet us at the Atheneum, in order to speak to them of the poor deaf and dumb who abound in your own country. A great many gentlemen attended. I had hoped also to see some of you there; but I saw none. I expressed my wonder, and at the same time, my regret. I am now fully indemnified. I see you; I look into your eyes, and by your eyes I can judge the bottom of your hearts. I feel it is good, tender and sensible. A tender and sensible heart is never inaccessible to the misfortune of others.

There are more than two thousand unfortunate deaf and dumb in the United States without instruction and consequently without any knowledge whatever of the charms of society, of the benefits of God toward us all, and of a better happiness in the other world! While it lies in your power to contribute to render them happy here below, will you leave them to die in this sad state? I hope you will be too good to permit it. Behold, ladies, what I should desire to obtain from you. Mr. Gallaudet and I are in the design of raising those unfortunates from their nothingness. We propose to establish an institution in their favor, and to collect them there. This institution must be in the middle of your country that the deaf and dumb may arrive there from all the states. The town of Hartford has seemed to us to be the most convenient place and has consequently been chosen.

The deaf and dumb whose parents or friends are rich, will pay their own board; those whose parents are indigent, will be at the expense of your liberality; and as they are the most numerous, the charity of all the citizens of America is indispensable. It is then to solicit that charity that we have come to Boston; and thence we intend to go to the other principal cities for the same purpose, and we have no doubt of its success. If you remark among your husbands, relations or friends, some who may be insensible to this action of benevolence, I beg you to change them into better dispositions. You have naturally great sensibility; you are endowed with the talent of causing the insensible to feel, and of subduing the inexorable. Thus, my friends rely on you, kind ladies, and I place in the number of the obligations I shall owe to you, those which my companions in the same situation as myself, will owe to you; and when they are educated, they will doubtless themselves express their gratitude to you."

At the close of my address, many ladies came to me, and shook hands with me, and I answered a number of questions, to the satisfaction of the company. A number of generous donations were made to the institution, and the example was followed by all classes in the community to the amount of many thousand dollars.

Dr. Cogswell had left us a few days previous and returned home; and on the 27th of September, Mr. Gallaudet and myself went to Salem, where we obtained several subscriptions.

The address which I delivered at the court-house was published in the newspapers. Early in October we returned to Hartford, and in a few days, we started for **New Haven**, where the legislature was in session. We had an exhibition before the

governor and both houses; at which time I delivered an address and answered numerous questions.

From New Haven we proceeded to **New York**, but we were not as successful there as we had been elsewhere. It was not that the New Yorkers were less benevolent than their fellow-citizens of New England, but the reason was that at the several meetings held at the City Hall, a majority of those who attended, wished to have an institution established in the city.

In November, the legislature of New York being in session at **Albany**, we went there, and a few days afterward we had an exhibition at the capital, where I delivered a long address, of which I regret I have not preserved any copy. We obtained something handsome from private gentlemen, but nothing from the legislature. We came back to New York city and made another attempt but did not succeed any better. We then went to **Philadelphia**, where we gave an exhibition at Washington Hall, in Third street. The meeting was much crowded, especially with pretty Quaker ladies; but as the Asylum was not to be located there, we did not receive as much as we had anticipated. I called several times on my countryman, Stephen Girard, Esq. I found him very eccentric: once he said he would give something, and the next day he would give nothing, on account of the school not being in Philadelphia, and said the people of New England were rich enough to support the institution. He was very local in his charity.

We returned north by way of **Burlington, N.J.**, and received some very liberal donations.

On the 15th of April 1817, our school was opened with seven pupils, in the south part of the building now the City Hotel, and on the 20th, Mr. Gallaudet delivered an appropriate sermon on the occasion in the Rev. Dr. Strong's church.

In January 1818, I visited **Washington City** with the late Mr. Henry Hudson, to ascertain whether we could hope to obtain something from Congress for our Asylum. I attended the House of Representatives, and the Hon. Henry Clay, who was the speaker, politely offered me a seat beside him. There was a recess of half an hour, and I conversed with several members of Congress, both in English and French. Afterward I visited the Senate chamber. The next day I had the honor of being introduced to President Monroe at the White House, by Mr. Hyde de Neuville, the French ambassador, for whom I had a letter of recommendation from the Duke Mathieu de Montmorency.

The President received me with much affability and bade me "welcome to America», and said among other things, that he hoped I would receive great honor and much gratitude by doing good to the deaf and dumb. I carefully preserved the paper containing our conversation but have mislaid it. I attended one of the levees with the ambassador and Mr. Hudson, and holding a paper and pencil in my hands, I had the pleasure of conversing with gentlemen and ladies.

In the session of 1819-20, thanks to the exertions of both our Connecticut senators and representatives, Congress granted us a township located in the state of Alabama, and President Monroe, with the benevolence which characterized him, readily sanctioned the act with his signature.

In May 1818, I prepared an address, and on the 28th, it was delivered, at my request, by Mr. Gallaudet, in the Center Congregational Church, before Gov. Wolcott and both houses of the legislature.

On the 3d of May 1819, at the house of her uncle, Benjamin Prescott, Esq., at Cohoes Falls, near Waterford, N.Y., I was married to Miss Eliza Crocker Boardman, a very beautiful and intelligent young lady, and one of our earliest pupils, by the Rev. Mr. Butler, then rector of the Episcopal church at Troy, and the father of the Rev. Dr. Butler, the present chaplain of the Senate of the United States at Washington. The grooms were Lewis Weld, Esq., and Hermann Bleecker, Esq., and the bride-maids Miss Prescott and Miss Butler, and the witnesses were Mr. and Mrs. Theodore Sedgwick, the Rev. Mr. Eaton and two or three other gentlemen of Albany.

Toward the close of April 1820, that is, about a month after the birth of my oldest daughter, Elizabeth Victoria, (now Mrs. George W. Beers,) I sailed for France on a visit to my friends and returned to Hartford in a year. We have now four living children, viz: two sons and two daughters, having lost two, viz: a girl and a boy, each at about two years old. My daughter Mrs. Beers has a son, and my younger daughter, Mrs. Henry C. Deming, has also one. My oldest son, Rev. Francis Joseph Clerc, rector of St. John's church, in St. Louis, Mo., is also married and has two children, a daughter and a son, so that I have now four grandchildren, all blessed with the sense of hearing, as well as their parents. My younger son, Charles Michael Clerc, is not yet married; he is at New York city, in a wholesale store. [...]

These instructions were given, not for a price, but in obedience to the precept of our Lord Jesus Christ, who said: "Freely you have received, freely give." In 1830, Mr. Gallaudet resigned his situation as Principal, notwithstanding my supplications that he would not. We had been so intimate, so harmonious, so much attached to each other; we had labored together so many years; that I parted with him with unspeakable grief.

In April 1885, I visited my friends in France again, with my eldest son Francis, whom I left there about three years ago, to perfect his knowledge of the French language. This was my second absence. The third and last was in May 1846, and I took my youngest son Charles with me, who also stayed for three years to learn to speak French and to acquire knowledge of silk making.

Laurent Clerc, Autobiography. In H. Barnard, A Tribute to Gallaudet, Hartford, Connecticut, Brockett and Hutchinson, 1852.

<https://usdeafhistory.com/>

2 - When the Mind Hears, Harlan Lane²⁷

His biography, as a literary genre, resembles any autobiography with a first-person narrative and a very tight chronological order. It is a very precise account interspersed with live sequences where Laurent Clerc's voice is heard. Occasionally he comments on events or expresses his feelings. It is a well-documented narration aiming, obviously, at situating events in time and space. It is also a very minute account of everyday life and, as such, a documentary on how education was then implemented in the French Paris Institute. This historical work recounts the struggle of deaf-mutes against prejudice, so that their rights and their language, sign language, was recognized. The people figuring in this book are many and range from the Abbe de l'Épée to Laurent Clerc, the spokesman for this community in the United States.

This book is a gallery of portraits of the prominent personalities of the time.

When the Mind Hears, the first comprehensive history of the deaf is also a powerful and compassionate study of the anatomy of prejudice and the motives and means of oppression. It is a narrative, told largely from the vantage point of Laurent Clerc, the deaf Frenchman who was an intellectual leader of the deaf community in France and then in America. Ultimately, the story of the deaf is a tragic one, as educators throughout history have sought to abolish sign language from the education of the deaf. The debate, involving such issues such as minority rights, integration (or "mainstreaming"), and bilingual education, rages anew today. Scrupulously documented but never dispassionate, *When the Mind Hears* vividly conveys the anger and frustration of all those who, deprived of their language, are deprived of their rightful heritage.

- ✓ What is Harlan Lane's approach? (Provided by publisher)

When the distinguished chairman of the drama department at Gallaudet College, Gil Eastman, and I wished to present, to a symposium of the National Association of the Deaf, a brief historical sketch of the American deaf community (in English and in American Sign language concurrently), we began: "My name is Laurent Clerc"; and so I begin here. Clerc was the intellectual leader of the French and then the American deaf communities; he knew most of the important figures in my "coherent interval"²⁸ personally or at one remove and he was the prime mover in that history. To learn what Clerc's experiences and views were, I consulted his published articles, addresses, diary, and autobiographical sketch, his book with Jean Massieu, the Clerc papers at Yale university, the Gallaudet Papers at the Library of Congress, and numerous documents by others describing or quoting his opinions. Often, I have been able to let Clerc speak for himself by taking sentences and paragraphs from these various sources (identified in the notes). When that was not possible, the views of Clerc's contemporaries served as my guide (where there

²⁷ Harlan Lane (1936-2019) was a linguist, psychologist, and specialist in sign language. Harlan Lane, a hearing man, became an often controversial spokesman for the Deaf community and he criticized cochlear implants. He believed on the social construction of disability . He received the Distinguished Service Award from the National Association of the Deaf (United States), the International Social Merit Award from the World Federation of the Deaf, and many other awards. He was Commandeur de l'Ordre des Palmes Académiques, the highest level of the academic honor given out by the French government. Lane died in France on July 13, 2019, at the age of 82.

His main books include: 1976. *The Wild Boy of Aveyron*, 1984. *The Deaf Experience: Classics in Language and Education*, 1984. *When the Mind Hears*. Random House.

He also published many articles.

²⁸ The foreword was written by Harlan Lane. Earlier in the foreword, he mentioned "a coherent interval" to depict the period: "The one hundred fifty years from the founding of the education of the signing community to the abandonment of that minority education—from mid-Enlightenment to 1900—seemed to me a coherent interval [...] to study."

was no reason to believe Clerc would have seen things otherwise). Where the facts are known, I have remained faithful to the facts, and I have indicated in the notes when I was obliged to give reign to my imagination.

Harlane Lane, *Introduction, When the Mind Hears*, 1984.



The Beinecke Rare Book and Manuscript Library,
Yale University, New Haven, Connecticut
(Postcard photo: Thomas P. Benincas, Jr)



The Library of Congress, Jefferson building

In an interview for Deaf Mosaic, (website link underneath) in 1985 (year of 200th anniversary of Laurent Clerc's birth) Harlan Lane explained how he came to be interested in Laurent Clerc and what was mainly his aim in writing his book. When discovering that no one so far had written the deaf history, he wondered why the deaf themselves did not do it. The answer was in the awareness that the English-Speaking majority conducted some oppression against the deaf minority (as all linguistic majorities quite often do elsewhere), not allowing them to struggle for acceptance. So, Harlan Lane wanted to have the deaf themselves speak in their own voice. Laurent Clerc was the perfect "spokesman". After ten years' research, Harlan Lane came to know him as "a bedfellow" as he says.

This is where Harlan Lane's "biography" differs from so many others: his unifying thread is connecting all the figures that accompanied Laurent Clerc, notably at the National Institution for Deaf-Mutes in Paris. A whole gallery of people constitutes the backdrop. Harlan Lane's narration depicts how the institution was working, daily, what subject matters were taught and how this school became the cradle of deaf education, and acquired its reputation thanks to gifted teachers. Of course, his main focus was on Laurent Clerc. However, he also highlighted the struggle of those who endeavored to impose models for the deaf education and whose support was so decisive in the recognition of the Deaf as human beings capable of being educated. Laurent Clerc stayed for twenty years in the Paris Institution, long enough for him to leave a deep imprint. Harlan Lane was more than a historian here: he was making a budding deaf community alive. By delineating its contours, he also spoke of the dividing line between a minority (the deaf community) and a majority (the mainstream society) and he asserted the values of both cultures. Source: media.gallaudet.edu/media/Deaf+Mosaic+105/1_9qt2p9ca

- ✓ What are the main points in Harlan Lane's account?

The book is divided into clear cut sections. Underneath: listing of main elements or themes as in note taking.

For a synopsis in ASL:

<https://www.worldcat.org/title/when-the-mind-hears-a-synopsis-in-asl/oclc/428482111>

- ✓ Laurent Clerc's youth; studies at INJS Paris

My name is Laurent Clerc. I am eighty-three years old. [...] The story has never been told. I will tell it all, and the forces of darkness will be revealed for what they are. I do not mean to say I shall relate all the facts; indeed, what interest would such an inventory have, even if all the facts were known? But I will tell the true story, how it really was, for I have seen much of it unfold with my own eyes; I have been a witness and a shaper of events.

After giving Laurent Clerc's historical background, the author described his youth, how he became deaf, how his parents took him to see a doctor in Lyon, and how he was taken to the Deaf school in Paris.

He depicted at length the very strict life at the INJS, its regularity, regulations, regimentation, uniforms, strict division between morning studies, and workshops in the afternoons (printing, that Laurent Clerc took, carpentry, clothing, design engraving) and this is summed up in one sentence:

I had exchanged the fields and grottos of La Balme for the confines of a monastery.



INJS Paris: main entrance, yard and students' dormitory
(INJS Paris private collection)

We also get information on the curricula:

First year: Fingerspelling is taught, as well as to read write and sign French nouns. Second year: French verbs, adverbs, adjectives, prepositions and pronouns. Third year and level: French syntax, mathematics, catechism. For the 4th level: the pupils were given books and studied history, geography and prepared for communion. All in all, 5 years were needed to complete the 4 levels. The evenings 6.30 to 7.30 were spent studying under supervision before supper.

Female students were housed and schooled apart as was the rule in residential schools. Laurent Clerc fell in love with a young girl who was sent to The House of Refuge. He complained about the tyranny that cloistered his beloved.

He learned how to articulate, but could not manage: hence he got a violent blow on his nose and speaking was over with him.

I will tell more about my teacher Massieu; and about his teacher, the Abbé Sicard, some thirty years older than he; and about Sicard's teacher, thirty years older

again, 'the father of the deaf', as he is called, the Abbé de l'Épée. But let me begin this unfolding as I experienced it, with the product of their labors, or rather the temple devoted to them, the National Institutions for Deaf-Mutes, where I would spend the next twenty years of my life.

- ✓ In the following sections, information is provided on Massieu and Sicard:

The focus is on Sicard's three flaws: hypocrisy, guile and vanity are underlined and how he loved center stage in the social theatre. After Bordeaux, it was Paris and he thought that the second school to be founded in Europe would attract public attention. Money had to be collected and special exhibitions and demonstrations of his pupils in front of influential High society people (Duchess etc..) were organized. Laurent Clerc and Massieu were playing the decisive parts. And they impressed audiences.

Sicard enjoyed this theatricality, as he loved being publicly honored by memberships in scholarly societies, the Legion of Honor he received, his becoming honorary Canon of the Cathedral of Notre Dame and the order of Vasa (from king of Sweden). He loved being in the forefront, but died much indebted in May 1822.

- ✓ The following sections underline the rising importance of oralism (with Pereire), the meeting between Laurent Clerc and Thomas Gallaudet, the role played by Alice Cogswell.

We get a picture of Thomas Gallaudet:

Simple, gifted, clever, humble, strong faith in God, Christian humility.

He suffered from bad health, so he decided to become a peddler on horseback to live in the open. He went to Seminary. He wanted to preach and be in the service of his fellow men. Fortunately, he met Alice.

The book mentions some deaf women: Alice Cogswell, Julia Brace, and Eliza Boardman.

It provides an analysis of common signs/Indian signs.

It also covers the following information: After L Clerc's death: importance of oralism; Alexander Bell was taking over. Clerc and Bell were opposites: Clerc was for bilingualism; Bell for monolingualism. Two different personalities.

How were the signing communities of the Western World laid to waste? The offspring of Pereire and oralism were back to the fore and truth was distorted into "the French method of educating the deaf".

Not the silent method of L'Abbé de l'Épée, but the speaking method of Pereire. Pereire was put on a pedestal.

The Pereire Society organized a national meeting at Lyon.

An Inspector (Claveau) toured France and came back promoting oralism. Clerc's old friend, Forrestier, counterattacked, but to no avail. The minister ordered the Bordeaux School to open as an oral school.

✓ Milan Conference, 1880:

REPORT
OF THE PROCEEDINGS OF THE
INTERNATIONAL CONGRESS
ON THE
EDUCATION OF THE DEAF, *et cetera*,
HELD AT MILAN,
SEPTEMBER 6th—11th, 1880;

TAKEN FROM THE ENGLISH OFFICIAL MINUTES,

READ BY

A. A. KINSEY,

SECRETARY OF THE ENGLISH-SPEAKING SECTION OF THE CONGRESS:

PRINCIPAL OF THE TRAINING COLLEGE FOR TEACHERS OF THE DEAF,
ON THE "GERMAN" SYSTEM, HALLING, LONDON.

WITH AN APPENDIX,

*Containing Papers written for the Congress by Members of the
"Society for Training Teachers of the Deaf": and diffusion
of the "German" System in the United Kingdom."*

LONDON:

W. H. ALLEN & CO., 13, WATERLOO PLACE, S.W.
1880.



A conference conceived as a brief rally of opponents of manual language. 2 dozen hours only. 3 or 4 oralists domineering the scene. A partisan gathering was prepared beforehand in Italy where oralists prevailed. Those who could speak had, in fact, learned to speak before losing their hearing.

164 delegates, the Italians, exceeded the majority by 10; 56 from France, 8 British delegates and 5 American delegates, who represented 51 schools and 6 thousand pupils, were outvoted.

Among the French: Claveau, Peyron and Adolphe Franck all were representing the Ministry of the interior. Houdin represented the rival Ministry of Public Instruction. All was organized in favor of oralism.

The congress did not discuss language teaching methods, as no delegate had a method of teaching speech. So, issues were about construction of buildings, age of admission and of graduation.

Edward M. Gallaudet spoke in favor of the combined system. All but the Americans voted for the dominant oral language.

3 - The Memory of Laurent Clerc by James Denison²⁹

James Denison's admiration is palpable all through and his forceful praise of Laurent Clerc's character and moral qualities verges on a subjective account. Laudatory adjectives are abundant and give this piece of terse prose the touch of a love declaration.

Indirectly, it is a picture of James Denison too. Denison was one of the Americans who attended the Milan Conference in 1880. He could not vote as a delegate, because the organizers did not give deaf participants their voting privileges.

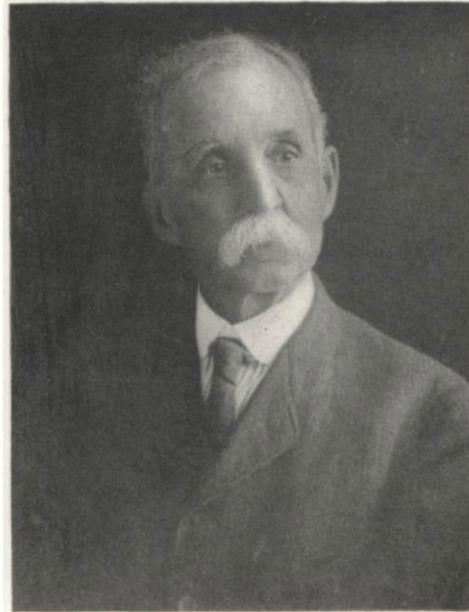
It would appear at this distance of time to have been the most trying, as it was the most momentous act of Mr. Clerc's life to decide to accompany Mr. Gallaudet to America. He must bid farewell to home, friends, and relations; to aged parents on the verge of the grave; he must leave forever the vine-clad hills and lovely vales of France; he must abandon Paris, with its palaces and gardens and fountains, its libraries and art-museums, its unrivalled resources for aesthetic and intellectual enjoyment, so dear to the heart of the true Frenchman; he must prepare to see buried beneath the dust of disuse and oblivion his precious French, his only written language, mastered with the heavy tax of time and effort laid upon the deaf-mute; he must tear himself from his beloved teacher and friend, Sicard, the tendrils of whose nature clung to the young protégé and assistant, loth to let him go-even on a mission of beneficence to which he himself had pointed the way by precept and by example.

Yet, from all we can learn, Mr. Clerc did not hesitate in making his decision. He won the reluctant consent of his parents; he overcame the objections of Sicard one by one; he took prompt leave of his friends and the scene of his labors and triumphs, and on the 18th of June he embarked for America with Mr. Gallaudet

It was a great step to take; one from which most men under similar circumstances would have shrunk. Allowing something to the persuasive pleading of Mr. Gallaudet, and to the contagion of his enthusiasm, and something also to the influence wrought upon Mr. Clerc's nature in breathing for so many years an atmosphere so pervaded with the fragrance of self-consecration and generous deeds, the fact remains that had not Laurent Clerc been a man of more than ordinary decision and benevolence of character, he would never have thus bidden fare well to France and come a voluntary exile to a foreign land.

²⁹ James Denison (1837-1910) He was a teacher (1856-1909) and first principal (1869-1909) at the Kendall School for the deaf. James was deaf. James' sister Susan was wife of Edward Miner Gallaudet. He paid an homage to his friend in *The American Annals of the Deaf* vol55 n°3, May 1910. James Denison was a delegate at the Milan Conference in 1880.

The record of Mr. Clerc's life from the date of his arrival in America until his death, fifty-three years afterwards, is a familiar one to every educated mute. With the exception of a few months at three different times spent in visiting his native country, forty-one of these years were passed in the faithful and successful performance of duty as an instructor in the American Asylum. In the annual reports of that institution, where Mr. Clerc's name from first to last heads the list of the corps of instructors, repeated and honorable mention is made of his assistance in soliciting funds, of his valuable aid in training teachers for the Hartford, as well as other schools, of the high estimate in which his labors and counsels were held by the board of directors. The board at various times gave evidence of their sense of his important services by the bestowment of special favors and appropriations; and in 1858, when, in his 73d year, he closed his active connection with the asylum, he retired in the receipt of a pension for life from its funds.



JAMES DENISON,
1837-1910.

Teacher in the Michigan School, 1856-1857.
Teacher in the Kendall School, 1857-1910.
Principal of the Kendall School, 1870-1909.

James Denison, "The memory of Laurent Clerc", *American Annals of the Deaf and Dumb* 19, no. 4 (October 1874).

Source: Edward M. Gallaudet's "James Denison", *American Annals of the Deaf*, Vol.5 no.3 (1910) : 280-281

4 - Laurent Clerc: Apostle of the Deaf People of the New World by Loida R. Canlas

This is about Laurent Clerc's intellectual talents in a few strokes. How one moves from place to place to "preach" as apostles did? The answer may lie in an intellectual potential, top-ranking studies and the sense of a mission.

When he was about a year old, Clerc fell from his high chair into the kitchen fireplace. His right cheek was severely burned, a fever developed, and later, it was discovered that his senses of hearing and smell were damaged. It was never clear if this resulted from his accident or if he was born with those disabilities. His name-sign derives from the scar that remained - the middle and index fingers brushed downward across the right cheek near the mouth. His parents tried many different treatments to restore his hearing, but none succeeded. For the next 11 years he stayed at home, exploring the village and taking care of their cows, turkeys, and horses. He did not go to school and did not learn to write. Thus, as a deaf child, Clerc had neither an education nor a systematic mode of communication. Clerc excelled in his academic studies. However, an assistant teacher, the Abbe Margaron tried teaching him to pronounce words. Clerc's difficulties in

pronouncing certain syllables so infuriated this teacher that one time, he gave Clerc a violent blow under his chin. This caused Clerc to accidentally bite his tongue so badly that he swore never again to learn to speak. Later, this experience would strengthen his belief that signing is the method of communication by which deaf students can best learn.

He learned to draw and to compose in the printing office of the Institution. In 1805, just eight years later, he was chosen to become a "tutor on trial ". The following year, he was hired as a teacher. His salary was about \$200.

When Napoleon returned to Paris in March, 1815, Sicard decided that he should leave. He visited England and brought with him Massieu and Clerc. In London, they lectured and demonstrated their teaching methods. One of their lectures on July 10 was attended by the Yankee Congregationalist minister, Thomas Hopkins Gallaudet, from Hartford, Connecticut.

L.R. Canlas, "Laurent Clerc: Apostle to the Deaf People of the New World." National Deaf Education Center, Washington, DC: Gallaudet University Education Center, 2006.

[https://www.gallaudet.edu Centre national d'éducation des sourds Laurent Clerc](https://www.gallaudet.edu/Centre-national-d%27education-des-sourds-Laurent-Clerc)



5 - Thomas Gallaudet: The Voice of the Deaf by Yasmin Garza

In this biography, Yasmin Garza celebrates Thomas H. Gallaudet, who brought Laurent Clerc to American deaf people.

Thomas Gallaudet was a man of many talents. After graduating from Yale at seventeen, he worked as a law assistant and a tutor, but due to health-related issues, he left his job and became a door-to-door salesman in rural Kentucky and Ohio, where he schooled young children that couldn't afford an education. He especially enjoyed teaching geography, U.S. history, and the Bible, which eventually lead to him discovering his own passion for religion. He earned his license to be a preacher, and became a traveling minister, going everywhere he felt there was a need. His constant traveling allowed him to visit his family in his hometown of Hartford, Connecticut on a regular basis.

There he met little Alice who was deaf, and agreed with his father to become her teacher.

[...]

Although the school was good, Gallaudet and Clerc wanted to keep going. They went to Congress and got approval from the House of Representatives, Senate, and President Abraham Lincoln to granted college degrees from their school. Eventually, the American School for the Deaf branched out to form Gallaudet University, the first and only all-deaf university in the United States. Both the

American School for the Deaf and Gallaudet University continue to provide proper education to those who are deaf and hard of hearing, proving a saying that prevails in deaf culture: Deaf people can do EVERYTHING a hearing person can do except hear.

April 6, 2019

<https://stmhistorymedia.org/thomas-gallaudet-the-voice-of-the-deaf/>

Appropriately, Thomas Gallaudet, a hearing man, was “the voice of the deaf”, as he was their spokesman to address wealthy influential people and politicians for financial support, but also as he voiced their legitimate aspirations to be heard and recognized in the field of education.

6 - Laurent Clerc by William W. Turner³⁰

It deals with Laurent Clerc’s life and professional career, his sense of having to accomplish a divine mission, his commitment to educating the deaf and dumb students, his wish (shared with Gallaudet) of establishing schools in States other than Connecticut. It is in praise of education at large, as it brings enlightenment and civilization. By inserting Laurent Clerc’s biography into a historical perspective of what he brought with Thomas H. Gallaudet in the field of educating deaf and dumb, this article positions Laurent Clerc, not only as a pioneer, but as a visionary. This is the originality of this article.

W.W. Turner provided also a moving account of Laurent Clerc’s last years and death, thus enabling readers to accompany him till the very end of his life.

Civilization in its progress has led to the development of education and its diffusion among all classes of the people. This progress, however, has been gradual. In ancient times its possession was confined to philosophers and sages and to a few individuals of the higher ranks of society. The introduction of Christianity accelerated its progress and increased the facilities of obtaining it. At length its advantages came to be generally appreciated and desired; and now the governments of the most enlightened nations consider it good policy, as well as an imperative duty, to provide free schools for all the children within their respective jurisdictions. For a long time, deaf-mutes were regarded as an exceptional class that, in common with idiots, could not be reached by any of the processes of education; and until the fifteenth century no successful effort had been made to teach them a written language. Then enough was done in a few isolated cases to show the possibility of educating them to some extent. But it was not until the middle of the eighteenth century that the first school was established for their instruction. In 1760 the Abbe de l' Epee was at the head of a school in France, consisting of a little company of deaf-mutes, which was commenced by him five or six years earlier, with two pupils. He was succeeded, on his decease in 1789, by the Abbe Sicard, who had previously received instruction from him in Paris, and had been conducting another school for deaf-mutes in France for about three years. It was at this Institution, while under the direction of Sicard, that the subject of this notice received his education.

³⁰ William Walcott Turner (1800-1887) - He graduated with honor at Yale College in 1819. He taught in Wethersfield, Connecticut until 1821 then accepted a job as teacher in the school that became later The American School for the Deaf. He was instructor here for 33 years, and in 1854 became the third principal of the school following Thomas Gallaudet and Lewis Weld. He retired in 1863, after 42 years of service to the deaf and dumb, the longest period for this position.

[...]

Early in the year 1858, Mr. Clerc closed his active labors as teacher of his fellow mutes, and at the age of seventy-three retired from the post of instructor which he had held, with the slight interruptions already alluded to, for forty-one years. During this long period, he had discharged the duties of a class teacher with great fidelity. His valuable services were fully appreciated by the first Principal, Mr. Gallaudet, and his successors; by their associates in the department of instruction, and by the officers and pupils of the Institution. Evidence of this appears in their records and annual reports and in the bestowment of special favors and appropriations by the Directors, and particularly of a pension for life from the funds of the Asylum. From this time till a few months before his decease, he enjoyed life as well as most men of his age. Happy in his domestic and social relations, he might be seen in the streets, in the post-office and the reading-rooms of Hartford, almost every day, meeting his friends with a pleasant smile and a graceful salutation; and expressing a deep interest in public events relating to the welfare of the country and especially to the prosperity of his beloved Asylum. At all its public gatherings, and annual visitations by the Executive officers and Legislative Committees of the New England States, he was expected to be present and was honorably noticed. So identified was he with the Institution that no occasion of this kind seemed to be complete without him. In the spring of the present year, however, the infirmities of age and the invasions of disease clustered around him and his strength was weakened by the way. He was obliged to confine himself to his house; and before the coming on of an event which he had hoped would have brought together a large circle of friends and former pupils - the celebration of his golden wedding- he had taken his bed to die. A committee from the mutes in Boston, New York and Philadelphia, came to him when the time had arrived, in the place of the multitudes who would under other circumstances have gladly been present, bearing valuable gifts from those who sent them, and were permitted to pass through the sick-room, to take a last look of their venerated friend, and to grasp the hands extended in his final benediction. He lingered on for some weeks, till the strength of a vigorous constitution was exhausted, and he peacefully departed this life on the 18th of July 1869, in the eighty-fourth year of his age; leaving his wife and two surviving children, Mrs. Beers of Hartford, and Rev. Dr. Clerc of Philadelphia, to mourn his loss. His youngest daughter, wife of Hon. Henry C. Deming, died two weeks before her father.

Respecting Mr. Clerc's religious opinions and Christian character, it may be said, that he received the Bible as the word of God, and during the whole time of his connection with the Asylum, he faithfully taught its doctrines and precepts to his pupils. In middle life he became a communicant of the Episcopal church, and ever after retained his connection with it. During his last sickness, of more than three months continuance, he manifested a lovely spirit of Christian submission to the divine will. In a conversation with him when his recovery seemed doubtful, the writer of this article reminded him of the fact, and of the importance of being prepared for death and the great account; he replied that he had been Re-viewing his past life, and was deeply affected with the conviction that he was a sinner without any merits of his own; and that his only hope of forgiveness was in the efficacy of the blood of Christ to wash away his sins, and that he gave himself up to the disposal of God, trusting he should be accepted through the grace and mercy of his Son.

A large circle of friends mourned the death of Mr. Clerc, as a public calamity, while all the educated deaf-mutes of our country regarded it as a personal bereavement;

yet they may console themselves with the full belief that the sentiment expressed by him on taking leave of the convention which met at Hartford in 1850, to do him honor, has now in his case at least been realized:

My prayer is that when we leave this world, we may all be ushered into another where our ears may be unstopped and our mouths opened - where our happiness shall have no alloy; shall fear no change and know no end.

William W. Tuner, "Laurent Clerc". *American Annals of the Deaf and Dumb* 15, no.1, (1870) : 16-28.

7 - Laurent Clerc: A Complex and Conflicted Deaf Man in America, Christopher Adam Noel Kurz³¹ and Albert J. Hlibok³²

This article contains biographical elements from Laurent Clerc's birth to his death and follows a chronological order as befits the biography literary genre. However, it distinguishes itself from other biographies as the authors put the emphasis on probing into Laurent Clerc's psychology and personality:

We draw on primary sources to examine Laurent Clerc's inner self, his successes and struggles as a deaf man in the New World, and how he dealt with issues relating to family, religion, deafness, and the growing Deaf community.

Who was the man in Laurent Clerc?

The article is divided into five big sections: Family, deaf wife, hearing children and hearing grandchildren; Religious conversion; Language use: The unfortunates; Deafness, Deaf community, Audism; Elitism in two communities. The subtitles highlight the main topics at issue and the analytic perspectives chosen by the authors to deal with them: Laurent Clerc's personality and actions are considered within a social context, as well as broader issues of his time (elitism in communities, audism). For instance, Laurent Clerc's solitary youth accounts for his wish to gather his pupils for conversation in sign language, his falling in love with Eliza Crocker Boardman, one of his students, led him into momentary trouble as he was accused of "fraternization with students", but they got married despite Gallaudet advising him not to marry a deaf woman. He declined to be part of the wedding, which was "a heartbreaking moment for Clerc" as he held Gallaudet in high respect. Laurent Clerc, "a complex and conflicted deaf man in America" is both depicted and clarified by taking his background (in America) into account. Similarly, when he became a grandfather he wrote to a friend: "I have now four grandchildren, all

³¹ Christopher Adam Noel Kurz: is a Professor for the Master of Science in Secondary Education program and director of the Mathematics and Science Language and Learning Lab at the National Technical Institute for the Deaf in Rochester Institute of Technology. His research interests include content language and literacy in mathematics and science, Deaf experience with math and science learning, ASL/English bilingual education, gaming, and international deaf literacy and sign language documentation. He earned a PhD in Foundations of Education from University of Kansas and a BS in Applied Mathematics from RIT.

³² Albert J. Hlibok: a retired civil engineer and an amateur historian. See Albert and Peggy Hlibok collection of Empire State Association of the Deaf (ESAD) and Rochester Civic Association of the Deaf (RCAD) papers (1938-2008) at RIT Archive Collections.

blessed with a sense of hearing, as well as their parents”. This sheds some light on the way Laurent Clerc envisaged the place of deaf people in a hearing society and later, he expressed his views that some jobs could not be done by deaf people, an opinion that might have been surprising. Indeed, some people’s different views and their enthusiastic wish for total equality was somewhat tempered by Laurent Clerc’s realism and intimate beliefs.

Anita Small in her foreword to *Telling deaf lives*, sums up Christopher A.N. Kurz and Albert J. Hlibok’s contribution and insight:

The section concludes with a chapter by Christopher Kurz and Albert Hlibok about Laurent Clerc’s personal struggles and successes. It includes evidence of Clerc’s double consciousness, which influenced his personal perspectives, and new information about his family, work, and interactions with prominent historical figures. This chapter makes an important contribution in that it points to the humanity and complexity of revered historical figures.

Christopher Kurz and Albert Hlibok ‘s introduction sounds like a literary manifesto. Then, they unfold an analysis of Laurent Clerc’s complexities, by focusing on a few outstanding markers.

The unexamined life is ignorance. In the 1970’s Robert F. Panara, a renowned deaf professor of literature at the Rochester Institute of Technology, acknowledged the depressing lack in both American and world literature of the genuine life stories of deaf people: “[...] It is time that the deaf are studied as the human beings they are—as a living representation of the experience of Everyman in his journey through life”. Since then, post revisionist writers have brought hundreds of deaf persons to light in the literature. In this chapter we draw on primary sources to examine Laurent Clerc’s inner self, his successes and struggles as a deaf man in the New World, and how he dealt with issues relating to family, religion, deafness and the growing Deaf Community.

Family: Deaf Wife, Hearing Children, and Hearing Grandchildren

As a single, Catholic young man in a growing country, Laurent Clerc desperately needed someone with whom he could share life and rear a family. When Clerc first taught at the Hartford school, he was thirty-one years old and single. His deaf female pupils ranged in age from nine to forty. Naturally, the pupils, female and male alike, looked up to Clerc as their role model, for he was deaf, communicated in sign language, and knew about the world. After school they would visit him in his apartment for conversation in signed language. In September 1817 school board member Nathaniel Terry, whose deaf daughter attended the school, wrote a letter to Thomas H. Gallaudet accusing Laurent Clerc of fraternization with students. The issue was later resolved when Gallaudet responded, in writing, and defended Clerc’s character:

“to have an opportunity out of school hours, of enjoying the pleasure of social conversation with the young ladies. They esteem this, too, a peculiar privilege, & I may add, also, that it is a singular advantage to them, inasmuch as their chief business here is to acquire language, & his language of signs is the foundation of all their improvement...the origin of the charge, which has been made, that he is

*too attentive to them. I know his disposition well. He is as far aloof from any pretty jealousy or retaliation as any man I was ever acquainted with.”*³³

Well into retirement, Clerc continued his habit of welcoming groups of students to his home after class for a chat. It is certain that one of the ladies who frequented Clerc’s social affairs was Eliza Crocker Boardman from Whitesborough, New York, who enrolled at the Hartford school in 1817 at the age of twenty-four. Of Laurent Clerc, Eliza wrote the following in a letter for a student composition to Thomas Hopkins Gallaudet: “Mr. Clerc made signs and teaches the deaf and dumb about God and Jesus Christ... I believe Mr. Clerc will go to France in one year. We are sorry it.” Clerc, love struck by Eliza’s beauty, intelligence, and character, needed to wait until Eliza’s graduation in 1819 to share his love. Clerc was relieved when Eliza told him that she felt the same way. They were married at her uncle’s house at Cohoes Falls near Watertown, New York, on May 3, 1819, one month after graduation.

Clerc was shocked when Gallaudet advised him not to marry a deaf woman for fear that they would produce deaf children or encounter more inconveniences in society as a deaf couple. When Gallaudet, upset that Clerc was ignoring his advice, declined to be part of the wedding, Clerc asked Lewis Weld, one of the teachers at the Hartford Asylum, to help celebrate the wedding with him. Weld was his best man, not Thomas Hopkins Gallaudet, for whom Clerc held a high respect. This was a heartbreaking moment for Clerc, but he knew he needed Eliza Crocker Boardman to love for the rest of his life. After all, they possessed a shared deaf experience and conversed in sign language.

From his perspective, Laurent Clerc was vindicated when all of his children and grandchildren were hearing. In his April 28, 1858, retirement address Clerc related that “the first thing he did, on the birth of his child, was to satisfy himself by experiment that the child could hear, and how pleased he was to find that the discouraging predictions of his friends had failed to come to pass. «During his time, many deaf-mutes were happily married. In fact, several of his hearing friends had married deaf-mutes and had only now and then a deaf child among their offspring. In a letter to a friend, Clerc wrote: “I have now four grandchildren, all blessed with the sense of hearing, as well as their parents.”

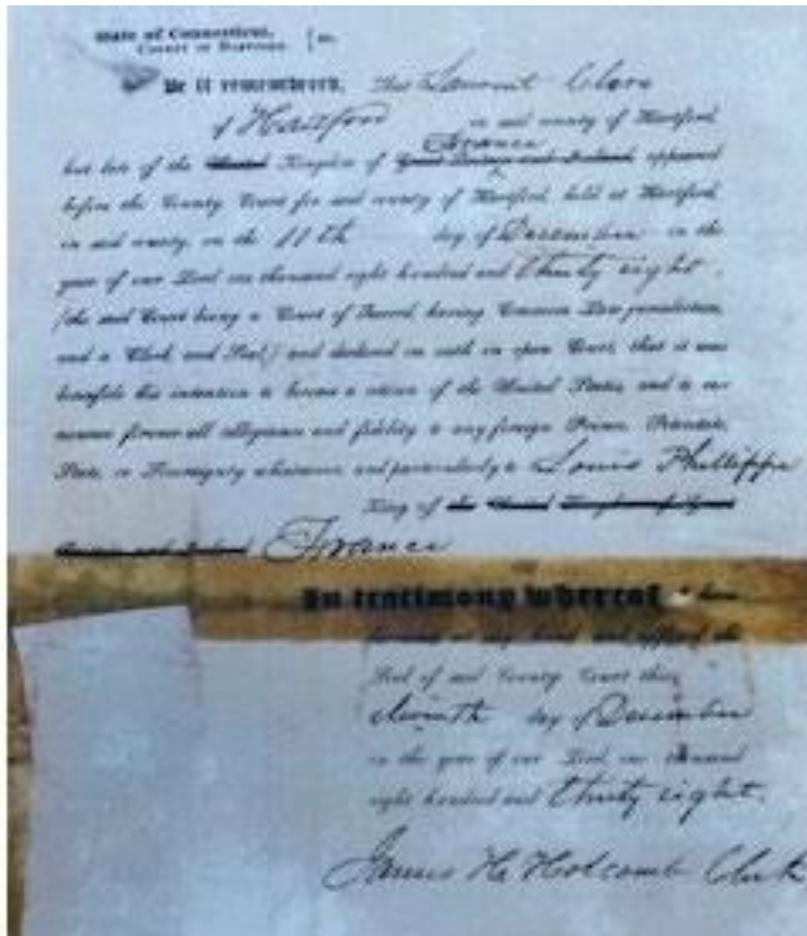
On the day of Laurent Clerc’s death, he had outlived four of his six children and his parents and sisters. The passing of his children, Helen (1822), John (1831), Charles (1852), and John’s twin sister, Sarah (1869), must have been heartbreaking for Clerc and his wife, although the mortality of children was high at the time. The passing of his two sisters in France and the faltering health of another sibling, also in France, prevented Clerc from visiting that country for a fourth time. In his 1857 letter to a friend, Clerc wrote of the death of his sisters and the cancellation of his anticipated trip to France. As his childhood family and relatives in France passed away, the sense of nostalgia from France and family faded and there would be no communication support from extended family). At the time of letter writing, Clerc knew he would never visit France again or see his old friends and family relatives.

³³ Thomas H. Gallaudet, letter from Thomas Hopkins Gallaudet to Nathaniel Terry, Thursday, September 1817. American School for the Deaf Library Archives.

Religious Conversion

At a time when religion defined a person's identity, one's religious association was usually passed along by family and/or political ties. Laurent Clerc was born to a Roman Catholic family and educated as a Catholic at the Institut National des Jeunes Sourds de Paris under the supervision of the Abbé Roch Sicard. For Clerc, the world could be comprehended by an understanding of God and Jesus Christ. As Clerc's writings demonstrate, difficult life conditions were alleviated by one's faith in God. Fearing that Clerc would convert to Protestantism should he accompany Thomas H. Gallaudet, a Congregationalist, to a country where Catholicism was not highly regarded, Abbé Sicard had Clerc promise to be faithful to Catholicism: "[Y]ou would lose faith, you would have embraced a false religion for sure... which would be fatal if you go to a country of heretics or you would lose yourself for an eternity. I never will cry over your fate. And I never will regret the pain and care that I had given you as a good Catholic and a good Christian." In a conversation with Gallaudet, Sicard was adamant that Clerc "not... be called upon to teach anything contrary to the Roman Catholic religion which he professes, and in which faith he desires to live and die."

Arriving in New York City from Le Havre, France, Laurent Clerc noticed numerous church steeples throughout the town, indicating the American belief that people should have freedom of religion. During his first years of teaching at the Hartford school, Clerc taught Catholicism to his deaf pupils. One of his first religious struggles came when he fell in love with Eliza Crocker Boardman, an Episcopalian. Although his May 3, 1819, wedding was conducted as an Episcopalian ceremony at the home of his fiancé's uncle, Benjamin Prescott, Clerc remained a Catholic. Although he wrestled with his promise to Sicard, Clerc knew he would have to answer to him when he visited France after the expiration of his first contract with the Hartford school. In 1820, one month after his first daughter's birth, he visited France for a year. In Paris he reaffirmed to Sicard his Catholic religion. After the death of his parents in the late 1810s and then Sicard in 1822, Laurent Clerc was at last free from any binding promise. He became an Episcopalian several years later: "In middle life he became a communicant of the Episcopal church, and ever after retained his connection with it.» In addition, Clerc attained US citizenship on December 11, 1838, thereby forfeiting his loyalty to the sovereign of France, King Louis Philippe, but gaining religious freedom.



Laurent Clerc's U.S. citizenship document from Hartford County Court, December 11, 1838, denouncing allegiance to France
Cogswell Museum, ASD, private collection

"...declared on oath in open Court that it was bonafide his intention to become a citizen of the United States and to renounce forever all allegiance and fidelity to any foreign Prince, Potentate, State or Sovereignty whatsoever, and in particular to Lois Philippe King of France."

Language Use: The Unfortunates.

From August 1816 to March 1817, the first seven months of Laurent Clerc's time in the United States, he accompanied Thomas Hopkins Gallaudet and Mason F. Cogswell (a wealthy physician and a father in search of a better education for his deaf daughter, Alice) up and down the Eastern Seaboard on a fund-raising and marketing drive to establish and recruit pupils for a new school for deaf children. While in the eastern cities for legislature sessions and public audiences, Clerc gave addresses in sign language with Thomas Gallaudet's voicing and, with chalk and slate, exhibited his knowledge of and perspectives on the world. In his addresses Clerc would categorize deaf people as "unfortunates." In an address in New York City on August 19, 1816, Clerc concluded: "I thank you for it, and the interest you

express for us poor unfortunates. «In Hartford he urged the audience to be benevolent to the deaf and dumb: “Be then so good as to hasten their happiness; your countrymen have been too negligent of that unfortunate class of deaf and dumb. «In Boston on September 10, 1816, he opened his address to a male audience in similar fashion: [I wish to] speak to you more conveniently of the deaf and dumb, of those unfortunate beings who... would be condemned all their life, to the most sad vegetation if nobody came to their succor, but who entrusted to our regenerative hands, will pass from the class of brutes to the class of men.” To a female audience in Boston the following day he reiterated his address:

“ [Yesterday we spoke] of the poor deaf and dumb who abound in your own country» and of the “more than two thousand unfortunate deaf and dumb in the United States [...] While it lies in your power to contribute to render them happy here below, will you leave them to die in this sad state?” Clerc’s constant portrayal of deaf people as “poor unfortunates” stemmed from his experiences in France and England as part of a traveling exhibition with his mentor, the Abbé Roch Sicard, director of the Paris school for Deaf children. In the exhibitions Roch Sicard routinely portrayed deaf people as “the unfortunate,” “the abandoned,” and “strangers to society.” Witnessing the success of Sicard’s emotional appeal, perhaps Clerc adopted the same approach.

Laurent Clerc was an educated person with a brilliant mind; however, he did not cease to make negative generalizations about deaf people as a group. At the age of eighty-three Laurent Clerc wrote in a letter to a friend, “Thanks to God, I still enjoy good health and wish I had not retired so early as I could have continued to do more good to my unfortunate fellow Beings and to teach new teachers how to teach well.” His conviction was that uneducated deaf people may have more limitations in different aspects of life and that deaf people without knowledge or understanding of God are doomed in the afterlife. He strongly believed that deaf children need a good education so that they will be able to open their eyes to God and live independently in society through the use of reading and writing. In fact, Laurent Clerc, educated at the Paris school and an esteemed teacher, referred to himself as an “unfortunate. «While in New York City during his first days in the United States, he met with Nathaniel F. Moore, a professor at Columbia College, and communicated with him by writing with chalk and slate. The day after, Nathaniel wrote a letter to the Reverend John Mc Vickar about his meeting with Clerc: “We all are very much interested in this poor unfortunate, as he calls himself; though he has, as I told him, almost lost all claim to that name.” Moore himself did not see Clerc as a poor unfortunate, but Clerc thought otherwise. It is possible that Clerc continued to make emotional appeals to hearing people because he believed that, if he did so, society would help people in need.

Deafness, Deaf Community, Audism

Deafness can be perceived as a biological condition, a disability, or a trait. Living in a society that highly values audiological input and spoken language can be a struggle for many deaf people. Some find it gratifying to be different from the norm and have unique experiences; others find it frustrating in terms of not being able to overcome societal obstacles or stigma. Laurent Clerc became deaf at a very early age, possibly at birth, from a fever or, as his family maintained, a fall into a fireplace. In spite of his many successes as a deaf person, Clerc would often wonder

whether the grass was greener on the other side. During his second visit to France in 1843, he saw an opportunity to cure his deafness:

One day, in walking through Lyons, seeing a crowd of persons reading a notice stuck on the wall at the corner of a street, I had the curiosity to examine it. It announced that a Mr. LaFontaine would give in the evening, at the hotel Du Nord, an exhibition of experimental magnetism, at which he would operate on a young girl and present the physical phenomena [sic] of magnetism, and produce ecstasy under the influence of music; that he would also introduce a deaf and dumb young man of Lyons, whom he said he had succeeded in making hear by magnetism, and submit to the magnetical operation many other deaf and dumb, whom he would try to enable to hear also. I immediately concluded to attend the exhibition, and to request Mr. LaFontaine to experiment upon me, should he succeed, that the operation might be decisive. ³⁴

However, Clerc was prevented from attending the exhibition when his son, Charles, became ill. He later learned from deaf students at a nearby school that the experiment was a total failure. Clerc felt that God had a better plan for him, which was to continue educating deaf people.

Sign language is the lifeblood of the Deaf community. Laurent Clerc was proud that he brought his sign language from France to the United States. In his teaching, he employed the methodical signs, that is, English-order signing, as he believed it was the only way for students to learn reading and writing. His educational experience dictated this belief, as he had learned French through the methodical French signs. Occasionally he would criticize his students for sign production errors and for not adhering to his sign repertoire.

A former student wrote the following:

“It seemed to distress him [Clerc] to see me make any sign wrong, or in a clumsy manner. I remember well how I once met him in a street in a great hurry and told him my mother was visiting me. I was going to run right by, but he stopped me, and made me repeat what I had said, and then corrected one or two faults, nor would he let me go until I had made every sign to his satisfaction.”

During that incident, Clerc became upset when the student signed MOTHER with an open-palmed hand with a thumb resting on the cheek rather than the old sign with two productions, MOTHER-BABY (the baby symbolizes motherhood). Though he was the originator of the modified French American Sign Language, Clerc struggled with the natural evolution of this language. He did not realize that languages must evolve if they are to survive; all he wanted was for everyone to use the same language.

³⁴ Clerc, L. (1847, October). Visits to some of the schools for the Deaf and Dumb in France and England. *American Annals of the Deaf and Dumb*, 1(1), 62-66.

A few years after Clerc arrived in the United States, he conceived the idea of establishing an exclusive community of, for, and by deaf people, where they would find jobs and communicate in sign language. In 1819, after he found that a land parcel in Alabama had been put aside for funding the Hartford School, Clerc suggested “the plan of selling such part of the land... for the Asylum, and then having the rest as headquarters for the deaf and dumb, to which they could emigrate after being educated”. The idea was tabled until John Jacobus Flourney, a deaf Georgian and former student of the Hartford school, picked it up in 1855 and petitioned for the formation of a deaf colony in the West; Oregon was the destination. In the Deaf community, the deaf colony debate intensified, and Clerc felt obliged to respond to it. He realized it would take a miracle to make this colony happen, especially when deaf parents have hearing children. What would become of these youngsters? Clerc pointed out this problem: “It was very convenient to have some hearing persons within call in many cases, as for instance, sickness and fire.

Clerc acknowledged the potential of deaf people, as when, in his 1816 Philadelphia address, he described French deaf people in early 1800s: “Many are married and have children... Many others are employed in the offices of the government, and other public administrations. Many others are good painters, engravers, workers in mosaic, and printers. Some others... are merchants and rule their affairs perfectly well. «However, he believed deafness imposed job-related limitations in terms of deaf people’s ability to work as doctors and firefighters. During his 1843 visit to France, he stopped by a school for deaf children in the suburb of Lyons. The school was run by a deaf couple, a Mr. Forestier and his wife. Before Clerc left the school to visit his family in Le Balmes, he advised Mr. Forestier to “associate with him a clergyman, or a gentleman of respectability and talents, who could hear and speak, for the greater prosperity of the school and the better improvement of the children in written language and religious knowledge; my opinion being that, however instructed a deaf and dumb person might be, he was still less so than those who hear and speak.” Convinced he could run the school independently, Mr. Forestier naturally dismissed Clerc’s advice. Another example of Clerc’s belief that deaf people have limitations comes up in his 1864 address to the First Presbyterian Church in Washington, DC, for the inauguration of the National College for Deaf-Mutes. Near the close of his address, in which he pointed out the importance of higher education for deaf people in their pursuit of happiness and independence, he signed, “The degree of Master of Arts can be conferred on the deaf and dumb when they merit it; but, on account of their misfortune, they cannot become masters of music, and perhaps can never be entitled to receive the degree of Doctor in Divinity, in Physic, or in Law.” His belief that deafness imposes such limitations is a classic example of audism: “when deaf and hearing people have no trust in deaf people’s ability to control their own lives.” Although he had directed and transformed the Philadelphia School for the Deaf in almost eight months, he had worked under the supervision of hearing people for most of his life. What he experienced and believed was not uncommon among deaf people of the nineteenth century.³⁵

³⁵ Tom Humphries, *Communicating across cultures [Deaf/Hearing]and Language Learning*, 1997.

Elitism in Two Communities

Throughout his life Laurent Clerc learned the importance of being affiliated with people in upper-class society, for it brings advantages in terms of opportunity and recognition. During his traveling exhibitions, he was no stranger to royalty and people of affluence in Europe. In the United States, through Thomas Hopkins Gallaudet, Clerc met, conversed with (through writing), and gave exhibitions to wealthy people, religious leaders, professors, politicians, and presidents. His comfortable salary, in addition to what he earned as a private sign language tutor at the Hartford school, afforded him a life of prosperity. He traveled to Europe three times, owned a house and a pony, and attended social events in Hartford and elsewhere. Through his contacts in Philadelphia, Clerc met Charles Wilson Peale, who painted a portrait of Laurent and another of Eliza with baby Elizabeth Victoria Clerc.

Laurent Clerc maintained his elite status in the hearing community until the resignation in 1830 of Thomas Hopkins Gallaudet, his gatekeeper to upper-class society for almost fourteen years. Clerc was upset when Gallaudet decided to resign from his principal position: “We had been so intimate, so harmonious, so much attached to each other; we had labored together so many years; that I parted with him with unspeakable grief.” After his resignation, Gallaudet chose to take up writing, support women’s education, and become a minister at a mental asylum. Laurent Clerc could no longer rely on Gallaudet for communication and networking. His status in the hearing community gradually diminished, and he continued to maintain his networks only through his children and their extended families.

As the number of educated deaf people was growing exponentially, Laurent Clerc was christened by younger deaf leaders as the “Apostle to the Deaf People in the New World.” Clerc was invited to give presentations at events held by deaf organizations and teachers’ groups. At conferences he was often given an honorary chair while the meetings were in session. Although his status in the hearing community began to decline, his standing in the Deaf community increased. In one situation during the 1850s he repeatedly petitioned the Hartford school’s board of directors to help pay the maintenance costs for his house. Although he was drawing a pension from the school, he could not afford the house repairs, but, to Clerc’s utter frustration, the board denied his requests. In response, the Deaf community initiated a fund-raising drive to cover the cost of the repairs, posting announcements in deaf newsletters and Hartford newspapers. Clerc was upset with the notice in the Hartford newspapers, preferring that hearing people not know of his financial problems. He was embarrassed by this fund-raising drive because it put him in the spotlight in the Hartford community. In the Deaf community, Laurent Clerc was highly respected, as he remains today.

Every human being has successes and struggles. Even the apostles of Jesus Christ had internal struggles as they wrestled with faith, family, and money. The Apostle to the Deaf People in the New World was first and foremost a human being who happened to be deaf and who was the right man in the right time and place to bring bilingual teaching methods to the United States. As mentioned earlier, some of

Clerc's experiences and perspectives on the world are not uncommon among deaf people, especially the belief, rooted in audism, that deafness is inferior to hearing. On his deathbed on July 18, 1869, at the age of eighty-four, Clerc had fulfilled his dreams: finding love, home, and a growing community that continues to venerate him as the Apostle to the Deaf People in the New World."

C.A.N. Kurz and A.J. Hlibok, "Laurent Clerc: A Complex and Conflicted Deaf Man in America." In Snodden (ed.) *Telling Deaf Lives*, (Gallaudet University Press, 2014).

8 - Laurent Clerc, The Good Star of the Deaf-Mutes, Dahmane Soudani³⁶



Laurent Clerc, a bust of an icon of the deaf-mute community,
Chauncey Bradley Ives, 1846
(photo Dahmane Soudani)

In this article, the journalist Dahmane Soudani reconstructs the key stages in the life of Laurent Clerc, during the Exhibition organized by the Connecticut Historical Society for the 200th anniversary of the creation of the ASD.

It is written by a journalist whose French culture gives some coloring to his writing. Thus, the section "Alice's Call Comes to London" is a hint at contemporary French History, and the subtitle "Contre mauvaise fortune bon cœur" echoes a French adverbial phrase meaning make the most of everything or: against all odds, good heart.

Emphasis is placed on the importance of the religious context and a Yale community, which determined Thomas H. Gallaudet would come to the rescue of Alice, and then to the Deaf youth in America, to educate them. Thus, the metaphor "The good star of the Deaf Mutes", with strong connotations of luck, good feelings and supranatural protection, designing Laurent Clerc, can apply both to Laurent Clerc and Thomas H Gallaudet: after all, as both were also of French origin. And Dahmane Soudani recalls a Francophile atmosphere then prevailing in Hartford.

³⁶ Dahmane Soudani, a journalist who settled in Hartford and worked for the French Alliance.

USA. LAURENT CLERC, THE LUCKY STAR OF THE DEAF-MUTE

The Connecticut Historical Society is dedicating an exhibition to the bicentennial of the first school for the deaf and dumb in North America (American School for the Deaf or ASD). A man from the Isère region who was at the heart of the battle is at the heart of the event.



Gallaudet and Clerc, an exceptional dedication
(photo Dahmane Soudani)

The Connecticut Historical Society hosted an exhibit dedicated to the American School for the Deaf and Dumb (ASD) under the title “200 Years of ASD Impact”.

Born in 1785 in the small village of La Balme-les-Grottes, capital of the eponymous commune of a thousand inhabitants in the Isère region, Laurent Clerc (1785-1869) was the soul and driving force behind this enterprise, whose success at the time was by no means guaranteed in advance and which has survived events and men.

✓ **Alice's call reached London**

It all began with a meeting in London in 1815. In the company of the Girondin Jean Massieu (1772-1846) and the Iseran Laurent Clerc, his two assistants, Abbé Roch Ambroise Sicard (1742-1822), director of the Institut national de jeunes sourds de Paris (INJSP) was in the capital of the United Kingdom to promote the manual of the French teaching method for deaf mutes. Laurent Clerc was then 30 years old.

For his part, the American pastor Thomas Hopkins Gallaudet was also in London, on a mission from a group of a dozen notables from Hartford, Connecticut, to explore the advances in sign language for deaf mutes developed in Europe.

In Hartford, the capital of Connecticut, Dr. Mason Fitch Cogswell (1761-1830), a graduate of the prestigious Yale University, became very famous for having successfully performed the first cataract operation in his country. He had four daughters and a son, but, born in 1805, Alice, his third daughter, was deaf; a situation that the famous doctor lived very badly. It was then that he confided in Thomas Hopkins Gallaudet and the poetess, also from Hartford, Lydia Sigourney (1791-1865). A meeting of ten notables from Hartford and its environs was held sometime later at the doctor's house. At the end of this meeting, it was decided to raise funds and to send someone to Europe for a tour of the different methods of adapted education and the possibilities of using them to benefit American deaf mutes. That's how Pastor Thomas Hopkins Gallaudet ended up in London.

✓ **...But made himself heard in Paris**

At first, the pastor was interested in the oral method used by Braidwood Schools - named after the Edinburgh family that had developed it and still owned it - in Scotland and London, but the leaders of these establishments refused to share their recipe with the American emissary. Disappointed and disappointed, Thomas Hopkins Gallaudet met the three French pedagogues, in all likelihood by chance. After his meeting with Abbé Sicard and his assistants, the American pastor changed his mind and accompanied them to Paris where he attended a course given by Laurent Clerc. No doubt seduced by the professional qualities of the Isère native.

Thomas Hopkins Gallaudet managed to persuade the young teacher to go and prove himself in the United States and to help him to found an educational establishment for deaf-mutes. The Frenchman agreed, but only on the condition that his stay on the other side of the Atlantic would not last forever. In the early summer of 1816, the two men set sail for the United States. At the time, the 52-day crossing was used by Thomas H. Gallaudet to learn sign language from his recruit. In France, the specter of the Empire was irreversibly fading. Although disrupted by the White Terror, one of whose leaders was the future King Charles X, the Restoration had the wind in its sails.

The two men arrived in Hartford on August 22, 1816, and that same evening Laurent Clerc had an appointment with Alice Cogswell. Less than a year later, on April 15, 1817, the first school for deaf-mutes in North America opened in Hartford under the responsibility of Thomas Hopkins Gallaudet, assisted by Laurent Clerc, who was also a teacher.

✓ **From La Balme-les-Grottes to Hartford**

The son of a notary who collected taxes and a lawyer mother from the local bourgeoisie, Laurent Clerc (1785-1869) lost his hearing and sense of smell at the age of one when he fell from his chair into the fireplace. At the age of 12, he left Balme-les-Grottes for Paris - which still bore the scars of the Terror - where his uncle had enrolled him in the INJSP, an establishment whose genesis goes back to the initiative launched shortly after 1759 by the priest Charles-Michel de l'Épée (1712-1789), son of Charles-François de l'Épée, Louis XIV's building expert. Abbé

Sicard was twice director of the INJSP. Laurent Clerc's first teacher was Jean Massieu.

He graduated in 1804. After the coup d'état of 18 Brumaire, Napoleon I established the First Empire. "Already Napoleon was breaking through under Bonaparte, and of the first consul, already, in many places, the emperor's forehead was breaking through the narrow mask» said Victor Hugo of this period. The young man from the Isère region became a tutor, then a teacher in the same establishment before being promoted to assistant in the same capacity as his former teacher.

✓ **A breath of fresh air and teachers from Yale**

On the other side of the Atlantic, from the beginning of the 19th century, the religious revival known as the Second Great Awakening, combined with the abolition of slavery and the conquest of women's rights, made social action its battle horse. Yale University in Connecticut was one of the bastions of this movement. Its president at the time, Timothy Dwight (1752-1817) was one of the promoters of the moral and virtuous society. Many of the promoters and later first teachers of the deaf and dumb also came from this university. Thomas Hopkins Gallaudet was himself a graduate of Yale. He was predestined for a future as a reverend when the case of Alice Cogswell made him change his course.

In addition to the human dimension of this undertaking, the DSA's approach was in line with the pastor's convictions. For Thomas Hopkins Gallaudet, the education of the deaf was also a question of justice, but it also opened the way to evangelization. He was among those who believed that without education, deaf people have no access to the knowledge of God, morality and salvation and cannot participate fully in society.

✓ **In the history of the Alliance Française of Hartford**

The choice of language developed in France is undoubtedly linked to the undeniable qualities of Laurent Clerc, but the Francophile fiber may not be totally foreign to this option. In his text dedicated to the history of the Alliance of Hartford and published in the spring of 2017, the American jurist Philipp Sussler mentions: "The path and life of Thomas Hopkins Gallaudet, largely spent in Hartford, are other examples of Hartford's French ties. Thomas H. Gallaudet and his legacy illustrate the contribution of the Hartford community to the promotion of universal values, strongly influenced by France and French culture. A descendant of the French Huguenots who emigrated to the United States, Thomas H. Gallaudet lived in Hartford. In 1817, he founded the American School for the Deaf (ASD) there. Today, this school is the oldest educational institution for the deaf in the United States that has never had a break in operations. And Philipp Sussler added, "A prominent Parisian teacher of Isère origin, specializing in the education of the deaf, Laurent Clerc left France for the United States and settled in Hartford at the request of Thomas H. Gallaudet, whose principal collaborator he became; this undoubtedly strengthened and expanded the efforts of the founder of ASD. Given his inspiration and the influence of Thomas H. Gallaudet and Laurent Clerc -himself deaf- on its development the ASL (NDLR. American Sign Language) is closely linked to the French Sign Language and the Parisian Institute of the Deaf and Dumb).

✓ **Against all odds, good heart**

The first classes were held at the Bennett Hotel in Hartford. Laurent Clerc was the first teacher. The first class of learners consisted of seven students ranging in age from 9 to 51. Alice, who was just under 12 years old at the time, was part of that first wave of students. "In France I had left many people and affairs to which I was attached, and America, at first, seemed uninteresting and monotonous, and I sometimes regretted leaving my native land; but on seeing Alice, I remembered only the object which had induced me to seek these shores to contemplate the good that we were going to do. The sadness was then submerged by a consenting conscience» wrote Laurent Clerc in 1852.

Doing against bad luck, good heart, the Iseran finally succumbed to the call of New England. He would make his permanent home there after marrying Eliza Crocker Boardman, one of the first students of the ASD who was also deaf. Thomas Hopkins Gallaudet was opposed to deaf people marrying each other, but the example of Laurent Clerc and Eliza Crocker Boardman convinced him otherwise. The couple would have six children.

✓ **"I thank Gallaudet and Clerc"**

In 2004, nearly two centuries later, Chad Williams, a recent ASD graduate pays tribute to the Clerc-Gallaudet couple with these words, "I am grateful that ASD was created. I thank Gallaudet and Clerc for their incredible undertaking, for what they did. Today, the school is still here and as a person with hearing loss, I am so grateful for what it has allowed us to achieve. Now when I look at the deaf children, my wish is that they have the same success that we had."

Dahmane Soudani

<https://maghnord.com/2017/09/19/usa-laurent-clerc-la-bonne-etoile-des-Sourds-muets/> :

In his "Lessons learnt from the Connecticut Asylum", Barry A. Crouch³⁷ summarizes his vision of the three great men: Dr Cogswell, Thomas H. Gallaudet and Laurent Clerc, in two conclusive sentences:

Cogswell, Gallaudet and Clerc catalyzed the emergence of deaf Americans from marginality, isolation and ignorance to community, solidarity, organizational strength and substantial intellectual achievement. This struggle needs to be chronicled.

The documents published above, be they biographies, an autobiography, or life writings are definitely chronicles (a chronicle is a factual written account of important or historical events in the order of their occurrence.) in so far as the figures they deal with belong to History.

³⁷ Barry A. Crouch was a history professor at Gallaudet University.

He and Andrew J. Offutt published a book, *A place of Their Own*:(1989): from original sources, the book focuses on the Deaf community during the nineteenth century and shows the importance of schools in the creation of a deaf community.

C - Public Addresses and Celebrations

1 - Public addresses

These are eulogies read at particularly important moments and events in the life of Laurent Clerc or Thomas H. Gallaudet. They have been carefully written in advance and consider circumstances, but also the audience to whom they are delivered. They belong to life writings of the characters, beyond the artificial and rhetorical, not to say lyrical tone of a somewhat biased speaker who would pile up endless excessive compliments. Other times, in just one phrase, a single dominant feature was pinpointed, in what was called in ancient times “Homeric epithets”: in *The Iliad* and the *Odyssey*, Homeric epithets helped the reader keep track of who the main heroes were. For the most important characters, these epithets expressed their relationships to others or how they were seen by others, as well as their individual traits. It was like a tag that could be used with the ordinary name, bringing it some glamour, so to speak. For instance: Laurent Clerc, “the apostle of the Deaf” belongs to the genre.

In public addresses, speakers, usually renowned, highly educated personalities were also showing off their culture (in front of an élite audience, notably at international Conferences), and in those times, culture meant Latin and Greek culture. So, in their addresses, they would connect great contemporary figures with those of the past, or on the contrary, draw comparisons with illustrious contemporary characters and saviors of their country. The savior image or the Saint image is grandiloquent. Yet, those stylistic devices would push the figures they were honoring into the Pantheon of religious or pagan Gods.

1-1 *The Memory of Laurent Clerc by James Denison*

It's a catalogue listing intellectual and moral values:

MR. Gallaudet labored till the autumn of 1830 when, to our great sorrow, ill health compelled him to resign. He was a good man. His physiognomy was the type of his goodness and mildness. In his manners and conduct there was nothing affected. He had the wisdom becoming a man of his age and profession. He was neither ambitious nor mercenary. He was contented with what he received. His forte, however, was not the dexterous management of the perplexing business matters of so large an Institution; the school-room was the true arena for the display of his great abilities and greater affections. He made good scholars many of whom we are happy to see here, expressing with tearful eyes their gratitude to him, who first brought them to speak and hear. No bigot was he, although strict in his religious persuasions. He was not too denunciatory of others' faults; for so persuaded was he, that genuine repentance can only come through the grace of God, that he loved to pray for sinners rather than to reprove, when reproof only served to irritate. We therefore, saw nothing in his piety but what ministered our improvement and edification. His mind was well cultivated. His knowledge was extensive, and taste so correct, that in his usual conversation there appeared to be nothing but good taste and correct reasoning. When in discussions with others, he was deep as the sea, smooth as oil, and adroit as Talleyrand. (...) No person knew better how to speak to others, of what he himself knew, and of what he knew would please his listeners. He was a man of uprightness and equity. Neither greatness nor favor, nor rank, could seduce or dazzle him. In a word, he was one of the best men who

ever lived; benevolent, obliging and kind to everybody. No wonder, therefore, that he was beloved by all the deaf and dumb."

Denison, James. *The Memory of Laurent Clerc; Oration Pronounced at the Dedication of the Clerc Memorial*, *American Annals of the Deaf* 19, no.4 (1874): 238–244. James Denison delivered an address delivered at the dedication of the Clerc Memorial, Hartford, Connecticut, September 16, 1874.

1-2 On delivery of silver pitchers, American Annals for the Deaf 3, 1850

Ladies and gentlemen,

You have assembled here in this building, truly a large assemblage, for the purpose of witnessing an interesting ceremony. If the remarks I now shall make to you lack point, I trust I shall be excused from the peculiarity of the occasion. I feel a delicacy in expressing my ideas before so many to whom I am unknown, upon such an interesting topic. There seems to be to myself, an incongruity in standing here to address you, while there are so many among you, whose powers would have been better suited to the occasion. It is like passing a splendid gateway, decorated to the extent of modern taste; we think that behind it there must be a temple, or a palace for the kings and queens of the earth; that it must lead to fountains and parks in all their beauty.

You open the gate and advance, and find behind this splendor, only a miserable cottage. In like manner, I feel as if I, in comparison with my important subject, might be considered but the miserable cottage behind the splendid gateway.

[...]

We are assembled to express our love and gratitude to the founders of this institution, the first established in this country.

There are present former pupils of the establishment who left it ten, fifteen and even twenty years ago, from distant parts of the country. We once more warmly greet each other. We have experienced great pleasure in being allowed to assist in contributing for the object of this day, and thus testifying our gratitude to our instructors, and to the founders of this institution. Their glorious example has been followed, and now, for the education of our fellow sufferers, there are twelve or thirteen similar places of instruction, all arising from this institution. Thirty-three years ago, the deaf-mutes in this country were in the darkness of the grossest ignorance. They knew not God. They knew nothing of the maker of heaven and of earth. They knew nothing of the mission of Jesus Christ into the world to pardon sin. They knew not that, after this life, God would reward the virtuous and punish the vicious. They knew no distinction between right and wrong. They were all in ignorance and poverty, with no means of conveying their ideas to others, waiting for instruction, as the sick for a physician to heal them.

But their time of relief had come. In this city, a celebrated physician, Dr. Cogswell, had an interesting daughter, who had been deprived of her hearing. Though her father and her friends looked upon her with pity, yet her deprivation of hearing has proved to have been a blessing to the world. Had she not been left by God sitting in darkness and ignorance, the successful efforts that have since been made for our instruction might never have been attempted. Mr. Gallaudet was an intimate friend of the family, and devoted himself to contrive some means for her

instruction. Dr. Cogswell's enquiries soon established the fact that there were many other persons in the same unfortunate condition, a number sufficient to form a school, -if a system of instruction could be discovered. Some gentlemen of Hartford sent Mr. Gallaudet abroad for this benevolent purpose. He visited the London Institution, but circumstances prevented the acquisition of their plan of instruction. The same thing took place at Edinburgh. But at Paris, all the facilities that he needed were given him by the Abbe Sicard.

2 - Celebrations and orations

These took place mainly at the opening of the National Conventions of Deaf-mutes every three years. The attendees came from many foreign countries and the Convention was held in prestigious places or luxury hotels. The speakers were carefully selected and knew that much was expected by an international élite of delegates. Consequently, their speeches were high flown and full of erudition. References to great historical figures were not merely stylistic ornaments or evidence of an impressive culture. They provided a frame and historical perspective. Their speeches or orations were a show of power and a demonstration of intellectual excellence. This was double-edged: the learned speaker's name would be remembered too, and the press would publicize in papers those deaf meetings as gatherings of highly educated deaf people. Yes indeed, deaf people can be educated; and some are far above the average, even if under such circumstances, the speaker was not the average man.

Each president, each speaker, of course, has his own style. Note how at the 4th convention, the President welcomes each country by complimenting it. Thus, France becomes "la belle France", the "home of the blessed Abbé de l'Épée and Sicard", a tender phrase all the sweeter for such a formal speech.

A sample of those speeches:

2-1 From Third Convention, Washington D.C. 1889

THE PRESIDENT'S ADDRESS:

We are assembled to-day in a convention that will go down to posterity as the most memorable, if not the most important in the annals of the deaf. Conventions in general deal with the affairs of the living, but a prominent part of the proceedings -of our present gathering will be to do honor to the dead. Today it will be our privilege to listen to eulogies on the one who by his life· work has made conventions of deaf-mutes possible, and to whom, above all others, deaf-mutes owe that education which enables them to perform their part in the great world of thought and action.

ORATION, by Robert P. McGregor, of Ohio; [In signs, by the author; read by Charles N. Haskins]

With great pomp and ceremony, and amid general rejoicing, we recently celebrated the centenary of our nationality. We then congratulated ourselves upon our national progress during the last century, which is patent to the whole world.

Our bosoms swelled and our hearts beat high in contemplating the wonderful strides that our country has made in population, in material prosperity, in the arts and sciences, in literature and in education. 'for all these we can justly "point with pride, " but to none of them more so than to that department of education relating especially to the deaf.

[...]

The history of the Greeks begins with the advent of Cadmus among them. Before that, Grecian history is a blank. He taught them the use of the alphabet, and then their history began, and what a glorious history it is with the appearance of Thomas Hopkins Gallaudet upon the scene, the history of the deaf of this country begins.

2-2 From 4th Convention, Chicago, 1993

OPENING ADDRESSES BY MR. DOUGHERTY

Ladies and Gentlemen,

On behalf of the Directors and Commissioners of the Columbian Exposition and of its World's Congress Auxiliary, under whose auspices our Congress is being held, in the name of the Pas-à--Pas Club and the deaf of Chicago, I have the honor and pleasure of bidding you welcome, all of you who have come from afar and near, from the sister states of the Union; from la belle France the home of the blessed Abbé de l' Epee and Sicard; from Germany, where flourished Heinecke, the father of oralism; from England and Scotland where Braidwood taught; from Ireland, my own ancestral country; from Italy, the birth-place of Christopher Columbus, whose ever memorable achievement in the discovery of America we all are met to celebrate with the Quadri-Centennial Exposition at Chicago; from Spain, which rendered possible Columbus' great career of discovery, and what is more to ourselves, was the abode of the Benedictine monk, Ponce de Leon, the first teacher of a class of deaf-mutes in history; from Sweden and Norway, whose almost nameless but recklessly daring Vikings not without reason combatted with the great Genoese Sailor for the honor of originally discovering the new world; from all countries, we heartily welcome you to this-the land of Gallaudet.

2-3 From 7th Convention, Saint Louis, Missouri, August 1906

PRESIDENT SMITH'S ADDRESS:

One hundred years ago, that great and far-seeing statesman, Thomas Jefferson, purchased from France the grand domain of Louisiana, an empire in itself, which, more than any one thing, has contributed to and made permanent the greatness of the United States of America as a nation among nations. And only a few years later, another Thomas-Thomas Hopkins Gallaudet-obtained from that same

France the means of opening up to the deaf of America that domain of enlightenment and knowledge which so many thousands of us have entered upon as our possession. We honor Thomas Jefferson for that judgment, that foresight, and that courage of his convictions which enabled him to carry through his great project against the skepticism, ridicule, and determined opposition of eminent men arrayed against him. Once to every man and nation comes the moment to decide, and the American people have reason, as long as the Nation shall endure, to congratulate itself that when the moment arrived there was a man like Jefferson in the Presidential chair to decide aright for the glory and greatness of Our Country. We honor Thomas Hopkins Gallaudet for those same qualities of judgment, foresight, and courage of his convictions-the essential attributes of the pioneer in any great cause-which enabled him to introduce the education of the deaf in America against the skepticism, ridicule, and opposition of less enlightened and progressive men. The right of the deaf to all educational benefits is so unique”.

EDMUND BOOTH'S ADDRESS, 7th Convention, Saint Louis, Missouri, August 1906

The following speech below (by Edmund Booth) reaches a climax by positioning Gallaudet with a group of most prestigious characters: Melancthon, a protestant reformer and Huguenot, recalls his French origins and philosophical ideas, together with Socrates, known for his moral philosophy and art of teaching; Florence Nightingale (born in 1820), the epitome of the dedicated nurse, and Father Oberlin, a pastor and philanthropist, nicknamed “true precursor of social Christianity in France”. By including them all, the speaker conjures up a cluster of high-ranking intelligence and competences that elevate Thomas H. Gallaudet to unthinkable summits. But the top is to come:

Mahomet, Napoleon and Cromwell are, according to the speaker, the paragons of virtue, which has been much debated however. With Mahomet the Prophet, the escalation is carried on and culminates in the end of the lyrical utterance with the daring sentence: “Thomas H. Gallaudet approached the stamp of Jesus Christ”.

This is the product of an inflamed imagination and rhetorical construction. Yet, the delegates, both deaf and hearing, to the Third Convention, celebrating Thomas H Gallaudet could not be less: no way to surpass their idol, no one to outshine him. It is indeed remarkable and unique that, in the span of his life, together with Laurent Clerc and their followers, he could achieve what no one before had done in the field of deaf education.

[...] As already stated, his passion was not for money-making, but for benefitting mankind. He was of the type of Melancthon, Socrates, Howard, Florence Nightingale, Clara Barton, and Father Oberlin. The world needs storms often, hurricanes now and then, and perhaps tornadoes. Mahomet, the first Napoleon, Cromwell, were of that class in the moral and mental world. Mahomet destroyed idolatry and substituted Allah il Allah. Napoleon and Cromwell shattered serfdom and the idea of the divine right of kings.

Gallaudet brought forth and promoted growth of the intelligence and the better nature of man. He was of earnest nature, but he was not an ascetic. Genuine kindness, an ever-active intelligence and love of humor, were his leading traits. This last quality displayed itself even on his death-bed. Holding in his hands the certificate of an honorary degree just received from Oberlin College, he remarked

that "it came just in time not to be too late." He was so like Father Oberlin that it was proper this honor should come from a college bearing the name. In short of all the twenty-five or thirty teachers in the first thirty years of the Hartford school, Thomas. H. Gallaudet most nearly approached the stamp of Jesus Christ. The Hartford school directly, and the college indirectly, are his best monuments. We may well cherish his memory.

Remarks by Edmund Booth, of Iowa, a pupil (1828) of Thomas H. Gallaudet; In signs by John B. Hotchkiss; read by the son of the author, Frank W. Booth, 3rd Convention.

D - Writings by Laurent Clerc and Thomas H. Gallaudet

Correspondence, letters, definitions and answers at public lectures (London, 1815 and elsewhere afterwards), and other writings complete the picture.

1 Correspondence, Letters

They are precious documents whether they are professional or private. They cast a different light on historical figures: they might be the senders, themselves, or the addressees of letters sent by colleagues, school directors, friends and family.

Some of those letters have been collected, by universities where they were archived, or by descendants, notably Laurent Clerc's family. It must be remembered that in the 19th century, letter writing was nearly the sole means of communication. And more, particularly between deaf people who could not use telephones, as Graham Bell deposited his patent for the invention of the former telephone in 1876. News was circulating in papers or deaf magazines (many of them were created then, such as *The Little Family Papers*) or private letters. Deaf printing was very active and many deaf people were hired to work on noisy printing machines, as they could not be disturbed by the noise. As to letters, they could convey messages to and from distant places (for instance when Laurent Clerc was established in America while his family was in France), but they travelled short distances as well, between hearing and deaf people, as written language was shared by both groups. It is to be remembered that Laurent Clerc and several other educators were promoting learning English in schools. He went even as far as recommending having hearing teachers in the deaf schools so that deaf students could learn English properly. In A collection of definitions and answers of Massieu and Clerc, *Deaf and Dumb*, to the various questions put to them at the public lectures of the Abbé Sicard in London, 1815, answering a question on the Deaf Happiness, Laurent Clerc replied: "it is a great consolation for them [the Deaf and Dumb] to be able to replace hearing by writing, and speech by signs". (p. 93)

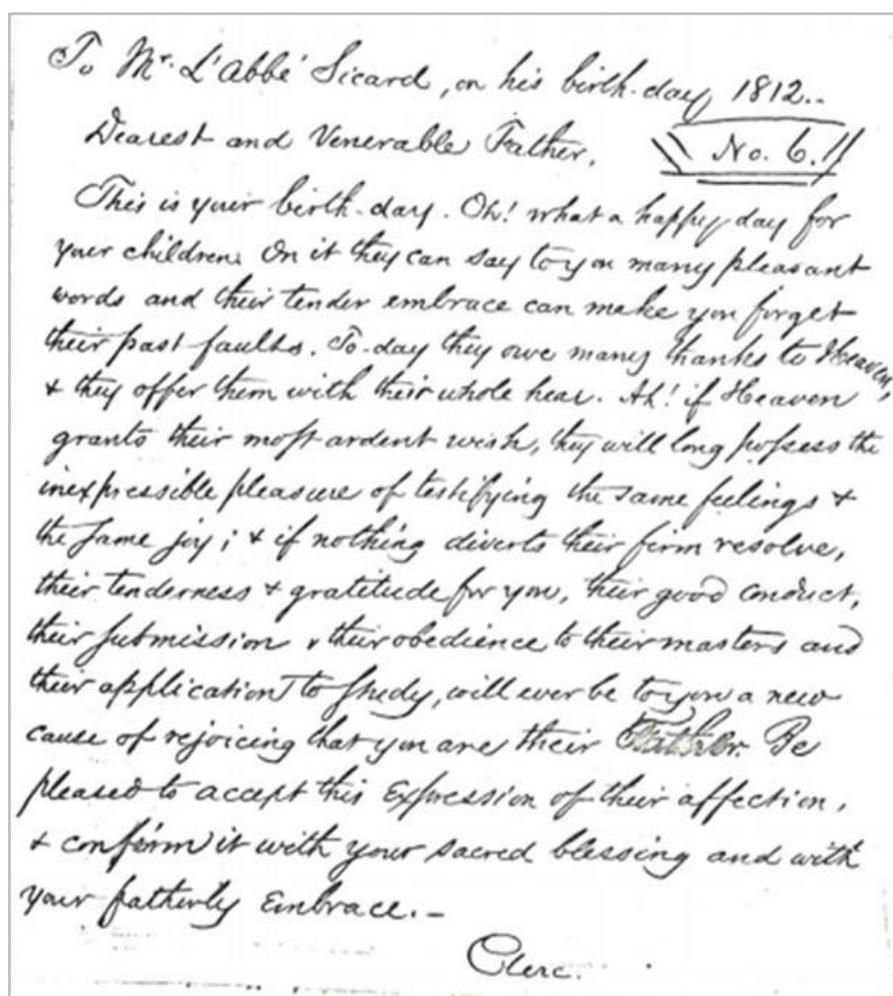
What strikes the modern readers of Laurent Clerc's and Thomas H. Gallaudet's letters (but also those of Abbé Sicard or School directors) is the politeness that suffuses them. Not only family names were being used, but they were preceded by "Sir" or "Madam" as a mark of respect. No doubt people involved here belong to a certain social and intellectual élite. They were educated (many prominent figures were Yale's alumni) and their instruction was imbued with moral values (and sometimes Christian values as well) of deference towards parents and masters of all kinds. When they belonged to the clergy, devotion was the rule. In 1820, someone writes to Abbé Sicard to invite Laurent Clerc to a ceremony and this is L' Abbé Sicard's written reply: "I will call him with great pleasure, you can tell him so from me; beg him from me to come with us and tell him that it will give me extreme pleasure if he will leave us no more". The style is slightly affected and representative of the times. Very often sentences are quite long and overelaborate as writers had time, and furthermore, relished in writing.

Letters from Boards of Directors are very solemn, with a pompous address to "Esteemed friends" when they are writing one another just for business reasons, such as discussing the amount of teachers' retribution for instance. Nonetheless, despite their decorum, they let their writers' emotions or judgements transpire.

Some others, on the contrary, are dealing with mundane matters. Laurent Clerc's personal letter to George Randolph, dated March 10th, 1818, from Hartford, dwells at length on snowing, the icy river, and the damaged bridge following bad weather: "What a climate prevails in America! Upon my word, my friend, I had never seen anything similar before." However topical or down-to-earth this letter might be, it is to be noted that half of it is written in English, half of it in French, demonstrating Laurent Clerc's fluency in both languages.

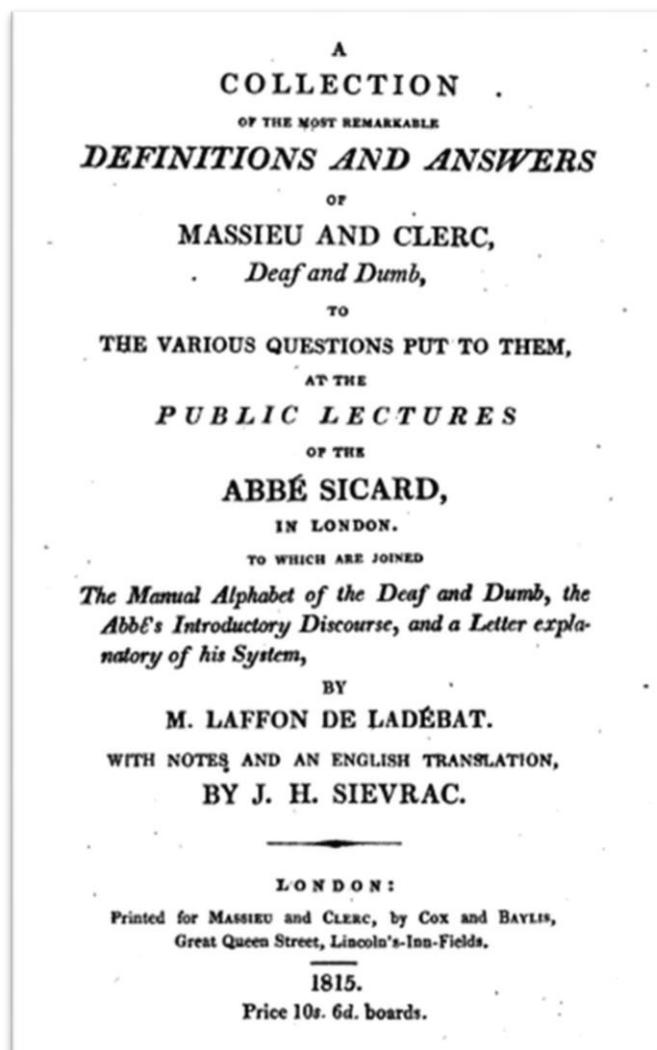
In the following letter, see how affectionate he is when wishing Abbé Sicard a happy birthday:

Correspondence and private letters introduce a familiar, intimate tone reminding us that historical figures were also simple mortals.



To M^r. L'abbé Sicard, on his birth-day 1812..
Dearest and Venerable Father, No. 6.
This is your birth-day. Oh! what a happy day for your children! On it they can say to you many pleasant words and their tender embrace can make you forget their past faults. To-day they owe many thanks to Heaven, & they offer them with their whole heart. Ah! if Heaven grants their most ardent wish, they will long possess the inexpressible pleasure of testifying the same feelings & the same joy; & if nothing diverts their firm resolve, their tenderness & gratitude for you, their good conduct, their submission & their obedience to their masters and their application to study, will ever be to you a new cause of rejoicing that you are their Father. Be pleased to accept this expression of their affection, & confirm it with your sacred blessing and with your fatherly embrace. -
Clerc.

2 - A collection of definitions and answers of MASSIEU and CLERC, Deaf and Dumb, to the various questions put to them at the public lectures of the ABBE SICARD in London, London, 1815



The question might be: Have these “definitions and answers” their place in a chapter dedicated to the life writings on Laurent Clerc? Yes, certainly, when considering how much they tell of the intellectual and moral qualities of the speakers we know so little of in their biographies. This is a part of their personality that must not be neglected since they were bathing in spirituality and a religious atmosphere prevalent in their time.

Massieu and Laurent Clerc’s students were right to collect those London public lectures which, by chance, had been written down. And the publisher was right to have them translated, and published in English, as well as in French, showing consideration to Laurent Clerc, a French man also.

The Table of contents set the tone: “Mind and Matter, Hope, Authority and Power, Music, Beauty in the natural and moral sense, Natural and artificial language, Ambition” to quote a few “themes” picked up at random. They are nearly all abstract concepts, as was fitting the test Laurent Clerc was submitted to: Can deaf people understand the questions of the audience and can they express themselves fluently in sign language, especially when abstract? So, from the start, there is a deliberate bias, but it is admitted that the speaker stood the test very easily. According to an

article by a deaf person, the questions and their answers might have been prepared in advance, for the travelling exhibitions, which might account for their quality. Abbé Sicard was a skilled entertainer. There was a short article by a Deaf person who described how Sicard would collect the audiences' questions written on pieces of paper that he would put in his coat pocket. But he would produce his readymade questions and Massieu and Laurent Clerc would use the prepared answers.

Whatever happened, for us, the "answers" provide samples of what the three of them thought.

"What difference is there between love and friendship?"

Laurent Clerc's answer:

Love is that sentiment by which the heart inclines towards an object which appears good, handsome, agreeable and lovely; and the possession of which we are panting after. It is a transitory sentiment.

Friendship is more lasting. It is the affection we feel for another person, and which we imagine to be mutual; it fixes its choice upon persons, whose character, habits, taste, pleasures, and qualities, both of the mind and heart, are in perfect harmony with its own; so that they find in each other a free and agreeable intercourse, a reciprocal confidence, and a source of comfort and assistance, in case of need.

He was then 30 and had friends. He met Eliza Boardman later and got married in 1819 when he was 34. He was more talkative on friendship than on love as he fell in love later.

Do the Deaf and Dumb think themselves unhappy?

Laurent Clerc's answer:

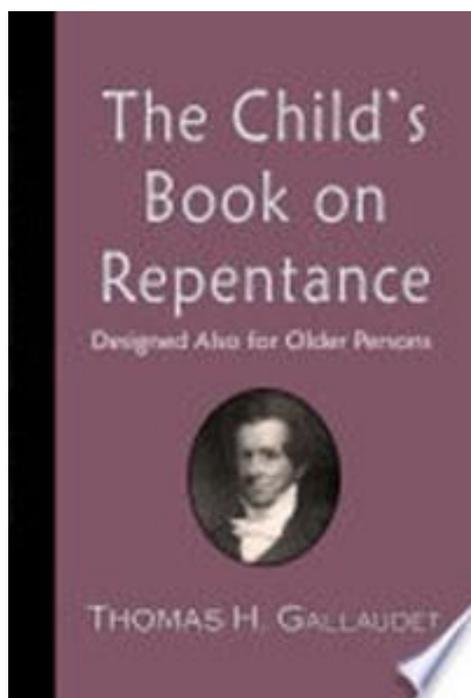
He, who never had anything, has never lost anything; and he who never lost anything has nothing to regret. Consequently, the Deaf and Dumb, who never heard or spoke, have never lost either hearing or speech, therefore cannot lament either the one or the other. And he who has nothing to lament cannot be unhappy, consequently, the deaf and dumb are not unhappy. Besides it is a great consolation for them to be able to replace hearing by writing, and speech by signs.

This piece of wisdom is nourished by experience, expressed in clear language and shows the sincerity and simplicity of an honest man. However, indeed, we have a slight feeling that this particular passage looks as if it had been written in advance, as it unfolds so logically, so perfectly. In all his answers, Laurent Clerc shows the depth of his reflection, his maturity and the extent of his language fluency. He stands out as having all competences to become an instructor and a spiritual guide for deaf students.

Another question arises for us: what is the difference then between first person narratives (autobiographies) and this exercise of questions and answers? The former can be written in time, the latter is spontaneous. In the latter, people asking questions operate as in Socrates' maieutics, a method of giving birth to the truth, by eliciting ideas through a series of questions. Of course, the questioning process is not neutral, but the answers are often sincere.

3 - The Child's Book on repentance

Thomas H. Gallaudet, late principal of the American Asylum for the Deaf and Dumb, 1834



The book was written to be studied and reviewed and recited by children of a suitable age, to establish in their minds correct and abiding views of one of the fundamental doctrines of the Gospel.

Thomas H. Gallaudet

The goal is explicit: “To aid parents in devoting a portion of their time to the religious instruction of their children”. The book is a conversation between a mother and her children and in the Introduction, the author says: “the book can be read by the parents to children, at successive portions of time, to supply the place of conversation”. It is mainly about sin, selfishness and repentance.

4 - Teaching methods and importance of language fluency

Laurent Clerc and Thomas H. Gallaudet were both instructors and have been teaching for many years. They explained their methods in public addresses and in books they published to help parents and teachers. Though self-taught, they had acquired experience in teaching and were willing to share it. This might explain why Laurent Clerc, in particular, insisted so much for having future deaf teachers properly trained.

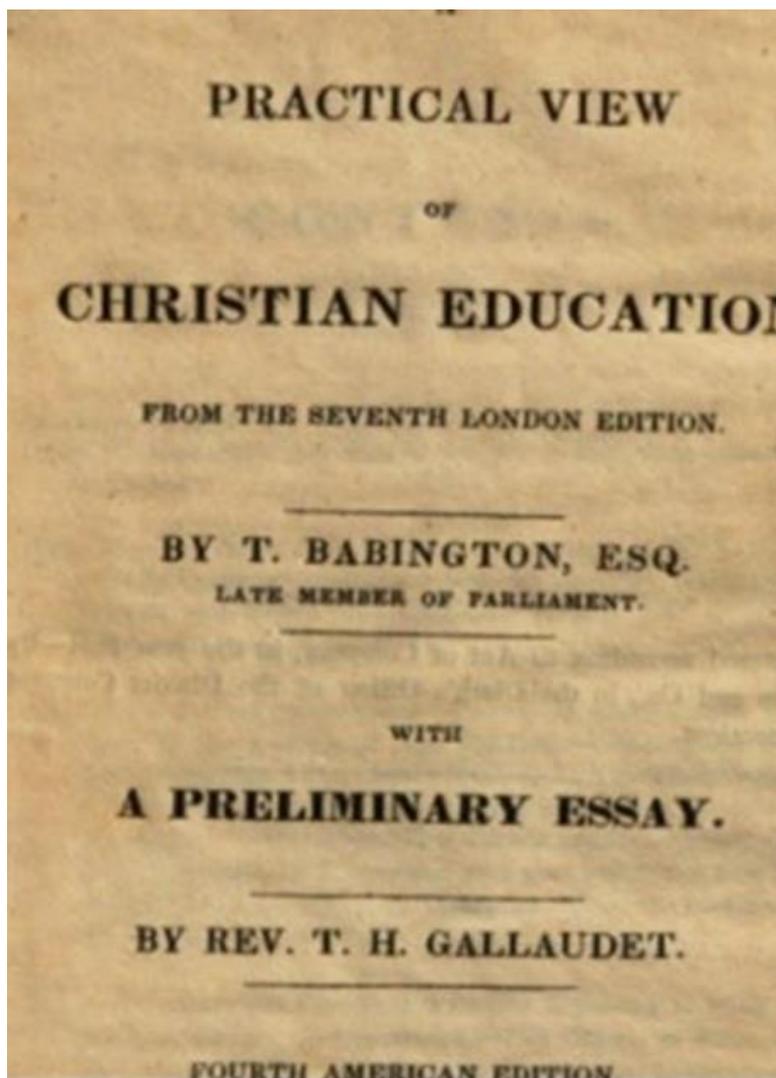
The Deaf Teacher of the DEAF

When we glance backward over the history of education for the deaf in America, it is significant to note that one of the first teachers of the first permanent school was a deaf man. Laurent Clerc was one of the two deaf teachers in the school founded by The Abbé de l'Épée in Paris, and it is conceivable that Thomas H. Gallaudet realized that he would be an asset to the new school in more ways than one. In the effort to raise funds, Clerc would be a living example of the feasibility of educating the deaf; he would be of indispensable aid in teaching the manual alphabet and the sign language to others; he would impart information on the educational and

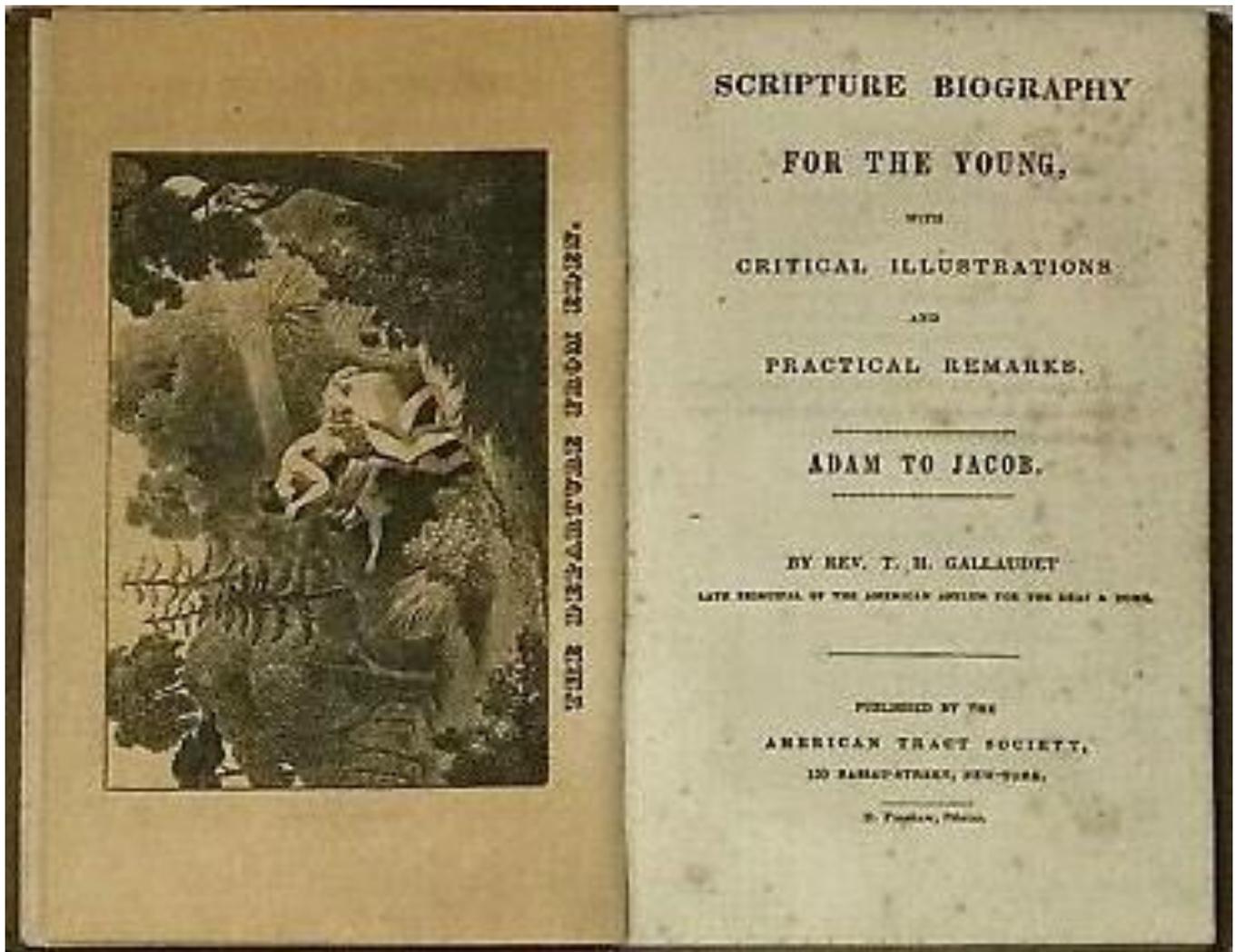
administrative methods followed by the Paris School; but more important, he would create enthusiasm for an education among the uneducated deaf people in America.

Professor Drake, *The American Annals of the Deaf*, vol 85, no. 2, March 1940

4-1 Thomas H. Gallaudet: among his publications:



A Practical View of Christian Education

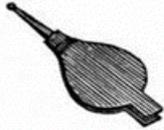


It is meant for parents mainly, but also for all educators. Thomas H. Gallaudet asserts his strong faith in Almighty God and develops moral and religious principles as the guarantee of a good education. But he also presents his ideas in matters of family life, marital life and social behavior at large. He appears as the staunch believer he was during his whole life. His moral authority was never questioned even if he might, at times, appear authoritarian in his strict and rigid obedience to rules, which he never stopped imposing on himself first. Austerity was his way of life.

To Humble, zealous, well-directed and persevering efforts, in the work of Christian Education, God gives a signal blessing: but those who will not employ such efforts, have no ground to expect any blessing. They may rather look with awful apprehension to the curses everywhere denounced in the word of God, against those who have mercies placed within their reach, but will not accept them in the appointed way.

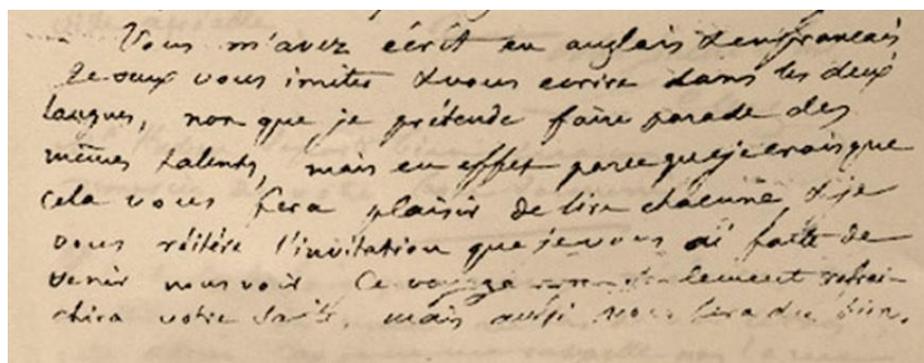
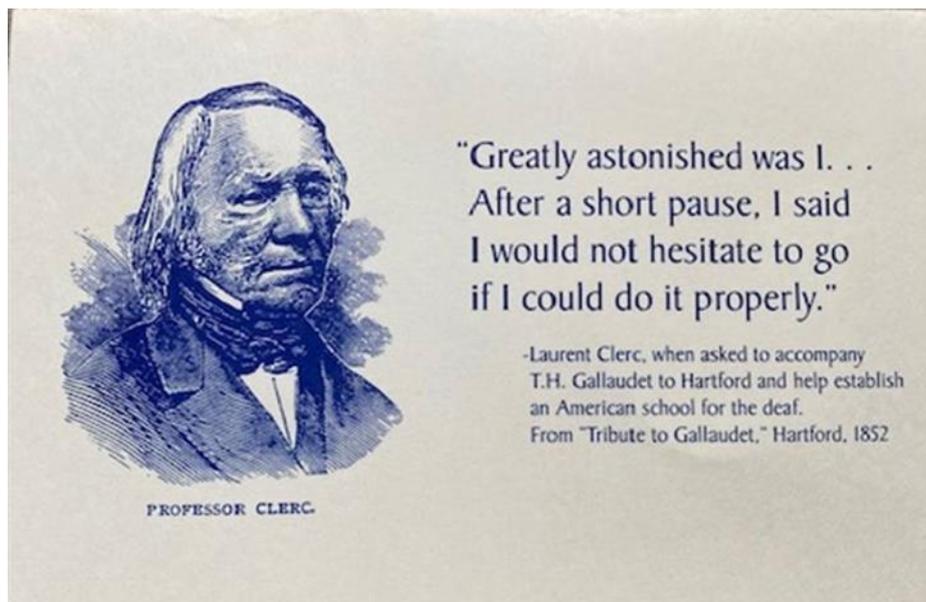
Thomas H. Gallaudet, *A Practical View of Christian Education*, American Tract Society, 1831

The schoolteacher's manual: containing practical suggestions on teaching and popular education.

	<p>Bellows. new. he blows. He mended a pair of bellows.</p>
	<p>Ink-stand. old. he dips. You must not spill your ink.</p>
	<p>Umbrella. fine. it fades. He opens his umbrella.</p>

The illustrated book was meant to educate young students by providing a collection of familiar objects where each image was associated with a noun, an adjective, a verb and used in a short, simple sentence where the word was used. It is a pedagogical primer, much imitated later.

4-2 Laurent Clerc: Among his publications:



Laurent Clerc's personal letter to Gorge Randolph,
Hartford, March 10th, 1818
(From Cogswell Museum private collection)

He replies to an invitation to visit schools. He will write his advice from concrete observations.

Vous m'avez écrit en anglais et en français. Je veux vous imiter et vous écrire dans les deux langues, non que je prétende faire parade des mêmes talents mais en effet parce que je crois que cela vous fera plaisir de lire chacune ; je vous réitère l'invitation que je vous avais faite de venir nous voir. Ce voyage non seulement rafraîchira votre santé, mais aussi vous fera du bien.

You have written to me in both English and French. I want to copy you and write you back using also the two languages, not to pretend I am as talented as you, but only because I think you will be happy to read each of those languages. Indeed, I reiterate my invitation addressed to you, to come and visit us. This trip won't only refresh your body and mind, but definitely will be good for you.

✓ Visits to Some of the Schools for the Deaf and Dumb in France and England

He visited different schools in Lyons and St Etienne, schools for boys and schools for girls and drew some bold conclusions concerning the need of hearing teachers, justified as follows:

I examined some of the scholars, in compliance with the request of the teachers, and found they had made pretty good proficiency; but I took the liberty of advising Mr. Forestier to associate with him a clergyman, or a gentleman of respectability and talents, who could hear and speak, for the greater prosperity of the school and the better improvement of the children in written language and religious knowledge; my opinion being, that however instructed a deaf and dumb person might be, he was still less so than those who hear and speak. But he did not appear disposed to adopt my suggestions; so, I bade him goodbye and departed, not without wishing him all the success he merited, in spite of his pretensions.

Laurent Clerc, "Visits to Some of the Schools for the Deaf and Dumb in France and England", *American Annals of the Deaf and Dumb* 1 (October 1847) : 62-66

- ✓ Address written by Mr. Clerc and read by his request at a public examination of the pupils in the Connecticut Asylum before the Governor and both Houses of the Legislature, 18th May 1818.

It is to be noted that Laurent Clerc prepared this address who was delivered by Thomas H. Gallaudet. Both educators were endorsing common ideas on education.

The language of signs, then, ought to fix the attention of every enlightened man who makes it his study to improve the various parts of public instruction; this language, as simple as nature, is capable of extending itself like her, and of attaining the farthest limits of human thought. This language of signs is universal, and the Deaf and Dumb of whatever country they may be, can understand each other as well as you who hear and speak, do among yourselves. But they cannot understand you; it is for this reason that we wish to instruct them, that they may

converse with you by writing, in the form of speech, and know the truths and mysteries of religion.”

- ✓ Address by Laurent Clerc A. M., Instructor in the Royal Institution for the Deaf and Dumb in Paris, and in the American Asylum at Hartford, Connecticut. (June 28, 1864)

Science is a most useful thing for us all. It is one of the first ornaments of man. There is no dress which embellishes the body more than science does the mind. Every decent man, and every real gentleman in particular, ought to apply himself, above all things, to the study of his native language, so as to express his ideas with ease and gracefulness. Let a man be never so learned, he will not give a high idea of himself or of his science if he speaks or writes a loose, vulgar language. The Romans, once the masters of the world, called the other nations, who did not know the language of Rome, barbarians; so, now that there are so many schools for the deaf and dumb in the United States, I will call barbarians those grown-up deaf mutes who do not know how to read, write, and cipher.

At the Third Convention of the National Association of the Deaf, 26-28 June 1889, Henry C. White, Utah, launched in a speech entitled “DON’T”. He expatiates at length on the qualities required to occupy such a function:

The position of a teacher is an honorable one. It is also a responsible calling, for to the care of the educators are entrusted hundreds of immortals «buds of promise «whose destiny extends throughout eternity, and none but God can rightly estimate the influence a teacher has in molding their docile minds, their thirst for knowledge and their soaring fancies. A teacher, unless he strictly confines himself to the routine work of the school room, must be more than an instructor; he must be a guide as well as a friend, to whom every confiding child looks up as to a copy to model after.

A teacher has so high responsibilities and duties that he can't practically exert them in the classroom, and he is not regarded enough with the consideration that would be given to him. He is not paid enough, consequently. At some point in his speech, he says: “My advice is: Don't be a teacher if you can possibly help it”. As a matter of fact, all his preceding arguments delineating the ideal teacher apply both to Laurent Clerc and Thomas H. Gallaudet, the latter more particularly, as he was both gifted for teaching and a moral and religious “guide” due to his religious instruction and adamant convictions.

When Gallaudet died, some educated deaf mutes created an Association, headed by Laurent Clerc to erect a commemorative monument. Laurent Clerc delivered a written address in honor of Thomas H. Gallaudet:

the school-room was the true arena for the display of his great abilities and greater affections.

E - Fiction Works

Several works are literary fictive narrations or visual ones (videos, films), thus making the exemplary life and actions of Laurent Clerc and Thomas H. Gallaudet accessible to the public. Beyond their didactic purpose, either they tell the everyday life of those legendary figures or focus on key events that made them famous. In the first case, we can see them as ordinary people and a kinship link is established as they are very similar to each of us, as “ordinary” human beings; in the second case, their actions are so out of common grounds that they inspire admiration and can make some young readers dream.

Cathryn Carroll’s “biography” serves both purposes by demonstrating how the dream came true.

1 - Laurent Clerc: The Story of His Early Years by Carroll Cathryn

In the fictionalized biography of Laurent Clerc, Cathryn Carroll, a graduate of the universities of Maryland and Gallaudet follows him step by step, from childhood to his training as a teacher. From his early years, when a doctor told his mother that there was nothing more for him to do (Chapter 1), to his glory years when he became the “pastor of America” (Chapter 17), through learning languages.

During his years of study, he met many different personalities: the devoted and inspiring deaf teacher, Jean Massieu, the “sadistic” Dr. Itard who, in the name of science, inflicted painful “treatments” on the students, and the “Father of the Deaf” from France, and L’Abbé Sicard, who was almost unable to sign.

The rich and entertaining story of this remarkable young man's passage to adulthood foreshadows the prominent role he would later play in the education of deaf children.

Between us, we used sign language as, as far as I know, the deaf in Paris had been doing it for a long time. The Abbé de l’Epée, who had founded our school, had been astute enough to notice it, learn it, and use it to teach deaf children in the classroom. But he hadn’t been shrewd enough to leave that tongue alone. He had to put the signs in the order of oral French. Taking a sight-based language and turning it into code for a sound-based language was not easy. And learn it, even less. During my early years at school, I barely understood signed French, while I quickly learned sign language. I didn’t need French to transfer Massieu’s typing signs and spellings into writing. I did the conversion, often letter by letter. It was a long time before I understood what I was writing. (p.75)

[...]

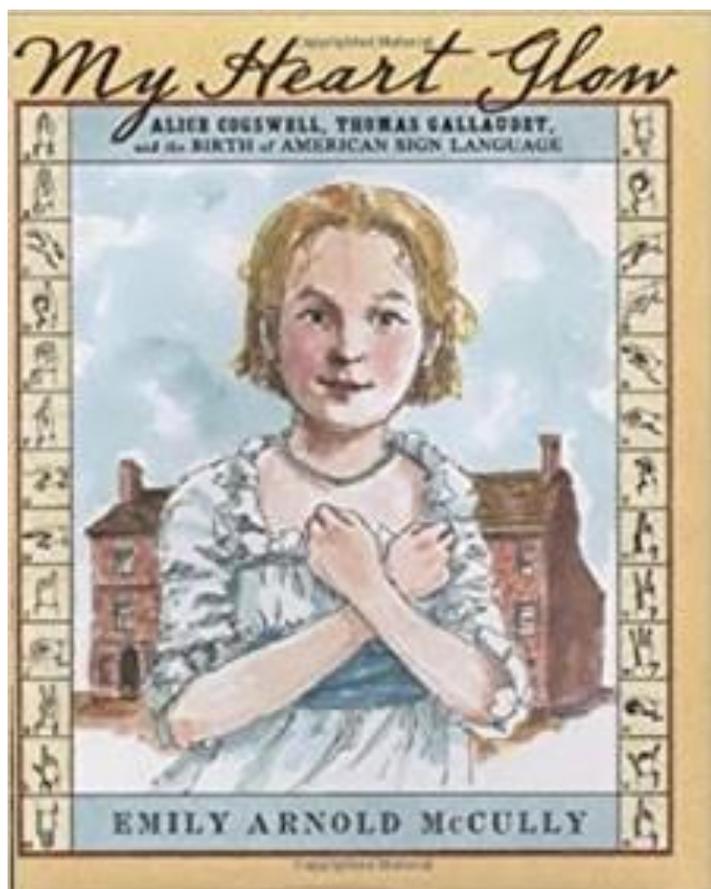
Ferdinand Berthier was right. Laurent Clerc’s decision to accompany Gallaudet to America to help him establish a school for deaf young people had innumerable consequences. The school founded by the two men led to the growth of an educated and sign language practicing deaf community in the United States - a community which would one day lead the fight for the recognition of the deaf as members of a community richly endowed with beautiful sign languages belonging to it. Clerc’s

French signs mingled with those of his students to produce much of what is now American Sign Language. (Postface)

C. Carroll and H. Lane, *Laurent Clerc: The Story of His Early Years*. Gallaudet University Press, 1991.

2 - Books for children:

2-1 *My Heart Glow* by Emily Arnold Mc Cully³⁸



It is the story of little Alice for young readers of about her age. Emily Mc Cully's style is particularly fitting. Her choice of fresh colors, notably the greens for the garden scenes at the opening of the book call to mind some watercolors. Alice's pretty dresses and fair hair illuminate the pages. As we turn them, we watch a scene spread out on one or two pages and we get literally into the landscape or the inside of the drawing room. The story occupies very little space at the bottom; the pictures are very big, so that we are physically present in the scene. This effect is very efficient. It is a picture book more than a book.

Alice had noticed the young man who stood watching her. Thomas Gallaudet's family lived next door.

Later on when both Gallaudet and Clerc get to the Cogswell house.

"Hellow, Clerc signed to her.

"Deaf you me same" she signed back. «What signs will you teach me?»

"I will teach you the sign for love", he replied.

"My heart glow", Alice Signed.

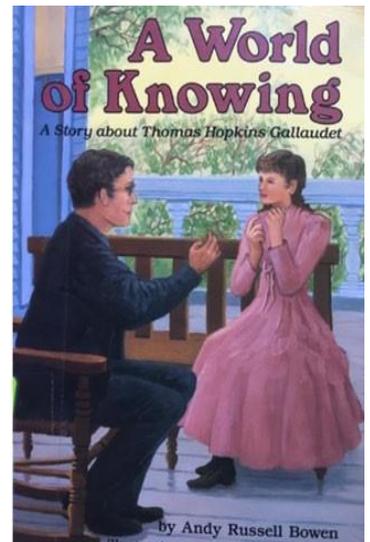
Album by Emily Arnold McCully: *My Heart Glow*, Hyperion Books for children, New York, 2008

³⁸ Emily Arnold Mc Cully : (born July 1, 1939) is an American prolific writer and illustrator who is best known for children's books. She won the annual Caldecott Medal for U.S. picture book illustration in 1993 recognizing *Mirette on the High Wire* which she also wrote.

2-2 *A World of Knowing, A story about Thomas Hopkins Gallaudet, Andy Russell Bowen,*

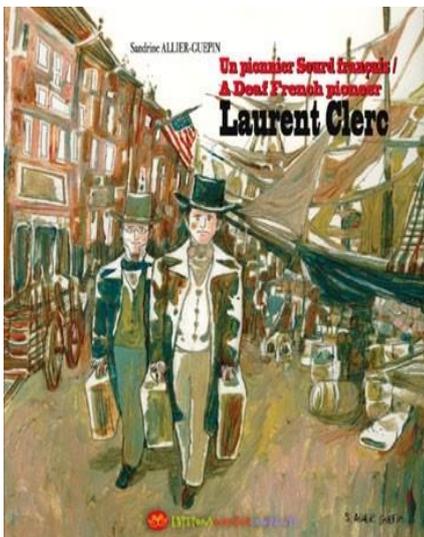
illustrations by Elaine Wadsworth, Carolrhoda Books, Inc., Minneapolis, 1995

It is an emotional story of Gallaudet's life with a focus on his poor health and small size, which isolated him from other children; and then his generous involvement to help suffering people.



3 - Comic strips

3-1 *Un pionier sourd Français [A Deaf French Pioneer] by Sandrine Allier-Guépin (Éditions Monica Company's)*



The cover page shows both men getting out of a ship (the Mary Augusta) and setting foot in America (probably New York harbor).

3-2 *Silent witnesses (1 and 2) by Celine Rames, Yann Quentin and Rames Dano*

It is the story of Jean, a young deaf boy who is emblematic of all deaf boys living in Paris in the 1780's. In those days, the deaf community was totally unknown.

Jean is an orphan, working for a cabinetmaker, and he is confronted with the harsh realities imposed by his condition as a Deaf person. By chance, however, he meets the Abbé de l'Épée and other deaf teachers and his situation improves.

The story is encouraging for all those who might feel isolated and destitute: a fortunate encounter brings hope and nice prospects. This is a variation of folk tales in modern times and very comforting.

CONCLUSION

In memoriam: obituaries, elegies and praise of Laurent Clerc and Thomas H. Gallaudet

If their individual biographies can sometimes be summed up in a few salient facts, what they accomplished, separately and then together, is more than admirable. It is the product of shared values strongly influenced by a strict and austere Calvinism in the case of Thomas H. Gallaudet, and by a strong Catholicism in the case of Laurent Clerc. These moral values permeated their lives and Abbé Sicard had recommended to Laurent Clerc that he not detach himself from them. When he authorized him to follow Thomas H. Gallaudet, he enjoined him not to let them be diluted (cf. his letter and also to his mother) by arriving in an unknown New World and the object of all fantasies concerning morals and religious practices. Laurent Clerc remained faithful to his commitments.

For his part, Thomas H. Gallaudet remained throughout his life very close to all those he met and helped. His generosity and altruism, even to the point of giving himself totally to a charitable cause, never failed: he was a living example of a faith that could be summed up in the concept that to help one's neighbor is to be in harmony with God.

Sharing the same belief in God's omnipotence, both Laurent Clerc and Thomas Gallaudet were his spokesmen and disciples, making respect for others an active principle. The view they shared of "the unfortunate" goes far beyond this: it is the mark of humanism, which, in education, believes in the perfectibility of the pupil and which, in social relations, fights against all forms of discrimination, of categories of individuals, of superior or inferior classes.

Many biographies, many essays, many papers, many graduates' dissertations have been published on these two personalities, and probably more on Thomas H. Gallaudet, whose professional career did not, a priori, destine him to become an educator of the Deaf. They attract and fascinate historians, learned people, and all of those who enjoy both History and individual stories.

Doubtless some published memoirs might well have been dispensed with; but men are endowed with such an infinite variety of gifts; their lives and labors are so exceedingly modified by providential circumstances; that very interesting traits of character are often brought out in memoirs which do honor to human nature; and which serve as examples to stimulate others to noble aspirations, but which would otherwise have been lost to the Church and the world. Without claiming the highest rank for the subject of this memoir, we are persuaded, that not only his numerous friends in all parts of the land, but many others, will be glad to see a more extended notice of his life and labors, than has yet been published."

Herman Humphrey, *The Life and Labors of Rev. Thomas H. Gallaudet*, New York: Robert Carter and Brothers, 1857, Introduction.

French and American deaf citizens, [...], shared a common history. In the United States, ASD's centennial symbolized a century of educational and cultural progress for deaf citizens. In France, deaf citizens took special pride in the advanced status and education of American deaf adults. One century before, France's brilliant deaf teacher Laurent Clerc, gave up a teaching career in Paris and sailed to the United

States, where he assisted the Reverend Thomas Hopkins Gallaudet, an eager but inexperienced evangelical, in founding ASD. Over the next forty years, they worked with unparalleled success to establish and expand the impact of the venerable institution. In their efforts, these men advanced forever the standing of America's deaf citizens.

Gallard, Henri. *Henri Gaillard in Deaf America, A Portrait of the Deaf Community*, 1917, (Washington, DC: Gallaudet University Press, 2002).

For everyone who knows anything of him today, Gallaudet was a secular saint, a man of disinterested benevolence and unflappable mild manner, admired by the general public, adored by the deaf people who knew him during his lifetime, revered by the many who have benefited from his work, and honored by the United States Post Office with a 20¢ stamp.

Why would anyone question this story? Well, for one thing, historians recognize this sketch as an egregious example of "Great Man" historiography, the now discredited view that social, political, and scientific progress is achieved by daring paradigm shifts made by lone (male) visionaries of genius. In a similar fashion, historians of Deaf culture have been misled in the past by what sociologist Paddy Ladd calls the "Grand Narrative," in which every nation's Deaf community is constructed as the product of a distinguished hearing (male) educator. For historians inspired by Ladd it is rather Gallaudet's Deaf mentor and assistant Laurent Clerc who was the major player, and so it seemed to me.

Sayers, E.E., "The life and times of Thomas H. Gallaudet." *Journal of American History* 105, no.3. (2018).

Each historian, biographer, chronicler can produce his own account. And, to end with, it is but "his":

A history cannot be written, however, without a point of view. Nor even, if that were possible, should it be. A history is bound to be an interpretation because, for one thing, it makes selections at every turn among infinity of facts. It defines its domains, excluding some periods, nations, individuals, including others. Within the domain, the documentation is incomplete, and of those facts well documented the historian will cite some and not others, according to their significance. That is, the historian has a vantage point and he will arrange and subordinate his selected facts and describe them in a way that allows him to develop his interpretation.

Harlan Lane, Introduction to When the Mind Hears.

With Laurent Clerc and Thomas H. Gallaudet, it is the story of an outstanding human journey directed both by Fate and Destiny, a myth grounded in reality, both accessible and unreachable. It can be read as a fable, whose ending moral could stress will power, determination and generosity.

From now on, we all have a duty for the future. It is expressed in Anita Small's Foreword to *Telling Deaf Lives: Agents of Change* (Preface Kristin Snoddon) :

In this book, the real lives of Deaf people as individuals and as parts of a collective take their rightful place in history through storytelling that reaches a large audience far beyond one conference. The stories are told through a variety of methods, including autobiographies, biographies, visual art, literature (sign language poetry and historical novels), and photography. In these ways, the contributors become agents of change as they preserve Deaf people's contributions and experiences for generations to come.

*The book moves from the personal telling of one's history through autobiography to sharing other individuals' histories via biographies and then to sharing collective histories and the products of those histories in terms of evolution of the arts. It concludes with instructions on how to preserve and access these stories and products of history. In this way, readers become engaged in a collective accountability to pass on this rich Deaf experience to future generations. The book is intentionally subtitled *Agents of Change* to convey the message that while the individual pioneers and collective Deaf people studied are "agents of change, «so too are the readers as recipients of the knowledge of these individual and collective lives, and they become accountable as potential agents of change to do something with this new knowledge."*

This is the purpose of this book: being initiated by Laurent Clerc's and Thomas H. Gallaudet's story we are now "agents of change" in our turn, and our mission is to carry on improving what has been already achieved, so that the Deaf community, in France, in the USA and elsewhere might grow and develop further.

To the labors of both Gallaudet and Clerc (very seldom associated so closely in literature) there is this expressive tribute in the lines written by Dr. Abraham Coles of New Jersey:

*Not less their praise nor less their high reward,
Th' unequalled heroes of a task more hard,
Enthusiasts, who labored to bridge o'er
The gulf of silence, never passed before,
To reach the solitaire, who lived apart,
Cut off from commerce with the human heart,
To whom had been, all goings on below,
A ceremonious and unmeaning show;
Men met in council on occasions proud,
Nought but a mouthing and grimacing crowd;
And all the great transactions of the time,
An idle scene or puzzling pantomime.
Children of silence! deaf to every sound
That trembles in the atmosphere around,
Now far more happy, dancing ripples break
Upon the marge of that once stagnant lake,
Aye by fresh breezes over-swept, and stirred
With the vibrations of new thoughts conferred.
No more your minds are heathenish and dumb,
Now that the word of truth and grace has come.*

This viewpoint deserves to be read again:

No doubt some published memoirs might have been dispensed with; but men are endowed with such an infinite variety of gifts; their lives and labors are so exceedingly modified by providential circumstances; that very interesting traits of character are often brought out in memoirs which do credit to human nature; and which serve as examples to stimulate others to noble aspirations which would otherwise have been lost to the Church and the world.

Herman Humphrey, *The Life and Labors of Thomas H. Gallaudet*, New York, 1867.

With Laurent Clerc and Thomas Gallaudet, it is the story of an outstanding human journey directed both by Fate and Destiny, a myth grounded in reality, both accessible and unreachable. It can be read as a fable whose ending moral could stress will power, determination and generosity.

The only person you are destined to become is the person you decide to be.

Ralph Waldo Emerson.

Chapter 3

Providential Encounters of Laurent Clerc and Thomas H. Gallaudet

International Meetings, and Home Gatherings: Building Up Friendly Relationships



David Call: *The new beginning*
<https://deaf-art.org/profiles/david-call/>

The video tells the story of Thomas H. Gallaudet, who was running out of time when he went to France, and of Laurent Clerc who agreed to help him and to go to America. This is how the two men became “connected” (the sign in the work of art). The concentric circles represent a bright future from that connection, as if it is a fire / light that shines, a new hope, a new future for America. Their friendship was born, and when they arrived in America, they began to educate the Deaf together.

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=VkY_MLTrFUE

<https://www.facebook.com/277967045564957/photos/pb.277967045564957.-2207520000../281574338537561/?type=3&theater>

Cogswell, Gallaudet and Clerc came together almost accidentally, yet they shaped the contours of deaf education for years to come.

How was such an enterprise conceived, and what steps did the individuals involved take to bring it to fruition?

Crouch, Barry, A.

Lesson learned from the Connecticut Asylum,
in *Telling Deaf Lives: Agents of Change*,³⁹

Kristin Snoddon⁴⁰ (Editor), Joseph J. Murray⁴¹, Anita Small⁴²,
Gallaudet University Press, 2014

But you know already: we do not choose to make history; history chooses to make us. I was a teacher of the deaf, there was none in America. I was an educated man born deaf, there was none in America. I was the teacher of the senior class of the mother school for all deaf education. A hearing American had come to France to bring back enlightenment for my deaf brothers and sisters. I was his guide and his friend, now I must be his collaborator and his interlocutor.

Harlan Lane,

When the mind hears: A history of the Deaf, Random House, 1984

We are all travelers in the wilderness of the world and the best we can find in our travels is an honest friend.

Robert Louis Stevenson

³⁹ In 2012, the 8th Deaf History International (DHI) Conference featured presentations from members of Deaf communities around the world who related their own autobiographies as well as the biographies of historical Deaf individuals.

⁴⁰ Kristin Snoddon, Assistant Professor at the School of Linguistics and language studies at Carleton University in Ottawa, Canada.

⁴¹ Joseph J. Murray, PhD, is a deaf activist, born in Connecticut. He is the seventh president of the World Federation of the Deaf. Associate Professor of American Sign Language and Deaf Studies at Gallaudet University.

⁴² Anita Small, M.Sc., Ed.D. is founder and owner of small LANGUAGE CONNECTIONS providing language, culture, and communication expertise throughout the lifespan for individuals, schools, universities, and organizations.

Doctor of Education in Sociolinguistics from the University of Cincinnati (1986), Master of Science in Speech and Language Pathology from Dalhousie University (1981) and Bachelor of Science in Psychology from the University of Toronto (1979). She was Co-Founder and Co-Director of the DEAF CULTURE CENTRE in Toronto.

INTRODUCTION

Is it a small World?
Or a small world getting large?

It is often said, generally speaking: "They met, at the right moment, at the right place". Is it by chance? Or were they destined to meet? Is there a hidden plan? A hidden hand, God's, or Fate's? What is an encounter? A meeting? Who are "they"?

An encounter is an unexpected or casual meeting with someone or something; a meeting is a planned occasion when people come together, either in person or virtually. In both cases, there must be at least two persons, a place, and a particular time.

Thus, the place can be Dr. Mason Cogswell 's garden in Hartford where Thomas H. Gallaudet fell upon Mason's little Alice; it can be a London conference hall where Laurent Clerc was introduced to Thomas H. Gallaudet by Abbé Sicard; it can be on board a ship carrying future Congressmen to a European capital. The right time is, for instance, when Thomas H. Gallaudet, after being a traveling salesman and then a clergyman accepted the higher call to help deaf people and educate them; it can be when Laurent Clerc fell in love with Eliza Boardman and furthered his American career by settling in Hartford; it can be when a delegation from the Institute for the Deaf in Paris decided to visit their American counterparts in ASD or when an American delegation came to la Balme les Grottes when a Laurent Clerc foundation opened a museum.

Who are "they"? Necessarily two persons, at least, whose aims happen to converge and connect.

An encounter or a meeting happens when an individual, often aspiring consciously or not to a life change, or having some objective in mind (that the encounter will crystallize) finds himself under favorable social or historical circumstances and meets another person who will contribute to shared achievements. Dr Cogswell could have put his daughter into the expert hands of a private tutor; but his socially oriented thoughts and visionary mind pushed him into wishing her in a school with other deaf pupils. There was a social need he was clever enough to anticipate. Had not Mrs. Sigourney Heaver taught Alice some words, how could she have so easily recognized the H-A-T letters?

Rev. Herman Humphrey summed it up:

It is a common remark that great and eminently useful men are made by the exigency of the times in which they live; and, in a limited sense, it is undoubtedly true. They are brought into notice by the pressure of circumstances, by the onward progress of society, by the demand for talents of a high order, to inaugurate and successfully prosecute great enterprises. So far, the leaders, around whom ordinary men rally, are made by the times. But what made the times? In other words, who in the progress of human affairs, so order events that just such qualification and services as are wanted, are at hand to meet the demand; and who

endows the prominent agents with talents, which the most urgent necessity of the times would accomplish nothing? They develop faculties which, under other circumstances, may never have been brought out. That is all they can do. God, in governing this world, raises up such instruments as he wants and endows them with just such talent as are best suited to his purpose.

Rev. Herman Humphrey, *Life and Labors of the Rev. T.H. Gallaudet*, New York, Robert Carter, and Brothers, 1859, Introduction p. 12.

Encounters between two people extend to larger gatherings for special occasions and international conferences. In modern times, the world is shrinking (The motto of an Air flight company was: “we are shrinking the world”). It is a vast world becoming smaller when new modern technologies (telephones, smartphones, and other technical devices) enable anyone to meet someone else in a virtual way. Or a small world becoming widespread with a network of international communications. Either way, the deaf cultural tendency to find mutual connections (similar to seven degrees noted by actor Kevin Bacon) occurs when two deaf persons encounter for the first time, the world (or rather, Deaf space) keeps becoming smaller.

While the dynamics in each of these encounters between diverse deaf people around the world vary, they all involve deaf people meeting each. This book’s title, “It’s a small world”, is a phrase often used in such encounters by deaf people who discover mutual connections, often over and across great geographical distances, and these encounters can be seen as examples of this deaf “small world.” Indeed, a shared experience of being deaf, which we call “deaf-same”, created the conditions of possibility for these encounters to take place.

Michele Friedner and Annelies Kusters, editors, *International Encounters, Deaf Places and Space*, Gallaudet University Press, 2002.

A - Providential encounters

Or, in the case of Thomas Gallaudet and Laurent Clerc, there are “significant accidents of history” as they are called by Douglas C. Baynton⁴³, Jack R. Gannon⁴⁴, and Jean Lindquest Bergey⁴⁵ in *Through Deaf Eyes*, Gallaudet University, 2002, p.13.

⁴³ Douglas C. Baynton is associate Professor of History at the University of Iowa, Iowa city, IA.

⁴⁴ Jack R. Gannon is former Special Assistant for Advocacy to the president of Gallaudet University, Washington, DC, and the curator of the History Through Deaf Eyes exhibition.

⁴⁵ Jean Lindquist Bergey is the Director of the History Through Deaf Eyes Project at Gallaudet University, Washington, DC.

1 - Laurent Clerc meets Thomas H. Gallaudet: a friendship is born.

1-1 From La Balme -Les- Grottes to Paris, is it a small World?

When little Laurent was leading a peaceful and solitary life in his small village and exploring in the cave by the village, he could not have even imagined he was meant to travel long distances and was at the onset of a life journey that would take him to a foreign continent and ultimately to the deaf land. It is not on a map, as there is not a country where the Deaf might be settled and speak a foreign language among themselves. It is much larger indeed. What is near and what is far away. What is familiar and what is unknown. A territory to explore for this man called "The pioneer of the New Word".

When I passed my childhood at home, in doing nothing by running about and playing with other children. I sometimes drove my mother's turkeys to the field or her cows to pasture, and occasionally my father's horse to the watering place. I was never taught to write or to form the letters of the alphabet; nor did I ever go to school; for there were no such school-houses or academies in our villages as we see very where in New England.

Laurent Clerc, *Laurent Clerc, Connecticut Common School Journal* (1838-1853) 6, no. 3/4 (March and April 1852), pp. 102-112.

His uncle whom he shared the same name took him to the Deaf Institute of Paris in 1797, when he was eleven, and for being deaf, he was not accepted at the local school. Can we go as far as saying his deafness turned ultimately to his advantage? Was it an asset then? He was a clever boy and learned quickly, he studied there and became a teacher in 1806. Once a month, public lectures were organized around Jean Massieu, his former deaf teacher and Laurent Clerc. Then, when L'Abbé Sicard took refuge in England, to escape historical turmoils in France with Napoleon's coup return from Elba, he introduced Laurent Clerc to Thomas H. Gallaudet, then touring the United Kingdom to study how deaf education was carried out there.

1-2 From Paris to London, back to Paris, is it a small world?

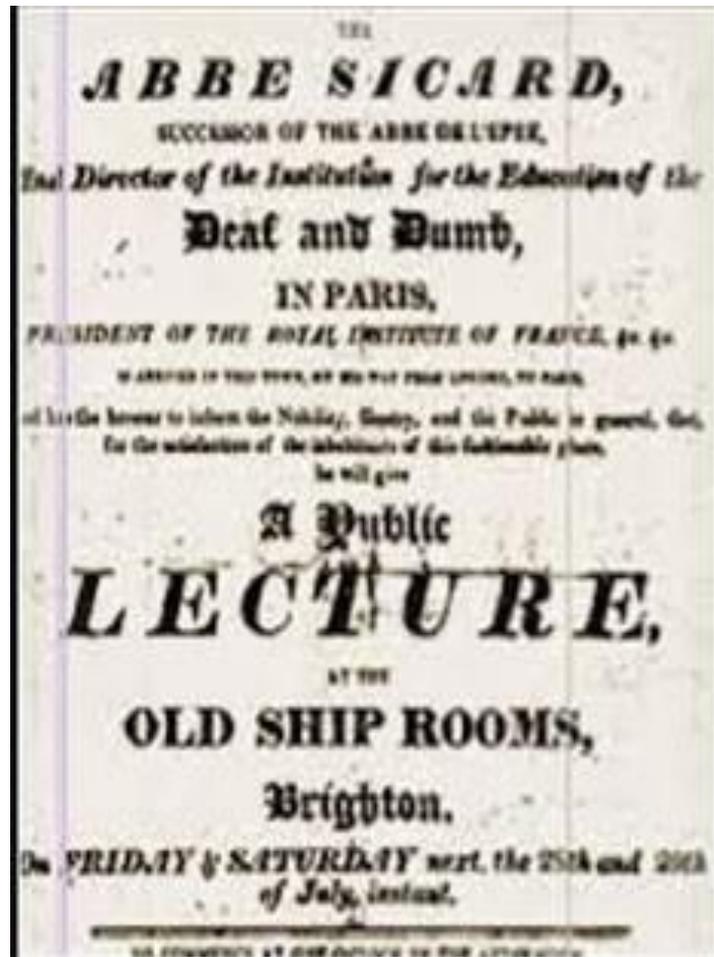


Nancy Rourke⁴⁶, Public lecture 1815, 2010,
Private collection, Maryland

From left to right: standing Laurent Clerc (signing Education, the Duke of Orleans, the Duke of Kent, Abbé Sicard, Thomas Hopkins Gallaudet (holding a brochure advertising the conference) ; seated: Jean Massieu (showing the word ESPRIT (French for MIND) on a slate and signing Esprit), the Duchess of Wellington, a woman, and Armand Godard (deaf student from the Paris school). The eight people, however, did not attend the same conference.

L'Abbé Sicard and his troupe of Deaf Frenchmen who had fled to England gave their public lectures in different cities (i.e., Brighton and London) to demonstrate that Deaf people could communicate as well as hearing ones.

⁴⁶ Nancy Rourke is an internationally-known Deaf artist and activist. She is also a full-time professional artist, she does artist-in-residencies at Deaf schools and promotes De'VIA (Deaf View/Image Art) which is art that examines and expresses the Deaf experience from a cultural, linguistic, and intersectional point of view through art workshops in community settings. She is very involved implementing De'VIA art curriculum for Deaf children. She is a mural artist and had painted over 27 murals at Deaf schools nationwide. She had done her humanitarian aid to a Deaf school in Puerto Rico after Hurricane Maria. She taught De'VIA art in St. Petersburg, Russia, Paris, France and Canada. She had four paintings featured in the September issue 2018 Harpers Magazine. She had given several trauma art therapy workshops using De'VIA art for Deaf students. Nancy graduated from Rochester Institute of Technology with a Masters of Fine Arts in Graphic Design and Painting. She resides in Loveland, Colorado.



London was an unlikely place for such a meeting, yet, by chance, Thomas Gallaudet and Laurent Clerc were there, at the right place, at the right time and a mere handshake (and certainly a strong convergence of ideas and a solid sense of a high mission too) sealed a future long-term friendship.

It was at the close of one of our public lectures that Mr. Gallaudet was introduced to me for the first time by Mr. Sicard, to whom he had previously been introduced by a member of parliament. We cordially shook hands with him, and on being told who he was, where he came from, and for what purpose, and on being further informed of the ill success of his mission in England, we earnestly invited him to come to Paris, assuring him that every facility would be afforded him to see our Institution and attend our daily lessons. He accepted the invitation and said he would come in the ensuing spring.

Laurent Clerc, Autobiography in A Tribute to Gallaudet, published by H. Barnard (pp. 106-116). Hartford, CT: Brockett and Hutchinson, 1852.

Back to Paris, in the spring 1816, Abbé Sicard and Laurent Clerc welcomed Thomas H. Gallaudet, faithful to his promise. He visited the institution, and also attended some of Laurent Clerc's classes, then teaching the highest level. He also required private tuition and this was the opportunity for both men to get to know each other.

I had, therefore, a good opportunity of seeing and conversing with him often, and the more I saw him, the more I liked him; his countenance and manners pleased me greatly. He frequented my school-room, and one day requested me to give him private lessons of an hour every day. I could receive him but three times a week, in

my room upstairs in the afternoon, and he came with punctuality, so great was his desire of acquiring the knowledge of the language of signs in the shortest time possible.

Laurent Clerc, Autobiography in A Tribute to Gallaudet, published by H. Barnard (pp. 106-116). Hartford, CT: Brockett and Hutchinson, 1852.

Running out of money and time (his journey was funded for up to one year), Thomas H. Gallaudet could not stay too long in Paris and expressed his wish to go back to America with a competent deaf French man who might help him import French teaching methods for the Deaf. Despite Laurent's recommendation of two young deaf men who had left the Paris school a few years before and had some English skills, his choice was made on Laurent Clerc.

2 - Leave-taking: breaking one's moorings, heading for America!

Jumping into the unknown is not so easy, though, according to biographers and historians, but Laurent Clerc did not think twice. In 1815 he was already immersed in his teaching mission and wishing to carry on with it. With Thomas Gallaudet, he was confident and might have found in him the protective father figure he lacked in his youth. What he could fear was L'Abbé Sicard's refusal and his mother's worries and reluctance. Laurent Clerc could not set off without some permissions, and with Thomas H. Gallaudet's support and eventually L'Abbé Sicard's consent, he was able to overcome all obstacles with his mother.

2-1 Making up one's mind

After a short pause, I said I would not hesitate to go if I could do it properly. I suggested to him the idea of speaking or writing to the Abbé Sicard on the subject, as I considered myself engaged to the Abbé. He said he would write, and accordingly wrote; but although his letter was never answered, we both inferred that Mr. Sicard's silence was rather favorable than otherwise. But in order to ascertain his views, I was requested to sound him. Accordingly, I called and inquired in the most respectful manner whether he had received Mr. G's letter, and if so, what answer he had returned. I received but an evasive answer to my question; for he abruptly asked me why I wished to part with him. My reply was simply this, that I could without much inconvenience leave him for a few years without loving him the less for it, and that I had a great desire to see the world, and especially to make my unfortunate fellow-beings on the other side of the Atlantic, participate in the same benefits of education that I had myself received from him. He seemed to appreciate my feelings; for after some further discussions on both sides, he finished by saying that he would give his consent, provided I also obtained the consent of my mother, my father being dead. I said I would ask her if he would permit me to go home. He said I might. Accordingly, I made my preparations and started for Lyons on the 1st of June, after having promised Mr. Gallaudet to return a few days before the appointed time for our voyage. I thought I was going to agreeably surprise my dear mother, for she never imagined, poor woman, that I could come to see her, except during my vacation, which usually took place in September; but I was myself much more surprised when, on my arrival, she told

me she knew what I had come for, and on my inquiring what it was, she handed me a letter she had received from Mr. Sicard the preceding day. On reading it, I found that the good Abbé Sicard had altered his mind and written to dissuade my mother from giving her consent; saying he "could not spare me!" Accordingly, my mother urged me hard to stay in France, but to no purpose, for I told her that my resolution was taken, and that nothing could make me change it. She gave her consent with much reluctance and said she would pray God every day for my safety, through the intercession of La Sainte Vierge. I bade herself, my brother and sisters and friends, adieu, and was back in Paris on the 12th of June, and the next day, after having taken an affectionate leave of the good Abbé Sicard, who had been like a father to me, I went also to bid my pupils good-by, and there took place a painful scene I can never forget. A favorite pupil of mine, the young Polish Count Alexander de Machwitz, a natural son of the Emperor Alexander, whom I knew to be much attached to me, came over to me and with tears in his eyes, took hold of me, saying he would not let me depart, scolding me, at the same time, for having so long kept a secret my intention to go away. I apologized as well as I could, assuring him that I had done so, because I thought it best. However, he still held me so fast in his arms, so that I had to struggle, to disentangle myself from him, and having floored him without hurting him, I made my exit, and the day following, the 14th of June, I was en route for Havre, with Mr. Gallaudet and our much-honored friend, S. V. S. Wilder, Esq., who, I am happy to say, is still alive, and now resides somewhere in Greenwich, in this state. On the 18th of June, in the afternoon, we embarked on board the ship *Mary Augusta*, Captain Hall, and arrived at New York on the 9th of August 1816, in the morning.

Laurent Clerc, *Autobiography in A Tribute to Gallaudet*, published by H. Barnard (pp. 106-116). Hartford, CT: Brockett and Hutchinson, 1852.

2-2 Getting parental advice and permission

✓ Abbé Sicard's letter to Laurent Clerc

In his Letter from Abbé Sicard to Laurent Clerc, we find the advice of an adult to a "child", of a father to a son. Even more so since Laurent Clerc's own father was no longer living.

I can do without you and I would be disposed in favor anything that would promote your welfare, even if you were essential to me, but you ask of me something which would cause your eternal misery. You have the happiness as well as I and all your family of being born in the Catholic Apostolic Roman Religion and you wish to go to a country where this, the only true religion, the only one which leads to eternal salvation, is proscribed and forbidden. You wish to engage in a profession in which you will be obligated to teach children the Anglican religion, the protestant religion, whose ministers are not true ministers. You know that all the considerations of fortune will belong only to time, which are not in the future life, ought not to outweigh the advantages of religion which alone can assure us of eternal happiness. This is the only obstacle to your project, this obstacle Mr. Gallaudet too would oppose, if I should propose to him to abandon the Anglican religion and to embrace the Catholic faith, our religion for his. Therefore, my dear child, I must advise you to pursue the same conduct which he makes to you; you ought to tell him that you feel obliged to be true to your religion, as he feels obliged to be true to his. I will allow you to go and take advice of your family, but I

forewarn you; I shall write to them and inform them of the danger, if they should permit you to follow out your project. You would lose your faith; you would embrace a false religion instead of the true; and they would do what they may judge most suitable for you. But I must tell you that if they allow you the fatal liberty of going to a heretical country, where you would be forever lost, I shall forever deplore your fate, and I shall ever regret the labors and the pains I have taken to make of you a good Christian and a good catholic. As I feel obliged to write all this to your good mother, I hand you back what you have written to me and what I have just answered you, that you may send it to them and that they may decide, with full knowledge, on your temporal and eternal fate.

Laurent Clerc's answer:

I am really troubled my dear Master, it is painful, I assure you to leave you, but we must take courage, and I pray God to give us the needful strength. Alas! It is too late to give up the journey. My fare in the diligence was paid yesterday. I should lose 70F. I have ordered clothing for 300F. The tailor has already cut them out.

Abbé Sicard's reply:

I will pay for the fare and the clothing.

Laurent Clerc:

This morning I called on Mr. Viscount Montmorency, he gave me the same approval as did Mr. De Gerando. He required of me that I should remain faithful to my religion, to my country, to my king. I have promised this. I renew the promise more especially to you, my dear Master, and I pray God to grant you the strength needed for this cruel parting. The Viscount will give me letters to respectable clerics of his acquaintance in New York.

Abbé Sicard's reply:

Since Mr. Montmorency will give you introduction to Catholic clergy, I yield but my dear Child, will you indeed be firm in the religion which I have taught you? Can I count on your promises in this respect? Can I rest easy on this essential point? Will you be faithful in the holy observances of our religion? Will you among Protestants, have the opportunity of those holy observances? Will you know when Lent comes, the Ember seasons, the fasting days? How will you learn them? Will you dare abstain from meat on the prescribed days, Friday, Saturday? Answer my questions, frankly. Your own father is no longer living. I am more than ever such a one to you, you must pardon my anxiety.

(Letters, transmitted by Cogswell Library, ASD, Hartford)

✓ Thomas H. Gallaudet's letter to Laurent Clerc's mother

Thomas H. Gallaudet had written to Laurent Clerc's mother trying to convince her that her son would much benefit from his departure. It is a gentle plea and the reassuring message of someone who presents himself as a "son". It is also full of the religious and moral certainty that her "sacrifice" is God's design.

Madame,

Mr. Clerc, your dear son, will tell you the arrangements he has made with me to accompany me to the United States of America. These arrangements have received the approval of Monsieur L'Abbé Sicard to whom I owe the greatest treasure I can bring to my country. He generously made this great sacrifice for the sake of humanity. I will never forget his kindness. But it remains for you, Madame, to make an even greater sacrifice, and I would not ask for it, if I did not fear that it would be very advantageous for Monsieur your dear son. He will receive a very just and honorable reward, he will see a very interesting part of the new world; he will perfect his English language, he will make many respectable acquaintances; he will acquire a name; he will return to sweeten the last years of your life. The journey is neither long nor dangerous. If my life is prolonged, he will have a constant and faithful friend in me: he will find many others in America through his talents and virtues. Do not be afraid, Madame, to offer this gift to God; yes, to God! Because he will know, I hope for his glory, that your dear son is going to America to enlighten minds that are at present shrouded in ignorance, to instruct them, to console them (?).

I beg you, Madame, in all your prayers, to mention both of us. Our interest will be the same, our work the same, and my friends will become his. In truth, he will be like a brother to me, and with God's blessing, I have no doubt that we will be successful (?) In our enterprise so interesting to my country.

To God, Madam, I commend you, and to the consolations of his grace; and believe that, although I am unknown to you, I consider you with respect and affection in the person of your son.

*I am, Madame,
Your most humble
And most obedient servant,
Thomas H. Gallaudet*

Original Document on following pages.

Paris, Mai 20. 1816—

Madame,

M^r le Bre, votre cher fils vous dira
les arrangements qu'il a faits avec moi pour m'ac-
compagner aux États-Unis de l'Amérique. Ces arrange-
ments ont reçu l'approbation de Monsieur d'Abbi
Sicard à qui je dois le plus grand trésor que je
puisse apporter à mon pays. Il a généreusement fait
ce grand sacrifice pour l'intérêt de l'humanité. Je
n'oserais jamais se bouter — Mais, il vous reste,
Madame, à faire un sacrifice encore plus grand, et
je ne le demandais pas, si je ne croyais pas
qu'il fût très-avantageux pour Monsieur votre cher
fils. — Il recevra une récompense je crois très-juste
et honorable; il sera un parti très-intéressant

de l'ancien monde; il se perfectionne dans la langue
angloise; il fera beaucoup de correspondances respectables;
il acquerra un nom; il reviendra pour adoucir les
derniers annes de votre vie. Le voyage n'est ni
long, ni dangereux. Si ma vie est prolongée il aura
un ami un ami constant et fidèle; il en aura
beaucoup d'autres en Europe par sa lettre et par
sa visite. Ne craignez donc pas, Madame, d'offrir
ce don à Dieu; oui à Dieu! par ce que il sera le plus
pour sa gloire, que votre cher fils ou sa compagne pour
délivrer le esprit qui à présent est tout sans l'absence
d'ignorance, pour les instructions, pour les consolations.

Je vous prie, Madame, dans toute vos
prières de faire mention de nous deux. Notre intérêt
est le même; nos besoins les mêmes, et mes vœux
reviennent les mêmes. En vérité il me sera comme
un frère, et avec la bénédiction de Dieu je n'en

doute pas que nous ne réussissions dans notre
entreprise si intéressante à mon pays.

À Dieu, Madame, je vous recommande
et aux consolations de sa grace; et croyez, que
quoique je vous sois inconnu je vous considérerai avec res-
pect et affecté dans la personne de votre fils.

Je suis, Madame

Notre très humble,

et très obéissant serviteur,

Thomas H. Gallaudet

Letter by Thomas H. Gallaudet to Laurent Clerc's mother, Paris, May 28, 1816
Paris, 28 mai 1816

3 - Laurent Clerc and Thomas Gallaudet on the same boat: voyage across the Atlantic Ocean.



Laurent Clerc and Thomas H. Gallaudet, Nancy Rourke, 2011

Laurent Clerc was 30 years old when he left France for America on the ship Mary Augusta with Thomas Hopkins Gallaudet (28 years old) on June 18, 1816, and arrived in New York on August 9, 1816, and in Hartford, Connecticut on August 22, 1816.

<https://collections.slsa.sa.gov.au/resource/PRG+1373/19/33>

It took them 52 days to go from Le Havre Harbor in France to New York Harbor. When travelling together for so many days on board a ship in a closed space, relationships can develop either for better or for worse. With Laurent Clerc and Thomas H. Gallaudet, they bloomed as they invented a cross teaching: Thomas H. Gallaudet taught Laurent Clerc the rudiments of the English language and Laurent Clerc taught him French Sign Language. They were gifted, quick learners, motivated by a sense of urgency (at the end of the voyage they will be immersed in real life situations and action), inhabited by a desire to be immediately efficient, and trusting each other. In a way, seclusion and a tight emulation worked the expected miracle: Thomas H. Gallaudet, a hearing man, was following a crash course in sign learning as Laurent Clerc, a deaf man, was acquiring a second language. He mastered it fluently as was seen later in his own writings. Thomas H. Gallaudet gained linguistic credibility for his future mission and brought back to his country the best French signing teacher. Laurent Clerc was appropriating the linguistic code to decipher the new foreign world he was getting into and could thus appreciate.

Laurent Clerc explains how he learned to write English:

*Thirty-five years ago, while at sea on my way to America, I took a keen interest in studying the English language. Poor M. Gallaudet, who was kind enough to correct my compositions in English, tried to make me understand the difference between the adjectives alone and only. I understood very well the adverb only, but not as well the adjective only; because I often confused only and alone by using them in the opposite direction. How did M. Gallaudet explain it to me? As far as I can remember, he said: Only I of all the passengers wears glasses, and he asked me if I was wearing glasses. I replied: no, sir. So he said: I am the only one of all the passengers to wear them. This explanation was not satisfactory, because how could I understand the very fine difference between alone and lonely? It was very difficult for me. He tried to write another sentence, and said: You alone understand French, ou you understand French alone. It seemed to me that only in this last sentence was an adverb and not an adjective; I therefore did not understand better. Then he wrote another sentence and said: I'm only laughing. I did not understand better. Then he wrote another sentence, and said: The king only rides, he never walks. The king alone rides, his servants walk. The word only in the first sentence was an adverb, not an adjective. Then he wrote another sentence, namely: the king of Rome is a child alone. There is a child alone in the bedroom below. I understood better then. I now understood that a lone (only) child was the one who had neither brother nor sister, and that a lone child was the one who was on his own.
A lone (single) child means that there is no other of the same gender, and alone means that there is no other child.*

Extract from the Proceedings of the Second American Deaf and Mute Instructors Convention, held at the American Deaf-Mute Asylum, Hartford, Ct, 1851 (*History of The Deaf and Mutes instructions and Institutions, Connecticut Common School Journal* (1838-1853), Vol 6 N ¾, March-April 1852) [History of Instructions and Institutions for the Deaf and Dumb, Journal of the Communal School of Connecticut]:

A communication from Laurent Clerc, entitled "Some hints to Teachers of the Deaf and Dumb" read by M. Weld. M. Clerc followed with some illustrations of his principles on the slate.

They both embarked on the Mary Augusta for more than a crossing: an exceptional life journey beyond their own experience. As a popular saying goes: "A journey is best measured in friends rather than miles".

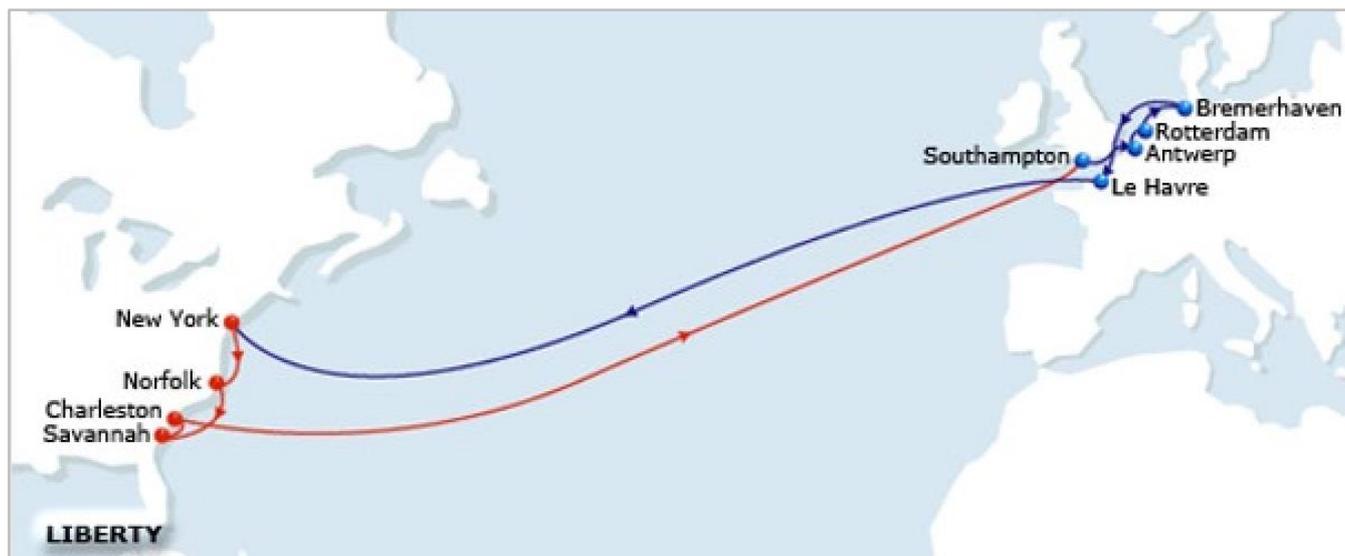
Mark Twain⁴⁷, a great American novelist knew the value of friendship, particularly in dire circumstances. "I have found out that there ain't no surer way to find out whether



⁴⁷ Samuel Langhorne Clemens (November 30, 1835 – April 21, 1910), known by his pen name Mark Twain, was an American writer. His novels include *The Adventures of Tom Sawyer* (1876) and its sequel, *The Adventures of Huckleberry Finn* (1884), the latter often called "The Great American Novel". The Mark Twain House and Museum is in Hartford, Connecticut. He and his family lived in Hartford from 1874 to 1891.

you like people or hate them, than to travel with them". He was a great adventurer and knew by experience. He explored it through the characters of Huck and Jim.

3-1 The crossing



The historical journey was described by Jack Gannon (1981):

The wind billowed, filling the sails. The rigging snapped taut as the little wooden ship, the Mary Augusta, alternately floundering and plowing the seas of the Atlantic Ocean, made its way westward to the city of New York...Four of the passengers were Americans and the other two were Frenchmen, one whom, Laurent Clerc, was travelling with one of the Americans, -the Reverend Thomas H. Gallaudet. In the beginning of the voyage, 30-year-old Laurent Clerc knew little English, and so he spent much of his time on the crossing learning the language from Gallaudet. In return, he taught Gallaudet the language of signs. He kept a diary of the trip, which lasted 52 days because of frequent calms and headwinds.

Jack Gannon⁴⁸, *Deaf Heritage: A Narrative History of Deaf America*, National Association of the Deaf, 1981.

Both Laurent Clerc and Thomas H. Gallaudet learnt much from this voyage. Robert P. McGregor in his Oration at The Third Convention of the National Association of the Deaf aptly speaks of the ship as Gallaudet's "golden Argosy" (an argosy: a large ship, a merchant vessel of the largest size). The voyage indeed was very successful and golden circumstances were looming up.

Proceedings of the Third Convention of the National Association of the Deaf, Washington D.C. June 1889, p.21.,
Printed at the office of the Deaf Mutes Journal, New York, 1890.

⁴⁸ Jack Gannon, writer, historian, and essayist. He is the author of *Through Deaf Eyes*. His "World Federation of the Deaf: A History" covers the first fifty years of its existence. He organized an itinerant exhibition (historic Smithsonian exhibition, which traveled to 12 cities (2001-2006)

3-2 Laurent Clerc's diary



Helen Mansfield

A detailed account of the voyage is to be found in Laurent Clerc's diary (chapters 1-6 Ellen Mansfield). His exultation on July 4th is to be noted, as well as his growing interest for America (past President George Washington at first) as they approached New York. This arouses a patriotic sentiment too and an outburst of emotion concerning Franco American friendship.

We were six passengers without counting the captain, whose name was Mr. Hall, and twelve strong and skillful sailors. Among the passengers were four Americans, namely: 1. Mr. Gallaudet, 2. Mr. Wilder, and two other gentlemen whose names I do not know, and two Frenchmen, namely: myself and another whom I do not know, and who is very unhappy; he does not understand English. We felt sorry for him. He has neither father nor mother.

After breakfast, Mr. Gallaudet, eager to encourage me to learn good English, suggested the thought of writing this diary, and it is in consequence of his advice that I do it. So, I started it at once and wrote my diary of June 18, which kept me busy all day. It was a long time for such a small matter, but if you would deign to consider that I was obliged, every moment, to look up in my dictionary the words I did not understand, you would say, I am sure, that I could not do it more quickly.

When I had finished my first day, I presented it to Mr. Gallaudet, asking him to correct it. He did so with his usual kindness. Saturday June 22nd. The weather being fine, I spent the whole morning on deck writing my diary of the previous days, and the whole evening in conversation with Mr. Gallaudet, who, at my request, gave me a description of an American dinner, a wedding. He gave me a description of an American dinner, of a wedding, and of the manners and customs of the inhabitants of this country; so that when I arrived there, I would know them, and the people would take me for a true American citizen and not for a foreigner.

Tuesday June 25...I conversed with Mr. Gallaudet. He told me of New York and that he was anxious to get there and see his relatives and friends, and especially Dr. Cogswell and his other friends in Hartford.

I think it should be said here that I have been in London and was there while Mr. Gallaudet was there also. He saw me with that the Abbé Sicard and two of my French friends during a conference that we gave to the English public. I saw him too but I was too busy, and I did not pay enough attention to him to allow me to recognize him when he came to Paris. I did not remember him until after a while. I talked a little with Mr. Wilder. We talked first about Proctor and then about marriage. He asked me if I wanted to marry a deaf-mute, beautiful, young, virtuous, pious, and kind woman. I replied that it would give me great pleasure, but that a deaf-mute gentleman and a lady suffering from the same misfortune could not be companions to each other, and that therefore a lady endowed with the sense of hearing and the gift of speech was and should be preferable and indispensable to a deaf and dumb person. Mr. Wilder did not reply, but I am sure he thought my argument was correct.

[...]

Thomas H. Gallaudet: At what age do you think it will be best to admit deaf-mutes to our institution?

Laurent Clerc: You can admit at any age those who will pay their pension, for they can stay there as long as they wish. For those who can be paid by the government, I think it would be better not to admit them except at ten years.

Thomas H. Gallaudet: How long do you think the government will allow deaf-mutes who can be at government expense?

Laurent Clerc: But if the children are ten years old, the parents can send them immediately. If, on the other hand, the children are too young, that is, if they are 6 or 7 or 8 or 9 years old, what you have just said will have a good effect.

[...]

Take care of this little book; don't let the writing fade, because I want to keep it.

God alone is omnipotent, no other being is. God is displeased only with the wicked and with no other being.

[...]

July 4 when my turn came, I pulled my sentiment from my pocket and gave it to Mr. Gallaudet, asking him to read it aloud:

"Today is the 4th of July. This must be a beautiful day for all Americans, for it is the anniversary of their freedom, independence, and happiness. May this anniversary come again? May this freedom last long! Long may this Republic exist!

"Long live the memory of the great Washington! How much his name must be revered from generation to generation and continue to the most distant posterity! Let us never forget that this illustrious general was assisted by the French in his generous undertakings!!!

"The French have always been the friends of the Americans and it is to be wished that they will always be so! Let us drink to the friendship and good harmony which now prevails between the two countries and let us address our prayers to God for their common felicity!

"May the citizens of the United States ever feel what a great happiness it is for man to be free! May their President always be a competent and worthy magistrate!

"Let us also drink to the health of the amiable and virtuous American ladies, without whom there would be no true felicity in this world!!!"

[...]

Thursday, August 8th. Oh, great joy among us all! We are told that we are approaching America, that if the wind continues, we will be in sight of New York in two days at most. May God grant that this hope will come true! But whatever he wants to order, we are all willing to resign ourselves to his orders, and whatever happens, I will mention it tomorrow. The weather is very nice today and I hope it will continue tomorrow.

Laurent Clerc, *The Diary of Laurent Clerc's Voyage from France to America in 1816*, reprint in 1952 by American School for the Deaf, West Hartford, CT.

3-3 A *Benediction*

Many homages to their courage and daring have been published. Their spirit of adventure was much admired, and it is very important that even today they should be remembered.

Raymond Luczak, a contemporary modern deaf poet blesses them while highlighting the power of signs and humble hands. The last but one line is an encouragement to beware of evil words, while the last one is more ecumenical in a reconciling injunction "Let's join hands", likely to unite all categories of people, deaf or hearing.

In memory of Laurent Clerc (1785 – 1869)

*Rolling across the Atlantic Ocean
To a country you'd never seen before,
You learned English on the ship over.
You were coming to America to teach.
A deaf girl named Alice Cogswell.*

*Every day on the ship you kept a diary,
Practicing English and wondering.
You taught Thomas Hopkins Gallaudet
The language of signs which you'd used.
At the Institution Nationale des Sourds-Muets.*

*You brought together a group of seven students.
That spring of 1817. Their eyes went afire.
When they discovered how clear you were.
Many more would join them and listen to you.
Your hands were manna from the heavens.*

*Your signs, the true gospel of clarity,
Freed so many souls ensnared.
In low expectations and menial jobs.
They were shocked that the key to Heaven.
Was not in the Bible, but in their own hands.*

*Today not enough people whisper your name.
In reverence. I light a candle in your honor.
There is no god greater than language,
And no greater evil than words twisted to deny.
Let us all join hands and pray never to forget.*

By Raymond Luczak⁴⁹ (sent by the author)

4 - American ties and friendships

We are all travelers in the wilderness of the world and the best we can find in our travels is an honest friend.

Robert Louis Stevenson
(In Stevenson's Quotes:

https://www.goodreads.com/author/quotes/854076.Robert_Louis_Stevenson)

Thomas H. Gallaudet, an American hearing man and Laurent Clerc, a deaf French one, are emblematic of a friendship between the Deaf and the hearing people, as well as between America and France.

Furthermore, Laurent Clerc, a loaner from France, made friends very quickly in Connecticut and contributed to change stereotyped ideas on Americans.

⁴⁹ Raymond Luczak is the author and editor of 25 books, such as *Once upon a twin* (Gallaudet University Press) and *From Heart into Art: Interviews with Deaf and Hard of Hearing Artists and Their Allies* (Hand type Press). His work has appeared in *Poetry*, *Passages North*, and elsewhere. He lives in Minneapolis, Minnesota (USA).

This is what Abbé Sicard enthusiastically declared as early as in 1815:

*Ladies and gentlemen,
There exist no longer between the Deaf and Dumb and those who hear and speak
that barrier which separated them for many centuries and which a charitable
philanthropist of France has had the courage and talent to overcome.*

Introductory Discourse delivered by the Abbé Sicard, at his first lecture in London, on the 2d of June 1815. In *A collection of the most remarkable definitions and answers of Massieu and Clerc, Deaf and Dumb*, to the various questions put to them at the Public Lectures of the Abbé Sicard in London, 1815.

Owing to their personalities and by sharing the same values they originated actions that changed the course of Deaf people. Their friendship was decisive indeed:

Barry A. Crouch asserts that Laurent Clerc and Thomas Gallaudet's encounter is worth remembering.

Cogswell, Gallaudet and Clerc came together almost accidentally, yet they shaped the contours of deaf education for years to come. How was such an enterprise conceived, and what steps did they take to bring it to fruition? (...) Cogswell was a man with considerable organizational skills, attention to detail, and fiscal responsibility. (...) But he knew he could not do it alone. Thomas Gallaudet was also a Yale graduate, and Cogswell was a prominent Hartford physician. Thomas Gallaudet, also a Yale graduate, was a frustrated minister, champion of the socially dispossessed, and neighbor of Cogswell. Clerc was a teacher". Cogswell, Gallaudet and Clerc catalyzed the emergence of deaf Americans from marginality, isolation and ignorance to community, solidarity, organizational strength, and substantial intellectual achievement. This struggle needs to be chronicled.

Barry A. Crouch, *Lessons Learned from the Connecticut Asylum* in R.C. Johnson, B.C. Snider, B.N. Snider, & D.L. Smith (Eds.), *The Deaf Way: Perspectives from the International Conference on Deaf Culture*, pp. 226-230 Gallaudet University Press, 1994: 227.

4-1 New friends: The American people

According to Charles Wilson Peale (1741-1827) who did not know much about deaf people in the Colonies,

Laurent Clerc is the first educated Deaf man to walk the streets of the New World".

American School for the Deaf. Language, Culture, Communities: 200 years of Impact by The American School for the Deaf (2017) : 41

In this first letter to Abbé Sicard, Laurent Clerc reassures him: the New World is welcoming (far from the frightening stereotyped image associated to the representations of the savage Indians, that was quite common in those days) and Sicard's fame is opening many a door.

My dear and respectable master,

I was as sensitive as one can be to all the signs of tenderness you gave me at my departure; and if I appeared quiet to you, it was so as not to increase your pain by letting you see all the pain I felt, of leaving a father as good and a friend as kind as you. No, my dear master, I will never forget you: and in whatever place it pleases Providence to direct my steps, I will always give you proof of my attachment and my gratitude.

(...) I shall continue my journey to Hartford, the place of my destination; and after some time of rest, it is proposed to take me to Boston, from there to Philadelphia, from there to Washington and other countries. These short trips from one city to another are necessary for the success of our institution, which will be organized immediately.

(...) I cannot help but tell you that you are known in the United States of America as well as in Europe. The newspapers of this country speak of you from time to time: you are esteemed and revered from afar, you are regarded as the corrector of the works of nature.

(...) The inhabitants of America are very honest, simple, considerate, and educated. The ladies and girls could serve as models for the others; they are very pious, tender, sensitive and virtuous.

(...) It takes more time to make a final judgment.

(...) I will tell you that I am well received everywhere and that they have the greatest respect for me.

(...) I beg you to always keep me the honor of your friendship and benevolence. Your very humble and grateful student, Laurent Clerc.

Laurent Clerc's letter to Abbé Sicard. (*Letters*). August 1816.

His enthusiastic views push him to show some slightly excessive admiration when he was flattering as he was endeavoring to collect money from people attending his meetings, more often women. Thus, when he met women in Boston, on September 10, 1816, this is how he spoke of them:

Ladies — yesterday we invited the most respectable inhabitants of Boston to meet us at the Atheneum, in order to speak to them of the poor deaf and dumb who abound in your own country. A great many gentlemen attended. I had hoped also to see some of you there; but I saw none.

I expressed my wonder, and at the same time, my regret. I am now fully indemnified. I see you; I look into your eyes, and by your eyes I can judge the

bottom of your hearts. I feel it is good, tender, and sensible. A tender and sensible heart is never inaccessible to the misfortune of others.

There are more than two thousand unfortunate deaf and dumb in the United States without instruction and consequently without any knowledge whatever of the charms of society, of the benefits of God toward us all, and of a better happiness in the other world!

While it lies in your power to contribute to render them happy here below, will you leave them to die in this sad state? I hope you will be too good to permit it. Behold, ladies, what I should desire to obtain from you. Mr. Gallaudet and I are in the design of raising those unfortunates from their nothingness. We propose to establish an institution in their favor, and to collect them there. This institution must be in the middle of your country that the deaf and dumb may arrive there from all the states. The town of Hartford has seemed to us to be the most convenient place and has consequently been chosen.

The deaf and dumb whose parents or friends are rich, will pay their own board; those whose parents are indigent, will be at the expense of your liberality; and as they are the most numerous, the charity of all the citizens of America is indispensable. It is then to solicit that charity that we have come to Boston; and thence we intend to go to the other principal cities for the same purpose, and we have no doubt of its success. If you remark among your husbands, relations, or friends, some who may be insensible to this action of benevolence, I beg you to change them into better dispositions. You have naturally great sensibility; you are endowed with the talent of causing the insensible to feel, and of subduing the inexorable. Thus, my friends rely on you, kind ladies, and I place in the number of the obligations I shall owe to you, those which my companions in the same situation as myself, will owe to you; and when they are educated, they will doubtless themselves express their gratitude to you."

At the close of my address, many ladies came to me, and shook hands with me, and I answered a number of questions, to the satisfaction of the company. A number of generous donations were made to the institution, and the example was followed by all classes in the community to the amount of many thousand dollars.

Laurent Clerc, *Autobiography*. In H. Barnard, *A Tribute to Gallaudet*. (pp. 106-116). Hartford, Conn: Brockett and Hutchinson, 1852.

4-2 Alice Cogswell

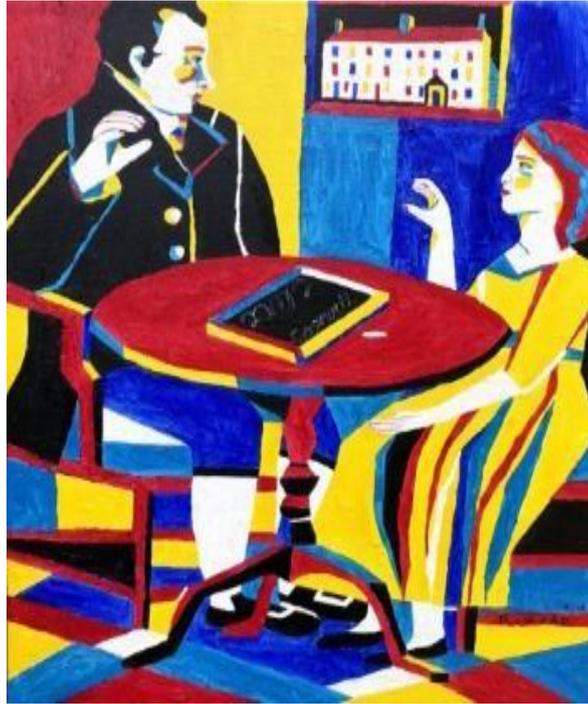
When Thomas H Gallaudet met Alice, he could not anticipate what was in store for him. This calls to mind l'Abbé de l'Épée's encounter with two twin sisters, that changed the course of his life. The basic facts of his trying to find some shelter during a storm and falling unexpectedly upon them before realizing they were deaf turned into a myth that rooted into deaf culture. He stands as a kind of divine figure sent to them to rescue them out of silence and ignorance.



Charles Michel de l'Épée désigné pour délivrer les Sourds-muets.
[Charles Michel de l'Épée appointed to deliver the deaf and dumb]
Painted by Joseph Cochefer (1849-1923)
(INJS Paris, collections)

Alice is at the core of the story and she moved Thomas H. Gallaudet up to the point that he made up his mind to help her get out of the isolation caused by her deafness. Her father, Dr Cogswell, who wanted to educate her, collected necessary money to send Thomas H. Gallaudet visiting different schools in Europe to learn how to set up a school and also how to teach deaf students. Then, when Thomas H. Gallaudet came back to Hartford, CT, with Laurent Clerc, Dr. Cogswell entrusted his daughter to the fatherly care of Laurent Clerc. For Laurent Clerc, encountering her, he discovered much later, was alone justifying his leaving his home country.

Painting representing Laurent Clerc and Alice, by Nancy Rourke:



By Nancy Rourke

This painting represents Laurent Clerc from France, who meets Alice for the first time. He writes his name "Clerc" on a slate and signs the letter "C" to Alice. She, on her side, wrote her name "Cogswell". The image in the background is the first school of the American School for the Deaf, in Hartford, Connecticut. Here we see the fantasy of Nancy Rourke and her ability to create a living scene.

On their way to Dr. Cogswell's house in Hartford, Thomas H. Gallaudet and Laurent Clerc visited New Haven where they toured Yale College and met with people whom Thomas H. Gallaudet held in high regards:

At length, we left New York for New Haven, where we made a short tarry, which I wished had been much longer; for I found it a delightful place. We called on President Dwight and some of the professors, who welcomed us. We visited the college, the library and chapel. The next day, it being very pleasant, we took the stage for Hartford, where we arrived in the afternoon of the 22d of August 1816.

We alighted at Dr. Cogswell's in Prospect Street. We found Mrs. Cogswell alone at home with her daughters, excepting Alice, who was then at school under Miss Lydia Huntley, (now Mrs. Sigourney, our lovely poetess.) She was immediately sent for, and when she made her appearance, I beheld a very interesting little girl. She had one of the most intelligent countenances I ever saw. I was much pleased with her. We conversed by signs, and we understood each other very well; so true is it, as I have often mentioned before, that the language of signs is universal and as simple as nature. I had left many persons and objects in France endeared to me by association, and America, at first, seemed uninteresting and monotonous, and I sometimes regretted leaving my native land; but on seeing Alice, I had only to

recur to the object which had induced me to seek these shores, to contemplate the good we were going to do, and sadness was subdued by an approving conscience.

Laurent Clerc, "Autobiography". In H. Barnard, A Tribute to Gallaudet. (pp. 106-116). Hartford, Conn: Brockett and Hutchinson, 1852.

In her *My Heart Glow* book, Emily Arnold McCully visualized the encounter in this sense:

"Alice had noticed the young man who stood watching her. Thomas Gallaudet's family lived next door". [...]

"Hello, Clerc signed to her.

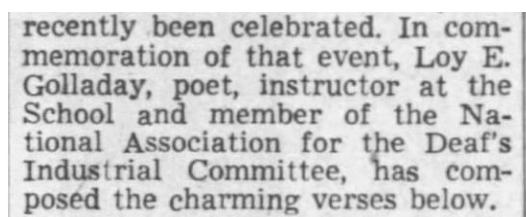
"Deaf you me same" she signed back." What signs will you teach me?"

"I will teach you the sign for love", he replied.

"My heart glow", Alice Signed.

Emily Arnold McCully, *My heart glow: Alice Cogswell, Thomas Gallaudet, and the birth of American Sign Language*, Hyperion Books, New York, 2008.

The Hartford Courant relates the outstanding encounter and publishes a poem dedicated to Alice, "A is for Alice".



recently been celebrated. In commemoration of that event, Loy E. Golladay, poet, instructor at the School and member of the National Association for the Deaf's Industrial Committee, has composed the charming verses below.

In commemoration of that event, Loy E. Golladay, poet, instructor at the School and member of the National Association for the Deaf's Industrial Committee, has composed the charming verses below.

Hartford Courant, Hartford, Connecticut, 23 May 1948

A historic breakthrough in the education and welfare of the deaf and hard of hearing people in America occurred in 1815, at Hartford, Connecticut.

Dr. Mason Fitch Cogswell's daughter, Alice, had been deafened by meningitis at age two, and soon forgot what little speech she had learned.

Thomas Hopkins Gallaudet, at the time a young Congregational minister, befriended the wistful little girl. To amuse her, he taught her to write HAT in the sand of the garden path. For the first time, Alice suddenly realizes things had names-and she was soon happily writing her own.

This led to the New World's first permanent school for deaf children, the American School, now in West Hartford, Gallaudet. Dr Cogswell, Hartford citizens and an experienced deaf teacher from France, Laurent Clerc, helped make this dream come true.

Daniel Chester French's statue at the school (the original is at Gallaudet University), shows Gallaudet teaching Alice the letter "A" in the hand alphabet-the first letter of her name.

As a long-time teacher, mostly at that same American School, I simply had to write about this incident (pages 6-9). How could I possibly not have named my book for wistful Alice Cogswell?

L.E.G 15 avril 1991

A is for Alice.

*Pretty little Alice
Playing in the sun,
All by her lonesome
While her playmates run
Hither and thither,
Shouting and shrill-
Sad little Alice
Demure and still.*

*Small pensive Alice
Wordless little Alice
Wondering Alice
All forlorn.*

*Young Tom Gallaudet
By the garden wall,
Musing and listening,
For God's final call-
Teacher? Or preacher?
Or tutor at Yale?
Or does duty call him?
To the Westward Trail?*

*Pretty little Alice
Demure little Alice
Trusting little Alice
Takes him by the hand.*

*Young Tom Gallaudet
Turns in surprise,
Smiling at the laughter
In the little lady's eyes.
Speaks-then remembers.
She cannot understand-And soon
he is making.
Scratches in the sand.*

*"See my hat, Alice?"
This is H, Alice,
Then an A, Alice,
T-and that spells hat!*

*Pretty little Alice-
Why is it she has frowned?
Twisting a wayward curl
And staring at the ground?
What is it? Something human?
Bird? Or house? Or elf?
Why she can draw much better
Than this, all by herself?*

*At last, little Alice,
Small, puzzled Alice,
Questioning Alice,
Pointing:" This. hat?"*

*A smiling nod and Alice
Has soon learned to trace.
Those first strange letters-
How radiant her face! -
When forth the good Doctor,
His face lined with care,
Her father, came walking,
And thus, found them there: -*

*Small, busy Alice,
Joyful little Alice,
Starry-eyed Alice,
Writing in the sand!*

*Long through the glory
Of Gallaudet may glow.
Still tell the story
Of Alice, long ago.
Small, trusting Alice.
Who took Tom by the hand,
Showing him God's final call
To teach the silent band!*

*A is for Alice-
On the statue, Alice,
By Tom's side, Alice-
Smiling in the sun!*

Loy E. Golladay, *A is for Alice*, Hartford Courant, Hartford, Connecticut, 23 May 1948.

4-3 Dr. Mason F. Cogswell

According to Barry A. Crouch:

[...] Cogswell was a man with considerable organizational skills, attention to detail...

And he could assume fiscal responsibilities.

“But he knew he could not do it alone”.

Thomas Gallaudet was also a Yale graduate and Cogswell was:

“A prominent Hartford physician Thomas Gallaudet was a frustrated minister, champion of the socially dispossessed and neighbor of Cogswell”.



Barry A. Crouch, *Lessons Learned from the Connecticut Asylum* In R.C. Johnson, B.C. Snider, B.N. Snider, & D.L. Smith (Eds.), *The Deaf Way: Perspectives from the International Conference on Deaf Culture*, pp. 226-230, Gallaudet University Press, 1994.

4-4 Eliza Boardman: marrying for love

Eliza Crocker Boardman Clerc

Eliza C. Boardman was the daughter of Elizah Boardman (who died in 1800) and Sabrina Crocker (b. 1762, d. 1840). She was born in Bennington, VT on August 22, 1792. She was one of the first students at the Connecticut Asylum for the Education and Instruction of Deaf and Dumb Persons (now, ASD), where she met Laurent Clerc. By 1818 Eliza and Laurent were engaged. Their engagement was not embraced by most people because most believed that Deaf people should not intermarry. Even Thomas H. Gallaudet opposed the marriage.

Eliza and Laurent were married on May 3, 1819, at the home of Benjamin Prescott, Esq. in Cohoesville, NY by the Rev. Mr. Butler. They had six children – three boys and three girls – all born with normal hearing.

In 1822 they both sat for their portraits with the great artist, Charles Wilson Peale. Eliza sat with her infant daughter (Elizabeth) on her lap and signed their shared initial “E” with her right hand. The portraits are currently on display at the Wadsworth Atheneum in Hartford, CT.

Laurent Clerc retired from ASD in 1858. He died on July 18, 1869. Eliza continued to live near the ASD campus and visited the school every Sunday. She spent the summers in Litchfield with her daughter. Eliza died in May 1880 at age 87. Both are buried in Spring Grove Cemetery in Hartford, CT.

(ASD Archives)

Laurent Clerc falls in love with one of his students, Eliza Boardman (1792-1880). He proposed to her after she completed her two-year education at the school (1817-1819). They got married in 1819 and had six children, all of them hearing. He was an affectionate father and gave his children the best of education.

Similarly, in 1821, Thomas H. Gallaudet married one of his former students, Sophia Fowler, a classmate of Eliza Boardman. They had eight children.



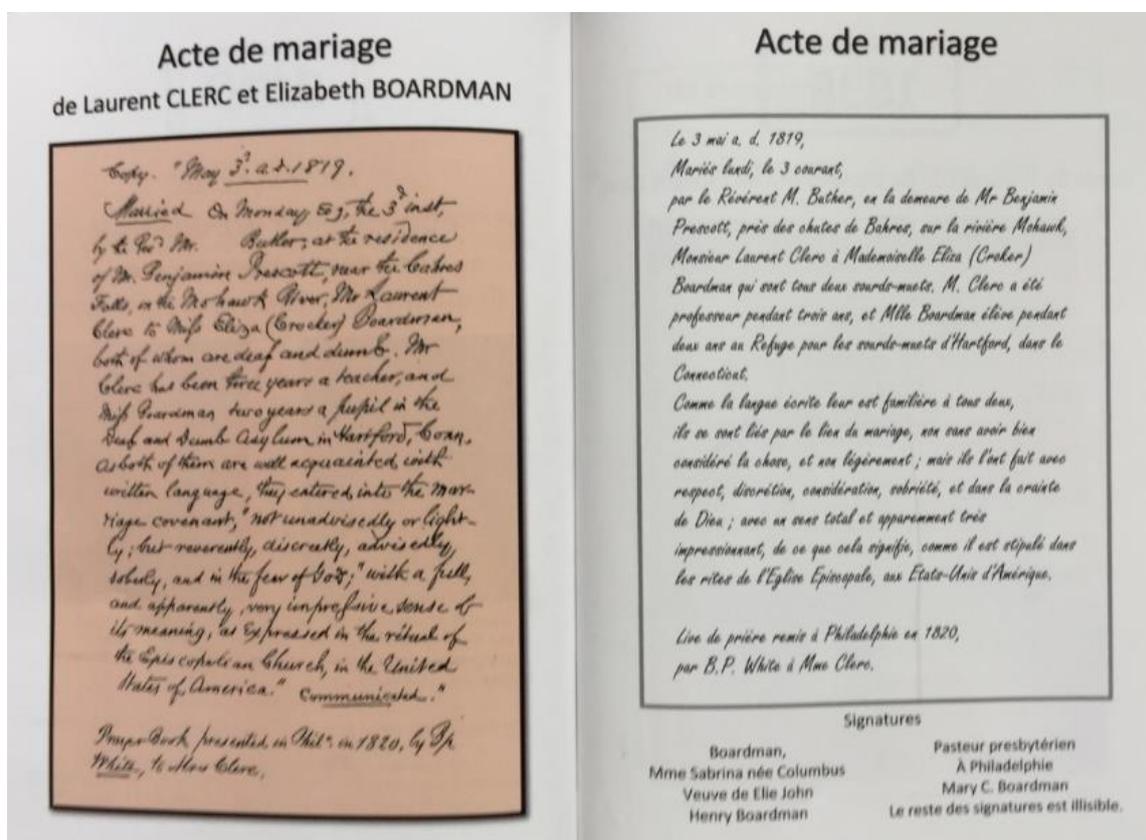
Clerc and Gallaudet Married their former students from the American Asylum

On the 3d of May 1819, at the house of her uncle, Benjamin Prescott, Esq., at Cohoes Falls, near Waterford, N. Y., I was married to Miss Eliza Crocker Boardman, a very beautiful and intelligent young lady, and one of our earliest pupils, by the Rev. Mr. Butler, then rector of the Episcopal church at Troy, and the father of the Rev. Dr. Butler, the present chaplain of the Senate of the United States at Washington. The grooms were Lewis Weld, Esq., and Hermann Bleecker, Esq., and the bridesmaids Miss Prescott and Miss Butler, and the witnesses were Mr. and Mrs. Theodore Sedgwick, the Rev. Mr. Eaton and two or three other gentlemen of Albany.

Laurent Clerc, Autobiography. In H. Barnard, A Tribute to Gallaudet. (pp. 106-116). Hartford, Connecticut, Brockett, and Hutchinson, 1852.

M. Laurent Clerc et Mlle Eliza (Crocker) Boardman, tous deux Sourds-muets furent mariés le lundi 3 décembre, par le révérend M. Butler, à la résidence de M. Benjamin Prescott, près des Chutes de Cohoes, sur le fleuve Mohawk. M. Clerc a été professeur pendant trois ans, et Miss. Boardman a été élève pendant deux ans à l'Asile pour Sourds-muets de Hartford, Connecticut. Comme tous

deux connaissent bien le langage écrit, ils ont contracté l'alliance du mariage, « non pas à l'improviste ou à la légère, mais avec révérence, discrétion, en connaissance de cause, avec sobriété et dans la crainte de Dieu ». Ils étaient pleinement au fait de sa signification, comme l'exprime le rituel de l'Église épiscopaliennne des États-Unis d'Amérique.



Prayer book offered to Phila (Philadelphia), in 1820, by B.P. White, to Mrs. Clerc.

Thomas H. Gallaudet did not attend the wedding ceremony, because he did not support deaf marriage. The issue of marrying deaf people if you were deaf was fired by Alexander Graham Bell's statement that "deaf mutes marry deaf mutes" (a paper published in 1883) : more than a simple statement, it sounds as a strong advice in the name of a possible degeneration otherwise.

On the contrary, Joseph Murray in his Dissertation devotes a paragraph in Chapter 4 entitled "True Love and Sympathy". According to him:

[Deaf people] argued Deaf marriages were successful because both parties were deaf and thus shared a "mutual respect and sympathy" lacking in Deaf-hearing marriages.

Joseph John Murray, *One Touch of Nature Makes the Whole World Kin: The Transnational Lives of Deaf Americans, 1870-1924*, Doctoral Diss., University of Iowa, 2007.

This dissertation is available at Iowa Research Online: <https://ir.uiowa.edu/etd/132>.

At the 1889 Paris Congress one speaker congratulated Laurent Clerc for being the first deaf mute to marry a deaf-mute girl. Laurent Clerc, however, was relieved when discovering his own children were hearing. He celebrated his golden wedding anniversary with a huge gathering of deaf and hearing friends in June 1869, one month before his death (July 18).

4-5 American friends

✓ Lydia (Huntley) Sigourney

Apart from Thomas H. Gallaudet, his friend forever, Laurent Clerc had also very good friends with Charles and Lydia (Huntley) Sigourney⁵⁰ and they all attended Christ Church in Hartford together. Lydia was very interested in education and, before she was married, she ran a small school for girls in her house. She was Alice Cogswell's first teacher before Alice came to the American School for the Deaf, and she created ways to communicate with Alice and teach her. The life-long friendship endured - in fact, after Lydia died Laurent Clerc bought her house.



She was a woman of letters too and published poetry. She wrote poems and prose about Deaf people and their deaf community (Edna E. Sayers and Diana Moore, Eds, *Mrs. Sigourney of Hartford: Poems and prose on the early American deaf community*, Gallaudet University Press, 2013). She was known as the "Sweet Singer of Hartford". After her death, John Greenleaf Whittier composed a poem for her memorial tablet:

*She sang alone, ere womanhood had known
The gift of song which fills the air to-day:
Tender and sweet, a music all her own
May fitly linger where she knelt to pray.*

[...] These two men would never have been called on to play the roles they did without the earlier and necessary contributions of Lydia Huntley Sigourney. Before Gallaudet and Clerc enrolled their first pupil, Alice Cogswell, in 1817, Lydia Huntley, under the patronage of the wealthy Daniel Wadsworth and with the support of both of Alice's parents, had taught the little deaf girl to read and write English. The Cogswell's, the Wadsworth's, and the Wadsworth's' protégée, Lydia Huntley, formed a group of what Ladd terms "laypeople," people related by blood, friendship, and community who, though they lacked any sort of professional training, nevertheless came together, and rolled up their sleeves to enable Alice's education.

⁵⁰ Lydia Sigourney (1791-1865) Worked for 2 years as a teacher in a Norwich school and then 5 more as headmistress of a private Hartford girls' school. It was there that she had a deaf girl, Alice Cogswell in her class and taught her rudiments of language. She gave up education when she married. Though at first her husband discouraged her writing, she persevered and published the first of several books in 1815, continuing to write and publish until at least the 1850s.

This article investigates Lydia Huntley Sigourney's role in the founding of American deaf education, her lifelong contacts with the deaf school and its pupils after her own retirement from teaching, and her later erasure from Deaf history.

✓ Deaf instructors

Another friend of Laurent Clerc's was the minister of Christ Church named George Burgess. We also know that Laurent was friendly with the other deaf instructors at ASD, especially the ones who had been his students: Wilson Whiton, George Loring, and others. His former student, Abigail Dillingham moved to Philadelphia and became a teacher at Pennsylvania School for the Deaf in 1821. He is described by them as intelligent, fair-minded, engaging, and pleasant. So, no wonder he must have enjoyed the company of many friends. His first students were: Alice Cogswell, George Loring, Wilson Whiton, Abigail Dillingham, Otis Waters, John Brewster, and Nancy Orr. Most of them remained friends afterwards.

When Laurent Clerc was retired, he was seen strolling along Hartford streets and would exchange friendly words with the people that would stop him: of course, he was the local celebrity.

Laurent Clerc also met Mark Twain. He was good friends with Noah Webster, one of the founding fathers. As a lexicographer, Noah helped define American culture - he created a dictionary of American English (replacing "-our" with "-or" (honour to honor, color to color) ; adding two new letters (J and V) as separate letters in the alphabet, developed an American English spelling textbook that was used for more than five generations of Americans.

✓ Mrs. Sophia Fowler Gallaudet



MRS. SOPHIA F. GALLAUDET.

She was one of the few peerless women found now and then in the world. Her face, figure, look and bearing all bore the stamp of true nobility and without the least show or pretense of affectation. Such is the influence of a grand, queenly, but loving

and kindly woman, one whom ordinary, dull, sordid, or frivolous souls cannot understand.

Ms. Gallaudet was a matron at Columbia Institution for the Deaf (now Kendall Demonstration School and Gallaudet College) for nine years. She notably headed the department for two years which taught many domestic techniques that she had learned in her childhood, such as cooking and sewing. She did not retire until her health began to decline.

In her later years, Mrs. Gallaudet spent winters in Washington, D.C., and the rest of the year traveling and visiting her children and grandchildren. She died on May 13, 1877. Gallaudet has preserved her memory by naming in her honor Fowler Hall, which was originally a girls' dormitory and is now part of the college.

(Wikipedia)

She was, as well expressed by the poet*:

*A perfect woman nobly planned,
To warn, to comfort and command,
And yet a spirit pure and bright,
With something of an angel light.*

Booth, Edwin *Booth's Reminiscences of Gallaudet*, American Annals of the Deaf 26, no.3, 1881: 200–202.

* *She was a Phantom of Delight*, William Wordsworth.

In America, Laurent Clerc was a foreigner. Although he quickly became fluent in English, he could not communicate as easily as Thomas H. Gallaudet, a hearing man, and a native speaker. Thomas H. Gallaudet was meant to have friends:

His meeting with Alice opened and brought to view the leading traits of the man. These traits were sympathy with the sorrowing and an abiding and active desire to do good. For the usual pursuits of his fellow men, wealth, and mere selfishness, he seemed to have no passion at all. Of course, he knew the duty of providing for family, and was as economical as circumstances would allow. Beyond that he seemed to give no thought as regards worldly advantages.

His personality and values as a friend were much appreciated.

No other man has ever stood so close to us in all the relations of life. He was not merely a friend, but a father. He did not stand afar off dispensing his benefactions with the cold, perfunctory formality of the professional almsgiver, seeking only the praise of man. No. Inspired by a warm and enthusiastic desire for our improvement, with faith in our capabilities and setting no limit to our possible attainments, he took us to his bosom as a father does his children, and he kept in touch with us to the end of his life. No other name is so linked to us by the indissoluble bond of affection—there is sweet little Alice Cogswell, she who "first kindled his sympathies for the deaf." It seems that— "To woo us unto heaven her life

was lent." His letters to her breathe a tender solicitude, a paternal affection, that could hardly be surpassed by her own father, and when she lay tossing in the grasp of delirium, her troubled spirit would obey none but his. We here behold her in all her childlike innocence.

Edmund Booth, *Remarks, Proceedings of the Third Convention of the National Association of the Deaf-Mute College*, Washington, D.C., June 2, 1889.

Thomas H. Gallaudet's affection for Alice was exceptional:

No other name is so linked to us by the indissoluble bond of affection—there is sweet little Alice Cogswell, she who "first kindled his sympathies for the deaf." It seems that— "To woo us unto heaven her life was lent." His letters to her breathe a tender solicitude, a paternal affection that could hardly be surpassed by her own father and when she lay tossing in the grasp of delirium, her troubled spirit would obey none but his.

Oration by Robert Mc Gregor, from Ohio at the Third Convention of the Deaf, Washington 1889:

When Laurent Clerc went back home to inform his mother, she showed no surprise: the day before she had received a letter from Abbé Sicard in which he showed great respect and delicacy.

All testimonies converge to picture Thomas H. Gallaudet as a kind man, as in:
Tribute to Gallaudet: A Discourse in Commemoration of the Life, Character and Services, of the Rev. Thomas H. Gallaudet, LL. D., Delivered Before the Citizens of Hartford, Jan. 7th, 1852, F.C. Brownell, 1859, 228 pages.

✓ Friends:

- Thomas H. Gallaudet's friends

How Gallaudet saw Paris:

Outside of the safe havens of Sicard's school and the Chapel of the Oratoire, however, Gallaudet was again depressed and downright fearful during his first few weeks in Paris. "I am in a hotel meublé as it is called, that is furnished. I hire my room of the landlady; procure my breakfast from the porter who brings it to me, after purchasing and cooking the articles that I need; have my room cleaned and bed made by his wife and dine and sup at a restaurateur in the neighborhood. My lodgings are in the Fauxbourgs [sic] St. Germain near the Abbaye. — It is a lonely way of life. I am quite sick of it.

Gallaudet: *What is the gaiety of Paris with me?*

- Laurent Clerc's friends

We know a lot about Laurent but little of his personal life. I can tell you that he was very good friends with Charles and Lydia (Huntley) Sigourney - they all attended Christ Church in Hartford together. Lydia was very interested in education and, before she was married, she ran a small school for girls in her house. She was Alice Cogswell's first teacher before Alice came to ASD - and she created ways to communicate with Alice and teach her. The life-long friendship endured - in fact, after Lydia died, LC bought her house. Another friend of LC's was the minister of Christ Church named George Burgess. We also know that LC was friendly with the other deaf instructors at ASD, especially the ones who had been his students...Wilson Whiton, George Loring, and others. His profiles describe him as intelligent, fair-minded, engaging, and pleasant - so he must have enjoyed the company of many friends.

B - International Public Meetings

As deaf communities were formed outside the deaf school campuses in multiple towns and cities, there were needs for deaf people to gather for connection, celebration, and support.

1 - Conventions of the National Association of the Deaf

Many delegates (from hundreds at the beginning, to thousands more later) would converge to the same place, sometimes traveling together and "communicating" through their own language: a replica on a broader scale on Laurent Clerc and Thomas Gallaudet's voyage to America, and the opportunity of creating lasting links. Laurent Clerc and Thomas H. Gallaudet were a kind of symbolic nucleus.

These conventions, typically held every three years, can be seen as portraits that illustrate the state of mind of deaf leaders. With their evenings marked by celebratory banquets and stirring toasts delivered in sign language, the days were also filled with an array of committee meetings, debates, and often impassioned presentations regarding the issues of the day. Not surprisingly, several presentations at the 1917 meeting focused on the ongoing methods debate.

Bob Buchanam, *Preface to Henri Gaillard's Henri Gaillard in Deaf America, A portrait of the Deaf Community, 1917.*

What Amos G. Draper said:

Those who think that oralism "restores the deaf to society," while a knowledge of signs isolates them in its midst, would have found considerable food for reflection if they had been upon the steamer that took the delegates across. The sign-taught mingled freely with the hearing passengers. One of them, who cannot speak, made more new acquaintances probably than any other person, deaf or hearing, among the six hundred in the saloon. Some of them attended every public meeting that was called - religious, patriotic, comic, or other - and when possible, they contributed to those meetings. Several who have been only in sign or combined schools could hold their own at whist with any players on board, and one, at draughts,

vanquished all who could be brought to try conclusions with him (though he did meet his match upon the return voyage). These may seem trifles, but in the saloon of a Cunarder these little social accomplishments count for much; moreover, it is not to be forgotten that these deaf players could, and did, at other times, by writing, discuss Gladstone with the English, Parnell with the Irish, or the tariff with the Americans among their fellow-passengers. They formed relations right and left, some of which may prove permanent and valuable. Two of the party, as a result of one of these chance acquaintanceships, were offered and received the hospitality of one of the most aristocratic houses in one of the most aristocratic quarters of London. A little social distinction of this kind is highly prized by the average American; both of those who enjoyed it in this case use signs freely on occasion.

Amos G. Draper, *Notes on the Meeting of the Deaf in Paris*, American Annals of the Deaf, Vol. 35, No. 1 (January 1890), pp. 30-33.

Gatherings of deaf delegates at the Conventions of the National Association of the Deaf (NAD) were important events. Their proceedings have been recorded and published. A full list of them can be accessed on their site: nad.org/about-us/nad-history. They started in 1850 and in 1889 the "National Association of the Deaf" was adopted as their official name. It was also then that the statue of Thomas H. Gallaudet and Alice was unveiled.

The NAD site provides dates, locations, names of presidents and main issues that were debated.

Some information:

➤ **1850**

New England Gallaudet Association of the Deaf founded; serving as a predecessor for the National Association of the Deaf

➤ **1880**

August 25, 1880. First national convention of Deaf-Mutes held in Cincinnati, Ohio. Chaired by Edmund Booth, who announced the purpose of which was to deliberate on the needs of the deaf as a class. Robert P. McGregor was elected President of the NAD.

➤ **1883**

Second national convention held in New York City. Edwin Hodgson elected President.

➤ **1889**

Third national convention held in Washington DC. Dudley W. George elected President. Statue of Thomas Hopkins Gallaudet and Alice Cogswell unveiled at Gallaudet's Kendall Green campus.

“National Association of the Deaf”, adopted as organization’s formal name.
Resolution passed objecting to discrimination against the deaf in Civil Service and use of “asylums” as reference to schools for the deaf.

As we follow them, date after date, we can see how they become more and more organized and structured, with a precise status and a clear organization of their timetables. For instance, the Eighth Convention:

Proceedings. First Day.

The Eighth Convention of the National Association of the Deaf was opened at 10 o'clock on the morning of Thursday, July 4, 1907, in the auditorium of the Young Men's Christian Association building, at Norfolk, Virginia,

President George William Veditz, of Colorado, presiding,

Secretary James H. Cloud, of Missouri, recording.

The invocation was given by the Rev. John Walter Michaels, of Arkansas.

Mrs. J. M. Stewart, of Michigan, recited "America."

The secretary then read the following official call.

Then committees and subcommittees were designated and work could start with a number of addresses and orations to introduce the main topics of the Convention. As time passed and deaf schools were being opened, in America and in other countries, the NAD convention evolved into a great national Federation of State Associations (8th Convention) and then into the World's Convention of the Deaf with delegates coming from France, Germany, Switzerland, Norway, Sweden, among others. The debates revolved around such topics as deaf education, oralism, the purity of sign language, religious education, technical schools, vocational training, higher education, the future of the Deaf, and more and more concern for the social place of the Deaf. The 6th national convention (July 1899, Saint Paul, Minnesota) tackled the issues of opportunities for the Deaf in employment. Later, women's employment, deaf teachers, and teachers' training were discussed.

Political issues such as: discrimination against the Deaf (1889), vocational training and schools for the “colored Deaf” (1904) were gaining ground, as did issues involving modern technologies, such as accessibility with movie captioning claims (2005), Video Relay Service (VRS) numbering (2008).

The Conventions were less and less commemorative events only (the 1885 Paris Congress happened to be a centennial celebration of L'Abbé de l'Epée's birth, only, and was criticized as such), as these gatherings focused on serious issues and festive times were no longer the main goal.

The sample below shows modern concerns:

➤ **2005**

The NAD celebrates its 125th Anniversary with a National Gala and a State Association National Conference, in Baltimore, Maryland.

- Successfully persuaded the FCC to adopt VRS standards including 24 hours/7 days a week requirement.

- Pushed for acceptance of petition urging better television captioning quality and enforcement. Convinces FCC to charge fines against television stations for failure to caption emergency information. Captioned movie access increases exponentially through NAD efforts as part of the Coalition for Movie Captioning.
- Settles discrimination suits against mortgage and title companies, and against Ellis Island, both for failing to provide access.

➤ 2008

49th national convention held in New Orleans.

Advocated for 10-digit VRS numbering and access to E-911 services.

Filed a position paper on ASL as an essential human right.

➤ 2009

Supported U.S. signing of the UN's Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities (CRPD)
Supported 21st Century Communications and Video Accessibility Act, which updates Federal regulation to protect disability rights in communication to include the evolving forms of video and internet-based technology.

Debates were followed with attention and mutual respect.

A friendly atmosphere was prevailing, and the Conventions would end with banquets where all members were gathered around good food and wine. There was a very friendly atmosphere. Beside banquets, popular events during the conventions are College Bowl where deaf teams from different colleges and universities compete to showcase their knowledge in a variety of academic subjects; and Youth Ambassador Program (formerly "Miss Deaf America" pageants) where female and male competitors between the age of 18 and 30 present their civic engagement and social responsibility platforms and are evaluated based on visibility, innovation, and sustainability. A full list of members was published in the final reports, sometimes with pictures. Some delegates would attend successive conventions, thus creating personal links and a feeling of belonging to an internal network of deaf people. Sometimes they would travel together, creating lasting interconnections.

A chronological chart of Year, Location, and Attendance Number of nations represented by participants can be seen in Joseph Murray's dissertation:

Joseph Murray, *One touch of nature makes the whole world kin: the transnational lives of Deaf Americans, 1870-1924*. Doctorate dissertation. University of Iowa, 2007.

In chapter one, Joseph Murray analyses the benefits of attending Congresses:

Congresses were geographical spaces where, for a period of time, Deaf people were not spectacles, but the norm. These Deaf spaces remained with the delegates throughout the Congress, moving along with them to Congress meeting halls, on trains embarking to commemorative ceremonies such as a trip to Versailles in 1889 or an 1893 excursion of 900 Congress-goers to a picnic in the woods outside Chicago. It is at these international meetings that one most clearly sees the existence of a transnational Deaf public sphere. [...] At these Congresses, Deaf leaders found points of comparison in one another's lives, a commonality of experience lacking in interactions with their national auditory counterparts.

Congresses were also spaces where Deaf people could live as Deaf people, privileging the Deaf aspect of their identities in the here and now. Meeting at Congresses provided attendees opportunities to meet community leaders from their own and other nations and draw inspiration from one another. Finally, being in a Deaf-centered space gave Deaf leaders energy and optimism for further battles back home. They believed the time and energy they invested in Congress debate and resolutions would further their aims at home.

Joseph Murray's work dwells at large and with an amazing profusion of references and quotations, on the necessity for deaf people to enlarge their space, which was also a means of escaping being a minority, and of aspiring to co-equality, with no subordination any longer.

The president's address, at 6th National Convention July 1899 Saint-Paul, Minnesota however, underlines that the relationships created at those meetings were not always permanent or long-lived.

The question is often asked- I confess I often ask it myself: -"What practical purpose do gatherings of this kind serve?" And it is a question not easily nor satisfactorily answered at all times. I am sure, however, that much good must be accomplished through those periodical meetings, not only of this national association, but of the various state societies, in calling attention to the material advancement of the deaf as a class; their attainments and capabilities; to disabuse the public mind of the many fallacies and prejudices entertained concerning us; to call attention to ways and means for betterment in their condition; and for the mutual assistance and encouragement attendant upon the gathering of a widely scattered people. Judged from results in the past, it is evident that if wisely managed our associations may be made the means of great and lasting good. A large and constantly increasing permanent membership would undoubtedly help to increase our usefulness, and it will be well to consider this phase of the question at this meeting. Heretofore the attendance has been largely local, and the membership likewise, and thus fluctuating. In the intervals between the meetings, there is nothing to continue or increase interest in membership.

Thomas Francis Fox, M.A., Secretary. National Association of the Deaf

Of course, the conventions were not yearly and means of communications were nearly non-existent so that distance was a big hurdle. Both in time and in space.

The proceedings of the 4th Convention of the Deaf, Chicago, 1893, gives a fair idea of the atmosphere:

THE BANQUET.

By 9 o'clock in the evening of Tuesday, July 20, a large number of guests, who had been invited by the Pas-a-Pas Club of Chicago, had assembled in the observatory on the twenty-first floor of the Masonic Temple, in Chicago. After some short preliminaries, the company formed in procession and marched to the magnificent banqueting hall of the Temple, where covers were laid for four hundred. In addition to the flower of the American deaf world, there were present

representatives from England, France, Ireland, Germany, Sweden, and Canada—the common language of all on the occasion being that of signs.

[...]

Mr. Edwin A. Hodgson, the toastmaster, opened the speech making by reference to the cordial feeling existing between the deaf of all countries, and especially in America. He congratulated the people present upon the fact that the deaf education knows neither North and South nor East and West, and no matter from what section of the country the deaf hails he is nip-and-tuck with those present from the other parts.*

The toastmaster introduced George T. Dougherty, President of the Pas-a-Pas Club, who began by quoting:

Hands that round the empire might have swayed.

Here at our elbows stir their lemonade.

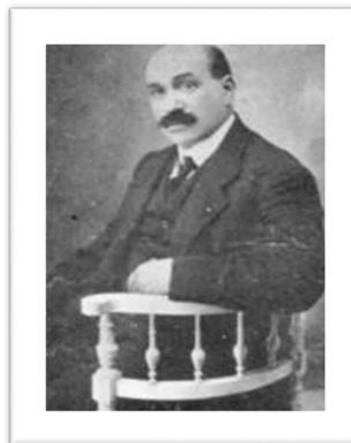
Elaborating on the quotation, he maintained that club life promoted unity of purpose, maintenance of social intercourse, advancement of mutual interest, and a conglomeration of all that The Banquet. 109 tend to produce perfection and helps to forward the reputation of the deaf as men and citizens, friends, and helpers.

This is a vivid image to tell how close those people are, as does the adjective “cordial”. However, we must remember that delegates were usually educated people, working mainly in professional occupations, and not ordinary deaf people.

These conferences were held later on and John Buchanam underlines what Franco-American relationships owe to them:

The impetus for Gaillard’s visit began not in France but the United States. In the fall of 1916, Jay Cook Howard, the eighth president of the National Association of the Deaf (NAD), eagerly invited representatives of the “deaf of France” to journey to Hartford, Connecticut, the following summer to celebrate the 100th anniversary of the American School for the Deaf (ASD), the first permanent school for deaf students in the United States. French and American deaf citizens, Howard understood, shared a common history. In the United States, ASD’s centennial symbolized a century of educational and cultural progress for deaf citizens.

In France, deaf citizens took special pride in the advanced status and education of American deaf adults. One century before, France’s brilliant deaf teacher Laurent Clerc, gave up a teaching career in Paris and sailed to the United States, where he assisted the Reverend Thomas Hopkins Gallaudet, an eager but inexperienced evangelical, in founding ASD. Over the next forty years, they worked with unparalleled success to establish and expand the impact of the venerable institution. In their efforts, these men advanced forever the standing of America’s deaf citizens.



John Buchanan, in his Preface to Henri Gaillard's⁵¹ book: *Gaillard in Deaf America: A portrait of the Deaf Community*, 1917.

In 1834, deaf-mutes from many different schools, countries, and professions came together determined to offer up a public tribute in thankfulness to the Abbé de l'Épée. Choosing from amongst themselves a committee charged with the care of accomplishing their intentions, this committee, presided over by Monsieur Ferdinand Berthier and composed of ten members, the Messieurs Lenoir, Forestier, Boclet, Payson, Mosca, Gouttebauge, Gire, Dereuz, Gouin and Doumic, decided in a meeting on the 15th November 1834 that the anniversary of the birth of this venerable benefactor of society would be celebrated each year by a banquet to which the friends of the deaf-mutes would be admitted.

This is an extraordinary event, a total revolution for deaf-mute people, who signify by a salvo of applause the new era into which they now enter. Every year since, they have been faithful to the meeting; and their banquets have become more and more brilliant and more and more numerous.

It is the history of these regular celebrations that they publish today; their Olympiad – four times more frequent than those of Greece and one hundred times more touching, more interesting. Their example will be followed by the daughter schools of the Parisian Institution; and it will spread abroad, for the good deeds of the Abbé de l'Épée are universal. Already, M. Richardin, a deaf teacher at the school in Nancy, France has announced that there will soon be an annual banquet established between his brothers in that town.

We should, at this point, express our grateful thanks to le Moniteur, le Journal des Débats, le National, le Temps, le Courrier Français, le Constitutionnel, le Droit, la Quotidienne etc. and all those papers who have, with the greatest haste, lent the support of publicity to this service of pious remembrance.

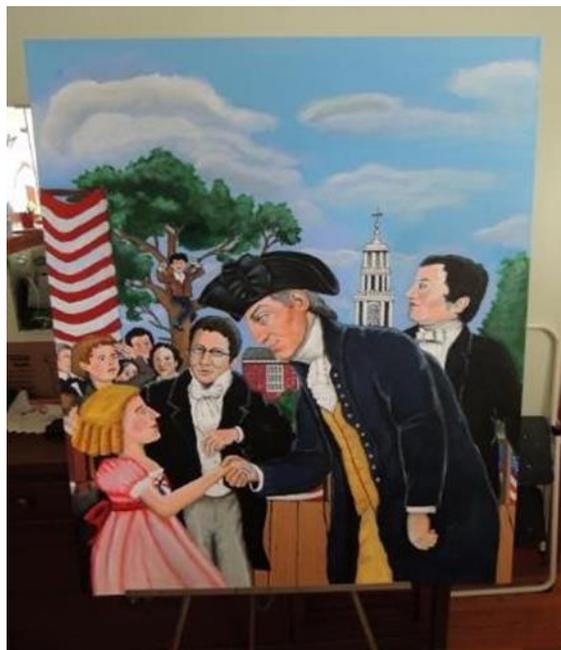
The annual banquet of the deaf-mute has become the seed for their central society who, each month, hold meetings in a hotel in the Rue Saint-Guillaume (district of Saint-Germain) in Paris. There, all differences of social standing, of birth, of wealth, of learning disappear before a common infirmity; there, complete equality reigns; there, the only language permitted is that of signs (mimique). Agendas and minutes, reports, correspondence, communication, everything is read out in that language – one that is understood well by deaf-mutes from all corners of the globe. The establishment of this society and its meetings should be supported by those in power and should, by the addition of courses of training in industry, and public courses in jurisprudence made accessible to deaf-mutes, cannot fail to produce extraordinary results in the very near future.

Joseph Murray, 2007, *One touch of nature makes the whole world kin: the transnational lives of Deaf Americans, 1870-1924*. Phd Thesis, Iowa University.

⁵¹ Henri Gaillard (1866-1939) attended the National Institute for the Deaf in Paris as a student, at 20, he was a skilled printer and at 27 he was editor of the *Gazette des Sourds Muets*, of *Deaf Gazette*, the first paper for Deaf people in France.

2 - Political encounters

2-1 Laurent Clerc meets James Monroe



This oil painting is a portrait of the fifth U.S. President. James Monroe visited Connecticut Asylum for the Education and Instruction of Deaf and Dumb Persons on Monday, June 23, 1817.

✓ Historical background

In 1806, Monroe had conducted a deaf Virginia boy, St. George Tucker Randolph, across the Atlantic to the Braidwood school in London. The Randolph boy was a nephew of John Randolph, a congressman from Virginia and sometime political ally of his cousin Thomas Jefferson. The boy was also a cousin of the deaf Bolling children whose father would soon be attempting to establish a school in Virginia with John Braidwood as teacher. Upon arriving in London with young Randolph, Monroe personally visited the Braidwood school, and he wrote congressman Randolph of his good opinion of the Braidwood's, and also of Sicard, whose school he knew of only by reputation. After installing the boy in the Braidwood school, Monroe visited Paris, became convinced of the superiority of the French pedagogy, and transferred St. George Randolph to Paris, where the boy studied with Laurent Clerc.

Rev. Thomas H. Gallaudet's father, Peter W. Gallaudet was a patriotic soldier in the American Revolutionary War in 1776. He knew General Washington and Lt. James Monroe.

Rev. Gallaudet's ship passport was signed by two founding Fathers of the United States, James Monroe, the Secretary of State and James Madison, the 4th President of the United States. Rev. Thomas H. Gallaudet had his first-time ship passport in his pocket. The passport described his height 5 feet and 6 1/2 inches, dark gray eyes, and straight nose. He walked on the deck among a famous author Washington Irving and they went into the small ship "Mexico" under the

commander, S. Weeks on May 25, 1815. He waved down Peter's family and Dr. Cogswell and his Deaf daughter Alice. Also, the English troops entered the ship. Their voyage from New York City to Liverpool, England for 32 days.

Stanislaus M. Hamilton, ed., *Writings of James Monroe*, vol. 4, pp. 414, 480, and A. G. Bell, "Historical Notes," vol.2, pp. 385-90.

<https://albert.rit.edu/record=b375>

✓ President Monroe at Hartford in 1817

On Tuesday, March 4, 1817, the fifth U.S. President James Monroe was fifty-eight years old, and gave an address to the crowd from a platform adjacent to the temporary "Brick Capitol".

Rev. Thomas H. Gallaudet had heard that the fifth U.S. President Monroe would plan to tour the northern states in the summer. Rev. Thomas H. Gallaudet wrote a letter to President Monroe inviting him to visit a new school for the Deaf in Main Street, Hartford, CT.

Thomas H. Gallaudet called the volunteers for constructing a high speaker's platform at the center of Prospect Street in front of the Old Bennett's City Hotel and had it decorated with bunting. The flags with fifteen stripes and stars billowed from poles and windows. The platform base was draped with red, white, and blue skirting. Rev. Gallaudet pinned patriotic red, blue, and white ribbons on 25 Deaf pupils' dresses.

On Monday, June 23, 1817, the fifth U.S. President James Monroe's parade took place on the Main Street through a big crowd. President Monroe stopped and delivered his patriotic address.

The five U.S. Presidents, George Washington, John Adams, Thomas Jefferson, James Madison, and James Monroe were the founding fathers of the United States. They wore their black revolutionary hats with black cockades. President Monroe was the last president as a founding father of the United States. And also, he had his last revolutionary hat on.

Laurent Clerc looked up: a pupil sat on the branch of a high tree and some pupils on the platform signed two holding hands above the forehead to salute President Monroe standing on the platform.

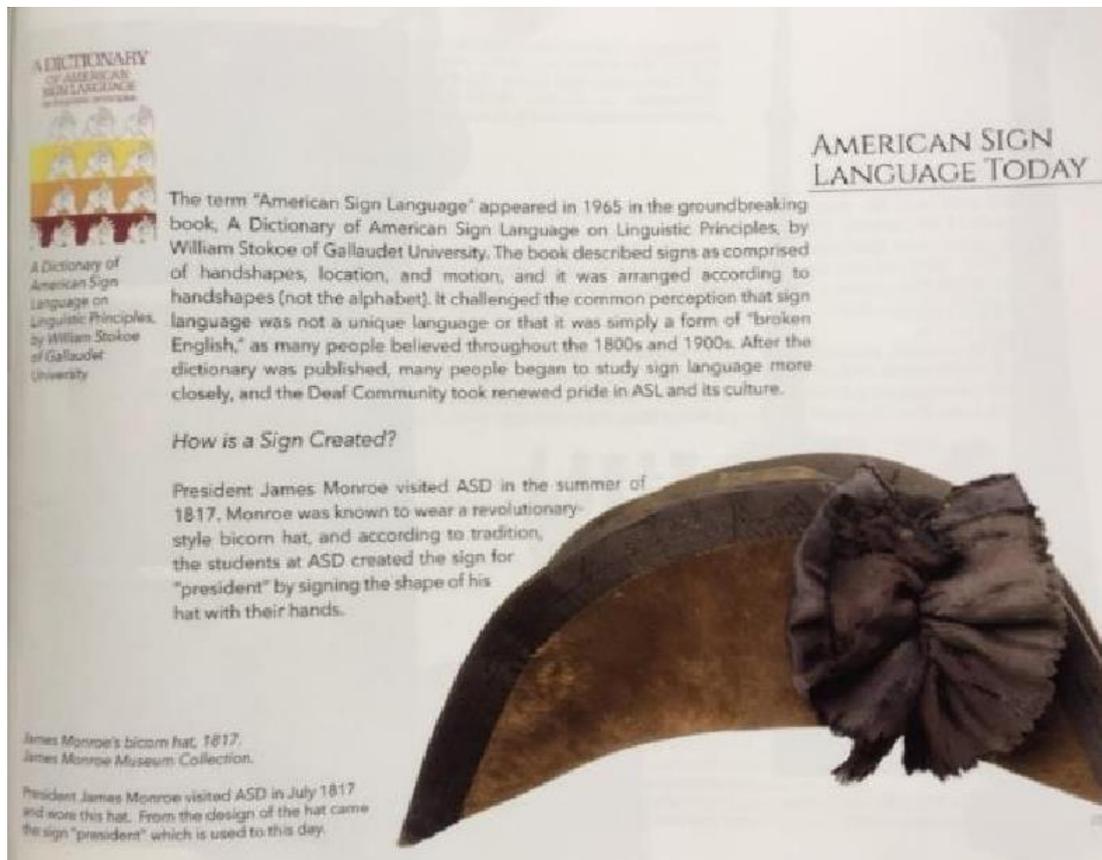
Mr. Clerc added a new first American sign word "President" on the list of the sign language after President Monroe left the city of Hartford.

Rev. Thomas Hopkins Gallaudet was a sign language interpreter on the platform with US President Monroe. He was one of the first ASL interpreter in America.

Adapted from Baynton, Douglas C., Abraham Lincoln, Laurent Clerc, and the Design of the Word: Lincoln Day Address at Gallaudet University, February 11, 2009. Sign Language Studies 10, no. 4 (2010) : 396-408.

One item in the 200th year celebration exhibit at ASD is a two-cornered hat worn by President James Monroe. When Monroe visited the school, students saw his hat and improvised a sign for "president" that is still used.

<https://www.courant.com/ctnow/arts-theater/hc-deaf-school-exhibit-at-connecticut-historical-society-2017-0428-story.html>



In January 1818, Mr. Clerc attended the House of Representatives in the old Brick Capitol, Washington City with the ASD Board Director, Mr. Henry Hudson (Mayor of Hartford). Rev. Gallaudet couldn't come there because of his poor health and Deaf French teacher Mr. Clerc replaced him. Attendants were surprised he was deaf and impressed by his address. He solicited a suitable land grant proposal to help pay off the debt for a new building for ASD.

The Congress passed the bill. The land grant document was signed by Fifth U. S. President Monroe, the same president that visited the school a year ago. The Federal Government had allocated land in the states of Alabama and Mississippi. They granted it to the American Asylum for the Deaf and Dumb in Hartford, Connecticut, in 1819. ASD had sold parcels of that land for the next few decades and used the money from the sale to help pay off the school's debt. The land parcels were sold for about a total of \$300, 000, which went towards constructing school buildings and establishing an endowment. The third ASD building (Old Hartford) was built on the Asylum Hill on 1821.

From American School for the Deaf, Hartford, Connecticut.

pr e s i d e n t

Both Long (1910) and Higgins (1942) agree that this sign symbolizes the “horns of authority.” Higgins (1942) goes further to say that “chieftains affected the horns as part of headdress.” Roth (1948) instead correctly interprets its origin as “George Washington’s three-cornered hat,” an image that was certainly in the history books that Deaf children would have seen in school. Confirmation of Roth’s proposed etymology is found in LSF, where the same sign means GENDARME (constable; Pélissier 1856; Clamaron 1875), and is documented as symbolizing the three-cornered hats worn by French police officers during the nineteenth century.



ASL PRESIDENT



George Washington



LSF GENDARME
(Clamaron 1875)



Illustration of a constable
(Clamaron 1875)

PRESIDENT 209

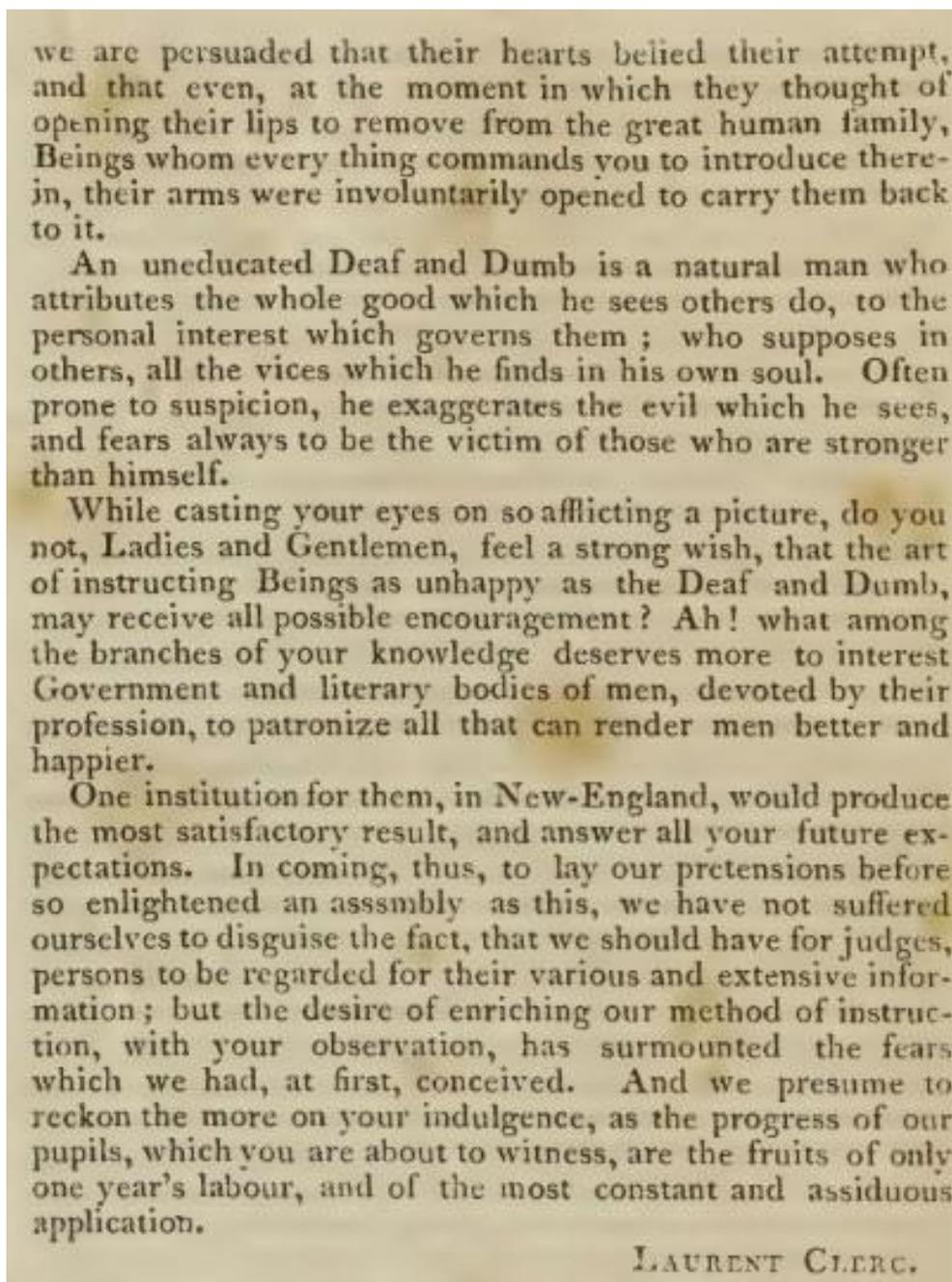
shaw, E., & Delaporte, Y. (2015). A historical and etymological dictionary of american sign language : The origin and evolution of more than 500 signs. ProQuest Ebook Central <a onclick=window.open('http://ebookcentral.proquest.com'; '_blank') href='http://ebookcentral.proquest.com' target='_blank' style='cursor: pointer; created from rit on 2021-01-22 06:24:21.

Baynton, Douglas C. *Abraham Lincoln, Laurent Clerc, and the Design of the Word: Lincoln Day Address at Gallaudet University, February 11, 2009*. *Sign Language Studies* 10, no. 4 (2010) : 396–408.

2-2 Address before the Governor and both houses of legislature

This address, prepared by Laurent Clerc, was presented by Thomas H. Gallaudet “before the governor and both houses of legislature” on May 28, 1818, as part of a “public examination” of students at The Connecticut Asylum for the Education and Instruction of Deaf and Dumb Persons.

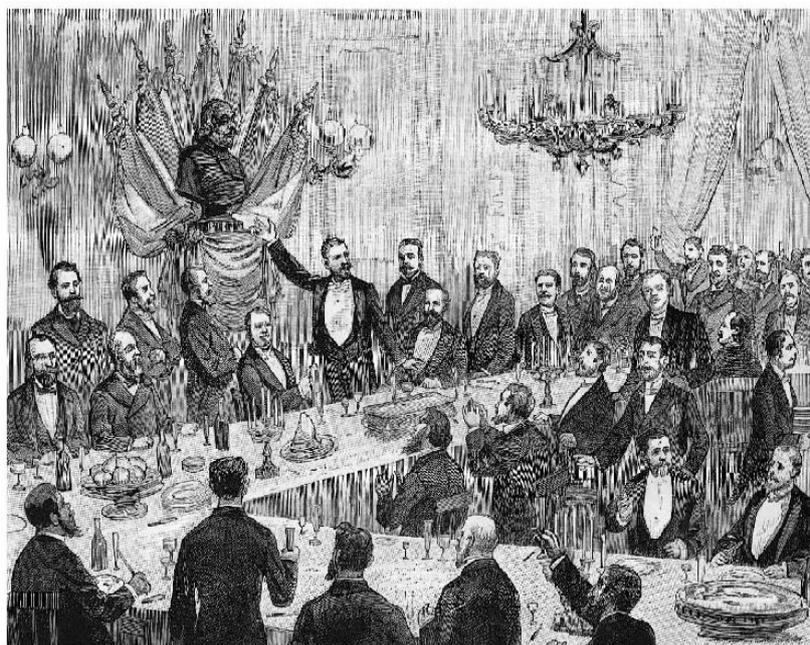
It is another instance of both men and friends working together for the advancement of their projects.



<https://dp.la/primary-source-sets/nineteenth-century-schools-for-the-deaf-and-blind/sources/1442>

C - In the wake of Laurent Clerc, and Thomas H. Gallaudet: Friendly meetings, events, and education

1 Banquets



Banquet for the Parisian deaf celebrating the 174th birthday of L'Abbé de l'Epée.

The president, who raises a toast, has just been kicked out of teaching with all the other deaf teachers.

Auguste Colas, *Le Monde illustré* [The Illustrated World] 1887

Berthier and his friends started annual banquets to celebrate Epee's birthday, starting in 1834. They took place later on the US side, not until 2012 when Joan Naturale and some people from National Technical Institute for the Deaf started hosting a banquet in Rochester, New York, to celebrate Epee's 300th birthday. From then on, annual banquets are held at NTID

<https://www.rit.edu/ntid/radscs-deafmute-banquets>

The decision for hosting annual banquets in Paris is decisive in three ways (other than celebrating Epee's birthday and contributions to deaf education) :

1. Moved the centeredness of deaf community from school to society.
2. Preserved the sign language and deaf culture (especially when the school shifted its communication policy from sign language to spoken French after Roch-Ambroise Auguste Bebian, an ardent sign language proponent, was fired)
3. Educated the public about deaf contributions to society as hearing reporters, ambassadors, famous people, etc. were invited to the banquets where latest contributions (patents, arts, etc.) and successful stories were shared. Interpreters for the hearing participants were provided.

Deaf Americans took part in the French banquets, especially those who did their residency or projects (artists, writers, scientists) in France. Some Gallaudet faculty members participated in the banquets (Amos Draper, for example).

Several excerpts below highlight the importance of early banquets as historical events. They have become a fixture in the life of Deaf communities and they are quite popular nowadays. Some are not as grand as the original ones and French “Deaf cafés” are quite common.

Banquets of Deaf-Mutes-were a series of annual banquets held in Paris at the beginning in 1834. They represent an event, entirely in sign language, conceived both as a protest against the way deaf people were treated by the hearing world and the alternative reality that their deaf organizers wanted to propose to the hearing world's examination.

Mike Gulliver, *Write me a memory – Or the constructions of the deaf-mute banquets in 19th century Paris*. Unpublished Master's Thesis. University of Bristol: UK, 2004.

The “birthdate of the Deaf-Mute nation” was in 1834 at the first Deaf-Mute Banquet in Paris. The eloquence of the signed speeches, toasts, and poems at this first large-scale gathering (which included foreign Deaf and invited hearing people) was well documented. The Banquets became political demonstrations of what is good and right about the Deaf way of being in the world.

The Deaf-mute Banquets and the Birth of the Deaf Movement. In R. Fischer and H. Lane (Eds.). *Looking back: A Reader on the History of Deaf Communities and Their Sign Languages*. Hamburg, Germany: Signum Press, pp. 143-155.

Even people from Hartford, CT, attended the deaf-mute banquet in Paris, including a Hartford mayor:

The Banquet July 5, at eight in the evening, the grand banquet was held at the Garde Hotel. Almost 400 delegates to the convention were present. The gentlemen were in tuxedos, the ladies, numerous, attractive, and elegant, wore fashionable gowns. According to American custom, the banquet was presided over by a toastmaster. This was Michael Lapidés, a most promising young man. On his right were the mayor of Hartford, the principal of the institution, Mr. Wheeler, and other notables, both hearing and deaf. On his left was the French delegation, Gaillard, Pilet, Graff, and Olivier.

Henri Gaillard, *Henri Gaillard in Deaf America, 1917*, chap Hartford Connecticut, the Banquet, Gallaudet University Press, 2002.

Banquets of the DEAF-MUTES, gathered to celebrate the anniversaries of the birth of the Abbé de l'Épée.

Account published by the Société Centrale des Sourds-Muets de Paris (Central Society of Parisian deaf-mutes) ---

Jacques Ledoyen (possibly, Jacques the elder), bookseller, 16 Galerie d'Orléans, Palais-Royal, 1842



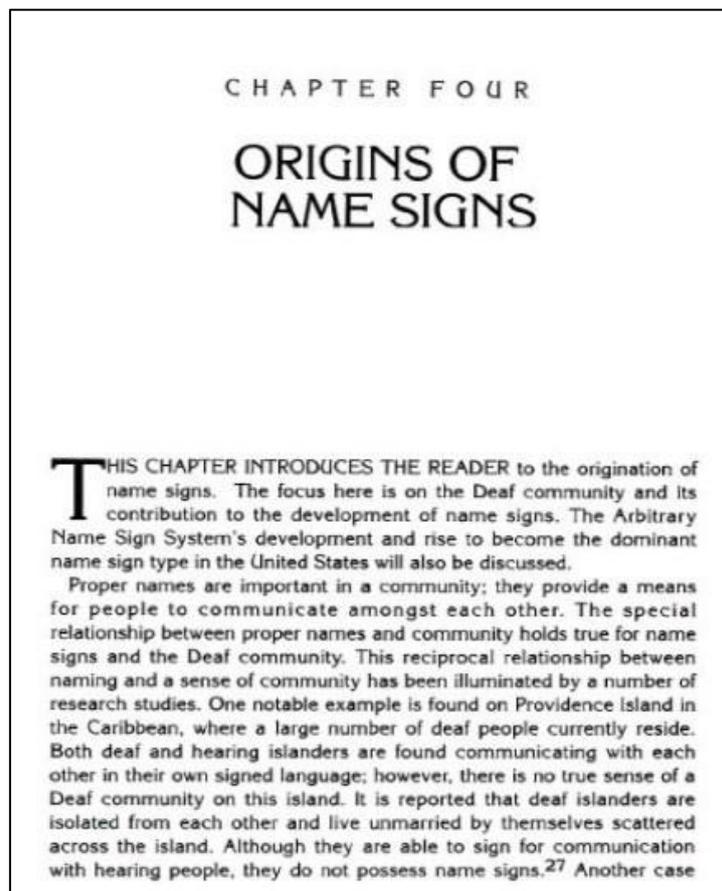
Menu for a banquet anniversary of the birth of L'Abbé de l'Épée, Auguste Colas.

2 - Laurent Holt visiting his ancestor's birthplace.

What's in a name?

When Laurent Holt visited Laurent Clerc's birthplace in France he realized the importance of family names.

- Name signs are also very important in Deaf communities.



Supalla, Samuel J., *The Book of Name Signs*, Dawnsign Press, 1992

In human communication, the name is used to “identify” the people involved.

The Deaf assign signs to name people: these are the names signs or signed names. They refer to a physical characteristic of the person (for Laurent Clerc: his scar on the face; for Thomas H. Gallaudet, his glasses) or to his habits, or to one of his psychological characteristics. The signed names have no pejorative connotations.



The use of the name establishes a close bond. It can also indicate that the interlocutor exercises some form of power over the other by holding information. "To meet" someone is also to enter this invisible space in between.

This chapter introduces the reader to the origin of sign names. The emphasis here is on the deaf community and its contribution to the development of sign names. It will discuss the development of the Arbitrary System and Sign Names and how it came to be in the United States.

Proper names are important in a community: they provide a way for people to communicate with each other. The special link between proper names and community is true of sign names and the deaf community. The reciprocal relationship between naming and a sense of community has been illustrated by several research studies. A notable example is found in Providence Island in the Caribbean, where a significant number of Deaf people reside permanently. The people of the island, Deaf and hearing communicate in their own language: and yet there is no sense of community on the island. It is said that the Deaf people on the island are isolated, do not marry and live scattered around the island. Although they can sign to communicate with hearing people, they do not have signed names.

Samuel J. Supalla, *The Book of Name Signs*, chapter 4, Dawnsign Press, 1992.

Laurent Holt (great, great ... grandson of Laurent Clerc) has become aware of all that is left unsaid in the image we have of others. And in this thick sense where the exchange takes its source. Thus "he meets his" ancestor ", Laurent Clerc, in the perception of those who venerate him.

- Below: an extract from Laurent Holt's Travelogue:

As time progressed, I came to understand many things about the Deaf that I did not know. I could not for the life of me understand why there were some many, about five, interpreters on stage signing at one time. I wondered why so many were needed for one language. Of course, it was because there are many sign languages. I had thought that French Sign Language was essentially universal and was adopted wherever it was sent. I soon became aware of the diversity that is sign language around the world. Not knowing sign, myself I was still intrigued by this, as I am attempting to learn French for my upcoming immigration to the Province of Quebec, Canada. Of course, I had already experienced the warmth and friendship that is the Deaf community. But I also became more aware of the intense interest and pride in Deaf history among the participants of the conference. The presentations, especially those focusing on biographies of pioneers in Deaf education in all the countries around the world, fascinated me. They seemed to parallel the experience of Laurent Clerc and they seemed no less significant than he in their native countries then Laurent Clerc was for America. Though these stories I increasingly felt the importance of Laurent Clerc's own sacrifices and work in helping to provide the tools for the enlightenment of a community previously denied by aggressive proponents of the oral methods. This struggle of the signing and the oral traditions seemed to take on the mood of a holy war of liberation. Harlan Lane's book helped me to understand why this conference on Deaf history came into being and the importance of such gatherings to explore a community experience. Alice's and other stories about their forced education in oral methods helped me to understand this struggle on a personal level. It was becoming clear for the first time for me who Laurent Clerc really was and what he was really about. Increasingly I was filled with a sense of pride for what he had done and the contribution he had made to so many.

Laurent Holt, *Travelogue*.

3 - Historical sketch: retrospective by Bernard Truffaut⁵²

Those visits renewed the Franco-American relationships. In the same way, Bernard Truffaut in his speech at Gallaudet College, Washington D.C. on June 18-19, 1991, drew a historical perspective * concerning Deaf relationships between France and America, by sketching 4 main periods:

[* Based on documents made available by the author, in French and English]

From 1771 up to 1880.

With strong French influence. L'Abbé de l'Épée Laurent Clerc and Thomas H. Gallaudet's heyday. The "French School" for education appears as a model.

Deaf American artists are coming to Paris to complete their training, such as Douglas Tilden⁵³ (from 1888 up to 1894)

⁵² Bernard Truffaut (born 1937), teacher, journalist and then director at Echo Magazine, from 1994 to 2008. Founder of the Association Etienne de Faye.

⁵³ Douglas Tilden, 1861-1935, studied at California School for the Deaf, then, Paris, with Paul-François Choppin

From 1880 up to 1920.

The first international conference in Paris in 1889 (Universal Exhibition in Paris; anniversary of Abbé de l'Épée's death)

23 Americans, both deaf and hearing attend the Conference.

The Americans pay homage to Laurent Clerc and Thomas H. Gallaudet, which is summed up in Turner's words:

"Both have given impulse to the current which crosses brilliantly the American continent".

International Chicago Conference in 1893.

France sends 6 delegates, among which Henri Gaillard, the famous journalist and author.

The delegation is staying 5 weeks and visits many institutions. The sculptor Felix Plessis offers a statue of L'Abbé de l'Épée to the "Pas à pas club" of deaf people in Chicago.

When returning to France, Gaillard printed a 185-page document.

It is noted that The Americans are much ahead of France in their deaf education system.

1897-1898: Edgar Miner Gallaudet.

The French Deaf people consider him as a hero. He comes to Paris: banquets are organized and a recognition medal is offered to him by the superior council of the Deaf and Dumb French Associations. The "Columbus Institution Message" which he inspired is addressed "to all people who are interested in deaf and dumb education progress in Europe" is published by deaf and dumb printers in Paris thanks to a subscription of French Deaf people.

In 1898 they offer him a bust of the Abbé de l'Épée by Felix Plessis.

1900: Paris International conference.

With two sections: one for the Deaf, the other one, for hearing people who had complained they could not understand the Deaf.

A split in the debates too, following the Milan conference resolutions.

Transitory period:

- **1902:** in Washington, in front of the White House, inauguration of de Rochambeau's statue by a French deaf sculptor, Frenand Hamar.
- **1904:** International conference in St Louis. No French delegates, but Henri Gaillard sent a paper.
- **1906:** San Francisco Earthquake;
- **1909:** cancellation of dispositions forbidding Deaf people to enter competitions for public employments in the United States.
- **1910:** catastrophic floods in France. The American deaf people organize a subscription to help the French deaf victims.
- **1810:** International Conference in Colorado Springs. No French delegation.
- **1912:** International conference in Paris. Organized for the bicentenary of L'Abbé de l'Épée's birth. It attracts many delegates, 27 Americans among them.

(An incident:

Mrs. Gaillard, a teacher from the Bordeaux institution explains that she used signs- then forbidden- in her classroom. Though she is rebuked by the headmistress of the Bordeaux Institution, the American delegates comfort her. And applaud her courage and call her "The Deaf Joan of Arc".)

At the end of the Conference, a resolution was voted for the combined teaching system.

- **1917:** Hartford Institution centenary.

4 French delegates are sent, among whom Henri Gaillard.

The Americans encourage French people and wish they can be liberated from oralism.

An American national deaf people's subscription makes it possible for 3 ambulances to be sent to the front: their names were L'Abbé de l'Epée, Sicard and Clerc.

Third period

Exchanges become rare during 50 years, from 1920 up to 1970.

Two international conferences are held in Paris in 1931 and 1937. Delegates were mainly European.

Fourth period: relations are renewed.

Conferences in Paris (1931) and Washington D.C (1937)

The creation of an "international deaf-dumb league" is envisaged. But it is in 1951 that the World Federation of the Deaf is set up.

After 1970: relations are renewed. It is the Awakening period with the socio-linguistic observatory of Mottez-Markowicz and the creation of IVT (International Visual Theatre) with Alfredo Corrado, Moody, and Robbin.

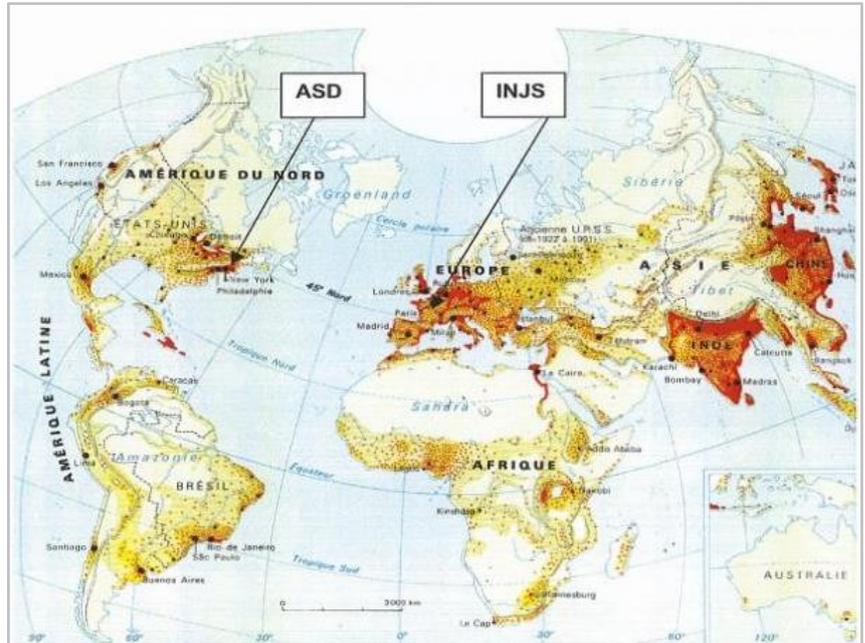
Bernard Truffaut underlines the constant support of the American deaf people to the French one, especially after the devastating Milan Conference. He pays homage to these brave people who crossed the Atlantic Ocean, from France and America:

They have built a solidarity bridge between America and Europe.

4 - School pairing: INJS, Paris, France, and ASD, Hartford, USA



American students and their French hosts pose in front of the Paris School for the Deaf. The statue is very reminiscent of the Gallaudet statue at ASD. It depicts the Abbé de l'Épée (1712-1789) who founded the Paris school, and who was the first to use sign language in formal classroom instruction. He is shown teaching a pupil the letter "D".



American School for the Deaf
West Hartford, CT USA

April 2-16, 2000
2-16 Avril 2000



Institut National de Jeunes Sourds
Paris, France



ASD/ INJS EXCHANGE PROGRAM
PROGRAMME D'ECHANGE ASD/INJS

“History of ASD / INJS Exchange Program “
Programme d'Echange ASD/ INJS

The exchange program between the American School for in West Hartford, CT and the Institute National de Junes Sounds de Paris has been in existence since 1989. During a two-year cycle, the students taking French at ASD and the students taking English at INJS become pencils and exchange letters. Then the two groups of students have a chance to meet face-to –face. In the spring of the first year, they meet in the U.S. where the American students are host to the French students. IN the spring of the second year, they meet in Paris where the French students host the American students. Currently in its twelfth year, the exchange program has provided the opportunity for students, staff, and administrators from each school to meet, to learn from each other, and most importantly, to become friends.

Le programme d'echange entre l'American School for the Deaf, situe a West Hartford, CT et l'Institut National des Jeunes Sourds de Paris existe depuis 1989. Tous les deux ans, les eleves qui suivent le cours de Francais a l'ASD et ceux qui suivent le cours d' anglais a l'INJS deviennent correspondants et s'envoient des lettres. Puis les deux groupes d' eleves ont l'occasion de faire connaissance. Au printemps de la premiere annee, ils se rencontrent aux U.S.A. ou les americains accueillent les francais. Puis, la deuxieme annee, c'est au tour des francais d' accueillir a Paris. Depuis douze ans, le programme d'echange donnent aux eleves, aux professeurs et aux administrateurs l'occasion de se rencontrer, d'echanger, et, ce qui est le plus important, de devenir amis.

Dossier réalisé
par Danielle Lefèvre, professeur,
Institut National des Jeunes Sourds de Paris,

Paris, septembre 2004

The relationship between the American School for the Deaf (ASD) and the Institut National de Jeunes Sourds (INJS) de Paris began in the early 19th century when Thomas Hopkins Gallaudet traveled to Europe looking for guidance in his efforts to set up the first school for the deaf in the U.S. After arriving in Paris, he was welcomed at INJS, where he studied for several months. He was able to recruit Laurent Clerc, a deaf Frenchman, who accompanied Gallaudet back to Connecticut and assisted in founding ASD.

The strong connection between the two schools was re-established in 1989 when a modern-day version of the Gallaudet-Clerc exchange was organized. In this program, students and staff from both schools have a chance to meet, visit each other's schools, and exchange ideas and cultures.

During a two-year cycle, the students taking French at ASD and the students taking English at INJS become pen pals and they exchange letters. Then both groups of students have a chance to meet face-to-face. In the spring of the first year, they meet in the U.S., where the American students are host to the French students. In the spring of the second year, they meet in Paris where the French students host the American ones.

Reciprocity is the rule.

The exchange program has provided an opportunity for students, staff and administrators from each school to meet, to learn from each other, and most importantly, to become friends.

INJS, website

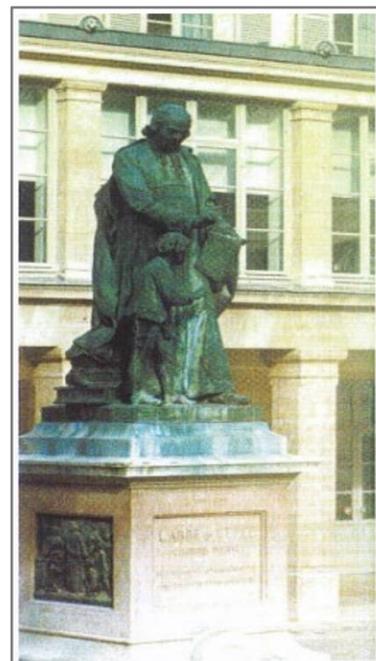


American School
for the Deaf

ASD

FOUNDED IN 1817

139 North Main Street
West Hartford, Connecticut 06107
(203) 727-1300 (voice)
(203) 727-1422 (TDD)
Winfield McChord, Jr.
Executive Director



Établissement public
rattaché au Ministère de l'Emploi
et de la Solidarité

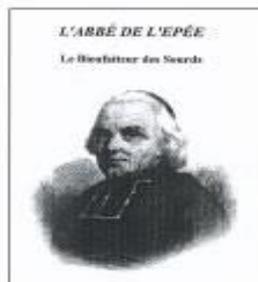
institut
national
de jeunes sourds

injs

254, rue Saint-Jacques - 75005 PARIS Tél. : 01 53 73 14 00 - Fax : 01 46 34 78 76

Trois figures emblématiques de l'enseignement aux Jeunes Sourds

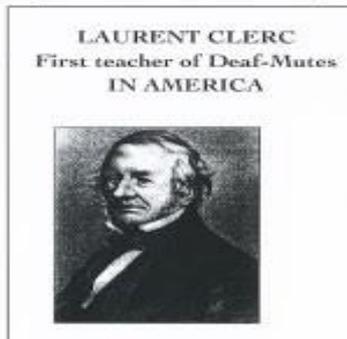
L'histoire de l'éducation des Sourds entre la France et les États-Unis
d'Amérique s'articule autour de trois personnages...



L'Abbé de L'Épée
précurseur de l'enseignement en signes
aux élèves sourds



Thomas Gallaudet et Laurent Clerc
co-fondateurs de l'école américaine des élèves sourds à Hartford, Connecticut
USA



Bienvenue à Paris!

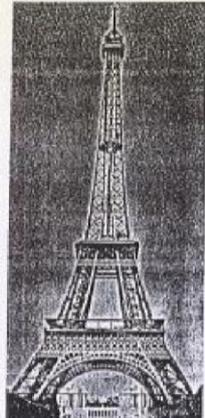
ASD students and teachers visit the school where Gallaudet first met Laurent Clerc

by Anna Andrews

Bienvenue à Paris! These warm words of welcome greeted our group of six ASD students and two teachers as we arrived at Charles de Gaulle Airport on April 17th. Robyn Biser, Maria Cardoso, Heidi Clemmey, Patty Garcia, Wilmonda McDevitt, Fatima Silvestre and their two teachers, Marilyn Brown and myself, left JFK Airport in New York bound for a two-week stay at the Institut National de Jeunes Sourds de Paris. The Institut St. Jacques, as it is known locally, has a special place in the hearts of all ASDers since it is the school where Thomas Hopkins Gallaudet received his training in deaf education and where he met Laurent Clerc, the first teacher of the deaf in the U.S. As we walked across the courtyard to look at the statue of Abbé de l'Épée or climbed the old spiral wooden staircases, we couldn't help but

wonder, "Did Clerc walk here too?"

The school day at Institut St. Jacques begins at 8:00 a.m. for high school students. They take academic classes in the morning until noon. Their vocational classes take place every day except Wednesday from 1:00 to 6:00 p.m. Wednesday afternoons are free for field trips, studying or leisure activities. We observed the French class of Mme. Gillot, the Human Growth and Development class of M. Chapelain, and the English class of Mme. LeFebvre. We also toured the vocational department and discovered that they offer tailoring, horticulture, and dental assistant classes as well as printing, electronics, machine shop, business education, and banking. In addition, M. Bernard, the school historian, prepared a lecture for us on the historical view of deafness and the establishment of the I.N.J.S. This was a special year to visit Paris, since France is celebrating the



bicentennial of the French Revolution. We were able to see many of the famous Parisian sights, including Notre Dame Cathedral, the Arc de Triomphe, the Louvre, the Place de la Concorde, St. Chapelle, les Invalides, and, of course, the Eiffel Tower.

The night tour of Paris from the Seine River was also spectacular. Day trips included tours of Versailles, the Chateau de Chambord, and the zoo at St. Yvlin. We also attended a play at the L.V.T., a deaf theater, where Marilyn Brown had a reunion with her former college classmate Alfredo Corrado, the founder of I.V.T.

Travel to a foreign country is very exciting and interesting. It also requires an open mind and the ability to accept customs and practices that are different from our own. The ASD students adapted very well to such French traditions as greeting each other in the morning with four kisses on alternate cheeks, eating French



ASD students pose with their French hosts on a Paris street

The French Connection Continues

by Anna Andrews

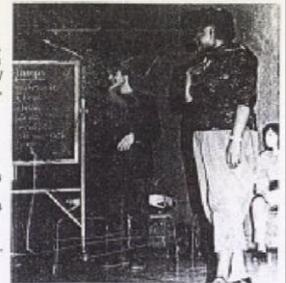
To meet their pen pals after 13 months of correspondence, to see the campus of the American School for the Deaf, and to visit Gallaudet University were three dreams that recently came true for a group of seven students from the Institut National de Jeunes Sourds (National Institute of Deaf Youth) in Paris, France. Olivier Congard, Christophe Dehall, Dominique Canneval, Stana Grubic, Nadège Roite, Karine Coze, and Sophie Mougensot, accompanied by their faculty advisors Danielle Lefevre, Isabelle Toussaint, and François Legras, arrived at Newark Airport on October 26. Greeted by ASD staff members Fern and Charlie Reisinger and three ASD students, the French visitors were immediately whisked away to Washington, D.C., where they spent a weekend sight-seeing at many national landmarks and touring the Gallaudet University campus. Because there are no post-secondary education programs in France which are specifically geared to hearing-impaired students, the visit to Gallaudet was a special treat.

When the group arrived in West Hartford on Tuesday, October 30, they were welcomed by the special warmth of ASD students and staff. During

their week-long stay, the French visitors were delighted to tour the ASD campus, the ASD museum, Converse Communications Center (the statewide TDD/Voice interpreting service), the Commission on the Deaf and Hearing Impaired, and downtown Hartford. They observed classes in the upper school and vocational departments for a full day, took a day trip to Searidge Village in Massachusetts, and, of course, made a stop at the West Farms Mall for souvenir shopping.

A mid-week highlight was the Halloween party on Wednesday night. Because Halloween is not celebrated in France, the foreign visitors enjoyed a novel experience in dressing in costumes and learning American games and dances. On Thursday night, a special banquet in honor of the French visitors was hosted by ASD Executive Director Winfield McChord, Jr. At the banquet, students had an opportunity to meet the families of their American pen pals, and their trip was topped off with a visit to the homes of these families over the weekend.

Because the French students had spent several years learning English and several ASD students are in their second year of French, communication between the two groups was easy. Many of the French and American signs are similar, too, since the American Sign Language and manual alphabet have their origins in France. The students were able to converse about the similarities and differences between their schools, their families and their own lives. They



French student Christophe Dehall and ASD student Elise Crawford each make their native sign for 'please' (it'll soon please in French) during a school assembly to introduce the visitors.

joked and teased each other a lot too.

The on-going exchange program between ASD and the French school will continue in April 1991 when a group of ASD students and their advisors will travel to Paris for a two-week stay. The ASD students are very excited to visit their pen pals again in France. Meanwhile, many memories of this fun-loving and personable group of young people from Paris will remain with ASD students and staff for a long time.



French faculty advisor Isabelle Toussaint and student Christophe Dehall show off some of the gifts they received at the end of their ten-day visit.



French students Dominique Canneval, Sophie Mougensot, Christophe Dehall, Stana Grubic, Nadège Roite, Karine Coze, Olivier Congard discuss the meaning of various signs during the initial assembly.

How We Look to Them

To give readers a taste of what can be learned from exchange programs, French students Richard Mayaud, Arnaud Gay, Florent Monier-Reyes, Laurent Debord, Helene Semblat, Beatrice Dupont, Louise Dias, Paula Carneiro and Isabelle Berthe and staff members Danielle Lefevre, Monique Bernard, Yves Bernard and Sylvie Puovic were questioned on their impressions of the United States, and on how this country compares with France. While they often differed among themselves, there were some things on which they agreed:

French streets are small and go every which way. American streets are large, and are usually arranged in a grid. The U.S. has

more squirrels but fewer dogs than France.

French clothes are better, but America has the best running shoes. Americans drink Coca Cola in the morning; the French do not.

A common observation by the students was that Americans are very casual. We eat anytime; we do not worry so much. Americans whose ideas about France come from the movies may be surprised to learn the visitors consider France far more puritanical than America. They admired the open-minded attitude shown here.

In a more critical vein, the French were surprised by the emptying of our cities after 5 p.m., and dismayed by the tendency of cities to be segregated by race and class. They noticed Americans usually stay home at the end of the day, whereas the French often go out shopping or take a stroll in the evening —

they mix in their community more.

The French had a high opinion of American deaf education. They admired the way almost everyone signs at ASD. They met a hearing signer by chance on the train — a very unlikely event in France. Schools for deaf children have a much heavier oral emphasis there. Gallaudet University was also admired. There is no equivalent college for deaf students in France. America, they said, offers more equal opportunity to its deaf students than France.

A deaf staff member, Sylvie Puovic, summed up the visitors' impressions. "People here are very friendly, very nice, I like that," she said. "But things seem strange, I would not want to live here. I prefer my home."

Exchange Students: "Vive la Difference"

The ongoing French exchange program continued this year with a visit to ASD by eight students and four staff members from the National Institute for Deaf Youth in Paris. The program is now in its fourth year, with each school alternating as host. Last spring, eight people visited France from ASD.

The visitors traveled first to Washington, D.C., arriving on February 29 for a visit to the nation's capital and Gallaudet University. They then took the train to Hartford, and used the American School as a base, taking many excursions. They visited Boston's Quincy Market and Aquarium; Hartford's Mark Twain Museum and other area sights; ASD's Camp Isola Bella in the Berkshire Mountains; and New York City. While in New York they stayed at the Fanwood School for the Deaf in White Plains.

Each of the French students had been a penpal to an ASD student for some time before the visit, so they had friends upon arrival. The students were able to see their ASD friends' homes and get a taste of American life.

The ASD hosts welcomed their guests warmly. There are many important connections between ASD and the "Institut St. Jacques," as the

Paris school is called. The first teacher at the American School, Laurent Clerc, was a graduate and teacher at the Paris school and the French Sign Language he used formed the basis for American Sign Language.

Consequently, the two languages are more closely related than are spoken English and French. American and French deaf students were able to overcome the language barrier relatively easily.

A highlight of the visit was a presentation on the history of deaf education in France by Yves Bernard, a history teacher at the Paris school. Speaking through two interpreters (spoken and signed), Bernard described the early life of Laurent

Clerc, illustrated with slides of rare pictures and documents from Paris.

Younger students had a great time questioning the visitors during a special assembly held in the Cogswell building. The youngsters were especially interested and amused by the differences between the two sign languages, which have, of course, grown apart over the past 175 years.

A packed schedule wound up on March 14 when the students and staff departed New York to return home to Paris. Many friendships were formed and strengthened, and people from both sides of the Atlantic learned from the exchange — what is different, and what is the same in all of us.



Staff and students of the "Institut St. Jacques," the National School for Deaf Youths in Paris, France, visited ASD recently.

Exchange Brings Deaf Students Together

For many years, the American School for the Deaf has exchanged students and staff with the National Institute for Deaf Youth (Institut National de Jeunes Sourds, INJS) in Paris, France. This year it was the French students' turn to come to the United States.

Seven girls, five boys and four teachers arrived at ASD April 25 after visiting Gallaudet University and Washington, DC. They were warmly received by their hosts — one ASD student for each visitor.

Participants in the exchange program study one another's language and correspond as penpals before the visit takes place. The common origin of American Sign Language (ASL) and French Sign Language (LSF) makes communication easier than it would be for hearing American and French students.

The first day, visiting students toured ASD, ate lunch with their penpals, and participated in a school-wide assembly. The following days were filled with typical exchange activities — class visits, social times, after-school activities and the like. School activities were interspersed with visits to area points of interest and historic sites in deaf education. A farewell banquet marked the end of the visit.

Before departing, the French took time to discuss their impressions of the U.S. Many expressed strong opinions when asked to compare the two countries. The French system is more heavily oral and mainstreamed than the U.S., although this is slowly changing as sign language gains respect.

Deaf people in France are organizing to push for this change, holding demonstrations reminiscent of the "Deaf President Now" movement at Gallaudet in 1988. A deaf actress, Emmanuelle Laborit, has emerged as an important spokesperson for the French movement.

For some students, the Classe Bilingue offers an equivalent to some Total Communication strategies, in which voice is supplemented with a form of manually-coded French. Other classes use "Codall," a form of cued speech which is very popular in France. There is little formal use of LSF, and there are virtually no deaf teachers in the academic departments.

The students admired Gallaudet University and ASD, and the broad use of sign language here. They liked American clothes ("large and comfortable") and kitchens ("spacious"), compared to France.

All were impressed with the warmth and friendliness of Americans, and enjoyed the visit tremendously. "This exchange is a good deal for both sides," said one student visitor. "We both learn, comparing our languages and cultures."

"We used up a lot of energy on this visit, but it was worthwhile," said another. "We had a great time!"

Editor's note: A related story, on a new French film on deafness, appears on page 7.



Exchange students from National Institute for Deaf Youth in Paris pose in front of the bust of Laurent Clerc, a graduate and teacher at the French school who came to the U.S. to help found ASD. Back row, l-r.: Anthony Rowand, Ingrid Wenzler, Emmanuel Degois, Nicolas Leguillier. Middle row: Kerline Pierre-Louis, Teacher Claude Chapelain, Alexandra Lhdre, Natacha Nowbuth, Lucie Rousse, Nathalie Le Huu Nho, Anthony Dubuisson, Delphine Liard, Teacher Alain Gôbert. Front: Teacher Yves Bernard and Fabrice Jurquet.



The year 2013 marks the 25th anniversary of the twinning between the INJS in Paris and the American School of the Deaf (ASD) in Hartford, Connecticut.

An agreement concluded in 1988 under the impetus of two teachers, Mrs. Anna ANDREWS, French teacher at ASD, and Mrs. Danièle LEFEVRE, English teacher at INJS, set up linguistic and cultural exchanges between the two institutes, which were to be translated into concrete

action in the form of pairings, meetings and reciprocal exchanges. The axes chosen are essentially pedagogical and educational.

The constant involvement of the organizers, the management of the two establishments and the great attractiveness of these exchanges for young deaf pupils have made it possible to keep this partnership alive for 25 years now.

The 10th anniversary was celebrated in Hartford in 1998 in the presence of a delegation from the INJS in Paris. The 20-year anniversary took place in Paris.

The 25th anniversary took place in Hartford in spring 2014.

These founding events created a lasting link between the two schools, even if the options taken in the education of the deaf diverged at the end of the 19th century, when sign language was banned in French and European schools.

Laurent Clerc remains one of the most revered figures in the French deaf community.

The work built from this meeting between two men of different origins remains exceptional and exemplary.

In May 2015, the INJS of Paris welcomed the management team of the Hartford ASD school and the team organizing the partnership between our two schools.

4-1 An account by a French School teacher, Dominique Lefevre, (INJS) who participated in one exchange:

The story of an unusual school exchange.

A Franco-American friendship built on cooperation and friendship at the Institut des Sourds-Muets de Paris in 1816 between a deaf Frenchman, Laurent Clerc, a teacher of deaf children, and a hearing American, Reverend Thomas Gallaudet, was renewed in 1989 and continues to this day.

My colleague and dear friend, Danielle, welcomed me to the INIS (Institut National de Jeunes Sourds) in September 1989, as a new English teacher colleague, just after the first group of ASD (accompanied by Anna) came to the institute for an educational visit. We all saw the interest that the INJS students had in their American peers, motivated to send (by mail) letters in English and French, photos, and drawings to their respective pen pals, all in preparation for their trip to discover ASD the following spring, in 1990. These first two contacts of students and companions were the origin of the great friendship between Anna and Danielle.

Afterwards, Danielle and Anna managed to involve their hearing and deaf colleagues in each school to take over and organize the following exchanges. Thus, many professionals and high school students, between 1989 and 2018 without interruption have been able to discover a "sister" school on each side of the Atlantic and to note the differences in pedagogy, mode of communication, etc... I have been part of the companions of the INJS groups in 1996, in 1998, and one last time in 2001. I went back in 2014 with Danielle, and the director of INJS to celebrate the 25th anniversary of the exchange, along with the group of students and in 2017.

The Alumni Association of St. Jacques and its President have always actively supported (morally and financially) the exchange, also offering gifts pi-Injs, and participating in person to important anniversaries: 10 years, 20 years, 25 years of the exchange, 200 years of the ASD school in May 2017.

During the preparation periods, emails and Facebook replaced letters from the young people, then visual exchanges (videos, or live with Skype RV) replaced

emails, the new technologies made the "correspondences" easier, but perhaps also more superficial. However, the real meetings in the respective schools and families have always been lived intensely.

At the ASD school in Hartford, the history of Deaf education, especially American Deaf education, is taught as a subject in its own right, the American students are well aware of the French origin of their sign language, ASL, and Laurent Clerc, one of the two founders, is a well-known and very important celebrity, often performed in theatrical re-enactments. His portrait is on display at the museum in downtown Hartford.

At INJS in Paris, it is usually the LSF teachers who teach the history of the school, the L' Abbé de l'Épée and the Deaf of France.

The ASD covered the visiting groups with various gifts, American style, and stimulated the production of "INJS gifts". These gifts, thought up by high school students and professionals, are symbolic of everyone's desire that this educational and pedagogical exchange, interrupted by the Coronavirus crisis, continue to exist, for the greatest happiness of young people!

In memory of Danielle who left us in 2020.

Dominique Lefevre Fischer, 2021

4-2 An account by an American Teacher, Anna Andrews (ASD) who participated in the first exchange program:

The seed for an exchange between INJS and ASD was planted in 1987 when the ASD Executive Director traveled to Paris with an American delegation and met the Director of INJS. The two men agreed to exchange residences for one month in the summer. They also agreed that one student from each school would travel and live for the month with the family of the other. This first exchange was the stimulus for ASD to initiate a French language and culture class. INJS had already been teaching English classes for many years.

A French teacher at the INJS and an American one at ASD proposed that students taking the French class should have the opportunity to travel to Paris to visit INJS and other historic sites during the school year so that they could meet French students and observe student life at INJS. The ASD administration approved the request, and in the spring of 1989, arrangements were made for a group of 6 American students with their teachers to lodge on the INJS campus and to observe classes there. Fortunately, while they were observing classes, they met one of the INJS English teachers. She understood the interest that there would be in exchanging groups of students who were learning a foreign language. She was very enthusiastic about participating in an exchange with ASD, and she worked diligently to organize regular exchanges of mail between French and American pen pals and made a plan for INJS students to visit ASD in the spring of 1990.

From that simple beginning, the exchange continued for more than 25 years. The Americans traveled to Paris in the odd years and the French group traveled to West Hartford in the even years. Over time, the program evolved to include side trips to Washington, DC and New York City for the French group and trips to Giverny and Normandy for the American group. Our goal from the beginning was always to provide an opportunity for French and American students and staff to share their respective languages, sign languages, cultures, and to strengthen the bonds of international friendship.

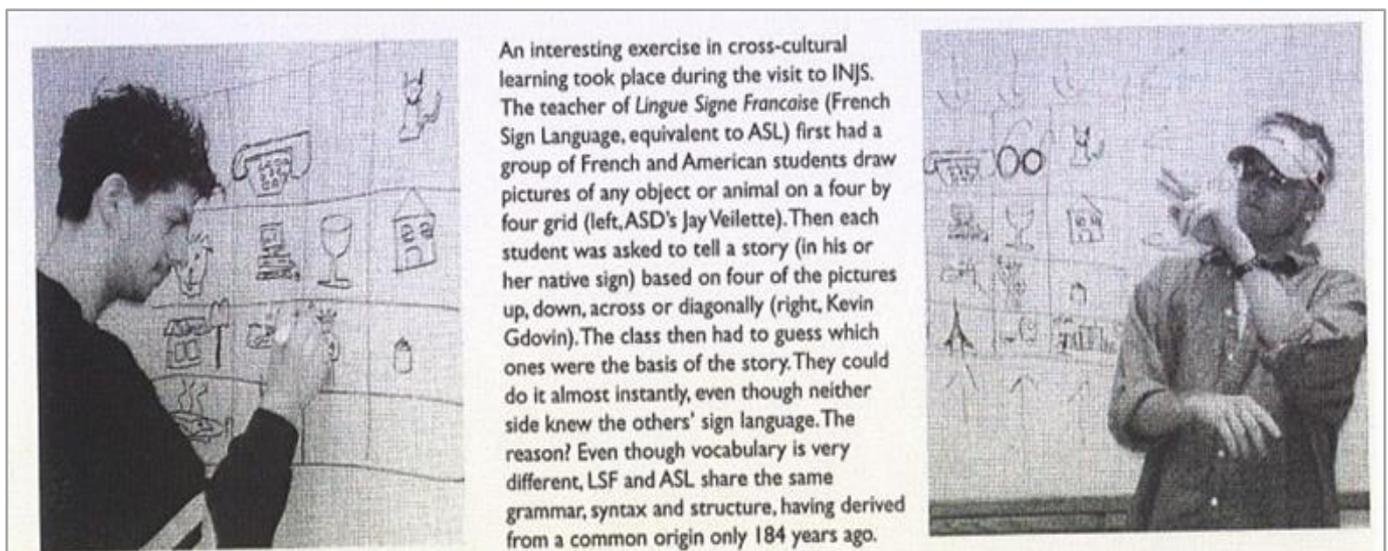
[...] A formal agreement between the two schools was written in 1992 and was accepted in 1998 by the directors of both schools on the occasion of the 10th anniversary of the exchange which was celebrated at ASD. Ten years later, on the occasion of the 20th anniversary of the exchange, INJS hosted guests from ASD for

a 2-day celebration that included a program of sharing pictures and memories of the exchanges and a trip to Versailles in the “footsteps” of Abbe de l’Epée, founder of the INJS. The ASD hosted a celebration of the 25th anniversary of the program in 2014.

The exchange program has provided a rich experience in language, culture, and history for more than 240 students and 60 staff on both sides of the Atlantic. It has also allowed students, staff and administrators from both schools to meet, to learn from each other, and, most importantly, to become friends.

Anna Andrews, 2021.

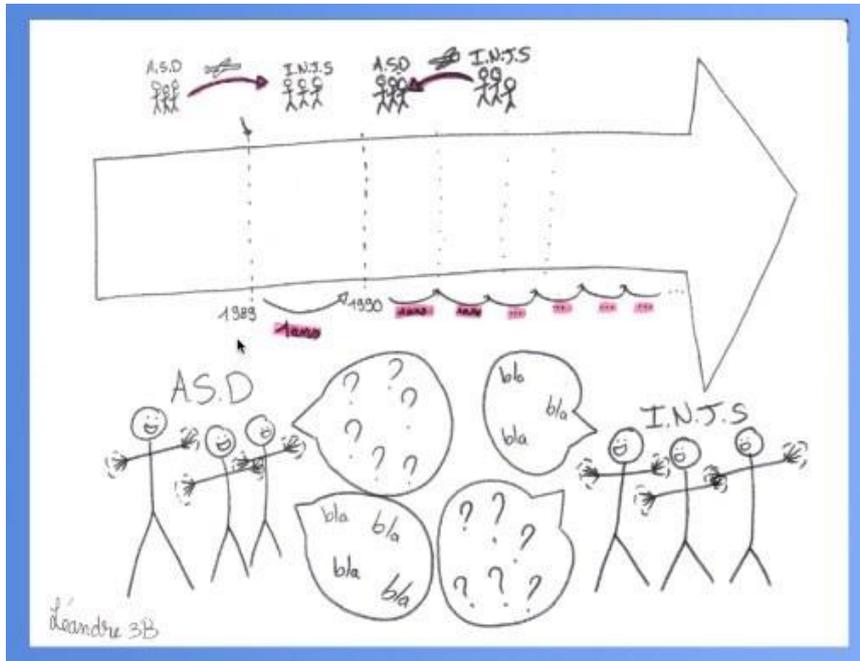
During one exchange, an original linguistic activity was organized between American and French students.



This is a demonstration that linguistic differences are not so big, and that young people (students) bring hope for the future: friendly physical meetings enable to discover that gaps between peoples can be dissolved to some extent.



25th birthday celebration cake.



Drawing by Léandre (3th B)

Other exchanges are regularly taking place. For example, this one, involving the Wisconsin School for the Deaf:

Rebecca Epple, Tracing the Steps of a Deaf Leader in France, Wisconsin School for the Deaf:
www.Miusa.org > Rebecca 1

They belong to a tradition of Franco-American connections initiated by Laurent Clerc and Thomas H. Gallaudet. Involving teachers and students, they demonstrate the power of education in drawing different people together whose cultures may differ, notably languages, and militate in favor of mutual respect and tolerance. This is one of the fundamental missions of education.

5 - Commemorations and celebrations of Franco-American relationships and friendship

5-1 Papers and magazines as go-betweens cementing relationships

First of all, Commemorations are privileged events where people gather and meet around a common interest: celebrating emblematic figures in their common history and culture. Secondly, as it is not always possible for all people concerned to rally to a particular place at the same time, who can better relate the event, but journals and magazines delivered to each one's doorstep, or, in the digital modern era, via the Internet?

➤ Some American papers and magazines:

Name of Periodical	Year Started	Number of years
The Gallaudet Guide And Deaf-Mutes' Companion	1860	
Deaf Mutes' Journal	1875	76
Silent World	1871	5
Buff and Blue	1892	Still in existence
The Silent Worker	1890	39
The National Exponent	1894	2
The American Deaf Citizen	1929	13
The Modern Silents	1937	2
The Digest of the Deaf	1938	2
The Silent Cavalier	1943	9
Silent Worker/Deaf American/NADmag	1948	Still in existence
The Observer	1952	4
The Silent News	1969	34
Deaf Life	1986	Still in existence
SignNews	2003	Still in existence
Kiss Fist	2008	Still in existence

Thomas K. Holcomb, *Introduction to Deaf Culture*, chap 8
Deaf Literature, Oxford University Press, 2013.

In America, The American Annals of the Deaf, (1847-present) The Deaf-mute Journal (1875-1951) The Silent Worker (1871-1929), Buff and Blue (Gallaudet, 1892-present) and other papers, were historically fulfilling this mission: they were a meeting space where deaf people could feel their sense of belonging to their communities and beyond. Similarly, in France the Echo des Familles and later ECHO Magazine up to other online papers more recently also, constitute a Deaf space by informing people of all that might happen all over the country. The reports made by highly motivated local reporters cover vast territories: not only from a geographical point of view, but from a cultural one as well. Historians, experts in sign languages, linguists, university professors and common mortals bring together their contributions, regardless of their social status. They represent the Deaf people, the Silent People of the Deaf who can express themselves to all their friends. Those magazines have also hearing readers wishing to get familiar with deaf culture.

Many American articles and excerpts have been referred to in all chapters of this book and will appear in its bibliography.

Introduction to Deaf culture, chap. 8, Littérature sourde, par Thomas K. Holcomb, Oxford University Press, 2013,

Some French magazines

Some relevant paper articles on the French side converge in their accounts.

✓ **ECHO DE FAMILLE N° 564 October 1989**

- Voyage to Washington, For the « Deaf Way » Congress 9-14 July,
- with many conferences (such as on Deaf-mute Banquets by Bernard Mottez, and the follow up of the Milan Conference, by Bernard Truffaut,
- an also entertainments for around 6500 people coming for over 80 countries. The play “At the end of the corridor” was much appreciated.

✓ **ECHO DE FAMILLE N° 584 September-October 1991**

Two university researchers, both hearing, John Schuchman and John Van Cleve, working at the History Department of Gallaudet University are at the origin of a great international Congress around Deaf History.

The American Deaf feel a kind of fervor for everything that touches their history (even though it is shorter than ours, the French Deaf) ; what is bequeathed to them by the past is really a heritage, a patrimony, as shown by their respect for the Archives kept at Gallaudet. These feelings are less strong in France.

For example, most American Deaf people know the story of Laurent Clerc, one of our compatriots who emigrated to the United States, better than we French Deaf people do; they have a kind of reverence for him that surprises us somewhat and makes us realize that we have perhaps lost the sense of our own history.

Bernard Truffaut

✓ **ECHO MAGAZINE n° 776, December 2004**



Dr. King JORDAN à la Balme, Sur les pas de Laurent Clerc
[In Laurent Clerc's footsteps] (cover page)

In November, King Jordan, president of Gallaudet University visited La Balme les Grottes, Laurent Clerc's native place.

Laurent Clerc is back (p 10)

The 20th anniversary celebrations of the Laurent Clerc Association took place on November 6 and 7, in the presence of Dr. King Jordan, President of Gallaudet University in Washington. As Marc Prégniard⁵⁴ said: "Through you, Deaf Americans, Laurent Clerc has returned to us."

Bernard Truffaut⁵⁵, Director, *Echo Magazine*, no. 716, December 2004

⁵⁴ Marc Prégniard, President of the Laurent Clerc Association.

⁵⁵ Bernard Truffaut (born 1937), teacher, journalist and then director at Echo Magazine, from 1994 to 2008. Founder of the Association Etienne de Faye.

Un président des États-Unis, grand-père d'un sourd-muet

On sait que George W. Bush, récemment réélu, est le 43^e président des États-Unis. Le 5^e s'appelait James Monroe.



• Vers 1810, James Monroe n'était pas encore président, mais secrétaire d'État dans le gouvernement des États-Unis. Il devait aller en Angleterre. Son ami le sénateur Randolph avait un neveu sourd-muet qui s'appelait John St George Randolph. Il n'y avait pas encore d'école pour les sourds aux États-Unis. Alors le sénateur demanda à son ami d'emmener son neveu dans une école en Europe. Le jeune St-George Randolph, d'abord élève à l'école Bradford en Angleterre, n'eut pas de bons résultats scolaires. Il fut alors placé à l'institution de Paris, dirigée par l'abbé Sicard. Laurent Clerc avait alors terminé ses études et était devenu professeur. St-George Randolph fut son premier élève américain. Et James Monroe fit ainsi sa première rencontre avec les sourds.

• 1817 : l'école des sourds de Hartford est fondée par Laurent Clerc et Thomas H. Gallaudet. La même année, James Monroe devient président des États-Unis. Peu de temps après son élection, il va visiter l'école de Hartford.

• 1819 : l'école de Hartford manque d'argent. Laurent Clerc se rend à Washington pour demander des subventions au Congrès. A cette occasion, il est reçu à la Maison Blanche par le président Monroe. Celui-ci dit à Laurent Clerc : « Je me rappelle vous avoir vu pendant une séance publique de Sicard » (c'était sans doute à Londres en 1816). Mais bizarrement il ne se rappelle pas l'avoir vu pendant sa visite à Hartford !

• 1823 : James Monroe devient grand-père. Son petit-fils qui s'appelle James Monroe Gouverneur, est sourd-muet. Nous avons peu de détails sur la vie de ce J. Monroe junior. Nous savons seulement qu'il est entré comme élève en 1835 à l'école des sourds à Philadelphie (état de Pennsylvanie) et qu'il est mort en 1885. ●

B. Truffaut

Sources : Livres de Harlan Lane « Quand l'esprit entend... » (pages 174-176, 228 et 238) et archives de l'université Gallaudet.



✓ ECHO MAGAZINE no. 759 March 2009

Gallaudet: French roots

✓ ECHO MAGAZINE N° 843 July-august-September 2017

Once upon a time Laurent Clerc, once upon a time America!

The 200th anniversary of Laurent Clerc and Thomas H. Gallaudet's founding of the first school for the Deaf, the American School for the Deaf, in Hartford, Connecticut, is a major commemoration.

We will delve not only into the story of the founding of a school, but also into the story of the creation of lasting ties between French Deaf and American Deaf people. Laurent Clerc is our ambassador, the key figure in the ties that bind us to the USA.

Françoise Chastel, editor in chief, *Echo Magazine*, no. 843 July – August – September 2017.



L'ASSOCIATION LAURENT CLERC à Hartford, USA, pour les 200 ans de la fondation de la première école américaine pour Sourds.

5-2 Deaf schools, Institutions, universities as anchoring spaces

They perpetuate the memory of the outstanding life experience, cooperation and friendship of Laurent Clerc and Thomas Gallaudet by providing resources and training in ASL and English for all. They are locations where the story was rooted. In Connecticut alone, several of them deserve particular attention, as they are the cradle of the whole Franco-American story and friendly bonds.

In his speech at the celebration of the 200th anniversary of the American School for the Deaf in 2018, Jeff Bravin, Director, celebrates Connecticut and expresses his gratitude to “countless friends of ASD”.

Good evening and Welcome!

Two centuries providing educational excellence for deaf and hard of hearing students is a milestone. I am honored tonight to welcome you to the 200th anniversary celebration of the American School for the Deaf! Tonight, we celebrate more than ASD. Tonight, we also celebrate Connecticut.

[...]

It has taken many people to bring us to where we are tonight. I am humbled to be joined by over 600 distinguished guests, including community leaders, alumni, staff, and countless friends of ASD. It is because of you and your support that we are able to celebrate 200 years of excellence.

We have a few very special guests joining us tonight. I am honored to welcome several relatives of ASD's co-founder and first teacher, Laurent Clerc. Sue Galloway, Kathy Harms, and Laurent Clerc Holt...welcome! We are so very happy to have you join us here tonight.

✓ **United States of America**

A small sample, directly related to the history of Laurent Clerc and Thomas H. Gallaudet:

- ❖ Laurent Clerc National Deaf Education Center at Gallaudet University, Washington, D.C.

Provides information, training, and technical assistance for parents and professionals to meet the needs of children who are Deaf or hard of hearing.

- ❖ American School for the Deaf, Hartford, CT

Founded in 1817, the American School for the Deaf was the first permanent school for the deaf in the United States and a nationally renowned leader in providing comprehensive educational programs and services for deaf and hard-of-hearing students.

Its Cogswell Foundation and Museum/library contains primary sources and other documents collected there around the ASD.

❖ Gallaudet University, Washington, D.C.

It was founded in 1864 and named after Thomas H. Gallaudet whose action was decisive in the education of the Deaf.

Gallaudet is the only university in the world where students live and learn in American Sign Language (ASL) and English.

Here being deaf is not something to overcome, but the place to embrace oneself, build connections within and beyond the signing and deaf community. At Gallaudet, our students find affirmative and positive acceptance of who they are and all they have to offer our world.

The freedom to communicate easily with everyone around you without barriers will change your life. Learn more about the Bilingual Advantage.

<https://www.gallaudet.edu/about/glance>

❖ Ohlone College (California)



Ohlone College is the home to Gallaudet University's regional center (GURC) for the western states. There is a close working relationship with Gallaudet since the 1980's

Here are the links for more information:

<https://www.gallaudet.edu/office-of-national-outreach/regional-centers/west>

❖ GURC-WEST

Serving Alaska, Arizona, California, Colorado, Hawaii, Idaho, Montana, Nevada, New Mexico, Oregon, Utah, Washington, Wyoming, American Samoa, Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands, Guam, and the Republic of the Marshall Islands.

The Gallaudet University Regional Center-West (GURC-West), at Ohlone College in Fremont, California, is one of Gallaudet's four regional centers devoted to providing services, programs and resources for deaf and hard of hearing individuals and their communities.

<https://www.ohlone.edu/gurc>



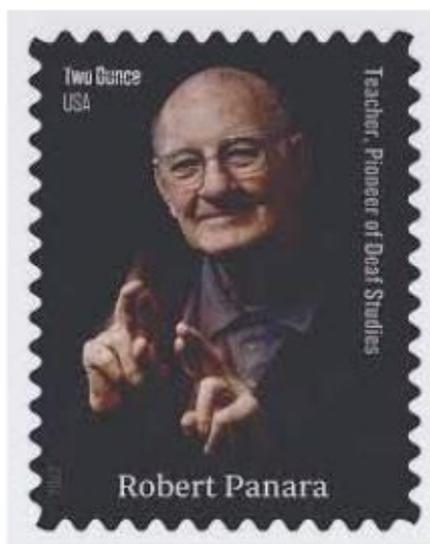
❖ Rochester Institute of Technology/National Technical Institute for the Deaf (RIT/NTID), Rochester, NY

It was established in 1965 to provide degree programs designed specifically for deaf and hard of hearing individuals to enter technical and professional fields and to propel them to success in their careers and in life. NTID is one of the nine colleges of Rochester Institute of Technology. RIT Library (second biggest, behind Gallaudet University Library) has a huge collection of Archives on the topic.





Robert F. Panara (8 July 1920 - 20 July 2014) was a poet, a professor and a co-founder of the National Technical Institute for the Deaf (NTID) and the National Theater of the Deaf. Panara is considered to be a pioneer in deaf culture studies in the United States.



He was born in 1920 in the Bronx of New York City, and lost his hearing as a child. He graduated from Gallaudet College (now Gallaudet University). He was a teacher at Gallaudet College before moving to the Rochester Institute of Technology, where he helped found the National Technical Institute for the Deaf (NTID). He was among those who founded the National Theater of the Deaf in connection with the American School for the Deaf.

Panara was a poet and his collected poems were published in 1997. *On His Deafness and Other Melodies Unheard.*

In 1987 the Rochester Institute of Technology named its performing arts theater after him, [and established a scholarship fund in his name. [1]

In 2017 the United States Postal Service issued a stamp in its Distinguished Americans series honoring Robert Panara.

❖ California State University – Northridge (CSUN)

(From website: <https://www.csun.edu>)

CSUN boasts the largest nationwide enrollment of students who are deaf and hard of hearing at a mainstream institution. CSUN was one of the first mainstream universities in the nation to admit people who are deaf and hard of hearing--providing inspiration for the National Center on Deafness, a landmark institution on the campus of CSUN that provides support services to the deaf and hard of hearing student population and continues to bridge the deaf and hearing communities. Today, more than 220 deaf and hard-of-hearing students attend CSUN and are mainstreamed into regular university classes.

Many other establishments for the education of the Deaf have been opened in the country. See the list of states that have recognized American Sign Language:

- Laurent Clerc National Deaf Education Center, Gallaudet University, Info to Go resource, "STATES THAT RECOGNIZE AMERICAN SIGN LANGUAGE AS A FOREIGN LANGUAGE". (2004).
- National Council of State Supervisors for Languages (NCSSFL), American Sign Language (ASL) as a Foreign/World Language, Summary of State Responses. (November 2010).
- University of New Mexico, "Universities That Accept ASL in Fulfillment Of Foreign Language Requirements", List maintained by Sherman Wilcox, Ph.D. (ongoing).

In Texas:

- ❖ Southwest College for the Deaf – Howard College (SWCD)

Below is a chart of the main schools for deaf students, between 1816 and 1860.

Schools for deaf students (1816-1860)	
1817 Connecticut	1849 South Carolina
1818 New York	1851 Missouri
1820 Pennsylvania	1852 Louisiana, Wisconsin
1823 Kentucky	1854 Michigan, Mississippi
1829 Ohio	1855 Iowa
1839 Virginia	1857 Texas
1843 Indiana	1858 Alabama
1845 North Carolina, Tennessee	1860 California
1846 Georgia, Illinois	

✓ **France :**

Numerous institutes or specialized schools were created, notably between 1808 and 1818 (Nogent le Rotrou, Auray, Rodez, Saine Tienne, Besançon, Albi, Toulouse, Clermont-Ferrand, Rouen, Laval, Saint Briec, Poitiers, Orléans) to mention only a few. Their model of education for the Deaf is inspired by that of the Abbé de l'Epée and Laurent Clerc, and the INJS. Since 2005, regular schools also offer a welcome to deaf students in the "inclusive" school and this system only needs to be evaluated for effectiveness in student learning.

❖ INJS, Rue St Jacques, Paris

The INJS of Paris, created in 1791, is a public establishment of specialized education placed under the supervision of the Ministry of Social Affairs and Health.

It welcomes young deaf people from 3 to 20 years of age and offers them different types of schooling according to their personalized project.

The training courses offered, as well as the methods of care, are in constant evolution within the framework of a project of establishment carrying a will of innovation and opening.



INJS Paris, Main entrance from the Street, (Rue St Jacques)
from INJS Paris private collection



Central Yard
 from INJS Paris private collection
 Historical perspective: www.injs-paris.fr/page/historique

*The national institute for the Deaf is established on a historic site, situated in the Latin Quarter. The remnants of a Gallo-Roman oven were uncovered in the 80's during the construction of the vocational workshop building.
 In 1286, a hostel welcomes the pilgrims who are going to St Jacques de Compostelle.*

- ~ *In 1572, Catherine de Médicis houses the Benedictines of saint Magloire's abbey in its buildings.*
- ~ *In 1618, the Oratorians organize a seminar which Jean de la Fontaine attends.*
- ~ *In 1760, The Abbé de l'Épée (1712-1789) opens a free school for deaf children in his house, on 14 Moulins street (now called Thérèse street). His teaching is based on his methodical sign method.*
- ~ *In 1791, the French Revolution founds the Institution for the Deaf at birth and gives the Abbé's foundation the national dimension which it deserved. His school is transferred to the convent of Célestins, near the Arsenal and supervised by Abbé Sicard.*
- ~ *In April 1794, the institution is transferred to Saint Jacques Street. It is the first public school in the world for deaf children. Abbé Sicard is the first director.*

It is conceived from the beginning as a charity institution, a school, a vocational training center, a place to live in and a research laboratory.

Several XIXth century personalities live there and carry out research. Doctor Itard who took in Victor de l'Aveyron, the wild child, or Bébien, the first school principal, the author of a sign language dictionary and the inventor of bilingual education.

Remarkable deaf pupils, who became teachers, have left their mark on INJS and in the world history of the Deaf: Laurent Clerc, a brilliant pupil of Abbé Sicard, leaves for the USA in 1817, with Thomas Hopkins Gallaudet. Ferdinand Berthier, a famous activist for the cause of the Deaf, a teacher in the Institute, author of the Napoleon code concerning the Deaf, the founder in 1838 of the Central Society for help and assistance of the Deaf-mutes, and a passionate advocate of sign language.

These deaf personalities illustrate the considerable outcomes of the work of Abbé de l'Épée: access for the Deaf to education, to citizenship, to clubs and intellectual or artistic societies, and development of sign language.

www.injs-paris.fr/page/historique

❖ Three other national institutes for young deaf people have been created



- INJS Bordeaux. Created in 1786 on the model conceived by the Abbé de l'Épée in INJS Paris. It became a national institution in 1793.
- INJS Chambéry. Two schools, originally. One for boys, one for girls, which merged in 1846. In 1870, this school became a National Institute for the Deaf.
- INJS Metz. Created in 1875 when the city was under German control. In 1960, the Ministry of Health gave it a national character.

❖ The Universities

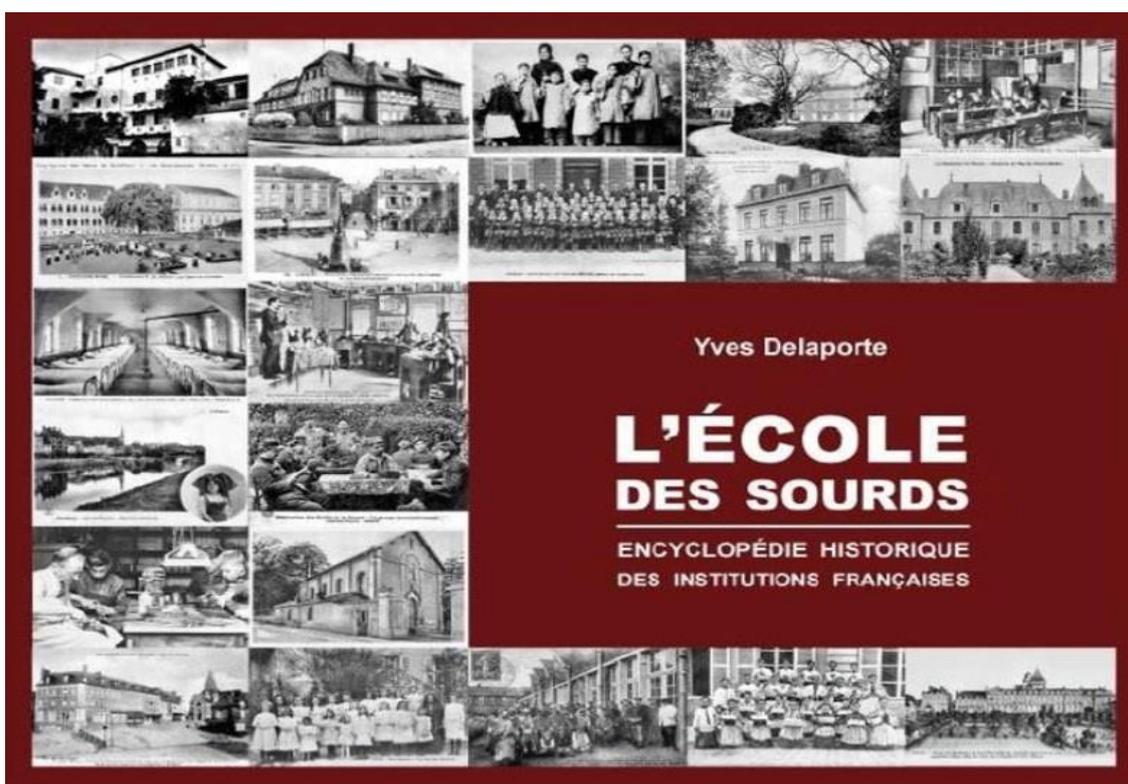
The University of Paris 8-Vincennes-Saint Denis offers a wide range of courses and training in LSF, for students, future teachers, translators and interpreters, at the Bachelor and Master levels. www.univ-paris8.fr/-Master-Interpretation-Langue-des-Signes-Francaise-Francais-666-
www.univ-paris8.fr/

Other universities also offer LSF courses to ensure the continuity of training for deaf students when they leave secondary education.

❖ The "boarding schools":

Schools and institutes for deaf students were privileged places to establish links and sometimes lasting friendships.

In his book: *The School of the Deaf, Encyclopedia of Institutions*, Yves Delaporte provides an exhaustive collection of 158 places where the education of the Deaf has been implemented, along with 650 postcards, the whole constituting an extraordinary visual documentary on these establishments.



Yves Delaporte, *L'école des Sourds*, Decitre Editions, 2016.
Encyclopédie des institutions, lnjs-paris.fr/page/historique.

It is to be noted that.

Residential schools nourished the foundations of the American deaf community. Their academic and vocational instruction produced a core of educated deaf adults who shared a common language and similar experiences. Many residential school graduates became teachers themselves and thus constituted an important group with whom deaf youngsters interacted, providing models and cultural indoctrination.

John Vickrey Van Cleve and Barry Crouch⁵⁶, *A Place of Their Own*, chap 5 *The Residential School Experience*, Gallaudet University Press, 1989.

The rigid existence at the boarding schools, in a confined, intimate atmosphere, was bearable as it drew students closer to face their regiment-like constraints. Many long-lasting friendships were born there. As education there meant more than learning languages, and “prepared deaf children to go out into the world as independent and self-supporting individuals”, obeying the rules was worthwhile. Having students learn a trade (shoe making, book binding or other), was also the originality and asset of these schools and a guarantee for students to make a living.

They were created to meet the demands of scattered deaf pupils on isolated farms or villages. Many deaf people would have lived and died there without any opportunity of meeting other deaf people.

They were also privileged places where Christian doctrine and the study of the Bible were highlighted, since their directors were often religious men. Their charitable function, at the root of their names “asylums” was gradually directed towards education. The role and decisive function of residential schools is carefully presented in “Trough Deaf Eyes”, A photographic History of an American Community, by Douglas C. Baynton⁵⁷, Jack R. Gannon⁵⁸ and Jean Lindquist Bergey⁵⁹, Gallaudet University Press, 2002. More particularly Chapter 2 “The advent of Deaf education in the United States” pp 12-27. This was the result of an exhibition at the Smithsonian and touring exhibitions in different cities. The numerous photographs are not only beautiful and moving; they also bear witness to the life of the Deaf community over several decades.

In his report, *Deaf America*, Henri Gaillard confirms the decisive role played by residential schools in establishing a community spirit, thanks to many festive gatherings, clubs, associations:

As deaf students across the nation lived and studied together at residential schools, many graduates sought to sustain and enlarge these relationships into adulthood. By the late nineteenth century, deaf adults had organized a host of school-based as well as local, state, and national organizations. As Henry Rider, a leader of New York's deaf community, explained in 1877, these organizations served an indispensable social purpose, that of enabling adults otherwise dispersed across the continent to satisfy a “longing desire and almost irresistible impulse” to communicate and socialize. Gaillard confirms these sentiments in a host of

⁵⁶ John Vickrey Van Cleve and Barry Crouch were history professors at Gallaudet University.

⁵⁷ Douglas C. Baynton is associate Professor of History at the University of Iowa, Iowa city, IA.

⁵⁸ Jack R. Gannon est ancien assistant spécial pour le plaidoyer auprès du président de l'Université Gallaudet, Washington, DC, et le commissaire de l'exposition *History Through Deaf Eyes*.

⁵⁹ Jean Lindquist Bergey est directeur du projet *History Through Deaf Eyes* à l'Université Gallaudet, Washington, DC.

accounts: from evening festivities in New York's Coney Island, to afternoon picnics at Hartford's idyllic Lake Compounce, to dinner parties among friends, deaf adults came together to share and celebrate their diverse and shared experiences.

Gallard, Henri. *Henri Gaillard in Deaf America, A Portrait of the Deaf Community*, 1917, Washington, DC: Gallaudet University Press, 2002.

However, even during their flourishing days, some criticisms were voiced:

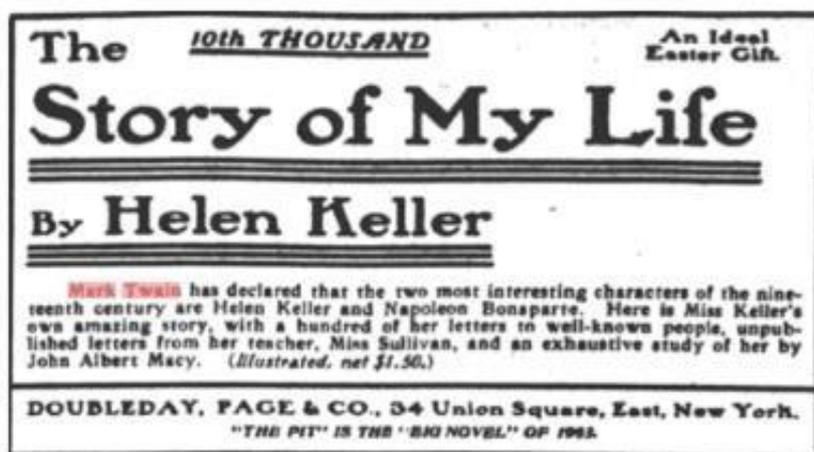
Early in the history of the education of blind and deaf children in this country, however, a few prescient leaders recognized that residential schools were not the ultimate response. Cruickshank states: although the development of the residential school marks an important step, there ultimately resulted a state of lethargy toward it...It is easy to build an institution and to place it miles away ... Once it was completed, children could be sent there. The children were being cared for. At that point, the conscience of society often ceased functioning. Society's guilt feeling was assuaged. Society had met its obligations. The handicapped could be forgotten.

Nordstrom Brian, *The History of the Blind and Deaf*.

Residential schools, or boarding schools, gradually disappeared. A new recent trend (in France, at least) would want them to be opened again to gather students living in distant places. But to many people, boarding schools are out of fashion.

Some other friendships:

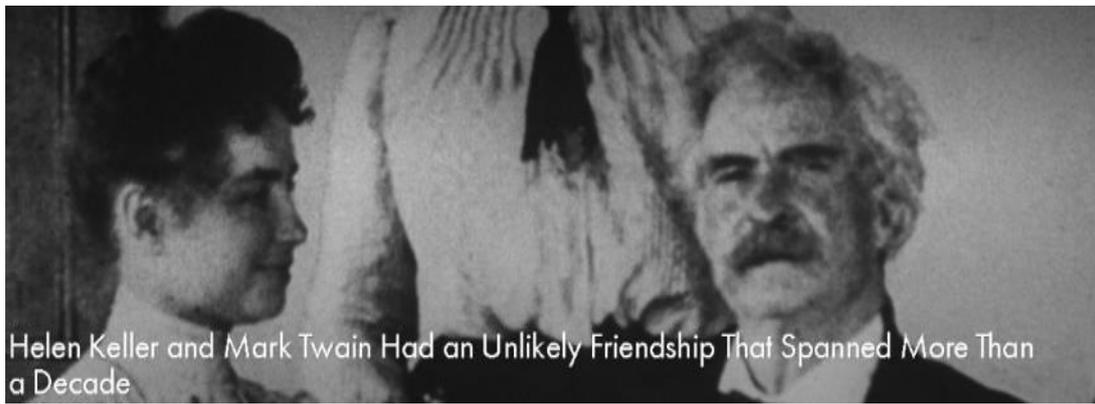
It is in Connecticut also that a famous friendship developed between Helen Keller and Mark Twain. Their an improbable friendship was nourished by their reciprocal admiration. Though they moved to different places and met in New York city, they both ended their lives in Connecticut. Helen enjoyed very much Mark Twain's humor; the American novelist was fascinated by Helen's vivacious mind and intelligence.



Ad from the New York Sun,
April 10, 1903, p. 9.

The two most interesting characters of the nineteenth century are Helen Keller and Napoleon Bonaparte

New York Sun, April 10, 1903

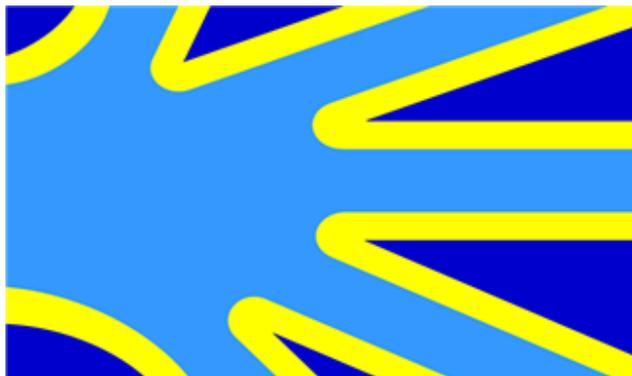


Deaf Union Flag

In an interview, Arnaud Balard⁶⁰ said:

My biggest dream was to have a flag, as a lot of people identify themselves immediately with that particular strong symbol. Why a flag? Simply because when you see one, you can feel (or not) at home.

In 2013, Arnaud Balard imagined a flag symbolizing sign language. Named Deaf Union Flag, it represents a wide open turquoise blue hand (color of the deaf community) placed on a yellow hand, on a navy-blue background. It has become a sign of recognition and has been used in many countries.



⁶⁰ Arnaud Balard: He was born in 1971 in Toulouse. He is a French Deafblind artist. He created the Surdism Art Movement in 2009. ([https:// surdisunited.com](https://surdisunited.com)). He wrote a manifesto inviting artists to exchange on their deaf experiences. He also created a flag, the “Sign Union Flag” in 2013, to promote all sign languages around the world.

CONCLUSION

Connecting the global Deaf and hearing community

“Feeling at home” implies belonging to a family and sharing common experiences. Feeling secure and part of the family, feeling confident. The opposite of feeling like a stranger or a foreigner. The “boat” metaphor is still pregnant with meaning. As it was in 1899:

There are some peculiarities about Deaf people. I have heard it charged upon them that they are clannish. The people who make that charge are mistaken. The deaf are simply loyal to their kin- And why should they not be? They are in a boat together and they should be loyal to deaf people and help each other and associate with each other.

Bangs of North Dakota, 6th Convention, July 1899 Saint-Paul, Minnesota.

It reminds one of Turner 's words to recognize the importance of Laurent Clerc and Thomas H. Gallaudet's actions, at the First International conference in Paris (1889) :

Both have given impulse to the current which crosses brilliantly the American Continent.

With an extended metaphor, the awful waves that raged during their Atlantic Ocean crossing became a land wave sweeping the American continent.

The gathering of widely scattered people might have been difficult in the past as means of transportation and means of communication were not as developed as today. It is now easier, and new “encounters” can take place with the increase of modern visual communication and new technologies that draw people closer one to another one:

My smartphone is my deaf-space... I go there... for Deaf people. —A Deaf American during an interview Most descriptions of Deaf space define the term as physical spaces where Deaf people meet and share experiences through visual communication. Places in which Deaf spaces were established could be, but were not limited to, schools, clubs, organizations, conferences, congresses, sports, religious sites, and Deaf community events. In this chapter, we document how Deaf space also can be created in nonphysical spaces such as social network sites (SNS). Physical encounters are not required for creating Deaf spaces. People have turned to social media to enhance interaction opportunities in schools, businesses, communities, and society in general social media has become an Internet-based movement where people utilize community-based websites and share information with others. For some, social media has transformed the way people live and Crittenden went as far as to describe social media sites, such as Facebook, Twitter, and Instagram, as a part of an emerging ecosystem rather than just a platform. The implications of social media for the Deaf community are enormous. Unlike the teletypewriter (TTY) and videophones, the Internet allows Deaf people to build

and/or maintain digital communities, nonphysical spaces called digital Deaf spaces. The Internet made possible the formation of multiple Deaf geographies: Deaf clubs and Deaf communities can be created, maintained, and influenced by their members' online participation. Digital Deaf Small spaces are readily accessible anywhere and anytime as long as there is an (preferably speedy) Internet connection. Deaf people use the Internet as an alternative way to access Deaf-related information, through both sign language and text, without physically being in the same place at the same time [...] The use of social media has made interaction with Deaf people from all over the world possible.

Christopher Kurz and Jessica Cuclick, *International Deaf Space in Social Media – The Deaf Experience in the United States*. In M. Friedner and A. Kusters (Eds.), *It's a Small World: International Deaf Spaces and Encounters*, pp.225-235, Washington, D.C.: Gallaudet University Press, 2015.

In the past, the boarding school was a closed space likely to ensure the cohesiveness of a group. J. Cleve and B.A Crouch showed the part it played in creating a community:

It was during these one hundred years that a revolution in the lives of deaf Americans occurred, when deaf people forged themselves into something more than a collection of individuals. For the first time, they confronted the hearing world with the strength of an organized group, and they developed strategies to cope with the unique situation in which they found themselves. As one of their leaders, Olof Hanson, wrote in the late nineteenth century, deaf people were "foreigners among a people whose language they [could] never learn."

J Cleve, and B.A Crouch, *A Place of Their Own, Preface*. Gallaudet University Press, 1989.

Today, being connected, interacting with other people that might be far away, creates the feeling of togetherness in which friendships can grow. In the past, the residential school provided a space where distances were abolished and where the exchange of information and the sharing of life experiences (more particularly when painful) put all people on an equal footing. This is a prerequisite for the blooming up of authentic relationships.

This was the wish of Anita Small during the Eighth Deaf History International Conference in Toronto in July 2012: "connecting the global community":

*The twenty-eight authors included here come from eight countries: Australia, Canada, Japan, Poland, Russia, Sweden, England, and the United States. However, their essays range far beyond these eight countries. For example, Melissa Anderson and Breda Carty's article about the Cosmopolitan Correspondence Club describes a potent nineteenth-century transnational network and sharing of life stories through letter writing that crossed ten countries. This chapter invokes Joseph Murray's notion of the adeptness of the Deaf community at building transnational sharing of life stories, even in the nineteenth century.² Furthermore, if one examines *Telling Deaf Lives* as a whole, one finds patterns that dis-* close transnational themes, as historians recount their lives and

those of their communities. This book is designed to highlight some of these themes, thereby connecting the global Deaf community.

Kristin Snodden, editor, *Telling Deaf Lives: Agents of Change*, Gallaudet University
2014

Ultimately, Laurent Clerc and Thomas H. Gallaudet's improbable friendship is exemplary in many ways and creates an invitation to revisit what friendship is. The Laurent Clerc Prize awarded every year by the Association of Gallaudet University alumni to honor a deaf person for his outstanding contribution to society, creates relationships and keeps them alive. Similarly, many universities have Deaf studies courses and Moocs that support the interest for the history of the deaf community.

Respectful and friendly gratitude is not a thing of the past, but a shared prospect for the future:

We glory in proclaiming our lasting indebtedness to Gallaudet and to Clerc. We write it on stone. We shall acknowledge it to future ages in tradition and in the records of the books.

The new generation of Deaf students has a keen interest for their past and their benefactors, and what's more, they attract hearing students with whom new links are established. As more and more hearing students and people are learning sign languages, there is some hope for the future: deaf and hearing people will make friends, out of mutual understanding through shared languages, out of respect for the other one's culture, out of their shared desire to immerse in the other one's culture.

Laurent Clerc, A French deaf man and Thomas H. Gallaudet, a hearing American, learned the other one's language and were precursors in the process of drawing together and becoming life-long friends:

The French have always been friends of the Americans and it is to be hoped that they always will be! Let us drink to the friendship and the good harmony which henceforth has been reigning between the two countries and address our prayers to God for their common happiness.

Laurent Clerc's 52-day Diary

The voyage is neither long, nor dangerous. If my life is spared (as long as I live), he will have in me a constant and faithful friend (and) he will find many others in America on account of his abilities and virtues."

Gallaudet's Letter to Laurent Clerc's mother, May 28, 1816.

Chapter 4

LSF, ASL, multilingualism⁶¹, intercommunication between Deaf and hearing people



In diversity There Is Beauty and Strength



What are the benefits of learning sign languages?

⁶¹ We define multilingualism as the practice of using two or more languages by an individual or a group of individuals.

Knowledge of words, also, is necessary to enable [them] to have recourse to books, those never-failing companions which are never weary of conversing even with the Deaf.

John Burnet (1808-1874)

Tales of the Deaf and Dumb

https://archive.org/details/gu_talesdeafdumbooburn

A language is a system of relatively arbitrary symbols and grammatical signals that change across time and that members of a community share and use for several purposes: to interact with each other, to communicate their ideas, emotions, and intentions, and to transmit their culture from generation to generation.

Baker and Cokely

American Sign Language: A teacher's resource text on grammar and culture

If you talk to a man in a language he understands, that goes to his head. If you talk to him in his language, that goes to his heart.

Nelson Mandela

Those who know nothing of foreign languages know nothing of their own.

Johann Wolfgang von Goethe

The sign language, granting even all that might be said of its imperfections, is the grandest means yet devised for rapidity and clearness of communication with the Deaf.

W.H. Weeks

a delegate at the Third Convention of the Deaf and Mute, Washington DC 1889

INTRODUCTION

What is human communication but exchanging information, ideas, and emotions through language? Which, in turn, might raise the next question: what is a language? A linguistic code? An spoken language? A written language? A manual one, a sign language? What part is played by the body language, its expressivity?

In the field of deafness, debates around different approaches have been raging long before Laurent Clerc imported some French signs into America. A campaign was organized around the 1860's to eliminate the use of sign language (manualism) in the classroom and to replace it with oralism, which is lipreading and speech.

The pro oralism people argued that sign language restricted deaf people to communication between themselves and that, consequently, they could not socialize and communicate with all people. Their assimilation in larger society was not possible. The oralists finally won, but many deaf people, notably students in residential schools continued to use sign language discreetly or in vocational buildings where deaf teachers were relocated as sign language was not allowed in academic classrooms.

The Milan Conference (1880) with its ban on sign language in education was a blow to all sign language defenders and a lasting one, as deaf school educators more particularly were standing on different positions. Despite the drastic decision adopted at the Milan Conference by a majority of delegates (manipulated, as historians demonstrated it by the oralist defenders), sign language continued to be used clandestinely, and it revived and flourished again toward the end of the 19th century. The French Deaf Institute of Paris (INJS), which had been developing and teaching sign language in the wake of L'Abbé de l'Epée and his followers, among them Laurent Clerc, and had served as a reference for the Americans, was nonetheless shaken, and some of its directors were dismissed when they disagreed with the Board of Directors.

In America, the New York Institution was the first and oldest school with oral education.



New York Institution for the
Instruction of the Deaf and Dumb, 1835

The second school for the Deaf and Dumb in New York was founded in 1823. In his article, The Central Asylum for the Instruction of the Deaf and Dumb, Canajoharie, New York, 1823-1835,⁶² Colin Campbell, a great grandson of a Central Asylum student, describes how it was founded and finally closed after 13 years of existence in 1835 for economic reasons and a lack of students. Indeed, in this rural area farmers needed their children to work on the farm and educating them was not the priority. Colin Campbell introduces the school founders and more particularly the president of the Board of trustees, James O. Morse, who was very influential on the local politics. He was a reformist and “supported not only the education of the Deaf, but the education of women as well, as the emerging Protestant missionary movement”. When Alexis de Tocqueville⁶³ and Gustave de Beaumont, a French magistrate, prison reformer and travel companion, visited America, he introduced them to the governor of the state. This is another instance of good Franco-American relationships and the beginning of Tocqueville’s interest for American People.

Among the teachers at the Central Asylum was Levi Strong Backus⁶⁴ who had been a student at the American Asylum at Hartford (CT) where he spent five years. As a teacher he was trained by Laurent Clerc. In his newspaper, *The Radii*, he insisted on the competences of the Deaf: “You will find that some of them are able to read as well as you can, and have read through the Bible”.

He also appealed to the religious feelings of the people to support public education of the Deaf. He believed that education was the key to self-confidence and feeling more comfortable in society. The objectives of the Central School for the Deaf were to overcome illiteracy and to make students wiser. Religious education was important in the school. If lip-reading was used, signs gradually took over, as they were used at Hartford where Backus was educated. Vocational training was also greatly developed in many workshops to prepare students to future jobs.

Years passed and sign language was officially restored or at least tolerated at first. If it is now established, thanks to the works of many linguists such as Stokoe⁶⁵ sign language is recognized by linguists as the language of their Deaf community, In France and in the United States, fluency in a written language (i.e., French, American English) is acknowledged as a necessity for all Deaf people to become contributing citizens to society. This position is a form of multilingualism worth considering now.

⁶² *American Annals of the Deaf*, Vol. 144, no. 5 (1999): 365-372.

⁶³ Alexis de Tocqueville (1805 – 1859) was a French aristocrat, diplomat, political philosopher and historian. He published *Democracy in America* after his US tour.

⁶⁴ Levi Backus (1803 – 1868) enrolled at American School for the Deaf 12 days after its inauguration opening day, April 27, 1817, becoming the 9th student to attend.

⁶⁵ Dr. William C. Stokoe, was widely recognized, both nationally and internationally, as the creator of the linguistic study of the sign languages of the Deaf. He had been teaching English to deaf students at Gallaudet College from 1955. Then, the sign language used by deaf Americans was not greatly considered and instruction in articulation and lip-reading was favored. He studied sign language and demonstrated it was a language as rule governed, structured, and contains linguistic principles and features shared by the world’s languages. He published *Sign Language Structure: The First Linguistic Analysis of American Sign Language*; Linstok Press, 1978; (Stokoe, W. C. 1960. *Sign Language Structure: An Outline of the Visual Communication Systems of the American Deaf*. Stud. Ling. Occas & Pap. 8, revised 1978. Silver Spring Md: Lin- stock. 94 pp.)

A - Modes of communication

1 - Oralism /manualism

As far as historians, linguists, and sociologists can probe into the past of humanity, they know that human beings, and Deaf people among them, have always communicated with different sorts of languages: oral or manual, with all possible variants ranging from mimics and gestures to syntactically structured languages, through sign languages, or a combination of different approaches such as the “combined method”.

Quarrels between oralists and manualists in the 18th century saw J-R Pereire⁶⁶ who was strongly defending oralism, and Braidwood⁶⁷ in Scotland, whereas L’Abbé de l’Epée, in France, was incorporating sign language in instruction by observing and learning from his deaf students. It is commonly established that Deaf people “invented” sign language, not anyone else. Thomas Gallaudet, sent on mission by Dr. Mason Cogswell to Europe to study the best course to instruct his deaf daughter Alice and other deaf people, was not convinced at all by Braidwood’s method, whereas L’Abbé de l’Epée’s one and Sicard’s modified method, as practiced by Laurent Clerc at the National Institute for the Deaf in Paris, captured his attention straight away. L’Abbé de l’Epée and Sicard had developed methodical signs that were in keeping with the syntax of the written French language. The idea was that it would make it easier for the Deaf to learn both languages. Many years later, in contemporary time, in France at least, temptation is still great to resort to what is being called “signed French”, sometimes mistaken for French Sign Language. Watson, Braidwood’s nephew, director of the London Asylum for the Deaf and Dumb, was strongly against signed French. In schools, more particularly, teachers are very careful. “Signed French” is appealing to hearing people, but it is a caricature and must be proscribed at all costs.

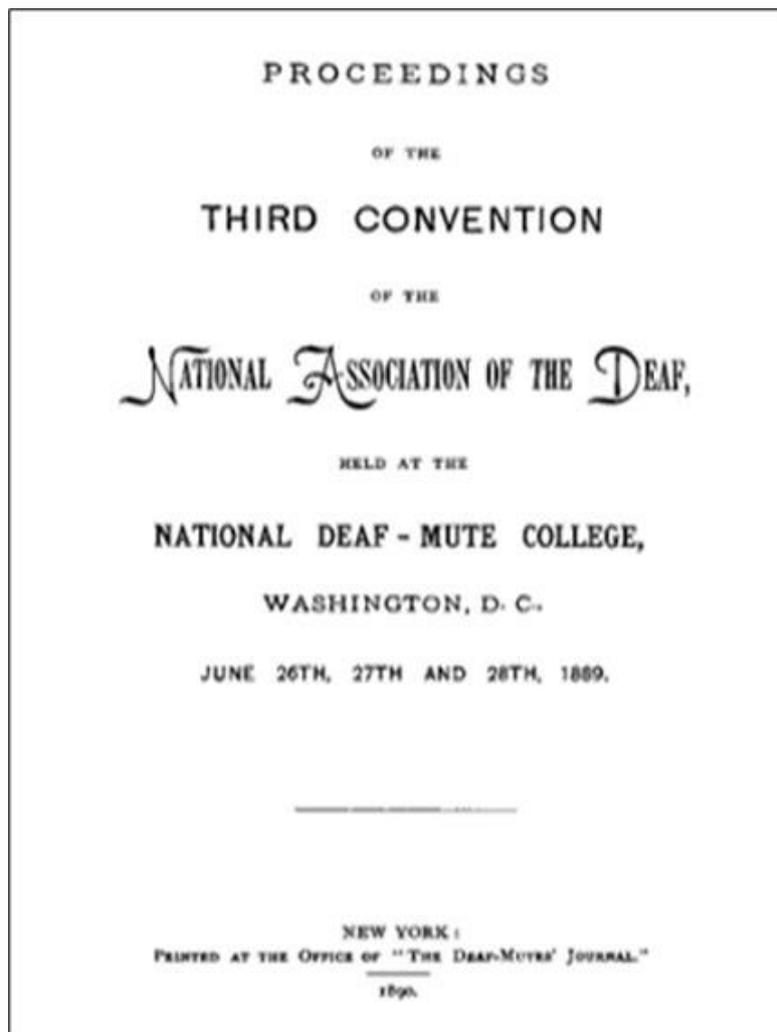
After reading Sicard’s 1808 treatise on signs for the instruction of the deaf and dumb and observing and learning in deaf classrooms at the National Institute for the Deaf in Paris,

Thomas Gallaudet was much in favor of “natural signs”, what he calls “the genius of the natural language of signs”. If compared with oral language, he argues, this shows “its decided superiority”. His “Instruction of the Deaf and Dumb” is a vibrant plea for this “visual language” and he deplures speakers don’t use it and are expressionless. He thanks the “God of nature” for his generous gift in gestures, and he encourages parents and instructors to teach them as early as possible to children. He wishes all instructors to “consent to take lesson after lesson of the older teachers who are proficient in this language”.

⁶⁶ Jacob Rodrigue Pereire (Portuguese: Jacob Rodrigues Pereira) (1715 - 1780) was a scholar and one of the precursors of deaf education and speech therapy in France. A recognized scholar and polyglot, he was also politically active in defending the rights of the community of "Portuguese Jews".

⁶⁷ Thomas Braidwood (1715-1806) was a Scottish teacher who eventually founded the first school for the deaf in Edinburgh, Scotland in 1760. He used a combined system using a sign language, fingerspelling, articulation and lipreading. He later founded the Braidwood Academy for the Deaf and Dumb in London.

Thomas H. Gallaudet, *On the natural language of signs, and its value and uses in the instruction of the Deaf and Dumb*, *American Annals of the Deaf and Dumb* 1, no.1, October 1847: 55 -60.



At the Third Convention of the National Association of the Deaf, Edmund Booth, a former pupil of Thomas H. Gallaudet analyzed how the situation was challenging for the instructor and how he (Gallaudet) responded to it. Similarly, Robert Mc Gregor in his oration stressed how he proceeded, methodically, “step by step”:

Not in haste, however, are life's achievements wrought, but slowly and by sure degrees. He [Thomas H. Gallaudet] must first become a learner that he might fitly teach. Joyfully he set forth for England on his mission of love, hoping to be able to speedily bring back the means of enlightening the darkened minds of those whose cause he had made his own. There he was permitted to enter the Promised Land and view its possibilities, but he was forbidden to carry away any of its fruit to refresh the famished souls in his own country. Leaving them, as he sorrowfully expressed it, to retain «a sad monopoly of the resources of charity, " he turned his face toward Paris, where he received a most cordial welcome from Abbé Sicard, upon whom had fallen the mantle of the sainted L'Epée. Patiently, step by step, from the lowest to the highest class, he followed the intricate windings of that system which, through the eye, penetrates the dark veil enshrouding the minds of the deaf, and finally casts it triumphantly aside, allowing them to bask in the rays of the full-orbed sun of knowledge, as it rises in all splendors before them,

illuminating their path to happiness and usefulness. In three months, he was in full possession of the theory and practice of the system, and was impatient to return to America, that not a moment might be lost in imparting to the deaf the glad tidings of their emancipation from the thralldom of ignorance. But there was one thing lacking. He had not mastered the language by which all was to be accomplished. He discovered that the language, beautiful in its sinuosity, scope and expressiveness, was without a literature, and that it possessed neither dictionary nor grammar. It was a language to be learned only from the living model. How then was he to acquire it without remaining two or three years, at least? Meanwhile, his «dear children, » as he affectionately called them, would be growing up and perhaps dying in ignorance of their Creator and Redeemer. He solved the problem by bringing with him a living, walking dictionary, in the person of Abbe Sicard's most accomplished deaf assistant, Laurent Clerc.

Robert P. McGregor, *Oration*; [In signs, by the author; read by Charles N. Haskins.]



(INJS, Paris, Private collection)

The excerpt from *The Pelican*, below, in April 1966, recalls the “harmful effects” of the oral method, as a reminder that it should be proscribed. This is evidence that the use of sign language must be supported again and again.



(Dictation-Lip-reading, INJS, Paris. Private collection)

Lip-reading: a non-English medium

Lip-reading alone is not satisfactory enough as a receptive medium for instructing deaf children because it is distinctly a non-English medium. Lip-reading presents to the deaf child's eyes only a series of "key-words" which in themselves do not constitute a complete English sentence. Thus, if a prelingual deaf child relies solely upon lip-reading he will see only the broken English pattern offered by key words. Consequently, he will come to imitate them in his own written and spoken language. Lip-reading of itself tends therefore to reinforce the poor language habits to which prelingual deaf children are generally prone.

To correct the harmful effects of lip-reading on the child, finger spelling is used by the teacher to supplement speech and to fill in the broken language pattern of key words. The child continues to read the lips.

The gaps however which appear in the language pattern of speech as seen by the deaf child are filled in with the correct grammatical forms which he sees spelled out in English on the hand.

Edward L. Scouten, principal, *The Objectives and Philosophy of the Louisiana State School for the Deaf*, The Pelican, April 1966.

Undoubtedly the missions and tasks for both Thomas H. Gallaudet and Laurent Clerc fully justify that they were called "pioneers", as they were breaking new ground, moreover for Laurent Clerc, in a foreign country; and also as they opposed firmly established previous methods for educating the Deaf by introducing a novelty.

A “mission” it was, indeed, in its religious meaning too, and the “promised land” would reward them with great happiness despite numerous hurdles on the way. Even after their death, the pro sign language people had to assert themselves.

In the sessions and at the banquet many speakers spoke with fervor, force and pathos about the happiness and benefit that (they said) signs have conferred upon them while at school. These speakers addressing themselves apparently to the present management of their schools would say: “You bring oralism to us. You impose it upon us. We receive it since we are forced to do so. We try with resignation to walk in the path that pleases you. But this path has few charms for us. We advance upon it, if at all, passively. It does not invite us to speed. It leads us neither to wide views nor to confidence in what we see; still less to the freedom of fluent expression with all its enjoyments. All these we reach and reach alone by means of the language of signs –as natural to us as native breadth. The above is a report merely and is not written in a spirit of devotion to signs; Indeed, the writer would have had something to say on the other side, as Mr. Davidson and Mr. Duboer among the Americans did, if only he could have caught the speaker’s eye, in the hubbub. Nevertheless, this principle of naturalism, or if it is better please the oralists, this passion amounting to a principle, is one that will have to be taken into account by those who would plant strict oralism in France and America.

Amos G. Draper, *Notes on the Meeting of the Deaf at Paris*, *American Annals of the Deaf* 35, no. 1, January 1890: 30.



Museum Exhibition - Draper "Signing of the Charter of Gallaudet College".
video services

Presented by Dr. Amos G. Draper.

Part of George Veditz's Preservation of Sign Language series.

Preservation of the Sign Language” is different in tone from the other films of the Veditz Collection. It is not intended to be merely a historical recording of a talented signer. In this speech, Veditz both pays tribute to the history of sign and mounts a blistering attack on the post-Milan oralists. He opens with a reference to the Abbe de L’Epee, whose 18th-century Parisian school is generally believed to be the

beginning of manualist education, before contemptuously comparing him to the “incompetent, hard-hearted” oral educators who were attempting to banish signs in Europe and America. He praises the skilled signers and manualist educators of his day (many of whom made films for the NAD as well), while dismissing oralist educators as “enemies of the true welfare of the deaf” who do not understand deaf people’s “thoughts, spirit, feelings, wants, and needs.

Christopher Shea, *Preservation of the Sign Language*.

<https://blogs.loc.gov/now-see-hear/2018/12/the-preservation-of-sign-language-film-registry-22/>

2 - Manualism: the use of sign language

The competition between instruction methods and modes of communication has been put in historical perspective. As Clerc had imported the French educational pedagogy and French Sign Language to America, he and Thomas H. Gallaudet committed that the new school shall employ to the manual system.

They developed four propositions to be adhered to as fundamental in the instruction of the deaf and dumb as follows:

1. Instruction should commence, with borrowing from the deaf and dumb themselves their own natural language of pantomime, in its full extent.
2. The instructor should carefully ascertain how far the ideas of his pupils extend before instruction, and how far they are just: he should know the extent, that he may build upon it, and the limit, that he may not exceed it.
3. He should avail himself of those materials, possessed by the deaf and dumb in common with us, to aid in the formation of a system of ideas, corresponding to that represented by the words of our language.
4. He must present to the eye of his pupil, language under a visible form, and under this form must teach him to associate its terms directly with their corresponding ideas.

Source: Fredrick A.P. Barnard, *Education of the Deaf and Dumb* The North American Review (1834) : 323.

The definitions of instructional methods were published in 1882 with the validation of the Conference of Superintendents and Principals, and presented in *the American Annals of the Deaf*, at the beginning of several issues:

Manual method:

By the manual method is meant the course of instruction which employs the sign-language, the manual alphabet, and writing as the chief means in the education of the deaf and has facility in the comprehension and use of written language as its principal object.

Oral Method:

By the oral method is meant that in which signs are used as little as possible: the manual alphabet is generally discarded altogether; and articulation and lip-reading, together with writing, are made the chief means as well as the end of instruction.

Combined Method:

The Combined method is not so easy to define, as the term is employed with reference to several distinct methods, such as (1) the free use of both signs and articulation, with the same pupils and by the same teachers, throughout the course of instruction; (2) the general instruction of all the pupils by means of the manual method, with the special training of a part of them in articulation and lip-reading as an accomplishment; (3) the instruction of some pupils by the manual method and others by the oral method in the same institution; (4) — though this is rather a combined system—the employment of the manual method and the oral method in separate schools under the same general management, pupils being sent to one establishment or the other as seems best with regard to each individual case.

Also published in *Sign Language Archeology, Understanding the Historical Roots of American Sign Language*, Ted Supalla and Patricia Clark, Gallaudet University Press, 2015: 30

In His *Gaillard in Deaf America*, Henri Gaillard⁶⁸ who was then touring different cities as he went to the United States, centennial celebration of the American School for the Deaf (ASD), and was providing a description of which method is being used in the deaf schools he successively visited in New York, Albany, Buffalo, Akron, Pittsburgh, Philadelphia, Washington D.C, New York (second time) and Jersey City. He focused on the combined system as he discovered was quite common in the schools he visited.

He also published an article on the combined method:

An anonymous contributor to the columns of "The Silent World", in commenting on the proceedings of the dozen conventions of the deaf held during the past summer, says they were almost unanimous in commending the "combined method of instruction." He adds, "If they had only gone so far as to define what they meant by the 'combined method,' we should know just what the deaf themselves desire as between oral and sign instruction." The italics are mine, and the idea suggested in this last clause will be referred to later. This writer then goes on to enumerate nine possible, perhaps actual, combinations of methods, and says that the term

⁶⁸ Henri Gaillard (1866-1939), a journalist and staunch supporter of the Deaf. He was a student at INJS (National institute for the Deaf in Paris). He refused to accept the conclusions of the Milan Conference and promoted sign language. His trips to America in 1895 and 1917 enabled him to make the French method of deaf education spread out in different places. He created *La Gazette des Sourds-Muets* (Deaf and Dumb Gazette). He published many articles; however, they did not produce what was expected in terms of influence. He was awarded the Legion of Honor.

"combined" has been applied to all the schools employing these several combinations. He then asks, "Which of these forms of combined instruction do the deaf refer to in the resolutions adopted at their conventions?" [...] That there will be schools where speech will be taught to all the pupils, and in which the processes of instruction will be mainly conducted through speech, no one will attempt to deny; and in localities where the establishment of such schools is impracticable, there will be classes and departments conducted in a similar manner. That there will also be schools and classes and departments in which no attempt will be made to give instruction in articulation is, in my opinion, equally certain. In all schools, the language of signs, the natural language of the dumb and the mother language of the world, will be accepted as a valuable and even indispensable adjunct at all stages in the course of instruction, while its excessive and injurious use will be carefully guard.

Henri Gaillard, *What is the combined method? American Annals of the Deaf* 40, no.1, January 1895.

In 1917, Henri Gaillard attended the centennial celebration of the American School for the Deaf. His journal is a chronicle of the earlier days of deaf schools during a crucial period. In 1917 The United States had just entered World War I and deaf leaders endeavored to support the war effort. Henri Gaillard had also previously witnessed speeches at the National Association of the Deaf Convention deploring the replacement of sign language by oral education. His being a journalist and editor of the *Deaf and Dumb Gazette* accounts for his special investigation turn of mind. And he contributed to spreading news from America, all the more since his paper was independent and the first one for the French deaf community. Henri Gaillard played a fundamental part in strengthening the Franco-American links.

A campaign was organized around the 1860's to eliminate the use of sign language (manualism) in the classroom and to replace it with oralism, that is lipreading and speaking. The pro oralism argued that sign language restricted deaf people to communication between themselves and that, consequently, they could not socialize and communicate with all people. Their assimilation was not possible. The oralists finally won, but many deaf people, notably students in boarding schools continued to use sign language.

Those who think that oralism "restores the deaf to society" while a knowledge of signs isolates them in the midst, would have found considerable food for reflection if they had been upon the steamer that took the delegates across. The sign-taught mingled freely with the hearing passengers. One of them, who cannot speak, made more acquaintances probably than any other person, deaf or hearing among the six hundred in the saloon. Some of them attended every public meeting that was called – religious, patriotic, comic or other- and when possible, they contributed to these meetings. Several who had been only in sign or combined schools could hold their own at whist with any players on board and one at draughts, vanquished all who could be brought to try conclusions with him (though he did meet his match upon return voyage. These may seem trifles, but in the saloon of a Cunarder these little social accomplishments count for much; moreover, it is not to be forgotten that these deaf players could, and did, at other times, by writing, discuss Gladstone

with the English, Parnell with the Irish or the tariff with the Americans among their fellow-passengers.

Amos G. Draper, *Notes on the Meeting of the Deaf at Paris*, *American Annals of the Deaf* 35, no. 1, January 1890: pp. 30-33.

Further information is provided in RIT Info guides:



Video: RIT Info guides, the historical sketch of sign language, NTID/ RIT, 1988Infoguide.rit.edu

Edward M. Gallaudet⁶⁹ prones the combined method as it is most efficient for the greatest number and more likely to educate the Deaf. His reference to civilization is a powerful argument too. He launches into a rhetorical plea for education with sign language, as it is a liberating factor. Though the “Old French method” should be complemented with “ articulation”. He is confident for the future where two categories of schools might exist, even if he advocates the fact that “In all schools, the language of signs, the natural language of the dumb and the mother language of the world, will be accepted as a valuable and even indispensable adjunct at all stages in the course of instruction.” His praise of sign language cannot be more obvious. And he puts the emphasis on “the mother language of the world” where his generalizing statement is, no doubt, supported by the circumstances of his speech. It was delivered in 1881, just one year after the devastating Milan Congres. The ecumenical quality of Edward M. Gallaudet’s speech might have had a pacifying value as well.

Mr. President, Ladies and Gentlemen,

With entire respect for the earnestness and sincerity of those who prefer and practice the method of articulation excluding signs and dactylology, I am compelled by my convictions, formed after a somewhat extended period of

⁶⁹ Edward Miner Gallaudet (1837-1917), the youngest son of Reverend Thomas Hopkins Gallaudet, founded the first college for the deaf in 1864, which in 1986 became Gallaudet University in Washington. He was president from 1864 to 1910. Gallaudet University is the only university in the world devoted exclusively to the deaf and hard of hearing.

observation and practical experience in the education of the deaf-mute, to advocate the combined system. By the combined system I mean one which makes use of the language of natural signs to a limited degree as an aid to instruction at every stage of the course, which employs the manual alphabet in the same manner, while articulation is attempted with all, and continued through the whole period of school training with such as give promise of attaining a reasonable degree of success in speech and lip-reading. In my opinion, it is by the practice of the combined system that the greatest good to the greatest number may be secured. That speech is a possession of very great value to man goes without saying. That its acquisition by the deaf-mute is a most precious boon none will concede more readily than the speaker. But that it is the greatest blessing a benevolent government can give to its deaf-mutes is by no means true. The savages of Africa have the power of speech, and yet they are not objects of envy to an intelligent and well-educated deaf-mute. (I use the term deaf-mute to indicate one who has not been taught to articulate.) The drudges of society have speech, and yet there are thousands of deaf-mutes in France, England, and America who no aid does not change places with them. What is education? Is it speech? The mere power of vocal utterance is not what has civilized the world.

With speech, but without education, the common people even of Christian nations rested for centuries in a state of degradation, disfranchisement, and practical slavery. And in our day, we see thousands of millions expended every year in Europe and America that the masses who have speech already may be educated. For the deaf and dumb, as for their more favored brethren, we ask from the hand of the government, or from private benevolence, the means to provide for their education. And how shall we spend the money that is readily accorded to us for this purpose?

Shall we give speech to the deaf and dumb, and call them educated? It is because this question has been often answered in the affirmative that I venture to raise my voice against a method likely to mislead men by the almost miraculous character of its results; a method which often falls far short of doing what it assumes to do; a method which often brings its objects to the threshold of the temple of knowledge, and leaves them there, with little hope of entering in. But I am not here to advocate the continuance of that other method which gives no speech to the dumb, and thus comes short of doing its duty to those it undertakes to benefit, for I believe that much more may be done for the improvement of deaf-mutes than is afforded them under the old French methods of instruction. And yet, when I read the history of deaf-mute instruction in the world, and compare the benefits secured to the deaf and dumb by those methods that were for so long a time openly hostile to each other, I am led to believe that the disciples of De l'Epée have done more for the real welfare of the deaf and dumb than has been accomplished by the followers of Heinicke. For it is a fact that in France, where the system of De l'Epée has been practiced for a century; in America, where the same system has been followed for half that period; and in Great Britain, where the instruction of deaf-mutes has been generally conducted without articulation, the great body of graduates of the schools of those countries, though not in the possession of speech, are living to-day as educated, intelligent, self-sustaining men and women, happy and prosperous in all the relations of life, useful citizens, grateful for the blessings they have received and rejoicing through their Christian faith in the hope of immortal life.

And what can be said, more than this, of the results of any system of education for the deaf and dumb? At a public examination of deaf-mutes a few days ago, a letter of one of the most advanced pupils was read, in which the sentiment was expressed - and it was received with applause by the audience - that a deaf-mute without speech was no more than a brute, an ape. As the son of a sainted mother, who lived an honored, useful, and happy life of eighty years without speech, and who, in spite of her deafness and dumbness, reared her large family successfully, and was the ornament and pride of every circle in which she moved, I repel the unworthy and foolish imputation that deaf-mutes without speech are brutes, and remind those who applaud such a sentiment that there are dumb beasts endowed with much more intelligence than talking birds. And is there no danger that a method the beginning and end of which is to impart speech to the dumb will bring forth a generation of chatterers, with so little of real education that they must ever remain at the bottom of the social ladder? I would not be regarded as the opponent of articulation in the education of the deaf and dumb; on the contrary, I have for many years advocated its adoption in my own country, and I am happy in the thought that my advocacy has not been without its effect. But my observation does not lead me to believe that the mass of deaf-mutes can be taught to speak well. In my opinion a large proportion fall so far short of success that the time spent in giving them the imperfect speech they acquire would be used to much greater advantage in the development of their minds, and in increasing the store of knowledge to be gained by them during the period of their continuance in school. And for those who can learn to speak well, natural signs and dactylology furnish too valuable aid in the course of their education to make it right to throw them aside. A system which employs all available means, adapting them wisely to the diverse conditions of those who are to be taught, a system which aims at the real and full education of its objects, is the one that will in due time receive the support of all intelligent and candid minds.

And so, I do not fear to predict that the system of the future, that on which all opposing elements will unite, and in the up- holding of which all hostility and animosity will be transformed into generous emulation, is the combined system. That there will be schools where speech will be taught to all the pupils, and in which the processes of instruction will be mainly conducted through speech, no one will attempt to deny; and in localities where the establishment of such schools is impracticable, there will be classes and departments conducted in a similar manner. That there will also be schools and classes and departments in which no attempt will be made to give instruction in articulation is, in my opinion, equally certain. In all schools, the language of signs, the natural language of the dumb and the mother language of the world, will be accepted as a valuable and even indispensable adjunct at all stages in the course of instruction, while its excessive and injurious use will be carefully guarded against. And so will the greatest good for the greatest number be attained, and the millennium of deaf-mute instruction be entered upon.

Edward M. Gallaudet, *Remarks on the Combined System*, *American Annals of the Deaf* 26, no.1, January 1881, pp. 56-59.

It was quite important to deal with sign language preservation, as it could be threatened by opponents, as had happened in the past.

Preservation of the Sign Language is a fourteen-minute emotional film featuring George Veditz, then president of the National Association of the Deaf (NAD), speaking in sign language for the right of the deaf to use sign language instead of verbal communication. His purpose was to leave a record of the use of sign language for posterity at a time when the 'oralists' influence was gaining power. According to George Veditz:

As long as we have Deaf people on Earth, we will have sign language.

In *Standards for Learning American Sign Language*, Glenna Ashton and her team wrote:

Sign languages have existed among deaf people in the United States since colonial times. With the founding of the American School for the Deaf in 1817, American Sign Language (ASL) began to standardize and spread through the network of schools for the deaf established across the United States. One of the original goals of the National Association of the Deaf (NAD), founded in 1880, was the preservation of ASL. [...]. The quotation above is taken from [...] a film, featuring George W. Veditz, the 7th President of NAD, giving a speech on the cultural and historical value that Deaf people place on ASL. The topic of this speech, "The Preservation of Sign Language, "demonstrates that ASL embodies the rich cultural and historical tradition of deaf people in America. Storytelling, folk traditions and respect for the language have long been core values of Deaf people and Deaf culture.

The Current Status of Teaching and Learning ASL in the United States, The preservation of sign language, 1913.

B - Eulogy of sign language

The meaning of Deafness changed during the course of the 19th century for educators of the Deaf, and the kind of education deaf people received changed along with it. Until the 1860's deafness was often described as an affliction that isolated the individual from the Christian community. [...] After the 1860's deafness was redefined.

Douglas Baynton⁷⁰, *A Silent Exile on this Earth: The Metaphorical Construction of Deafness in the Nineteenth Century*, *American Studies* 44, no.2 (June 1992) pp. 216-243.

⁷⁰ Douglas C. Baynton, Associate Professor, History/ASL, University of Iowa.
Published many journals, encyclopedia articles and entries, book review, essays.

The discovery of signs by Deaf people, whatever their age, is a source of elation and a new birth, as they realize it makes them “communicating” human beings:

It's a new birth, life beginning. A first wall that falls. I still have others around me, but the first breach of my prison is open, I will understand the world with my eyes and hands. I can already guess. And I am so impatient! [...]

Emmanuelle Laborit⁷¹, *The Cry of the Gull*, Chapter 7, September 1994.

Many autobiographical novels written by deaf people relate the same wonderful discovery when, for the first time, they are in contact with sign users. They feel they have lost much time, however long they have been submitted to speech therapists. Afterwards they realize how they have been forced into a “medical” treatment, against nature, with painful training. Signing is a relief, liberation and, indeed, a new start in life. They can communicate with peers easily and benefit from all the blessings of their deaf culture.

Sign language was officially recognized as a full language. Stokoe’s linguistic works have been decisive in the USA, and, as noted in some French linguists’ publications, later, in France, where this official recognition was made public lately by the 2005 Law.

William Stokoe’s *A Dictionary of American sign language on Linguistics principles* is a reference. He has been rightly called “the father of sign language linguistics”.

In *William Stokoe and the Discipline of Sign Language Linguistics*, Susan Lloyd McBurney underlines how important Stokoe’s works were to establish sign language as a language like any other human language.

Summary of the book: The first modern linguistic analysis of a signed language was published in 1960 — William Clarence Stokoe’s (1919–2000) Sign Language Structure. Although the initial impact of Stokoe’s monograph on linguistics and education was minimal, his work formed a solid base for what was to become a new field of research: American Sign Language (ASL) Linguistics. Together with the work of those that followed (in particular Ursula Bellugi and colleagues), Stokoe’s ground-breaking work on the structure of ASL has led to an acceptance of signed languages as autonomous linguistic systems that exhibit the complex structure characteristic of all human languages.

Susan Lloyd Mcburney, *William Stokoe and the Discipline of Sign Language Linguistics*, *Historiographia Linguistica* 28, Issue 1-2, Jan 2001, p. 143 – 186.

⁷¹ Emmanuelle Laborit, (1971). She is a deaf actress and was rewarded with the Molière of theatrical revelation for *Children of a Lesser God* in 1993. She is the director of the International Visual Theatre (IVT) in Paris. *The Cry of the Gull* is her autobiography.

Ever since – and before, though less officially, sign language has been much appreciated and praised in many publications, by a wide variety of authors. What follows is a short list of the most recurrent appraisals.

1 - Testimonies from experience

Could a former pupil of Thomas H. Gallaudet, here Edmund Booth, be more enthusiastic? His praise of sign language in a drawn-out metaphor of light, is certainly also addressing the language instructor. It is full of religious undertones too as befits the clergy man and staunch believer. It is dated 1828, the heyday of sign language teaching at ASD. He gives a personal testimony, as a student, of his master's pedagogical approach:

Patiently, step by step, from the lowest to the highest class, he followed the intricate windings of that system which, through the eye, penetrates the dark veil enshrouding the minds of the deaf, and finally casts it triumphantly aside, allowing them to bask in the rays of the full-orbed sun of knowledge, as it rises in all splendors before them, illuminating their path to happiness and usefulness.

Edmund Booth, *Remarks* (in *Signs* by John B. Hotchkiss; read by the son of the author, Frank W. Booth).

Edmund Booth, also comes back to the role played by Thomas H. Gallaudet and more particularly to his intelligent and pragmatic approach when taking the background into consideration:

Gallaudet was no servile imitator. He was not content with repeating the experiments or diffusing the discoveries of the Old World without attempting to add a single fact or principle to the old stock. When offered the services of an assistant of the London Institution to introduce the English system in America, his reply was: «I came to qualify myself." That was the key to his success. He introduced modifications and improvements, as his own Judgment and experience suggested. He did not attempt to build up a cast-iron system, but one that embodied the elements of growth and improvement. He, at the outset, sought to identify the New England States, and the general Government, with the education of the deaf, and he succeeded; so, it is to him, in a large measure, that we owe the fact that every American school for the deaf today rests securely upon the basis of our common school system, instead of being private beneficiaries depending upon the charity of the benevolent, as in England. His inborn Americanism accounts for the circumstance of there being no privileged classes in the first school for the deaf, which has served as a model for all others, the rich and the poor being placed upon the same footing, a thing unknown in English and Continental schools; and to him, also, is due the regular worship of God, and systematic moral and religious instruction that forms so important a part of the curriculum of our schools. His clearness of comprehension and logical reasoning, his enthusiasm in the pursuit of knowledge and philosophical insight into the workings of the mind, his great common sense and supreme patience, together with his consummate mastery of the sign language and wonderful descriptive powers, assured his success as a

teacher. But that for which, above all else, we are indebted to Gallaudet, is his adoption of the sign-language as the chief means of reaching the understanding of the deaf and communicating instruction to them. He was thoroughly conversant with the English, German and French methods and their results, before he left France on his return voyage. He had explored the whole field, looking only for whatever, it contained of worth and value to the deaf. Adopting the French system, he was satisfied that he was bringing with him the best the world afforded, and he never had occasion to change his opinion or regret his action. Like a wise engineer, he made a careful, philosophical and scientific survey of the ground, and he adopted the sign-language as the best, the shortest and the deepest channel by which to convey the stream of knowledge to the dreary desert, overrun by the thorns and briars of ignorance, which he wished to illiterate; not a mere shallow rivulet-just sufficient to nourish a few favored spots, and cause to grow thereon a few flowers of speech to the wonder and admiration of an unthinking public, that would win applause for himself, though of no permanent benefit, while the rest of the desert thirsted in vain-but a deep, steady stream, ample to supply all to the exclusion of no spot whatever. The object of his solicitude was the whole body of the deaf. No part of it was large enough to fill his enlarged philanthropy. The sign-language in its development has followed the same lines that govern all languages. From the primitive form in which L'Epée found it in his first pupils, it has gone on steadily developing in terseness, significance, accuracy, copiousness and beauty, until now it is capable of rendering every phase' of human thought. Like other languages, it has its dialects, its slang terms, and its value as a repository of forgotten usages. Having no lexicon, its vocabulary, though rich and expressive, and capable of infinite combinations, is necessarily short; for nowhere is the law of "the survival of the fittest" more rigorously enforced. In this language, all useless verbiage is ruthlessly doomed to extinction by the very necessities of its existence. The tendency is always to condensation and force of expression. It is a "most picturesque and pliable instrument of human thought, the birthright of the deaf, God's compensating gift to those from whom he has withheld the greater blessing of speech". It is " a highly practical and singularly descriptive language, adapted as well to spiritual as material objects, and brings kindred souls into much more close and conscious communion than that of speech, enlarged by culture into greater copiousness, more precision and greater accuracy, until "it has reached a clearness, an eloquence, a power as impressive to us as any spoken language ever is to any hearing audience, and which exercises over us through the whole range of human thought a supreme influence, which no words, spoken, written or fingerspelled, can hope to equal." This is the channel through which Gallaudet conveyed the golden Argosy laden with the choicest literature of all ages, scientific facts gleaned from all parts of the world, and the truths of Revelation to a benighted people in the dark valley of ignorance.

Edmund Booth, *Remarks* (in *Signs* by John B. Hotchkiss; read by the son of the author, Frank W. Booth).

However subjective, it is a genuine account and comes from direct experience. As does Amos G. Draper's report some seventy years later. From a practical point of view, he describes how delegates from different countries were communicating on board the Cunarder steamer that took them to the Paris Conference, to the advantage of those who could sign. Amos G. Draper's style is much more sober, as he is a mere observer of educating adults comprising hearing people. His

saloon looks like a floating Tower of Babel, gathering different languages previously scattered on different places (an inverted story of the Bible).



The Tower of Babel by Pieter Bruegel the Elder, 1563

It was built by a monolingual humanity gathered inside. The tower containing people might prevent them from scattering around.

"Then they said, 'ome, let us build ourselves a city, and a tower with its top in the heavens, and let us make a name for ourselves; otherwise we shall be scattered abroad upon the face of the whole earth.'" (Genesis 11:4).

Amos G. Draper, *Notes on the Meeting of the Deaf at Paris*, *American Annals of the Deaf* 35, no.1 (January 1890), pp. 30-33.

When our ship reached Liverpool this morning and from her deck were seen several of your number conversing in the crowd that stood upon those wonderful docks, it recalled that line of your greatest poet which says, "One touch of nature makes the whole world kin"⁷² for though you dwell here upon an island and we upon a continent beyond the seas, yet in all essentials our experiences are probably the same. If you have troubles we can sympathize with you, for we have the same troubles; or if you have joys, those joys are ours, and we rejoice with you.

Amos G. Draper, *Notes on the Meeting of the Deaf at Paris*, *American Annals of the Deaf* 35, no.1 (January 1890), pp. 30-33.

⁷² In William Shakespeare's *Troilus and Cressida*, Act III, Scene iii - Ulysses, speaking to Achilles says that "One Touch of Nature Makes the Whole World Kin". It means that the show of an emotion-positive, or negative- makes people draw close together.

A preliminary report dated January 1890, by Amos G. Draper sets the tone:

A propos of this subject there were many striking evidence of the attachment of the deaf to the sign language. On the programs of the Congress, it was stated that systems were not to be discussed; but this was a ghost that would not down at the bidding of anyone. In the sessions and at the banquet many speakers dwelt with fervor, force, and pathos upon the happiness and benefit that (they said) signs had conferred upon them while at school. These speakers, addressing themselves, apparently, to the present management of their schools, would say: "You bring oralism to us. You impose it upon us. We receive it since we are forced to do so. We try with resignation to walk in the path that pleases you. But that path has few charms for us. We advance upon it, if at all, passively. It does not invite us to speed. It leads us neither to wide views, nor to confidence in what we see, still less to the freedom of fluent expression with all its enjoyments. All these we reach, and reach alone, by means of the language of signs - as natural to us as our native breath." The above is a report merely and is not written in a spirit of devotion to signs; indeed, the writer would have had something to say on the other side, as Mr. Davidson and Mr. Nuboer among the Americans did, if only he could have «caught the speaker's eye» in the hubbub. Nevertheless, this principle of naturalism, or, if it better please the oralists, this passion amounting to a principle, is one that will have to be taken into account by those who would plant strict oralism in France and America.

Amos G. Draper, *Notes on the meeting of the Deaf at Paris, American Annals of the Deaf* 35, no.1 (January 1890), pp. 30-33.

2 - The purity of sign language

W.H. Weeks (a delegate at the Third Convention of the National Association of the Deaf) is radical in his eulogy:

The sign language, granting even all that might be said of its imperfections, is the grandest means yet devised for rapidity and clearness of communication with the Deaf. [...]

He draws attention on the fact that signs must be clear; signing, done with vivacity; that signer must stick to the purity of signs and don't invent new ones.

There is dignity and meaning in the gestures taught by Laurent Clerc and his associates, but, as their signs travel westward and southward, they are so transformed as to lose their identity.

W.H. Weeks, *The Purity of Sign Language*. Presented at the third convention of the National Association of the Deaf, Washington 1889.

Harry Markowicz⁷³ does not reject sign language expansion since sign language, like many other languages, is a living body capable of borrowing or creating new signs. Sign language is concrete and this allows it to evolve and name new objects invented by science or new technologies. But also, a process of “creolization” is at work with the mixture of populations in our open world.

One of the most persistent myths about sign language is that, although it can express concrete concepts, its ability to convey abstraction is limited. However, like spoken language, sign language can create new signs, give new meaning to other signs, and borrow from other languages when the need arises.

Harry Markowitz and Ruth Peterson. *American Sign Language: Fact and fancy*. Public Service Programs, Gallaudet College, 1978.

Keith Cagle⁷⁴, in his Dissertation, develops the process of borrowing, which enriches sign languages:

Research on ASL's Lexical Borrowing and its Creolization Woodward (1978) believed that ASL was the result of pidginization and creolization stemming from early 19th century LSF and other sign languages. Pidginization is the process of creating a new communication system through language contact between two different languages. Creolization is the process of a new language being created by children whose primary communication input is a pidgin used by the adults in their community. Woodward (1978) suggested that a creole deriving from early 19th century LSF possibly developed in the United States between 1817 and 1913.

Keith Cagle, *Exploring the Ancestral Roots of American Sign Language: Lexical Borrowing from Cistercian Sign Language and French Sign Language*, doctoral dissertation, chap 1, p. 54.

3 - Sign language is universal

What Laurent Clerc said about it:

This motive of convenience appeared to Mr. Sicard to deserve the greatest attention; but if the question regards the opening of the understanding of the Deaf and Dumb, as to the important end of giving them in society the same rank they would have if they were not deprived of the sense of hearing and the use of speech, his own experience and that of his pupils themselves, demonstrated fully to him, that nothing can supply to them the place of their natural language, the language of signs, which all languages spoken or written, are no more to them than translations. The language of signs, then, ought to fix the attention of every enlightened man who makes it his study to improve the various parts of public

⁷³ Harry Markowicz (1937-2020), a Holocaust survivor, a pioneer in ASL linguistic research and Professor Emeritus at Gallaudet University.

⁷⁴ Keith Cagle, Department Chair, Department of ASL and Interpreting Education, National Technical Institute for the Deaf, Rochester.

instruction; this language, as simple as nature, is capable of extending itself like her, and of attaining the farthest limits of human thought. This language of signs is universal, and the Deaf and Dumb of whatever country they may be, can understand each other as well as you who hear and speak, do among yourselves. But they cannot understand you; it is for this reason that we wish to instruct them, that they may converse with you by writing, in the form of speech, and know the truths and mysteries of religion.

Address written by Mr. Clerc and read by his request at a public examination of the pupils in the Connecticut Asylum before the Governor and both houses of the Legislature, 28th May 1818.

This characteristic was later presented at length by Thomas H. Gallaudet himself, speaking from his observations as an educator and principal of a school:

[...] Two uneducated deaf-mutes, who have never had any intercourse with others in a similar condition, can, at their first interview, communicate with each other, on a considerable number of common subjects. Let them be together a few days, or weeks, and the freedom and extent of this communication will be found to be constantly increasing, as they become familiar with each other's somewhat peculiar and dialectic modes of expression. They will be found, too, constantly and readily resorting to explanations and illustrations by the language of signs, and even to the invention of new ones, by which to convey their thoughts and feelings, and which prove to be, at last, perfectly intelligible. The universality of this natural language of signs is manifested also, in the striking fact that the instructors of the deaf and dumb, who have become familiar, by their habitual and long continued intercourse with their pupils, with this language in all its varieties and peculiarities, find it easy, as they meet, in different parts of the country, with the uneducated deaf and dumb, to converse with them on a considerable range of common subjects.

[...] There is still another illustration of the universality of this natural language of signs in the immediate facility with which an intelligent, uneducated deaf-mute, arriving at the Asylum, is always found to hold communication with its inmates. After a short residence in the family, he makes rapid progress in this natural language of signs, enlarged as it is, by culture, into greater copiousness, and marked by more precision and accuracy than in those detached families throughout the country in which insulated deaf-mutes exist; and improved into a somewhat regular system by the skill of those who have been engaged, for a long course of years, in this department of education. Yet it retains its original features. It is not an arbitrary, conventional language. It is, in the main, picture-like and symbolical, corresponding, in these respects, to the ideas and objects which it is used to denote. The newly arrived deaf-mute has been well acquainted with its elements in the home of his childhood. He recognizes them as the same which constituted the basis of those very signs which he and others around him have already invented and used, and sometimes they prove to be identically the same with his old ones, or so nearly so that they are at once intelligible to him. He finds himself, as it were, among his countrymen. They use his native language, more copious, indeed, and elevated than that to which he had been accustomed, but yet virtually the same; so that, perceiving at the outset that he understands others, and that they understand him, he is encouraged to proceed, and, to his surprise, in a comparatively short space of time, slides into a familiar acquaintance with the

language of natural signs, in its full extent, as employed by the more advanced pupils, and by the instructors themselves, in the little community of which he has become a member. The contentment which this throws around his new lot, removed as he is from the endearments of his native home; the pleasure which he derives from the acquisitions that lie is constantly making in the varieties of a more enlarged medium of social intercourse adapted to his peculiar condition, and of interesting and useful knowledge from his better instructed associates, and from the teachers; the delightful consciousness of his expanding powers of thought and feeling; the hope of future progress; and the ability, all the while, to make his wants and wishes known, and thus to obtain sympathy, counsel, and aid, all these things go not only to show what the natural language of signs is, a much more definite, copious, and effective language than many may suppose it to be, but to prove and illustrate its immense value to the deaf and dumb, especially to those who have just arrived at an Institution for their benefit and are commencing the course of instruction, and to those, too, who are concerned in giving this instruction.

Rev. T. H. Gallaudet, *On the natural language of signs and its values and uses in the instruction of the Deaf and Dumb*, *American Annals of the Deaf and Dumb* 1, no.1, October 1847.

Contemporary Linguists and sociologists who studied sign languages could bring more relevant information, especially as they studied large samples of users. Thus, Harry Markovicz published different papers, where some common ideas were discussed, and he puts into question some widespread beliefs that people have before getting into contact with deaf people. Such as: "Sign language is universal; Reality must be word-based; signs are glorified gestures; sign language is iconic; sign language is concrete; ASL is ungrammatical."

Sign language is universal.

It has often been said that sign language is a universal language, easy to learn, and a means of communication on a global scale. This idea can be found in the writings of the first authors on French Sign Language (FSL), such as Abbé DE L'EPÉE, creator of public education for the deaf in the second half of the 18th century, or Rémy-VALADE, professor at the Institut Imperial des Sourds-Muets in Paris, who wrote the first grammar of FSL in 1854. These authors thought that sign language reproduced objects and events in the way a painter reproduces the scene before his eyes. According to de L' Epée and Rémy-VALADE, sign language is a natural language that unites deaf people around the world. According to them, if hearing people learned to communicate with sign language, the world would have an excellent universal language from the start.

Harry Markowicz in *American Sign Language Fact and Fancy*, 1972, *Languages*, Décembre 1979, no. 56, *La langue des signes*, pp. 7-12, Armand Colin

4 - Sign language expresses emotions that are humanity in man.

Bebian⁷⁵, in 1817 had already described natural signs. In the following passage he postulates that ideas precede signs, and that signs express emotions:

The word sign has been used in many different ways. The Dictionnaire de l'Académie defines it as the external demonstration of what one thinks or wants. It can also be said that it is the expression of an idea, intended to awaken a similar idea in the mind of the person to whom it is addressed.

In speaking of deaf-mutes, the meaning of this word is usually restricted to the gestures by which they communicate their thoughts; a sign is, in this sense, one or more gestures expressing an idea.

Signs which have a direct and natural relation to ideas, and recall them by themselves, without preliminary convention, may be called natural signs. The products of the drawing arts are, for example, the natural signs of the objects they represent.

If we wish to take this expression in the most rigorous sense, we will only give the name of natural signs to those which not only immediately recall the idea, but are also inspired by nature itself and produced without study and without art: Such are those expressions of the physiognomy which render with such truth all the affections of the soul and even the operations of the mind; where pleasure, pain, joy, sadness, love, hatred, compassion, anger, desire, horror, admiration, contempt, fear, surprise, attention, worry, meditation, etc., are painted in all their shades. Such is also the gesture of the hand or body which accompanies these various expressions of the figure and gives them more force and precision: it repels with disdain, or clasps with tenderness; it calls, commands, prays or threatens; it brings together the objects which the eye examines and compares; it shows the relations of size or form; it indicates their movements, draws their outlines, and expresses by imitating them all possible actions. It is by this means that all deaf-mutes can hear each other, and that savages, even when speaking languages that are respectively unknown to them, can communicate their thoughts, pledge their faith, and make alliances.

[...]

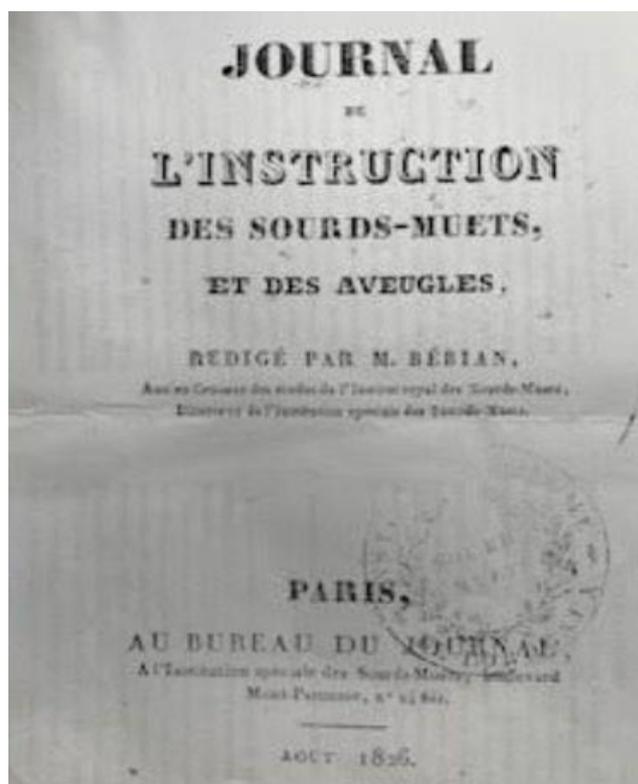
All these signs, which are natural to all men and understood in all places, form a much richer language than is commonly believed; it is sufficient for all the needs of thought, and deserves the name of natural language.

Auguste Bébien, *Essay on Deaf-mutes and Natural Language: Introduction to a Natural Classification of Ideas with Their Proper Signs*, 1817.

His convictions were also published in *Journal de l'instruction des Sourds-Muets et des Aveugles*, [Journal for the instruction of the Deaf-Mutes and the Blind] Paris L'institution spéciale des Sourds-Muets, Août 1826.

⁷⁵ Roch-Ambroise Auguste Bébien (1785-1839) was an educator at INJS and a friend of Laurent Clerc. He was dismissed in January 1821 by oralists. He published an *Essay on the Deaf and Dumb* in 1817. He was one of the promoters of sign language as a full language with Grammar and Syntax and this led to the official acknowledgment of sign language as a language.

Give the deaf-mute a means of communication; and suddenly his thought, long captive, will take off; it shakes off its too long stupor, and breaks the shackles which numbed it.



Some people thought that being able to communicate naturally by gestures was a gift from God “to supply the deficiencies of [our] oral intercourse” to deaf-mute people. And the common idea was that this “natural” language was best fitted to express emotions. Hence a certain distrust at the possibility for sign language to express concepts, a view which has not totally disappeared. But in religious times, sincerity was highly valued, as its opposite, lying was a sin. Thomas H. Gallaudet shared these views on the importance of showing what one felt:

[...] I wish I had time to go, somewhat at length, into the genius of this natural language of signs; to compare it with merely oral language; and to show, as I think I could, its decided superiority over the latter, so far as respects its peculiar adaptation to the mind of childhood and early youth, when objects addressed to the senses, and especially to the sight, have such sway over this mind, - when the expressions of the human countenance, with the general air and manners, attitudes and movements of the body, are so closely scrutinized by the young observer, while he receives, from these sources, some of the deepest and most lasting impressions that are ever made on his intellect and heart, - and when his first understanding of the meaning of words, singly, or in short colloquial phrases, which he hears uttered, depends so much on the unfolding of this meaning by objects, or combinations of objects and circumstances addressed solely to his eye. The natural language of signs is abundantly capable of either portraying or recalling these objects and circumstances. The life, picture-like delineation, pantomimic spirit, variety, and grace with which this may be done, with the transparent beaming forth of the soul of him who communicates, through the eye, the countenance, the attitudes, movements, and gestures of the body, to the youthful mind that receives

the communication, constitute a visual language which has a charm for such a mind, and a perspicuity, too, for such a purpose, that merely oral language does not possess.

It is greatly to be regretted that much more of this visual language does not accompany the oral, in the domestic circle, and, indeed, in all our social intercourse. Our public speakers often show the want of it, in their unimpassioned looks, frigid, monotonous attitude, and quiescent limbs, even when they are uttering the most eloquent, and soul-stirring thoughts. Would they but look out and act out these thoughts, as well as speak to them, how much greater power their eloquence would have. Why has the Creator furnished us with such an elaborate and wonderful apparatus of nerves and muscles, to subserve the purposes of this visual language; with such an eye and countenance, as variable in their expressions as are all the internal workings of the soul and graphically indicative of them; and with such a versatility of attitude and gesture susceptible of being " known and read of all men, " - thus to supply the deficiencies of our oral intercourse, and to perfect the communion of one soul with another, if we are to make no more use of these things than if we were so many colorless and motionless statues!

Rev. T. H. Gallaudet, *On the Natural Language of Signs and its Values and Uses in the Instruction of the Deaf and Dumb*, *American Annals of the Deaf and Dumb* 1, no.1, October 1847.

5 - Signs are beautiful

From Keith Cagle's Dissertation, *Exploring the ancestral roots of American Sign Language*:

LSF Lexical Signs



Figure 8. *BEAU*

Pélissier (1856), pg. 9, #12



Figure 9. *BEAU*

Lambert (1865), pg. 9, #4

The following quotes are by Pierre Desloges, the first Deaf author to write in defense of sign language—in 1779. These quotes were translated by Lisanne Houkes from the Dutch DVD script for *The Man, the City, and the Book*:

Sign language is visual. Your hands paint feelings in the sky, like fine brush strokes a pencil, soft colors or big movements, with clear speaking colors.

The things that reach our mind through the ear have to reach the Deaf through the eye. What cannot go through a door has to go through a window.

They are to be found in:

Moore, D., & Naturale, J., *Finding Hidden Treasures: Research Help in the Library and Archives*. In *Telling Deaf Lives: Agents of Change*, edited by Kristin Snoddon, 211-222. Washington, DC: Gallaudet University Press, 2014.

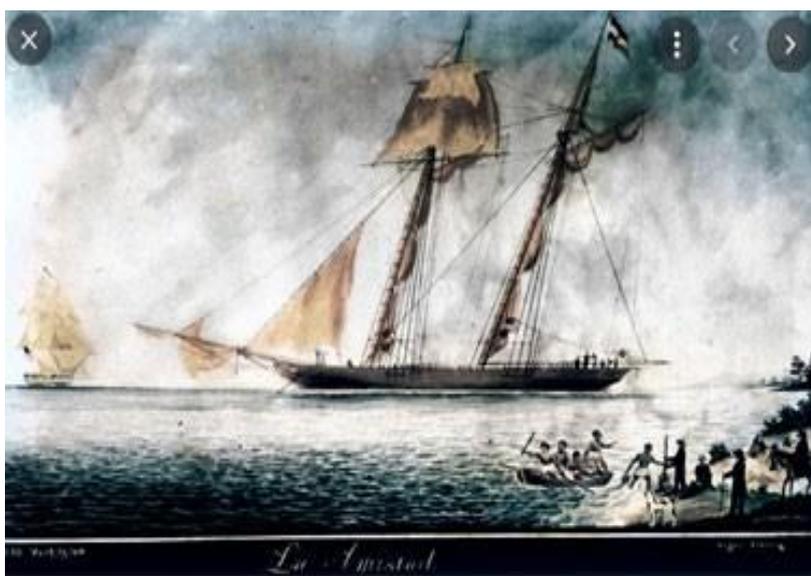
<https://scholarworks.rit.edu/article/1856/>

Henri Gaillard, during his visit to the New York institution could attend a theatrical performance with deaf actors. He reports:

On the screen was a rendition of The Song of Hiawatha, the famous poem by the great American poet Longfellow. A deaf woman was performing. She was slim and attractive, with harmonious gestures, slow and clear, in a rhythm like that of the verses, with flowing movements that came and went from one end to the other of the wooded landscape through which she passed.

Gaillard, Henri. *Henri Gaillard in Deaf America, A Portrait of the Deaf Community*, 1917, (Washington, DC: Gallaudet University Press, 2002).

6 - "Signs of freedom": The Amistad story between reality and myth



The Amistad story: Signs of Freedom: Deaf Connections in the Amistad Story.

Telling Deaf Lives: Agents of Change: Snoddon, Kristin

Contributor(s): Murray, Joseph J: Gallaudet University Press, 2014

This story has been related and examined carefully so that its authenticity- quite often questioned too- can be challenged. However, whether a myth or reality, it is telling of an epoch when communication processes were fascinating even more since the proximity of mimics and facial expressions (part of sign language) was striking and arousing some curiosity.

The way it is related is worth considering too: with a deliberate scientific precision, with convincing arguments, with consideration or with defiance, especially as the people involved were Africans. They were rebels and slaves and their origins and status left no one indifferent then.

It is said that Laurent Clerc and Thomas Gallaudet were called for help to establish some form of communication: it is a story inside their story?

Whether true or not, it contributes to the image of them wishing to establish communication, teach, and socialize the “unfortunates” on their road.

6-1 The Amistad story

The excerpts below are representative of reactions The Amistad landing provoked:

During the month of August 1839, the public attention was somewhat excited by several reports stating that a vessel of suspicious and piratical character had been seen near the coast of the United States, in the vicinity of New York.

Barbier, John Warner, *A History of the Amistad Captives*, published by E.L. and J.W Barber, 1840, p.1

This historical event is in the collective memory and its emotional impact is enduring. Indeed, when a French delegation visited ASD at Hartford for celebrations in 2017, the Amistad story was told and The French Magazine, *Echo Magazine* (N° 843 July August September 2017) mentions it (p.5).

What is the story about? as it is told in *Signs of Freedom: Deaf connections in the Amistad story*; in Kristin Snoddon, ed. *Telling Deaf Lives: Agents of Change*.

As oral history is one of many methods which indigenous, minority and marginalized people use to pass their knowledge and stories, as “a story”, even if it is a mere intellectual construction, some interpretation from a few facts only, it tells something important about such people, worth recalling. Historians have done exhaustive research of documents on Laurent Clerc's role in this case and came up empty.

In 1839 the capture of the Spanish schooner La Amistad by the US Navy in Long Island Sound revealed the United States' first successful mutiny by rebel Africans under the leadership of Sengbe Pieh, or Cinque. Were these captives' Cuban slaves who defied their masters? Or were these free Africans who had been unlawfully kidnapped from their country in violation of international law? The Amistad affair became an international case tried by the US Supreme Court and defended by former president John Quincy Adams. The crux of the case rested on the identification of the language used by the Amistad captives. Where the Amistad Committee's African-language translators failed, the signs used by the Deaf succeeded. Deaf educators Thomas H. Gallaudet and George E. Day relayed riveting stories of the captives to the newspapers and helped to identify the elusive Mende language. The charismatic and controversial leader Cinque ultimately became known as the “Black Prince” in the popular press.

Oral history from the American School for the Deaf (ASD) affirms that the founders of the school, Laurent Clerc and Thomas H. Gallaudet were the first interpreters

for Cinque, the leader of the Amistad revolt. In 1839 Laurent Clerc and Gallaudet went to New Haven, Connecticut, to meet with the Amistad Africans and help with communication since the captives' spoken language was unknown by their captors. Laurent Clerc and his students met Cinque and the Amistad Africans again in 1841, when they harvested crops together at Austin F. Williams's farm in Farmington, Connecticut. It was easy for the Africans and the Deaf students to communicate because both used sign language and gesture. During this visit, the men's gymnastics like dancing astonished these students.

Although this oral history did not include the name of the African people aboard the Amistad, the history of the Amistad case identifies most of the captives as being Mende. Mende people are historically renowned for their artistry in mime, storytelling, and dance. Once these details were confirmed, my research led to the writing of a manuscript that I titled "A Sign of Freedom," which turned out to be an amazing detective story with tantalizing clues.

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THE
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ART. II. LANGUAGE OF SIGNS AUXILIARY TO THE CHRISTIAN MISSIONARY.

By Rev. T. H. GALLAUDET, late Principal of the American Asylum for the education of the Deaf and Dumb.

SOME years since, I was led to reflect upon the possibility of employing the language of signs, made use of in the instruction of the deaf and dumb, as an auxiliary in the intercourse between Christian Missionaries and those heathen nations which have no written or printed language; and I then published some thoughts on this subject in the CHRISTIAN OBSERVER of London. Subsequent reflection and observation have led me to regard the principles which I then adopted, as strictly correct.

[...]

In the summer of 1818, a Chinese young man passed through Hartford, Connecticut. He was so ignorant of the English language, that he could not express in it his most common wants. As the principal of the deaf and dumb Asylum in that place, I invited the stranger to spend an evening within its walls, and introduced him to Mr. Laurent Clerc, the celebrated deaf and dumb pupil of the Abbe Sicard, and at that time an assistant teacher in the Asylum. The object of this introduction was, to ascertain to what extent Mr. Clerc, who was entirely ignorant of the Chinese language, could conduct an intelligent conversation with the foreigner, by signs and gestures merely. The result of the experiment surprised all who were present. Mr. Clerc learned from

[...]

institution, I one evening gathered round me several of these interesting strangers, from the islands of the South Sea, and from different tribes of the North American Indians. The object of the interview was, to ascertain how far a conversation could be conducted with them merely by signs and gestures. The result was similar to that in the case of Mr. Clerc's intercourse with the Chinese. Questions were proposed to them on a variety of topics relating to their own individual history and that of their families, to the state of manners and morals in their respective countries, and to their early religious knowledge.

Sign language to be Used by Christian Missionaries by Thomas H. Gallaudet.

There is also evidence for Laurent Clerc's and Gallaudet's facility in and promotion of signed communication between individuals who do not speak the same language. In 1834 the Literary and Theological Review published Gallaudet's "Language of Signs Auxiliary to the Christian Missionary," in which the use of sign language by missionaries was promoted. Gallaudet described various examples of successful signed communication between Laurent Clerc and a Chinese man, as well as his own success with more than twenty youths sponsored by the American Board of Commissioners for Foreign Missions. In September 30, 1839, the New York Commercial Observer published an article about Gallaudet's visit with the Amistad Africans during the Circuit Court trial held in Hartford. The article stated that "he [Gallaudet] finds little difficulty communicating with them [Amistad Africans] using the signs [...] employed with deaf."

The Amistad story had political consequences.

This led to the creation of the Amistad Committee whose members were abolitionists headed, 1839, by Thomas Gallaudet's colleague Tapan in defense of the Amistad Africans.

During the three trials the Amistad Africans were imprisoned in New Haven from August 1839 to March 1841. Two professors from Yale, Josiah Willard Gibbs and George E. Day, worked together to decipher and identify the captives' unknown spoken language. An October 9, 1839, article titled "Plans to Educate the Amistad Africans in English" in the New York Journal of Commerce stated that Professor Gibbs, who was working day and night, was assisted by Professor Day. After learning the numbers "Eta, fele, sawwa... one, two, three?" Gibbs went to the New York harbor and approached every black person with this question.

Teaching signs to the Amistad Africans.

After locating James Covey, a Mende African working on a British ship, and soliciting his aid as a translator for the Amistad trials, Gibbs testified in court and then pursued publication of his Mende/English vocabulary lists.

Meanwhile, Day and his student assistants from Yale held classes in the New Haven jail six days a week for the Amistad men. Day's letter to Tappan on October 19, 1839, states that "in accordance with the advice of Mr. Gallaudet, we have procured (20 to 30) pictures of single objects... at the close of the day many of them [Amistad Africans] had learned committed all the words." More cards were needed but could not be found in New Haven; however, "if Mr. Bartlett or Mr. Cary, Instructors of the Deaf & Dumb Institution... were to undertake to search for them [word cards]. Either... would willingly engage in the business." Day, who was a former teacher at the New York School for the Deaf, used Gallaudet's Elementary Book for the Use of the Deaf and Dumb at the Connecticut Asylum as a textbook. Many of the exercises in this book include references to the use of sign language (e.g., "your signs are clear"; "your signs are obscure"; "do you know our manual alphabet?"). Day's earliest connection to ASD was through his father's rental of the Day House as a second building for the growing institution.

After a verdict of freedom, thirty-six Amistad Africans were sent to the town of Farmington until funds could be raised for their journey home to Sierra Leone. The three girls lived with abolitionist families while the men, including the adolescent, Ka-le, had their own quarters above Samuel Deming's store. Later, Austin F. Williams built a dormitory on his farm for the men's use. This was the farm that annually donated food to ASD.

The youngest Amistad captive, nine-year-old Margu lived with Samuel Porter at his father's home. Samuel's sister, Rebecca Porter, was engaged to John Keep, the minister of the Unionville Congregational Church. From 1834 to 1835 Keep and Day were both teachers at the New York School for the Deaf. From 1852 to 1880 Keep returned to teaching deaf students in Ohio, New York, and Connecticut. Porter and Keep taught together at ASD from 1854 to 1860.

How friendship was developed thanks to the use of sign language.

John T. Norton's family soon became favorites of the leader, Cinque, and his second-in-command, Grabo. One reason for these friendly relations was that the Norton family had a son the same age as Cinque's own son in Sierra Leone. Charles Ledyard Norton wrote about his reminiscences of his close relationship with the two Mende leaders. During the Civil War, Col. Norton helped organize and commanded the Twenty-ninth Regiment, Conn. Volunteer Infantry (Colored).

The other reason for the friendly relations between the Norton family and Cinque was ease of communication. The Amistad leaders were not fluent in spoken English, but the Norton family could sign. Elizabeth Cogswell Norton, John's wife, was the older sister of Alice Cogswell. John T. Norton was a friend of Dr. Cogswell, and a family letter mentions Mr. Norton's inclusion at a tea at the family's home. Alice's journals describe her as a young Deaf woman who was always willing to

teach sign language to her hearing friends. This indicates that the Norton family had access to learning sign language.

Signs of freedom: Deaf connections in the Amistad story; in Kristin Snoddon, ed. *Telling Deaf Lives: Agents of Change*, 136-47, Washington, D.C., Gallaudet University Press.

6 - The Deaf have their own language

LSF and ASL are recognized as languages (Stokoe's works; Law of February 11th, 2005, in France), enabling the creation of a full identity and toward independence.

✓ In America

Deaf people (Laurent Clerc, Frederick A.P. Barnard, George Veditz; to name a few) and hearing allies (Thomas H. Gallaudet, Harvey Peet, Lewis Weld; to name a few) have described ASL as the language of Deaf people in the United States for more than two centuries and often referred to as "the language of signs," "natural signs," "the natural language," and "the sign language".

William Stokoe, a hearing professor and chairman of the English department at Gallaudet, published *Sign Language Structure: An Outline of the Visual Communication Systems of the American Deaf* in 1960. Some years later, Stokoe co-authored the *Dictionary of American Sign Language on Linguistic Principles* with two Deaf research assistants, Dorothy C. Casterline and Carl G. Croneberg. Both books claimed ASL is rule governed, structured, and contains linguistic principles and features shared by the world's languages. These publications ignited the global formal analysis of sign language linguistics. Ever since ASL was recognized as a language, sign language researchers have started to provide evidence that ASL has varieties and dialects, including Black ASL and Protactile ASL for DeafBlind. There are other sign languages in the United States, including, for example, Plain Indian Sign Language (PISL) and Mexican Sign Language (LSM).

While the United States federal government does not have an official language, states and District of Columbia can recognize official languages. As of this writing, over 40 states and the District of Columbia have recognized American Sign Language as the language of the Deaf community. ASL has become one of the most popular languages for high schools, colleges and communities. Hearing people take ASL to communicate and/or work with deaf people. Deaf people who grow up oral tend to take ASL to develop signing fluency when they become adults.

https://www.nad.org/wp-content/uploads/2018/06/List_States_Recognizing_ASL.pdf

✓ In France

In February 2005 Sign language was recognized as a full language of its own, even if the Fabius law, (named after the Prime Minister's name, Laurent Fabius) in 1991, officially authorized the use of LSF for the education of the Deaf.

Art. L. 312-9-1. - French sign language is recognized as a language in its own right. Any pupil concerned must be able to receive instruction in French sign language. The Conseil supérieur de education shall ensure that its teaching is encouraged. It is kept regularly informed of the conditions of its evaluation. It may be chosen as an optional test in examinations and competitions, including those for vocational training. Its dissemination in the administration is facilitated.

February 11th 2005 Law, on Equality of rights for every one in education.
Loi n° 2005-102 du 11 février 2005 pour l'égalité des droits et des chances, la participation et la citoyenneté des personnes handicapées, legifrance.gouv.fr
[Law n° 2005-102 of February 11, 2005 for equal rights and opportunities, participation and citizenship of disabled people]



C - Origins of sign languages



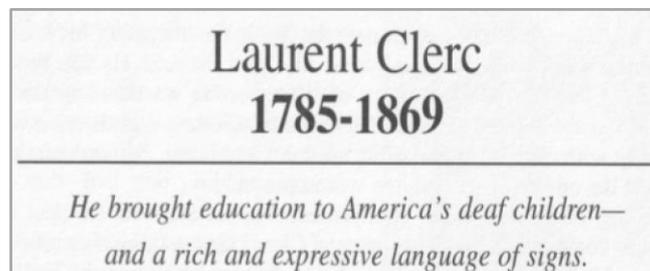
Our American Cousins, Echo Magazine, N ° 823, July-September 2015
Laurent Holt, descendant of the 7th generation of Laurent Clerc,
Sue Galloway and her sister Katherine Harms, descendants of the 6th generation.
[Note: photo in larger format in Chap.2 A-3 Genealogy of Laurent Clerc]

1 - Are LSF and ASL “cousin languages”?

Let’s have a look at this students’ handbook, to get a sample:

The Movers & Shakers Student Bilingual Workbook features twenty-one exercises highlighting deaf individuals— some culturally deaf, some not— who changed the society around them and the world we live in today. A rich tool for teachers of Deaf Studies, Bilingualism, and Language Arts classes who are seeking to instruct students in deaf history and simultaneously sharpen their use and understanding of both English and ASL

[publisher’s presentation]



MOVERS & SHAKERS
Deaf People Who Changed the World

LOOKING AT LANGUAGE
French Sign Language (FSL) and American Sign Language (ASL)
Linguists believe that 58% of American signs come from the French Sign Language that Laurent Clerc brought to America. Among the signs that linguists believe may have originated in France are:

 <p>LOOK FOR</p>	with a C handshape from the French word <i>chercher</i> , which means “look for.”
 <p>GOOD</p>	with a B handshape from the French word <i>bon</i> , which means “good.”
 <p>OTHER</p>	with an A handshape from the French word <i>autre</i> , which means “other.”

22

EXERCISE FOUR

In This Sign

Laurent Clerc
1785-1869

Background and Ideas

GOAL

To describe the experience of a Deaf Frenchman who gave America wonderful gifts—his language, his life, and his approach to Deaf education.

CONTENT

Students will find that reading requires less effort if they are familiar with some aspects of the following terms:

Paris School for the Deaf

The school where Laurent Clerc attended and later taught is in Paris. Called the Institute for the Young Deaf (Institut National de Jeunes Sourds, INJS), the Paris school was the first national school for Deaf people in the world.

Hartford, Connecticut

A New England city supported a way of life steeped in Protestant attitudes and wealth for the average person unheard of in other parts of the world.

French Sign Language

The result of the evolution of language in the Parisian Deaf community, the French Sign Language that linguists today call “Old French Sign Language,” was brought by Laurent Clerc to mix with native sign languages already developing in the United States.

American Sign Language

Native Deaf Americans were signing prior to Clerc’s arrival in their country, as evidenced by the evolution of a Deaf/hearing signing community on Martha’s Vineyard; one study showed 58% of today’s American signs have French cognates.

LANGUAGE

French Sign Language and American Sign Language

Linguistically, Laurent Clerc might be said to have constituted a one-man Norman Invasion, as he singlehandedly (or perhaps both-handedly) affected the signs of Deaf Americans in the same way that his ancestors had affected the speech of their hearing English counterparts hundreds of years before. While signers incorporated such French signed words as LOOK FOR, OTHER, and GOOD from Clerc, speakers had already incorporated such French spoken words as “souvenir,” “nature,” and “nation” from the 1066 onslaught of the Norman-French soldiers on the British isle. In the year 3000, American Sign Language, like American spoken language, will be far different from what is in use today—and even more different perhaps from what was in use in the 1800s.

Caroll, Cathryn and Mather, Susan, *Movers and shakers: Deaf people who changed the world*, Dawn Sign Press, 1997

4. CSL Lexical Signs with Strong Resemblance to both LSF and ASL

CSL Lexical Sign



Figure 273. 'hard'
CSL Authorized
Lasting, pg. 106

LSF Lexical Signs



Figure 274. DUR/DURE
Pelissier, 1856,
pg. 10, #20

ASL Lexical Signs



Figure 275. HARD
ASL Handshape Dictionary,
1998, pg. 294

(From Keith Martin Cagle)

Effective Public Presentation in ASL, by Dr. Keith Cagle

<https://youtu.be/Oj5oR2J73s0>

Keith Martin Cagle is asking a similar question that many researchers, linguists, sociologists have been attempting to answer.

This section is presenting a number of excerpts from their works and publications demonstrating how complex it is to date origins, the differences in their approaches, but also their convergence. They all agree on the fact that the iconicity of sign languages can account for its capacity of being easily understood by different deaf people.

Is it possible that some of our American Sign Language lexical signs are nearly 1000 years old? For some time, it has been widely known that approximately 60% of the ASL lexicon was derived from early 19th century French Sign Language (Woodward, 1978), known as langue des signes française (LSF). For this dissertation, this early 19th century French Sign Language will be referred to as Old LSF. This Old LSF lexicon was first introduced and then became incorporated into ASL when Laurent Clerc, the first deaf teacher in America, moved from Paris, France in 1816 and brought Old LSF with him. That language then began spreading throughout America. The lexicon of ASL may have originated from a combination of sources: gestures, home signs created by deaf individuals living with their hearing families, North American Indian sign languages, Martha 's Vineyard sign language, and new signs which were added to LSF and ASL through the course of generations. There are many documents indicating the use of gestures and/or signs by deaf people for many centuries prior to the 19th century; however, few documents containing descriptions of signs have become evident prior to the monks recording the descriptions of their Monastic sign language. Before the emergence of Old LSF in the 18th century and ASL in the 19th century, Monastic

sign languages such as Cistercian and Trappist sign languages had been used by Christian monks for centuries. There is evidence of that use dating from the tenth century, not only in Europe but also in Japan, China and the United States of America. CSL lexical signs were first documented in 1068 A.D. in Cluny (now France) and are still in use today (Barakat, 1975).

Keith Martin Cagle, *Exploring the Ancestral Roots of American Sign Language: Lexical Borrowing from Cisterian Sign Language and French Sign Language*, doctoral dissertation, University of New Mexico, May 2011.



Drawing by Guy Bouchauveau⁷⁶

The Deaf among the Tuaregs and the Indians (left and right). A deaf Egyptian child (top) is protected from a sacrifice by the divine light.

From Power Point: *Language, history, culture and social life of the Deaf*, Geneviève Le Corre, PhD in Language Sciences, 2013.

Online course on the platform of the Consortium L@CCES-LSF-pour-tous.

Origins are difficult to establish, as deaf people have always represented a small section of the overall population. In rural areas they were scattered and their language, used for everyday uses and local communication, did not reach a national status. The situation was slightly different in cities where their gathering enabled forms of transmissions to newcomers. This phenomenon has been thoroughly studied by Yves Delaporte⁷⁷ whose numerous publications have enriched the

⁷⁶ Guy Bouchauveau (1944-2016), a French humorist, and artist.

A documentary film directed by Jacques Sanga traces the story of Guy Bouchauveau, a famous character who marked the "Réveil sourd" and the entire history of the deaf community. He taught sign language at IVT and created the French Sign Language Academy. He was also well known for his talents as a comedian and artist.

<https://www.rdm-video.fr/film-dvd/V88886/guy-bouchauveau.html?fromrech=1>

⁷⁷ Yves Delaporte: born in 1944, is an ethnologist and ethnolinguistic, director of research at the CNRS. Trained in the 1970s at the Center for Arctic Studies directed by Jean Malaurie, then at the Ethnology Laboratory of the National Museum of Natural

knowledge of sign languages, notably his *Etymological Dictionary of signs*. In his introduction to this dictionary, he underlines how the setting up of the Parisian Deaf school in 1794 (Saint Jacques Institute), where several Deaf students were living together in a boarding school and, thus, could communicate among peers, were favorable social conditions with a permanent use of sign language:

This language has its roots in thousands of years of signifying gestures, during which the Deaf invented another way of speaking to the world; but it was in Saint Jacques, at the end of the 13th century, that a truly collective language crystallized, the one that would later spread throughout France.

Yves Delaporte, *Etymological Dictionary of Signs, Preface, 2015*

Excerpts below recall several sources worth considering dealing with studies on sign language.

Although he is best known for his innovations in deaf education, Thomas H Gallaudet also contributed insights and ideas to the study of language and communication. An investigation of his writing in this field indicates that some of his ideas about sign language have been misunderstood or overlooked and that in several instances he anticipated the work of 20th century linguists, anthropologists, and rhetoricians.

James J. Fernandes, *Thomas Hopkins Gallaudet on Language and Communication: A Reassessment; American Annals of the Deaf* 128, no.4 (August 1983), pp. 467-473 (7 pages).

In the Introduction to the *Etymological and Historical Dictionary of French Sign Language* (2007), [Yves Delaporte] wrote:

*In the great variability of the signs used in France, nothing is due to chance, everything is a matter of rational explanation, and there is perhaps none that cannot be linked to broader formal and semantic structures. The discovery, by Françoise Bonnal⁷⁸, of the 1200 descriptions contained in the manuscript *Iconographie des signes des Frères de Saint-Gabriel* (see *Patrimoine Sourd*,), then their publication while the writing of my dictionary was completed, provided an opportunity to test the validity of this assertion.*

Les apports de l'Iconographie des signes des Frères de Saint-Gabriel (1853-1854) à l'histoire de la langue des signes française [The contributions of the Iconography of Signs of the Brothers of Saint-Gabriel (1853-1854) to the history of French sign language] par Yves Delaporte.

History, he devoted himself for twenty years to the study of the Lapps. In 1994, he learns with passion the sign language. He collected and translated from sign language the story of Armand Pelletier, *Moi, Armand, né sourd et muet* [Me, Armand, born deaf and dumb] (Plon, 2002). He is the author of many articles and books, such as: 1997 : *Gestes des moines* [Gestures of the monks], *Regard des sourds* [Gaze of the deaf], *Les sourds, c'est comme ça : Ethnologie de la surdi-mutité* [The deaf are like this: Ethnology of deaf-mutity], 2002 : *Moi, Armand, né sourd et muet avec Armand Pelletier* [Me, Armand, born deaf and dumb with Armand Pelletier] 2006, *le Dictionnaire étymologique et historique de la langue des signes française. Origine et évolution de 1200 signes* [the Etymological and Historical Dictionary of French Sign Language. Origin and evolution of 1200 signs] (2007)

⁷⁸ Françoise Bonnal-Vergès: Thesis in Language Sciences, 2005: *Semiogenesis of French sign language: a critical study of French sign language signs attested on paper since the 18th century and new dictionary perspectives.*

Numerous Prefaces to works such as: *Iconographie des Signes* (1853-1854), *Dictionnaire à l'usage des Sourds et Muets*, (ca 1784) *Petit Dictionnaire usuel de mimique et de dactylogologie à l'usage des Médecins et des Gens du Monde* (1850), Editions Lambert-Lucas.

Other major university researchers have brought to light the iconicity of sign languages. As body movements and physical gestures are similar in all countries and were in use a long time ago, understanding through visual communication, face to face, has ever existed.

In the various sign languages practiced in the world, the whole body of the speakers participates actively in the construction of meaning, and the movements made to make meaning may involve the whole body: for example, small nods of the head, essentially phatic in nature, movements of the facial muscles to express various facial expressions, with modal or adverbial value, movements of the gaze, etc. It is only the movement as a parameter participating in the realization of signs (or gestural sets) carried out with the upper limbs and the hands that will be discussed here.

The parameter of movement will be questioned from the central notion of iconicity which, in my opinion, constitutes the key to any relevant entry - for learners as well as for researchers - in sign languages. The first part of this work will be intended to provide an epistemological framework for this notion.

Christian Cuxac⁷⁹, *Iconicité de la langue des signes française* [Iconicity of French Sign Language], 2007.

Langue des signes française (LSF)

Screening After the 497 CSL lexical items were screened and selected, they were checked against old LSF and modern LSF dictionaries to see if both the CSL list and the LSF dictionaries 'lists had corresponding lexical words. There were at least 800 LSF lexical signs with early manual alphabets in the 1855, 1856, 1865 and 1996 langue des signes française (LSF) dictionaries as follows:

- a) *Aux Origines De La Langue Des Signes française* [The Origins of French Sign Language:] : Brouland, Pélissier, Lambert, les premiers illustreurs, 1855-1865. Il Renard, M. and Delaporte, Y. Langue Des Signes Editions Publications, Paris (France), 1994. The authors reproduced the illustrations from three different old LSF dictionaries (Brouland, 1855; Pélissier, 1856; and Lambert, 1865) into one book.
- b) *Langue des Signes française : Dictionnaire Technique De Poche II* [French Sign Language: Technical Pocket Dictionary II], Labes, J.F. Langue des Signes Editions Publications, Paris (France), 1996. This dictionary includes illustrations of modern LSF lexical signs.

Keith Martin Cagle, *Exploring the Ancestral Roots of American Sign Language: Lexical Borrowing from Cisterian Sign Language and French Sign Language*, doctoral dissertation, University of New Mexico, May 2011. Chap 1, p.54

⁷⁹ Christian Cuxac: French linguist and professor at the University of Paris-VIII. He is one of the precursors of the Réveil sourd (Deaf awakening) He studies linguistics on French sign language. He learnt French sign language with Bernard Mottez in 1979 during the course of sign language by the Academy of French Sign Language.

Thanks to Guy Bouchauveau's analysis of sign language, Christian Cuxac was able to theorize a structure specific to sign languages: iconicity. For him, it is the fundamental characteristic of sign language that allows you to "see" the world, as if the scene were unfolding before your eyes, as if the speaker were playing the role of all the protagonists alone. The collaboration of Bouchauveau and Cuxac has benefited linguistic research and the recognition of sign language as a full-fledged language. (Wikipedia)

2 - Etymology

According to Yves Delaporte:

The question of the genesis and evolution of the lexical units of sign language is an entirely new question. In France, this was perhaps the price to pay for the work done by C. Cuxac, who, going against the dominant point of view, both in America and in Europe, brought out the idea that iconicity (and more generally, semiotic motivation) is the central fact around which this language is organized.

Iconicity is antinomic to the very notion of etymology, i.e. the discovery of an ancient form that can explain a current form. When signs are as iconic as TABLE, GRAND or DRAPEAU, [table, tall, flag] their immediate and obvious proximity to the objects they name dispenses with any etymology. [...]

Let us recall very briefly what the object of etymological science is: to discover the origin of words, to explain the form of a word by an older word from which it derives. The word limoger originated in the punishment, an exile in Limoges, applied to incompetent military leaders during the First World War. Etymology allows us to reconstitute families of words that have a common origin. For example, canicule (hot summer) belongs to the family of the word chien (Latin canis) because in summer the sun is in a constellation that the Romans called the Great Dog. Is it possible to construct an equivalent science for sign language? Let us observe as a preamble that any speaker of this language, even a beginner, knows at least two things about it intuitively: the first is that it is dominated by iconicity: by this we mean that many signs reproduce objects in the world by stylizing them using the resources provided by the human body. These objects are clearly recognizable in the hands of the deaf: the house in the two hands that form a roof [1], the fish in the flat hand that zigzags forward [1111], the moon in the horned hands that extend the face to form a crescent [1065]. These signs hardly pose any etymological problem, in the sense that this word has in the linguistics of vocal languages. Their origin is not to be found in a previous state of the language: it is directly identifiable in the objects to which they refer. The second thing everyone knows is that this is far from being the case for the entire lexicon. Many signs today are as arbitrary as the words of vocal languages: it seems impossible to find a link between their form and their meaning. This is because everyday use of the language has led to gradual changes in form and meaning, so that the relationship between the original sign and the thing represented has gradually become distorted. Here are a few examples, chosen from among those whose etymology I will mention later: CHOSE [1350], FAUX [469], PROFIT [1292], RESSEMBLE [421]. This is why hearing learners are constantly asking: why is this sign done like this, and that one like that? A question that their deaf trainers are often at a loss to answer. There is no reason to be surprised: etymological knowledge is a learned knowledge, and few French speakers know the etymology of the words canicule or limoger. And if they do, it is not because an oral tradition has brought it to us, but simply because they have consulted one or other of the many etymological dictionaries of the French language. The aim of this paper is to present some of the methods that will enable us to construct the first etymological dictionary of a sign language.

Yves Delaporte, *Structures étymologiques de la langue des signes française* [Etymological structures of French sign language],

<https://halshs.archives-ouvertes.fr/halshs-00004225/document>

Note: The etymological question in sign language: research methods Yves Delaporte Note: each mention of a sign is accompanied by the number, placed between square brackets, of the corresponding drawing in the volumes published by IVT, La langue des signes, dictionnaire bilingue élémentaire.

Thomas H. Gallaudet: a precursor in many ways.

[...] I wish I had time to go, somewhat at length, into the genius of this natural language of signs; to compare it with merely oral language; and to show, as I think I could, its decided superiority over the latter, so far as respects its peculiar adaptation to the mind of childhood and early youth, when objects addressed to the senses, and especially to the sight, have such sway over this mind, - when the expressions of the human countenance, with the general air and manners, attitudes and movements of the body, are so closely scrutinized by the young observer, while he receives, from these sources, some of the deepest and most lasting impressions that are ever made on his intellect and heart, - and when his first understanding of the meaning of words, singly, or in short colloquial phrases, which he hears uttered, depends so much on the unfolding of this meaning by objects, or combinations of objects and circumstances addressed The Natural Language of Signs. solely to his eye. The natural language of signs is abundantly capable of either portraying or recalling these objects and circumstances. The life, picture-like delineation, pantomimic spirit, variety, and grace with which this may be done, with the transparent beaming forth of the soul of him who communicates, through the eye, the countenance, the attitudes, movements, and gestures of the body, to the youthful mind that receives the communication, constitute a visual language which has a charm for such a mind, and a perspicuity, too, for such a purpose, that merely oral language does not possess.

It is greatly to be regretted that much more of this visual language does not accompany the oral, in the domestic circle, and, indeed, in all our social intercourse. Our public speakers often show the want of it, in their unimpassioned looks, frigid, monotonous attitude, and quiescent limbs, even when they are uttering the most eloquent, and soul-stirring thoughts. Would they but look out and act out these thoughts, as well as speak to them, how much greater power their eloquence would have. Why has the Creator furnished us with such an elaborate and wonderful apparatus of nerves and muscles, to subserve the purposes of this visual language; with such an eye and countenance, as variable in their expressions as are all the internal workings of the soul and graphically indicative of them; and with such a versatility of attitude and gesture susceptible of being " known and read of all men, " - thus to supply the deficiencies of our oral intercourse, and to perfect the communion of one soul with another, if we are to make no more use of these things than if we were so many colorless and motionless statues!

Rev. T. H. Gallaudet, *On the Natural Language of Signs and its Values and Uses in the Instruction of the Deaf and Dumb*, *American Annals of the Deaf and Dumb* 1, no.1, October 1847:1-7.

However, when comparing ASL and LSF today, after 160 years of independent development, the picture is quite different. In an analysis of 872 signs from contemporary LSF and ASL, we found a rate of related signs of only 57.3%.

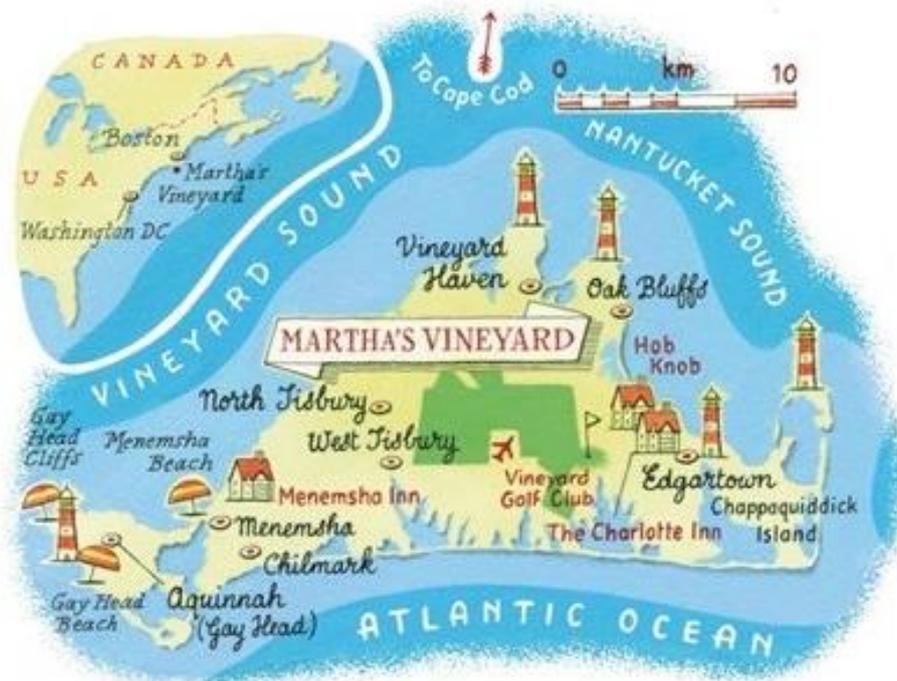
James Woodward and Lysiane Paul-Grosjean, *Quelques aspects sociolinguistiques des langues des signes américaine et française*, *Langues*, no.56, La langue des signes (Décembre 1979), pp. 78-91.

3 - Martha's Vineyard



(Permission received directly from the artist)
Original in RIT/NTID Deaf Studies Archive - The Great Convergence
(by David Call)

The sailboat from France carrying Langue des signes Française (LSF) met up with another sailboat carrying Martha's Vineyard (MV) sign language. A beautiful convergence happened when the boats met together and went on to the American mainland where ASL emerged.



3-1 Martha's Vineyard: background information

Martha's Vineyard (from the English meaning "Martha's Vineyard", which is often simply called also "the Vineyard"), is an island in the state of Massachusetts in the United States. The island, with a population of 15, 000, was home to the first American deaf community, which developed

its own sign language, called Martha's Vineyard Sign Language. Some signs were imported by the Wampanoag* tribe.

*The Wampanoag are a Native American people. They were a loose confederation of several tribes in the 17th century, but today Wampanoag people encompass five officially recognized tribes. The Mashpee Wampanoag Tribe and the Wampanoag Tribe of Gay Head in Massachusetts are federally recognized, and the Herring Pond, Assawompsett-Nemasket Band of Wampanoags, and Pocasset Wampanoag Tribe (Pokonoket) are recognized by the Commonwealth of Massachusetts. They lived in southeastern Massachusetts and Rhode Island in the beginning of the 17th century, at the time of first contact with the English colonists, a territory that included the islands of Martha's Vineyard and Nantucket. Their population numbered in the thousands; 3, 000 Wampanoag lived on Martha's Vineyard alone.

The first inhabitants of the island were the Wampanoag Indians (in their language, Martha's Vineyard is called "Noepe" ("the land among the currents")). They shared their food and techniques with the explorers who arrived on the island. But in 1642, the pioneers began to hunt them. Soon the newcomers took over all the rich land in the Edgartown area. Today, only Aquinnah is still Indian Territory (one of only two in the state of Massachusetts) with a large Wampanoag community. Unlike most other territories in the country, the Indians were not completely dispossessed. They were paid for their land and no confrontation took place between them and the explorers.

<http://www.visite-usa.fr/avoir/Martha.htm>

From 1615 to 1619, the Wampanoag suffered an epidemic, long suspected to be smallpox. Modern research, however, has suggested that it may have been leptospirosis, a bacterial infection which can develop into Weil's syndrome. It caused a high fatality rate and decimated the Wampanoag population. Researchers suggest that the losses from the epidemic were so large that colonists were able to establish their settlements in the Massachusetts Bay Colony more easily. More than 50 years later, King Philip's War (1675–1676) of the Narragansett and their allies against the colonists and their Native American allies resulted in the death of 40 percent of the surviving tribe.

Many male Wampanoag were sold into slavery in Bermuda or the West Indies, and some women and children were enslaved by colonists in New England.

Because everyone had a deaf family member, everyone in the community knew sign language. Deaf people were farmers, store clerks, anything they wanted to be. Hearing people would sign to each other over the large expanses the island farms created, a deaf person could walk into a store and the clerk would always know sign. Deaf people were even elected to high political office, becoming mayors and council members for the island, a thing unheard of in the rest of the country. When telling stories about the community, the people who were being interviewed could only remember after much prompting if the people they were talking about were hearing or deaf.

The rare deaf/hearing equality experienced in Martha's Vineyard is still remarkable today. In a society where hearing people are ignorant about deaf issues and can be very rude, a place like Martha's Vineyard seems particularly wonderful. The equality that was shared by everyone, and the prejudices about deaf people that didn't exist, make the little island community seem like the perfect place. Many deaf people consider it the ultimate utopia.

Ironically, the opening of the first deaf school in Hartford, Connecticut was a big reason why the hereditary deafness on the island petered out. Many deaf people

from the island attended the school, met and married other deaf people whose deafness wasn't hereditary, and lived and had children near the school on the mainland of New England. As more and more of the population moved away, less and less deaf children were born on the island. In 1952, hereditary deafness died on the island with the death of Katie West. Though the community is gone today, its signs live on. Children attending the Hartford school mixed their signs in with the French Sign Language Laurent Clerc brought with him from Paris, creating much of the uniquely beautiful American Sign Language that exists today.

Martha's Vineyard - Utopian society, American Sign Language, October 22, 2010 - (Wikipedia)

Further information on Utopias and on Thomas Moore's "Utopia" CF Unit and Power Point no. 9.

3-2 Sign languages

[...]

Clerc used LSF at ASD which influenced the development of American Sign Language (ASL). There are other influences on ASL, such as the signing Deaf and hearing community at Martha's Vineyard who used Martha Vineyard Sign Language (MVSL). This community migrated from Weald-Kent, England in the 17th century due to economic necessity and religious freedom. The Weald-Kent area used a regional dialect of British Sign Language (BSL) called Old Kentish Sign Language (OKSL) because there were deaf members in the community due to genetic deafness. John Lothrop sailed on the Hercules ship with a congregation of two hundred members to the New World and landed in Boston in 1634 and assume they brought their sign language with them. They settled in Scituate and then moved to Barnstable and Edgartown. Later, small groups moved to Chilmark on Martha's Vineyard.

Jonathan Lambert was the first Deaf person to settle in Chilmark in 1692. He had a hearing wife and seven children of whom two were deaf. The friendly Wampanoag Indian tribe lived in this area and sold cheap land to Jonathan. It is possible the settlers used Indian Sign Language with the tribe, which might have influenced MVSL, along with Kent Sign Language. Deaf children from Martha's Vineyard (the largest group of Deaf students from a geographical area) attended ASD and mingled with the mainland school community using MVSL which influenced ASL. Martha's Vineyard Deaf students attended ASD for approximately 100 years.

Info guides NTID/RIT

This documentary profiles the community that existed on Martha's Vineyard for 300 years, where deaf and hearing people all used sign language to communicate with each other. The filmmaker interviews Nora Ellen Groce, the author who wrote a book about this community's history, as well as some of the older residents who remember their deaf neighbors and relatives.

In *Everyone Here Spoke Sign Language, Hereditary Deafness on Martha's Vineyard*, Nora Ellen Groce provides a thorough analysis of the situation in a historical perspective. The Table of contents is explicit.

Contents:

1. "They Were Just Like Everyone Else"
2. The History of Martha's Vineyard
3. The Origins of Vineyard Deafness
4. The Genetics of Vineyard Deafness
5. The Island Adaptation to Deafness
6. Growing Up Deaf on the Vineyard
7. Deafness in Historical Perspective
8. Those People Weren't Handicapped?

A deaf person's greatest problem is not simply that he or she cannot hear but that the lack of hearing is socially isolating, and knowledge and awareness of the larger society are limited because hearing people find it difficult or impossible to communicate with him or her. Even if the deaf person knows sign language, only a very small percentage of the hearing population can speak it and can communicate easily with deaf people. The difficulty in communicating, along with the ignorance and misinformation about deafness that is pervasive in most of the hearing world, combine to cause difficulties in all aspects of life for deaf individuals—in education, employment, community involvement, and civil rights. On the Vineyard, however, the hearing people were bilingual in English and the Island sign language. This adaptation had more than linguistic significance, for it eliminated the wall that separates most deaf people from the rest of society. How well can deaf people integrate themselves into the community if no communication barriers exist and if everyone is familiar and comfortable with deafness? The evidence from the Island indicates that they are extremely successful at this.

Chapter 1.

The eighteenth century saw the development of deaf education, capped by the establishment of schools for the deaf in the 1760s and 1770s in Paris, Leipzig, and Edinburgh. But long-held prejudices were by no means quickly eliminated. The Abbe de l'Épée, founder of the school that would later become the National Institute for Deaf Mutes, and a leading figure in deaf education, found that "very respectable ecclesiastics in his own time openly condemned deaf education for theological reasons" (Mann 1836: 103). The French philosopher Condillac continued to deny that the deaf had any faculty of memory and, by extension, any power of reason.

Chap 7, p. 101

Today, when the medical, legal, and social service professions are heatedly arguing the advantages and disadvantages of incorporating disabled individuals into mainstream society, the situation that existed on Martha's Vineyard is of particular relevance. For more than 250 years deaf Vineyarders were included and encouraged, indeed expected, to participate to the fullest extent of their ability. It is impossible now to know exactly when or how this attitude toward deafness originated on the Vineyard. It would certainly make sense that a community that included a number of individuals who were simply unable to hear should make full

use of their abilities rather than exclude them. But logic is not necessarily a strong factor in many human decisions, and we cannot attribute much to it here. Certainly, many societies overlook or stigmatize their disabled members for no apparent reason; our own society is a case in point. On the Vineyard, and presumably earlier in the Weald of Kent, the attitude toward deafness was probably the result of a unique set of historical circumstances, rather than a calculated decision arrived at by the local hearing people, who do not seem to have even regarded the deaf as a separate, recognizable group.

Chap 8 p.108

Source: Nora Ellen Groce, Everyone Here Spoke Sign Language, Hereditary Deafness on Martha's Vineyard, Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1985.

3-3 Utopias and Modern Utopias

Places where deaf people might gather, for better, for worse.

Prior to 1817, the sign language on Martha's Vineyard may have been a blend of early Kent (English) sign language, Wampanoag Indian sign language and home signs created by the Martha's Vineyard deaf family members throughout generations of interaction. After 1817, the sign language of Martha's Vineyard blended with early 19th century LSF at the American School for the Deaf in Hartford, Connecticut.

Keith Martin Cagle, *Exploring the Ancestral Roots of American Sign Language: Lexical Borrowing from Cisterian Sign Language and French Sign Language*, doctoral dissertation, University of New Mexico, May 2011, chapter one.

- Some utopias are short-lived.

One of the boldest new urban visions to date was planned for a field in South Dakota that would not ordinarily be a candidate for large-scale development. But this was no ordinary project. "Laurent", a town designed for the hearing-impaired and for sign language users, might have been the first community of its type anywhere. It might have become the first new urban community incorporated as a town. Another unusual aspect of "Laurent" was its Interstate highway orientation. Named after French educator Laurent Clerc, who pioneered sign language in the US in 1816, the town was planned at an Interstate 90 interchange 30 miles west of Sioux Falls. It was abandoned.

- -An example of a successful community, beyond past utopia.

Lynn Thorpe, a long-time resident of the island has seen the importance of keeping sign language alive. With the local Chambers of Commerce, she is endeavoring to bring back its history and culture.

Her MV Times program and actions deserve much consideration and the Chilmark Free Public Library (chilmarklibrary.org) provides relevant information.

Its missions:

The Chilmark Free Public Library strives to be central to the community's year-round and seasonal needs by providing:

- A balanced, professionally-developed collection of materials that are primarily recreational and for all family enjoyment.
- An access to materials and information for personal learning and development of all age groups. The library will make every effort to serve the Chilmark School, providing materials and programs to support their studies
- A commons environment for people to meet and interact with others in the community and to participate in public discourse and community issues.

Chilmarkma.gov/chilmark-free-public-library

Martha's Vineyard, although but a speck on a map has so much history to deaf culture in American. Being one of the founding deaf communities and signs evolving into ASL have gifted us with tradition, culture and a way living side by side and not divided. Nora Groce, a medical anthropologist at University College London stated "Signs are not arbitrary. They have a history to them.

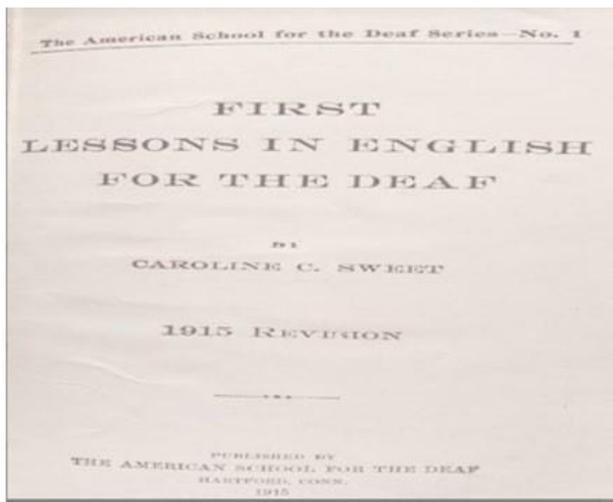
Nicole Colterman (08/27/2020)

Startasl.com/marthas-vineyard

For videos : MVTimes.com

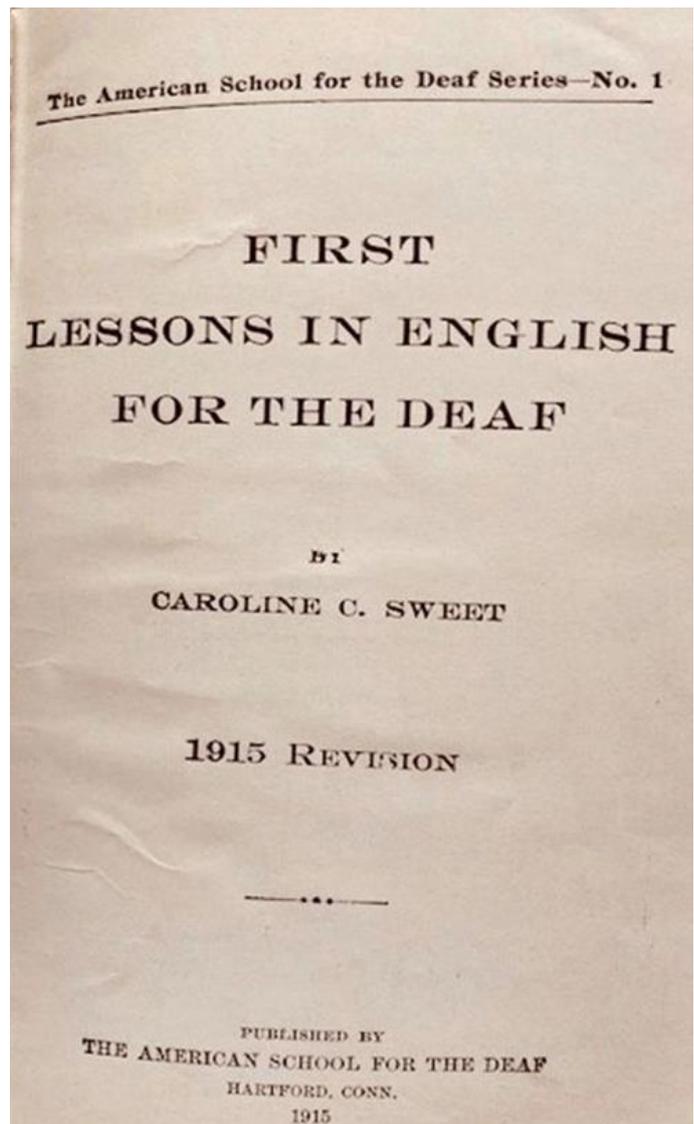


D - Bilingualism



This book was written by one ASD teacher (1869-1898), Caroline Sweet. There was a series of 5, printed in the school's printing shop, and the photos are of staff and students taken on school grounds at the time.

(ASD private collection)



But there is still one thing wanting, and that one thing is of the utmost importance. It is a KNOWLEDGE of WORDS, without which he can never converse, save with the few who understand his signs, and must thus remain a helpless dependent on the kindness of friends whom fortune may snatch from him. A knowledge of words, also, is necessary to enable him to have recourse to books, those never-failing companions which are never weary of conversing even with the deaf. Give him but the key of this grand store-house of knowledge, written language, and you put at once all the mind's wealth in his reach. No longer dependent of the leisure or the kindness of a few for information, he can then riot at will among the intellectual stores of successive centuries.

John Burnet, *Tales of the Deaf and Dumb*, (1808-1874).

<https://curiosity.lib.harvard.edu/reading/catalog/42-990030168160203941>

If we define the bilingual as a person who uses two or more languages (or dialects) in everyday life, then most Deaf people who sign and who use the majority language regularly (in its written form for example) a bilingual. Deaf bilinguals

share many similarities with hearing bilinguals (their diversity, the perception they have of their own bilingualism, their use of various language modes, etc.) but they are also characterized by a number of specificities (the lack of recognition of their bilingual status, the maintenance over time of their languages, the competence they have in certain language skills, their varying patterns of language knowledge and use, etc.) As concerns the bicultural, whom we can define as a person who lives two or more cultures, who adapts to each and who blends aspects of each, there is little doubt that many Deaf are indeed bicultural.

François Grosjean⁸⁰, *“The bilingual and bicultural person in the hearing and in the Deaf world, Sign Language Studies, 1992, pp.307-320.*

1 - What is bilingualism in education?

1-1 Bilingualism, biculturalism and Deafness

This paper contains three parts. In the first part, what it means to be bilingual in sign language and the spoken (majority) language is explained, and similarities as well as differences with hearing bilinguals are discussed. The second part examines the biculturalism of deaf people. Like hearing bicultural, they take part, to varying degrees, in the life of two worlds (the deaf world and the hearing world), they adapt their attitudes, behaviors, and languages to both worlds, and they combine and blend aspects of the two. The decisional process they go through in choosing a cultural identity is discussed and the difficulties met by some groups are examined. The third part begins with a discussion of why early bilingualism is crucial for the development of deaf children. The reasons that bilingualism and biculturalism have not normally had the favor of those involved in nurturing and educating deaf children are then discussed. They are of two kinds: misunderstandings concerning bilingualism and sign language; and the lack of acceptance of certain realities by many professionals in deafness, most notably members of the medical world. The article ends with a discussion of the role of the two languages in the development of deaf children. (Contains 2 figures and 2 notes.)

François Grosjean, *International Journal of Bilingual Education and Bilingualism* 13, no.2, March 2010, p133-145, University of Neuchâtel, Switzerland.

⁸⁰ François Grosjean, born 11 March 1946 in Paris, is a French linguist, honorary professor and former director of the Laboratory of Language and Speech Processing at the University of Neuchâtel in Switzerland. His main topics are Psycholinguistics, sign language and bilingualism of Deaf people.

1-2 What is bilingualism in school education?

Movers and Shakers: Deaf People Who Changed the World

by Cathryn Carroll, Susan M. Mather, Susan Mozzer-Mather, Dawn Sign Press

Description (publisher's presentation)

Deaf individuals who changed the society around them and the world we live in today are subjects of twenty-one exercises in the Movers & Shakers Student Bilingual Workbook.

What makes the Student Bilingual Workbook one-of-a-kind?

The section on Looking at Language includes:

- ASL Synonyms = different signs that have the same meaning
- English & ASL Homonyms = similar words with different meanings
- ASL Classifiers
- History of French Sign Language & American Sign Language
- Asking Questions in ASL
- ASL Inflections: Repeated Movement in Verbs
- Time Sequencing in English and ASL
- ASL Verbs in 3-D Space

Depending on the language fluency of students, the Student Bilingual Workbook can be used from middle school through 12th grade.

The other sections in the workbook include standard features such as English Idioms, Content (comprehension check), Opinion, and Follow-up Topics.

Through Follow-up Topics, students can study ASL poetry, learn about national publications for Deaf readers, and get acquainted with Deaf American professionals.

Teacher's Guide includes Goal of Story, Suggestions for Further Comprehension of Contents, Suggested Materials, Optional Projects, and Answer Key to Student Bilingual Workbook.

A group of experts, in 2006-2007, discussed at length how "bilingual communication, sign language and French language" should be understood in "education and schooling" for those young deaf people who choose it. A consensus was established around the idea that, given that the national education system takes charge of bilingualism from kindergarten onwards, it should be understood as "a dynamic perspective based on the individual potential of each child". Starting with the learning or consolidation of his or her knowledge of French sign language, depending on the case, the school institution will endeavor to build with him or her a gradual access to French, taking as a basis written French, the mastery of which, at the end of secondary school, is the minimum, essential to attest to the success of the bilingualism chosen.

Qu'est-ce que le bilinguisme ? [What is bilingualism?] Mireille Golaszewski, inspectrice générale de l'Éducation nationale [General Inspector for Education], EMPAN, 2011 /3 n°83 pp.96-101

An experimental school in the United States:



TRIPOD - A BRIEF HISTORY

TRIPOD was founded in 1982 by Megan Williams, the mother of two young children- deaf and hearing- to meet the complex educational needs of deaf children and their families. Inspired by her own family's experience, Megan developed the concept of a holistic learning environment where communication was no longer a barrier. The children's father, film producer Michael Shamberg, enlisted the help of Hollywood to make the vision a reality.

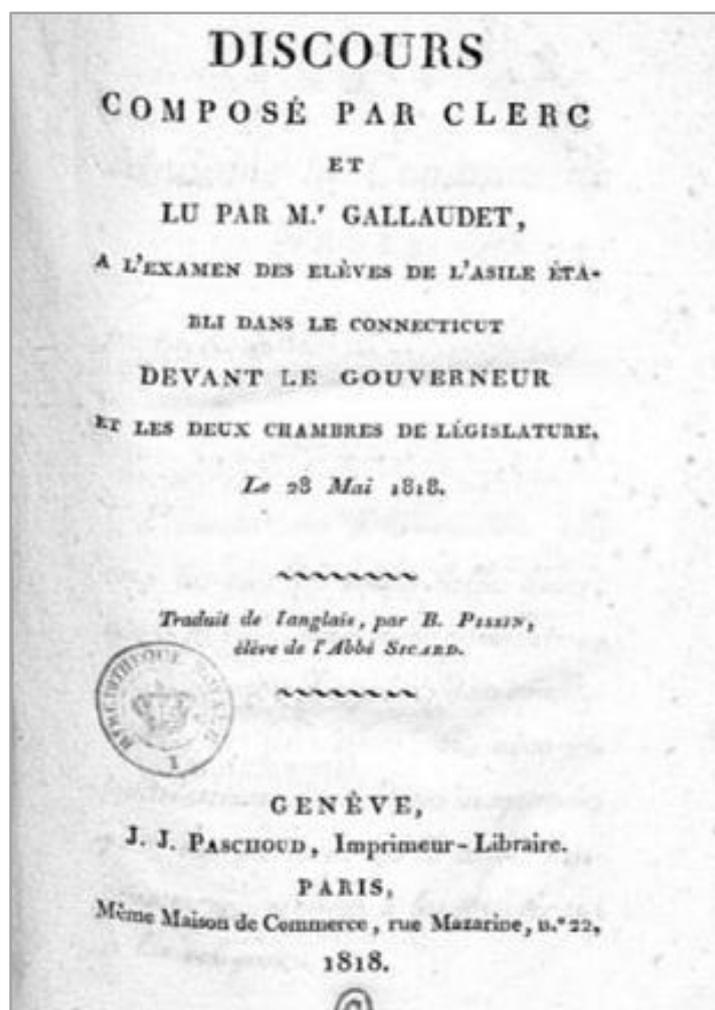
From inception, TRIPOD was fully inclusive with Deaf, hard of hearing and hearing individuals participating as members of the board of directors, as administrators, in the classroom as teachers and among students and their families. At TRIPOD deaf parents with hearing children were as welcome as hearing parents with deaf children.

With the support of two well-known educators of the deaf (Carl Kirchner from California State University, Northridge and Cindy Murphy from Gallaudet University, Washington D.C.) and with the help of community leaders and educational professionals, TRIPOD established a model educational program where deaf and hard-of-hearing children learn together with their hearing peers and siblings in a Total Communication setting. In this natural environment, hearing children model English for deaf children and all children develop sign language skills together. The Montessori approach was chosen because it is child centered as opposed to teacher directed, and a Total Communication philosophy was followed. (TRIPOD recruited and paid for deaf teachers to acquire a Montessori teaching credential.) Classes are team taught by regular and deaf education teachers who volunteer for the assignment. To foster communication, hearing teachers who learn ASL receive bi-lingual pay.

It was a successful experimental school that unfortunately faced the budget cut. The school followed the bilingual language policy for all students, including hearing students (usually they were children of deaf parents, grandparents and/or siblings). It had to close but, however, a few schools followed that model -- ASL English PS47 in New York City and Signing School in Milwaukee. They are not the same as the Tripod school, as the ratio of hearing to deaf students is high in those schools as opposed to the Tripod School.

<https://www.rit.edu/ntid/radscc/tripod/>

2 - Laurent Clerc's and Thomas H. Gallaudet's precepts



This address is quite long and Laurent Clerc apologizes, as he did not want “to fatigue the attention of our Auditors”. But in the name of “the favors which you have vouchsafed to confer both upon us and our pupils”, he considers it important to dwell on important issues.

Some excerpts:

The origin of the discovery of the art of teaching the Deaf and Dumb is so little known in this country, that I think necessary to repeat it. Afterwards I will give you a hasty sketch of our system of instruction, then let you judge whether the opinion of some persons among you is correct, who believe that the sight of the Deaf and Dumb, or conversation about them increase their number, and at length make you appreciate the importance of educating these unfortunate beings.

He recalls how L'Abbé de l'Épée met the two deaf mute sisters and started educating them, and how Abbé Sicard took over when Abbé de l'Épée died. He praises Abbé Sicard's works and how they enabled deaf people to have jobs in society.

[...]

Well acquainted with the French grammar, he knew that every language was a collection of signs, as a series of drawings is a collection figures, the representation of a multitude of objects, and that the Deaf and Dumb can describe everything by gestures, as you paint everything with colors, or express everything by words; he

knew that every object had a form, that every form was capable of being imitated that actions struck your sight, and that you were able to describe them by imitative gestures; he knew that words were conventional signs, and that gestures might be the same, and that there could therefore be a language formed of gestures, as there was a language of words. We can state as a probable fact, that there was a time in which man had only gestures to express the emotions and affections of his soul. He loved, wished, hoped, imagined, and reflected, and the words to express those operations still failed him. He could express the actions relative to his organs; but the dictionary of acts, purely spiritual, was not begun as yet. Full of these fundamental ideas, the Abbé de L'Épée was not long without visiting the unfortunate family again; and with what pleasure was he not received! He reflected, he imitated, he delineated, he wrote, believing he had but a language to teach, while in fact he had two minds to cultivate! How painful, how difficult were the first essays of the inventor! Deprived of all assistance, in a career full of thorns and obstacles, he was a little embarrassed, but was not discouraged. He armed himself with patience, and succeeded, in time, to restore his pupils to Society and Religion. Many years after, and before his method could have attained the highest degree of perfection, of which it was susceptible, death came and removed that excellent father from his grateful children. Affliction was in all hearts. Fortunately, the Abbé Sicard who was chosen for his successor, caused their tears to cease. He was a man of profound knowledge and of a mind very enterprising. Every invention or discovery, however laudable and ingenious it may be, is never quite right in its beginning. Time only makes it perfect. The clothes, shoes, hats, watches, houses, and everything of our ancestors, were not as elegant and refined as those of the present century. In like manner was the method of the Abbé de L'Épée. Mr. Sicard reviewed it and made perfect what had been left to be devised and had the good fortune of going beyond all the disciples of his Predecessor. His present pupils are now worthy of him, and I do not believe them any longer unhappy. Many are married, and have children endowed with the faculties of all their senses, and who will be the comforters and protectors of their parents in their old age. (The United States is the first country where I have seen one or two deaf and dumb fathers, some of whose children are deaf and dumb like themselves. Will this prove that the Americans are worse than Europeans? By no means. It is the result of natural causes, which I shall explain hereafter.) Many others of the Deaf and Dumb are the instructors of their companions of misfortune. Many others are employed in the offices of government and other public administrations. Many others are good painters, sculptors, engravers, workers in Mosaic, while others exercise mechanical arts; and some others are merchants and transact their own business perfectly well; and it is education which, has thus enabled them to pursue these different professions. An uneducated Deaf and Dumb would never be able to do this.

Let us now speak of instruction and say what Mr. Sicard did while teaching me. By reading or hearing this, you may pretty well judge how we teach the American Deaf and Dumb. The sight of all the objects of nature which could be placed before the eyes of the Deaf and Dumb, the representation of those objects, either by drawing, by painting, by sculpture, or by the natural signs which the Deaf and Dumb employ, or invent themselves, or understand with an equal facility; the expression of the will and passions, by the mere movement of the features, combined with the attitude and gestures of the body; writing traced, or printed, or expressed by conventional signs for each letter, or even simply figured in the air, offered to Mr. Sicard many means of instructing those unfortunate beings, to whom he had resolved to devote his life. He afterwards discovered, by his own

experience, that it was possible to make the Deaf and Dumb speak by the imitation of the movement of the organs of speech, a movement which the eye alone enabled them to conceive and transmit to their understanding. He saw that they could thus comprehend and express the accents of words which they did not understand. But this artificial speech not being susceptible among the Deaf and Dumb, of complete improvement, nor of modification and regulation, by the sense of hearing, is almost always very painful, harsh and discordant, and comparatively useless. It has neither the rapidity nor the expressiveness of signs, nor the precision of writing. This artificial part of the instruction of the Deaf and Dumb, therefore, appeared to him very limited and of little advantage. Nevertheless, he saw with great interest, when in England with myself, the degree of perfection with which this mechanical movement had been able to imitate speech according to the method of Mr. Braidwood and by the talent and care of Dr. Watson, in London. He heard several of their pupils, in whose voice there was not anything very disagreeable. Dr. Watson observed to Mr. Sicard, that this artificial speech was a medium which was found peculiarly useful for the Deaf and Dumb among the poor, because the children of this description are placed in manufactories and are thus enabled to communicate more easily with their masters. This motive of convenience appeared to Mr. Sicard to deserve the greatest attention; but if the question regards the opening of the understanding of the Deaf and Dumb, as to the important end of giving them in society the same rank they would have if they were not deprived of the sense of hearing and the use of speech, his own experience and that of his pupils themselves, demonstrated fully to him, that nothing can supply to them the place of their natural language, the language of signs, which all languages spoken or written, are no more to them than translations. The language of signs, then, ought to fix the attention of every enlightened man who makes it his study to improve the various parts of public instruction; this language, as simple as nature, is capable of extending itself like her, and of attaining the farthest limits of human thought. This language of signs is universal, and the Deaf and Dumb of whatever country they may be, can understand each other as well as you who hear and speak, do among yourselves. But they cannot understand you; it is for this reason that we wish to instruct them, that they may converse with you by writing, in the form of speech, and know the truths and mysteries of religion. Mr. Sicard's first steps, and even the difficulties presented to him by his pupils, made him soon feel the necessity of proceeding according to the strictest method, and of fixing their ideas as well as the knowledge they were progressively acquiring, permanently in their memory, so that what they already knew, might have an immediate connection with what they were to learn; his pupils unable to comprehend him, if the instruction which he wished to give them, did not coincide with that which they had received before; for thus they stopped his progress, and he could not accomplish his purpose but by resuming the chain of their ideas, and constantly following the uninterrupted line from the known to the unknown. It was thus that he succeeded in making them comprehend the language of the country in which he instructed them. This natural method is applicable to all languages. It proceeds by the surest and shortest way and may be applied to all the channels of communication between one man and another. It is by this method that Mr. Sicard has brought the Deaf and Dumb to the knowledge of all the kinds of words, of which a language is composed, of all the modifications of those words, of their variations and different senses, in short of all their reciprocal influence. In this manner the nouns become to the Deaf and Dumb the sign of all the objects of nature; words, which indicate qualities, become the signs of the accidents, variations and modifications which they perceive in objects. Mr. Sicard has made them comprehend, that qualities may be conceived of as detached from the object; whereby the adjective is far better defined than in the grammar written for youth, and by which means, also, he has so very rapidly led

them to the science of abstraction. Besides, Mr. Sicard has made them conceive, that the qualities, which, in their eyes, appeared inherent in the objects, could be detached from them by thought; but then it was necessary to unite them to objects, and they themselves pointed out the necessity of a junction by a line. Mr. Sicard has taught them, that, in all languages, this line is translated by a word, affirming existence, in French, by the verb être; in English, by the verb to be. Tree green, or tree is green, has equally represented to their minds the object existing in conjunction with its quality, or the quality inherent in the object. Mr. Sicard has thus made them understand the nature of the verb, and by making them afterwards comprehend that the verb could express either an existence, or an action present, past, or future, he has led them to the system of conjugation, and to all the shades of past and future, adopted in all the various languages written or spoken; an admirable system, in which the influence of the genius and of the thoughts of all ages is perceptible. It is to this system, which embraces all possible combinations, and which unites all thoughts, that the language of the Deaf and Dumb accommodates itself with wonderful facility. The proofs of this assertion, given by Mr. Sicard's pupils, must astonish even the best-informed men. By the same method of proceeding from the known to the unknown, he has subsequently brought to the perception of his pupils, the characters, use and influence of all the other words, which, as parts of speech, unite, modify and determine the sense of the noun, the verb, and the adjective. It is thus that at length Mr. Sicard has led his pupils to analyze with facility the simplest propositions, as well as the most complicated phrases and sentences, by a system of figures, which, by always distinguishing the name of the object which is either ACTING, or receiving the effect of an action, the verb and its government, direct, indirect, or circumstantial, embraces and completely displays all the parts of speech. The use of this method, when generally adopted, will simplify the rules of grammar in all languages, and facilitate more than any other method, the understanding and translating, both of modern and ancient languages. This is the way by which Mr. Sicard has initiated his pupils into the knowledge of all the rules of universal grammar, applicable to the primitive expression of signs, as well as to all spoken and written languages. But names do not only express physical objects; there are some which represent abstract objects. Whiteness, greatness, beauty, heat, and many other words, do not express objects existing individually in nature, but ideas of qualities common to several objects; qualities, which we consider detached from the objects to which they belong, and of which we make an intellectual substantive, created by the mind. As soon as Mr. Sicard taught the Deaf and Dumb to comprehend that the will, which determines our senses and our thoughts, is not the action of a physical Being, which can be seen and touched, he gave them a consciousness of their Soul, and made them fit for society and for happiness. The affecting expression of their gratitude proves the extent of that benefit. He advanced a step further, and the access to the highest conceptions of the human mind was opened to them. Mr. Sicard has found it easy to make them pass from abstract ideas to the most sublime truths of religion. They have felt that this soul, of which they have the consciousness, is not a fictitious existence, is not an abstract existence created by the mind, but a real existence, which wills and which produces movement, which sees, which thinks, which reflects, which compares, which meditates, which remembers, which foresees, which believes, which doubts, which hopes, which loves, which hates. After this, he directed their thoughts towards all the physical existences submitted to their view through the immensity of space, or on the globe which we inhabit; and the regularity of the march of the sun and all the celestial bodies; the constant succession of day and night; the return of the seasons; the life, the riches and the beauty of nature; made them feel that nature also had a soul, of which the power, the action, and the immensity, extend through everything

existing in the universe; a soul which creates all, inspires all, and preserves all. Filled with these great ideas, the Deaf and Dumb have prostrated themselves on the earth, along with Mr. Sicard himself, and he has told them that this soul of nature, is that God, whom all men are called upon to worship, to whom our temples are raised, and with whom our religious doctrines and ceremonies connect us from the cradle to the grave. All was now done; and Mr. Sicard found himself able to open to his pupils, all the sublime ideas of religion, and all the laws of virtue and of morals. You see by the above particulars, Ladies and Gentlemen, what Mr. Sicard has achieved for his pupils. Their replies to the questions which have been proposed to them in France, sufficiently prove that they have run the career, from which I have above delineated. This career is that which a man, gifted with all his senses, and who is to be instructed, ought alike to run. The arts and sciences belong to the class of physical or intellectual objects; and the Deaf and Dumb, like men gifted with all their senses, may penetrate them according to the degree of intelligence which nature has granted them, as soon as they have reached the degree of instruction which Mr. Sicard's system of teaching, embraces and affords. Now, ladies and gentlemen, if you will take the pains of reflecting ever so little upon the excessive difficulties which this mode of instruction presents, without cessation, you will not believe, as many people in this country do, that a few years are sufficient, in order that a Deaf and Dumb person may be restored to society, and so acquainted with religion, as to partake of it with benefit, and to render an account to himself of the reasons of his faith. You will notice that the language of any people cannot be the mother tongue of the Deaf and Dumb, born amidst these people. Every spoken language is necessarily a learned language for these unfortunate Beings. The English language must be taught to the Deaf and Dumb, as the Greek or Latin is taught, in the Colleges, to the young Americans, who attend the classes of this kind. Now, will you, Ladies and Gentlemen, give yourselves the trouble of interrogating the Professors of the Colleges, and asking them the time required, to put a pupil in a state to understand fully the Greek and Latin Authors, and to write their thoughts in either of these languages, so as to make them understood by those who would speak these languages, then you would agree with me that the Greek or Latin would not be more difficult to be taught to the Deaf and Dumb, than the English; and yet to teach the Greek and Latin in Colleges, the professors and pupils have, for a means of comparison, a language at hand, an acquired language, a mother tongue, which is the English language, in which they have learned to think; whereas the unfortunate Deaf and Dumb, in order to learn English, have not any language with which to compare it, nor any language in which they may have had the habit of thinking. These unfortunates have for their native language but a few gestures, to express their usual wants, and the most familiar actions of life. The Abbé de L'Epée demanded for the education of a Deaf and Dumb person, ten years of constant labor; and yet, after this labor of ten years, none of his pupils had as yet attained the highest degree of perfection. Will this prove that ten years of study will be required, in order that the American Deaf and Dumb entrusted to our care, may furnish their course of instruction? No, Ladies and Gentlemen, for then what would be the benefit of the perfection which Mr. Sicard has given to his method, and with whose system we are acquainted pretty well? I have the pleasure to inform you that the Deaf and Dumb of this country have very good natural talents, a great facility, and an unusual ardor in learning, and an intensity of application, which we have rather to moderate than to excite. The time which Mr. Sicard's illustrious predecessor thought necessary, will not then be required by us. From five to seven years only, is the time we wish they may pass with us, (especially if they come to the Asylum young,) that they may truly improve in all the common branches of useful knowledge, after so painful and so hard a course of study, and that their teachers may see with satisfaction, that they

have not showed on the sand. What must I think of the vain presage which some people draw from certain accidents, purely fortuitous! I compare these birds of good or bad augury, who imagine that the sight of Deaf and Dumb persons multiplies them, with those weak minds, who fear beginning a journey on a Friday, or who believe that the meeting of a weasel, the overthrowing of a salt-box, and the salt spread on the table, bring an ill-luck; or who fear hobgoblins, or who say that when there are thirteen persons at table, one of them is to die in the course of the year! Every creature, every work of God, is admirably well made; but if anyone appears imperfect in our eyes, it does not belong to us to criticize it. Perhaps that which we do not find right in its kind, turns to our advantage, without our being able to perceive it. Let us look at the state of the heavens, one while the sun shines, another time it does not appear; now the weather is fine; again, it is unpleasant; one day is hot, another is cold; another time it is rainy, snowy or cloudy; everything is variable and inconstant. Let us look at the surface of the earth: here the ground is flat; there it is hilly and mountainous; in other places it is sandy; in others it is barren; and elsewhere it is productive. Let us, in thought, go into an orchard or forest. What do we see? Trees high or low, large or small, upright or crooked, fruitful or unfruitful. Let us look at the birds of the air, and at the fishes of the sea, nothing resembles another thing. Let us look at the beasts. We see among the same kinds some of different forms, of different dimensions, domestic or wild, harmless or ferocious, useful or useless, pleasing or hideous. Some are bred for men's sakes; some for their own pleasures and amusements; some are of no use to us. There are faults in their organization as well as in that of men. Those who are acquainted with the veterinary art, know this well; but as for us who have not made a study of this science, we seem not to discover or remark these faults. Let us now come to ourselves. Our intellectual faculties as well as our corporeal organization have their imperfections. There are faculties both of the mind and heart, which education improve; there are others which it does not correct. I class in this number, idiotism, imbecility, dullness. But nothing can correct the infirmities of the bodily organization, such as deafness, blindness, lameness, palsy, crookedness, ugliness. The sight of a beautiful person does not make another so likewise, a blind person does not render another blind. Why then should a deaf person make others so also? Why are we Deaf and Dumb? Is it from the difference of our ears? But our ears are like yours; is it that there may be some infirmity? But they are as well organized as yours. Why then are we Deaf and Dumb? I do not know, as you do not know why there are infirmities in your bodies, nor why there are among the humankind, white, black, red and yellow men. The Deaf and Dumb are everywhere, in Asia, in Africa, as well as in Europe and America. They existed before you spoke of them and before you saw them. I have read, in a certain account of Turkey, that the great Sultan knowing not what to do with the Deaf and Dumb of his empire, employed the most intelligent among them in playing pantomimes before his Highness. The forty-two Deaf and Dumb who are here present, except four or six, had never seen each other before and did not even imagine that there were any others besides themselves. Their parents probably imagined the same. It is not then the sight of them, which can have produced them. I think our deafness proceeds from an act of Providence, I would say, from the will of God. and does it imply that the Deaf and Dumb are worse than other men? Perhaps if we heard, we might have heard much evil, and perhaps blasphemed the holy name of our Creator, and of course hazarded the loss of our soul when departing this life. We therefore cannot but thank God for having made us Deaf and Dumb, hoping that in the future world, the reason of this may be explained to us all. The bible, however, says that the doors of heaven will be opened to no one, unless he has fulfilled the conditions imposed by Jesus-Christ. If then, when the uneducated Deaf and Dumb appear before the supreme tribunal, they are found

not to have fulfilled these conditions, they may plead: "Lord, we wished to learn to know you and to do what you had ordered; but it did not depend upon us. Our mind was buried in the deepest darkness, and no man raised or contributed to raise the veil which covered it, although it was in his power!" But let us hope, Ladies and Gentlemen that this will not be the case. You are at peace with all the powers of Europe, and nothing abroad requires any sacrifice of your finances. May this happy state of things, therefore, while it permits you to improve the agriculture and manufactures of your country, allow you at the same time, to improve the welfare of some hundred individuals among your fellow-citizens! Doubtless you ought to use a wise economy in the distribution of the succor, for which the unfortunate sue from the national equity; doubtless you ought to refuse your charity to any establishment which, soliciting benevolence, would be a servant rather to pride than to humanity; doubtless you would have deserved well of your country by stopping with firmness, the first impulses of the sensibility of those among you who are ready to yield to pageantry and magnificence, that which ought to be granted only to the most urgent needs. But are these truths applicable to an establishment of a nature like ours? I believe I can deny it. About one hundred Deaf and Dumb in the State of Connecticut, included in the two thousand spread over all parts of the United States, the greatest portion of whom are born in the bosom of indigence, and reduced to the most miserable condition, all deprived of the charms of society, all unacquainted with the benefit of religion, all more to be pitied than those who are bound by pure instinct, and holding nothing from man but the faculty of more lively feeling, ought they then to be still longer neglected, eternally forgotten! They suspect, doubtless, all the extent of the deprivation they experience; every day they lament their unhappiness; but this is invisible, and the comfortable voice of reason neither comes to soften the rigor of their fate, nor alleviate the weight of their misfortune. Yet do not they form, like yourselves, a part of humankind? Are not the unhappy authors of their existence, Americans like yourselves? On account of having not penetrated our benevolent views, some persons, instead of casting a kind look upon those poor Beings, rose against our project, but we are persuaded that their hearts belied their attempt, and that even, at the moment in which they thought of opening their lips to remove from the great human family, Beings whom everything commands you to introduce therein, their arms were involuntarily opened to carry them back to it. An uneducated Deaf and Dumb is a natural man who attributes the whole good which he sees others do, to the personal interest which governs them, who supposes in others, all the vices which he finds in his own soul. Often prone to suspicion, he exaggerates the evil which he sees, and fears always to be the victim of those who are stronger than himself. While casting your eyes on so afflicting a picture, do you not, Ladies and Gentlemen, feel a strong wish, that the art of instructing Beings as unhappy as the Deaf and Dumb, may receive all possible encouragement? Ah! what among the branches of your knowledge deserves more to interest the Government than what can render men better and happier? One institution for them, in New-England, would produce the most satisfactory result, and answer all your future expectations. In coming, thus, to lay our pretensions before so enlightened an assembly as this, we have not suffered ourselves to disguise the fact, that we should have for judges, persons to be regarded for their various and extensive information; but the desire of enriching our method of instruction, with your observation, has surmounted the fears which we had, at first, conceived. And we presume to reckon the more on your indulgence, as the progress of our pupils, which you are about to witness, are the fruits of only one year's labor, and of the most constant and assiduous application.

Laurent Clerc, "An Address" written and read by his request at a public examination of the pupils in the Connecticut Asylum before the Governor and both Houses of the Legislature 28th May 1818.

Deaf people must learn how to write and read, so as not to be confused with the "barbarians" of ancient times. This is Laurent Clerc's precept, always valid in 1864:

My dear friends:

The president elect of your institution, Edward M. Gallaudet, has invited me to come and attend the inauguration of a "National College for the Deaf and Dumb" in Washington, the capital of the United States, to take place on Tuesday, June 28, 1864. I have accepted the invitation with much pleasure, and here I stand before you to say that I feel a just pride in seeing that the American Asylum at Hartford, Connecticut, has been the means of doing so much good, and has produced so many evidence of intelligence and learning. Our school at Hartford was the first of its kind ever established in America, not only through the exertions of the late Rev. Dr. Thomas H. Gallaudet, and your humble speaker, but also by the generous subscriptions and contributions of both ladies and gentlemen in Hartford and other towns of New England. It has broken that barrier which had separated for several centuries the deaf and dumb from those who hear and speak. It has repaired the wrongs of nature in enabling them to replace hearing by writing, and speech by signs. It has also enabled many among you to become the teachers of your unfortunate fellow-beings. It has enabled your kind Principal, and many gentlemen and ladies who hear and speak, to teach deaf and dumb persons in this and other schools which have since sprung up in several other portions of the United States. Now, my dear friends, let me ask what is the object of the foundation of a college? It is for the purpose of receiving such graduates of the other institutions as wish to acquire more knowledge in natural science, astronomy, mathematics, geography, history, mental and moral philosophy, and belles-lettres. Science is a most useful thing for us all. It is one of the first ornaments of man. There is no dress which embellishes the body more than science does the mind. Every decent man, and every real gentleman in particular, ought to apply himself, above all things, to the study of his native language, so as to express his ideas with ease and gracefulness. Let a man be never so learned, he will not give a high idea of himself or of his science if he speaks or writes a loose, vulgar language. The Romans, once the masters of the world, called the other nations, who did not know the language of Rome, barbarians; so, now that there are so many schools for the deaf and dumb in the United States, I will call barbarians those grown-up deaf mutes who do not know how to read, write, and cipher.

Laurent Clerc, June 28, 1864 Address. Inauguration of the National College for Deaf-Mutes. Washington, DC.

Laurent Clerc was in favor of having hearing teachers in Deaf schools and also of preparing deaf girls to be inserted in society.

In the spring 1846, Laurent Clerc obtained leave from the school to visit France on private business. Back to Paris, he could not visit the INJS as it was closed for vacation. He went to Lyons, then La Balme-les-Grottes, and Lyons again. There, the Institute for the Dead-mutes had been opened some 20 years ago and he was welcomed by Mr Comberry, a former deaf student from the Bordeaux Institute. There were about 40 pupils and all staff and teachers were deaf.

He advised the principal to hire a competent clergyman who could hear and speak, for the improvement of written language. But his advice was ignored.

He then moved to Saint Etienne to a school with about 50 girls under the care of 5 or 6 sisters of charity. The girls were shut up like "nuns in a convent" in this charity school. For Laurent Clerc, this was a situation very different from the one in America, where at least girls could marry and have children. He proceeded to The HOUSE of Refuge for "indigent girls" where articulation was the sole mode of teaching. In Paris, he visited another private school. Then he went to London to the Watson Institute, but he was disappointed as the Principal he met could not make himself available. He went back to America.

**VISITS TO SOME OF THE INSTITUTIONS
FOR THE DEAF AND DUMB
IN FRANCE AND ENGLAND**

LAURENT CLERC



American Annals of the Deaf and Dumb
Vol. 1, No. 3 (APRIL 1848),
pp. 170-176 (7 pages)
Published by: Gallaudet University Press

Visits to some of the Schools for the Deaf and Dumb in France and in England.,
Laurent Clerc, *American Annals of the Deaf and Dumb*. 1, no.1 (October, 1847) : 62-66.

3 - France: Institutional recommendations

3-1 France : official instructions



Le cadre législatif

- ❑ **1976 en France** : l'interdiction de la LSF est levée
- ❑ **La position de l'Europe**
- ❑ **La situation en Espagne** : la Loi qui reconnaît comme langues officielles la Langue des Signes Espagnole (LES) et la Langue des Signes Catalane (LSC) a été promulguée au Bulletin Officiel de l'état le mercredi 24 octobre 2007.
- ❑ **La situation en France** : le 10 juillet 1991, la loi Fabius. donne « aux jeunes sourds et à leur famille la liberté de choix entre une communication bilingue – langue des signes et français – et une communication orale ».
- ❑ **11 février 2005** : la loi sur l'égalité des droits et des chances et la participation à la citoyenneté des personnes handicapées reconnaît la LSF comme langue de France.

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[The legislative framework

- **1976 in France:** the ban on LSF is lifted
- **The position of Europe**
- **The situation in Spain:** the Law which recognizes the Spanish Sign Language (LES) and the Catalan Sign Language (LSC) as official languages was promulgated in the Official State Bulletin on Wednesday October 24, 2007.
- **The situation in France:** on July 10, 1991, the Fabius law gives "young deaf people and their families the freedom of choice between bilingual communication - sign language and French - and oral communication".
- **February 11, 2005:** the law on equal rights and opportunities and participation in citizenship for people with disabilities recognizes LSF as the language of France.]

Genevieve Le Corre, Course: *Language, History Culture and Social Life of the Deaf*,
on the Consortium L@CCES-LSF-for all platform.

Official instructions

Schooling or deaf pupils: choice of communication mode: this is provided for in the articles of the Law of 11 February 2005:

Art. L. 112-2-2. - In the education and schooling of young deaf people, freedom of choice between bilingual communication, sign language and French language, and communication in French language is a right. A decree of the Council of State shall set out the conditions for exercising this choice for young deaf people and their families, and the measures to be taken by the establishments and services where the education of young deaf people is provided to guarantee the application of this choice.

Article 75

Art. L. 312-9-1. - French sign language is recognized as a language in its own right. Any pupil concerned must be able to receive instruction in French Sign Language. The Higher Education Council shall ensure that its teaching is encouraged. It is kept regularly informed of the conditions of its evaluation. It may be chosen as an optional test in examinations and competitions, including those for vocational training. Its dissemination in the administration is facilitated.

The main concern is the quality and extent of information given to families, and probably at the time when the child's deafness is detected. Are they informed widely and objectively in order to make an informed choice, which is obviously difficult, in that it jeopardizes their child's future, his

or her ability to communicate and to integrate into a professional and social life, where the search for employment will be decisive?

It has also been established by the DGESCO that, throughout their school career, young deaf people who have chosen bilingual communication will not be assessed on their competence in oral French. With this in mind, the French Ministry of Education has undertaken a vast project: writing and publishing all the LSF teaching programs, from nursery school to the general and vocational high school, including secondary school; opening the LSF option test at the baccalaureate, for final year students, whether they are deaf or hearing; creating complementary certification for teachers with LSF skills; creation of the CAPES in LSF in 2010 (external CAPES and “CAPES troisième concours”, which is aimed more specifically at deaf candidates) ; design of the Diploma of competencies in LSF (DC LSF), which enables adults in the vocational sector to attest to their level of competence in LSF and written French (first session on 11 February 2011), which gives future employers a clearer picture.



Law 22 February 2005

[Creation of a French sign language CAPES]

3-2 French and American curricula

➤ **In the United States:**

Starting in 1970s, educational institutions started to offer ASL courses for hearing people. ASL is currently the third most-studied language (outnumbered only by Spanish and French). More hearing people take ASL to fulfill their modern and “foreign” language requirements in secondary and post-secondary institutions. The American Sign Language Teachers Association (ASLTA), a national, professional organization of ASL and Deaf Studies teachers, was founded in 1975 to address the growing need for teaching ASL in schools. Similarly, multiple organizations contributed to the development of K-12 ASL content standards for deaf students. The current ASL Content Standards for Kindergarten through Grade 12 were published by the Clerc Center at Gallaudet University (www.gallaudet.edu/k-12-asl-content-standards). K-12 teachers can teach ASL as language arts.

While the US federal government does not recognize any language as an official language, including American Sign Language, most states in the United States have recognized ASL as the language of the deaf. According to the National Association of the Deaf, over 40 states and the District of Columbia officially recognize ASL as a language.

Since its founding in 1975, ASLTA have developed national standards, curricular frameworks and materials, pedagogical strategies and assessments. ASLTA partnered with the American Council on Teaching of Foreign Language (ACTFL) to develop learning standards for ASL, incorporating the **5 C's**: 1) Communication, 2) Cultures, 3) Connections, 4) Comparisons, and 5) Communities.

1. **Communication:** Communicate in American Sign Language.

- a. Standard 1.1 Students use American Sign Language to engage in conversations and provide information, express feelings and emotions, and exchange opinions .
- b. Standard 1.2 Students comprehend and interpret live and recorded American Sign Language on a variety of topics.
- c. Standard 1.3 Students present information, concepts, and ideas to an audience of viewers in American Sign Language.

2. **Cultures:** Gain knowledge and understanding of American Deaf Culture.

- a. Standard 2.1 Students demonstrate an understanding of the relationship between the practices and perspectives of American deaf culture.
- b. Standard 2.2 Students demonstrate an understanding of the relationship between the products and perspectives of American deaf culture.

3. **Connections:** Use American Sign Language to connect with other disciplines and acquire information.

- a. Standard 3.1 Students reinforce and further their knowledge of other disciplines through American Sign Language.

- b. Standard 3.2 Students acquire information and recognize the distinctive viewpoints that are only available through American Sign Language and Deaf culture.
4. **Comparisons:** Develop insight into the nature of language and culture
- a. Standard 4.1 Students demonstrate understanding of the nature of language through comparisons of American Sign Language and their own languages.
 - b. Standard 4.2 Students demonstrate understanding of the nature of language through comparisons of American Deaf culture and their own culture.
5. **Communities:** Use American Sign Language to participate in communities at home and around the world.
- a. Standard 5.1 Students use American Sign Language within and beyond the school setting.
 - b. Standard 5.2 Students show evidence of becoming life-long learners by using American Sign Language for personal enjoyment and enrichment.

The ACFTL standards for learning ASL include learning scenarios for Grades K-4, 5-8, 9-12, and postsecondary. Some states elected to develop their own state standards for learning ASL in K-12 schools, usually following the framework for languages other than English. There are numerous ASL curricula, textbooks, learning materials, assessments that supports the ACFTL standards. ASL teachers, or schools, usually determine which curriculum to follow for their students.

In the US, there are the K-12 ASL content standards for deaf and hard of hearing students. Teachers can use the standards to plan for ASL instruction for them. It has four parts: introduction, anchor and grade-level standards, glossary, and references. The Anchor Standards describe the general expectations of K-12 deaf and hard of hearing students learning ASL as a first language. The Anchor Standards have five sections: viewing, published signing, discourse and presentation, language, and fingerspelling and fingerreading. The website link can be found at: <https://aslstandards.org/>

A team of experts in the field of sign languages and education is working to provide teachers with programs, advice and guidelines within the framework of “multilingual Deaf Education”. Focus on multilingualism shows their willingness to take into account linguistic and cultural diversity.

The Multilingual Deaf Education in the United States and Canada guidelines is to support the effort to create transformative curricular changes within teacher preparation programs by providing guidance for how to transition to or align with a Multilingual and Multimodal Deaf Education perspective. Programs that apply a multilingual, multicultural and multimodal lens to Deaf education are in a better position to produce teachers who are knowledgeable about the diverse language needs of Deaf students, including those with language deprivation, and advocates for and implementing pedagogy that is welcoming to all students of different backgrounds and intersecting identities. The goals of the guidelines are to increase the number of fluent language models for Deaf children in varying educational environments, the number of high-quality diverse teachers with competencies in multilingual and multimodal strategies, the number of high-quality teacher

educators in teacher preparation programs, and collaboration among teacher preparation programs.

Christopher Kurz, Debbie Golos, Marlon Kuntze, Jonathan Henner, and Jessica Scott, *Guidelines for Multilingual Deaf Education Teacher Preparation Programs*, Gallaudet University Press, 2021.

<http://gupress.gallaudet.edu/guidelines-for-multilingual-deaf-education-teacher-preparation-programs.html>

- In France: one national curriculum; same law for all regions, and schools

French LSF national policies in education

The schooling of deaf pupils in ordinary schools corresponds to an educational policy which is now that of inclusion. It is not without its educational difficulties. Hearing impairment is particularly disabling affecting language, which is transversal to the acquisition of knowledge and skills, it requires conditions and forms of accessibility in the classroom so that schooling is possible; it has a strong impact on communication, which is a factor in learning, but also in socialization, integration and personal development. Deafness, an invisible disability, is a challenge for all schooling professionals, and the French Ministry of Education has been working to meet this challenge since 2005. Let us emphasize here the importance of the concept of "schooling": we are far from just "reception", which has long since faded. Similarly, "mainstream schooling" goes beyond the stigmatization of this school population, which must be an integral part of all the pupils for whom an education system is responsible, with respect for tolerance, equal opportunities and inclusion. It is also about transcending ideological disputes. The deaf community, in the noble sense of the term, has suffered too much in the past from rejection, ostracism and denial of identity.

Schooling for deaf and hard of hearing pupils: Inclusive school, Mireille Golaszewski, Genelal Inspector for Education, EMPAN 3 no.83, 2011: 96-101

In the summary of an article published in 2003, Hervé Benoit writes:

The diversification of integrative practices, associated with the improvement of the quality of the teaching of LSF and in Lsf, which passes by the creation of specific university courses, is undoubtedly today a historical chance of escape of tor and social insertion to the oral/gestel dichotomy in the field of the deafness.

Hervé Benoit, *French Sign Language (LSF) What are the pedagogical issues?*, La nouvelle revue de l' AIS, Adaptation et intégration scolaires, no.2, 3rd quarter 2003: 113.

And thirteen years later:

If inclusive education is generally identified in the international literature with the issue of schooling for vulnerable people and formalizes the requirement for the education system to ensure the academic success and social integration of all students, regardless of their individual and social characteristics, several authors agree that it "now refers to a new relationship with diversity" and that it "refers to the way of thinking about social belonging in the perspective of an inclusive society" (Ebersold, Plaisance, Zander, 2016)

Laetitia Branciard⁸¹, Christine Mias⁸² and Herve Benoit, *Towards an inclusive school evaluation?*, La nouvelle revue de l'AIS, Adaptation et intégration scolaires, no.74, July 2016: 9

We can measure the progress made in the evolution of mentalities but also, all that remained to be done.

For some years now, the French Ministry of Education has been implementing a policy of schooling for young people with hearing impairments or deafness, from the age of their official entry into nursery school. Screening for deafness is, therefore, an upstream process; and the summary approach presented below is exclusively school-based, without any ideological or medical considerations.

As far as schools are concerned, young people who are hard of hearing or deaf must be educated like everyone else.

The Law no. 2005-102 of 11 February 2005 for equal rights and opportunities, participation and citizenship of disabled people, establishes the principle of priority schooling for disabled pupils in a mainstream environment. Articles D 351-3 to D 351-20 of the Education Code specify the procedures for implementing the educational pathways of pupils with disabilities. Schooling in a specialized environment (medical and social institutes), or in special classes: CLIS (Classes d'Intégration Scolaire) or UPI (Unités Pédagogiques d'Intégration) opened in 1995 in lower secondary schools and in 2001 in upper secondary schools, is still necessary in certain cases where the individual situation of the pupil requires specific support, as the learning difficulties cannot be taken into account in an ordinary class. In the CLIS and UPI, pupils with disabilities attend only some classes with the ordinary pupils in their class. This is a mixed educational arrangement. Since the beginning of the school year in September 2010, all mixed educational arrangements in lower and upper secondary schools are called ULIS (Unités Localisées pour l'Inclusion Scolaire) and are one of the ways in which accessibility to school learning for these pupils can be implemented.

Schooling for deaf and hard of hearing pupils: Inclusive school, Mireille Golaszewski, Genelal Inspector for Education, EMPAN 3 no.83, 2011: 96-101

Laurent Clerc and Thomas H. Gallaudet's precepts on how to educate Deaf students are the first seeds of modern approaches toward inclusion at school and in society.

⁸¹ Laetitia Branciard, Ingénieure de Recherche, [Research engineer] [ENFA Toulouse]. She is vice-president of the FFDvs.

⁸² Christine Mias, Professeur en sciences de l'éducation, [Professor in education sciences] Université de Toulouse Jean Jaurès.

3-3 Multilingualism: Towards a shared culture

There is an institutional and pedagogical desire to ensure that deaf and hearing pupils meet each other. Not in a formal way: the number of hearing pupils who learn sign language is indicative of their desire to reach out to their deaf peers for constructive exchanges. We note that the teachers' adapted pedagogies, aimed at the deaf pupils in the class, largely benefit the others. In particular, the use of techniques and tools where the visual is much more present. The emphasis is increasingly on expressiveness, which removes some stiffness and inhibitions.

Language and culture are inseparable, and deafness undoubtedly leads to a different way of understanding the world. Deaf people have their own customs, rites and codes in the field of social relations. They decipher the codes by a visual mode, thinking and gestures that characterizes them. We know to what extent any form of crossbreeding is fruitful, in education as elsewhere. The withdrawal of identity would only lead to forms of stagnation, always harmful. The cultural concepts of a common society are shared between deaf and hearing people in all countries of the world and constitute a common fund on which they must find each other, with each other.

Charles Gardou⁸³ gives a definition of this society:

A society is not a club whose members could monopolize the social heritage for their own benefit to enjoy it exclusively. It is not a circle reserved for certain members, busy collecting subsidies attached to a "normality" conceived and lived as sovereign. There is no membership card to acquire, no entrance fee to pay. There are no debtors or creditors authorized to cut the most vulnerable off. No masters or slaves. No center or periphery. Everyone is heir to the best and noblest of society. No one has the prerogative to lend, give or refuse what belongs to all. An inclusive society is a society without privileges, exclusivities and exclusions.

Charles Gardou, *Let's talk about the inclusive society! There is no such thing as a tiny life*, Editions Eres, 2012.

⁸³ Charles Gardou is an anthropologist, professor at Lumière Lyon2 University and lecturer at Paris Institute of Political Sciences.

CONCLUSION

**Quite a long time ago, the Deaf invented another way of speaking.
It remains to better connect the Deaf and the hearing.**

The precepts of Laurent Clerc and Thomas H. Gallaudet on how to educate deaf students are the first seeds of modern approaches to **inclusion** in school and in society. Much remains to be done, but the process is underway.



Like *Dandelions*, a poem by Clayton Valli⁸⁴, Deaf people will decide by themselves.

A Dandelion

*Their yellows dotted the field,
their petals waving with the breezes.*

*An irritated man stared at them, snarling,
“Dandelions!” His hands pulled
some apart, and mowed the rest down
until the field was smoothed out
in green. The rain soon came
and went away; the sun sneaked in,
warming a seed in the soil.
The seed rose, enjoying all nature.*

*It waved, watching a bee
coming by with a greeting and*

*going away. Nights it closed
its petals, opening up again
in the morning. One day it turned
into white puffs, their whiskers
a halo, but it still moved with the breeze.
Its seedlings flew off in every direction.*

*Spotting its whiteness, the man,
enraged, spit out, “There!”
The brave white puff still waved,
still sending off its seedlings.
The man grabbed its stem and pulled out.
The white puff exploded, its seedlings
scattering everywhere on its own.*

Thomas Holcomb, *Introduction to Deaf culture*, chap 7, Deaf Literature (English translation from ASL by Raymond Luczak).

The poem demonstrates that dandelions (or dandelions) do as they wish - no one has to decide for them.

Like any persons who use multiple languages, they should be viewed as forming a whole, and it is expected that they would mix the two languages. It is not a language problem, but a reflection

⁸⁴ The poet narrates a story where a man hates dandelions and removes all of them and when the sun and rain returns, the dandelions return. The man comes back and grabs one dandelion that has already turned into a white puff, and in the act of grabbing, the white puff spreads and the poet smirks.

of their language resources. They are using both languages for learning, as they are using their resources to transfer their knowledge from one language to another.

A contemporary and vibrant Deaf culture is found within Deaf communities, including Deaf Persons of Color and those who are Deaf Disabled and Deaf Blind. Taking a more people-centered view, the second edition of Deaf Culture: Exploring Deaf Communities in the United States critically examines how Deaf culture fits into education, psychology, cultural studies, technology, and the arts. With the acknowledgment of signed languages all over the world as bona fide languages, the perception of Deaf people has evolved into the recognition and acceptance of a vibrant Deaf culture centered around the use of signed languages and the communities of Deaf peoples. Written by Deaf and hearing authors with extensive teaching experience and immersion in Deaf cultures and signed languages, Deaf Culture fills a niche as an introductory textbook that is more inclusive, accessible, and straightforward for those beginning their studies of the Deaf-World.

Douglas Baynton, *Introduction*. In Irene W. Leigh, Jean Andrews, Raychelle Harris, and Topher Gonzalez Avila, editors, *Deaf Culture: Exploring Deaf Community in the US*. Second edition. Plural Publishing, 2016.

Albert Ballin⁸⁵, in *The Deaf-mute Howls*, wishes a transformation of the relations between Deaf and hearing people, and that sign language be universally known by all people. According to him that would be the great “remedy” for deaf people in the world and would enrich the lives of hearing people too.

LONG, LOUD and cantankerous is the howl raised by the deaf-mute! It has to be if he wishes to be heard and listened to. He ought to keep it up incessantly until the wrongs inflicted on him will have been righted and done away with forever.

Until today he has been a much-misunderstood human being, something quite different from the rest of mankind. Even now he is shunned and isolated as a useless member of society, a pariah. His more fortunate brothers contrive to have as little to do with him as possible, and when they cannot pass him by, they tolerate him from business interests, policy or unavoidable necessity, rarely from any inclination to take him to their bosoms as an intimate companion or as a close friend.

Occasionally you will come across an unusually bright, intelligent deaf-mute who awakens your interest and sympathy, but the slow, cumbersome difficulties of conversing with him stand as an unsurmountable barrier against free and equal companionship. In consequence, you drive him into seeking the society of his fellow unfortunates, for it is only among this class that he finds himself on comparative equality. When this happens, you frown upon him for his peculiar “clannishness.” His misfortunes are multiplied by the unnatural methods used to thrust upon him a sort of “education,” methods that stunt and warp his character by isolating him, while still young and helpless, in the institutions and schools built for him and his kind.

His peculiarities and grotesque characteristics are created by you—one of the fortunate blessed with speech. They are caused by your ignorance of the real situation and by your unintentional neglect of his crying needs. You must not add indifference to the list of your faults—it would be unworthy of you. In the past you

⁸⁵ Albert Ballin (1867-1933) author, artist Born into Deaf Family Attended Deaf School. American representative to the 1889 World Congress for the Deaf (Paris). He published many articles in *The Silent Worker*.

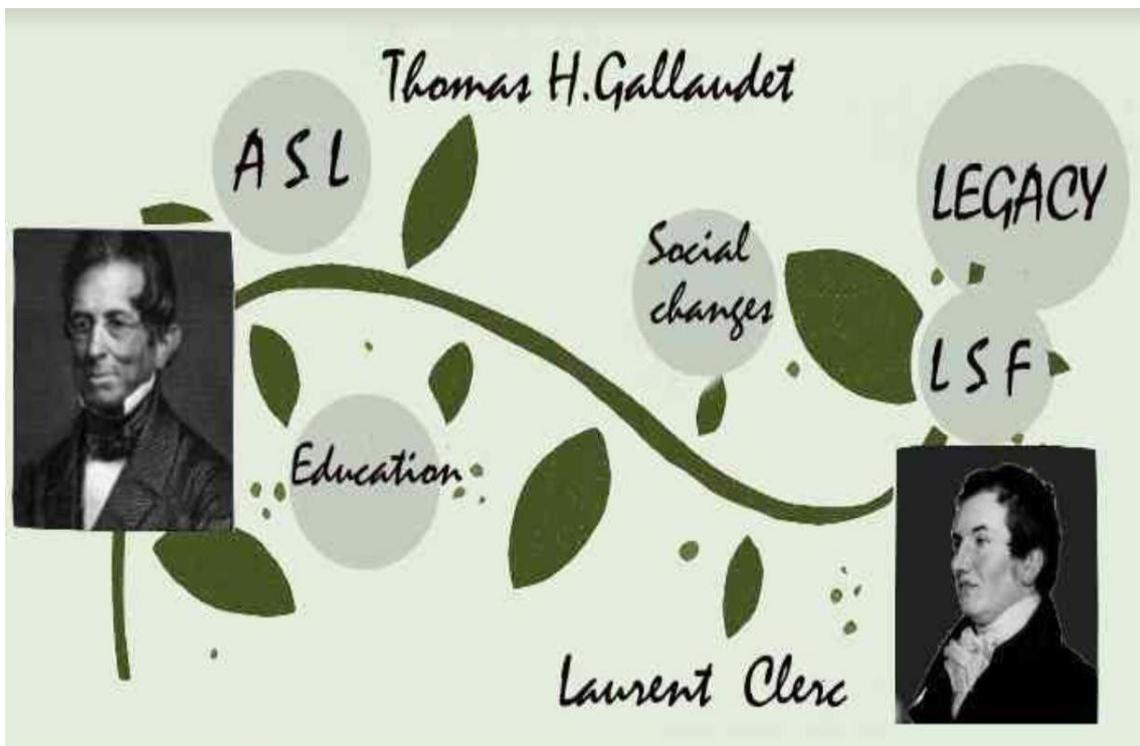
have been constantly deceived by his outward appearance, by sophistries handed to you by so-called experts, well-meaning but ignorant philanthropists, and by parasites who thrive and fatten on his misfortunes. You are also deceived by the quietude of the victim himself who is usually unable to present his grievances convincingly.

I realize the stupendous task I am assuming in raising as mighty an uproar as lies in the power of the very limited language at my command. This uproar has to be proportioned to the enormity of the wrong we, the deaf, suffer. Perhaps the louder, the sooner, heard the quicker our SOS may be answered.

Albert Ballin, *The Deaf-Mute Howls*, chap 1, 1930 (1867-1933), Gallaudet University Press.

Chapitre 5

The Legacy of Laurent Clerc and of Thomas H. Gallaudet



Cogswell, Gallaudet, and Clerc catalyzed the emergence of Deaf Americans from marginality, isolation and ignorance to community solidarity, organizational strength and substantial intellectual achievement. This struggle needs to be chronicled.

Barry A. Crouch

Without Clerc the history of the education of the deaf in America and the socio-economic status of deaf people would be very much different from what it is today. It is true that the Deaf in other parts of the world are not so fortunate because they did not have a 'Laurent Clerc' to set for them a high standard of achievement.

Edward E. Corbett

A people without the knowledge of their past history, origin and culture, is like a tree without roots.

Marcus Garvey

A nation has a soul, a spiritual principle. One is in the past, the other one in the present. One is the possession of a rich legacy of memories; the other is the desire to live together and to value the Common heritage.

Ernest Renan

Heritage; Be proud of it for you will be its legacy. It's your responsibility to carry and learn your heritage. Otherwise, it will be lost.

Kailin Gow

INTRODUCTION

Laurent Clerc and Thomas H Gallaudet's works are mainly to be found in the field of education. They were innovative and the effects of their actions are still visible. They left a substantial heritage to the following generations.

Edward E Corbett, mentioned above, raises relevant questions:

With the sesquicentennial of the opening of the American School for the Deaf on April 15, 1817, being observed next year, the minds of deaf people will focus their attention on the educators of the deaf -Thomas Hopkins Gallaudet and Laurent Clerc. The distinctive difference between the two educators is that Thomas H. Gallaudet was a hearing man whereas Laurent Clerc was deaf. Through the years we have spoken highly of Gallaudet and his service to the deaf, but little has been said of Clerc [...].

What would be the status of American deaf people as a group if Clerc had not come to the United States? If Clerc had been a lesser man, what would our social, economic, and educational picture be today? [Answering those questions might

Edward E. Corbett, *The Legacy of Laurent Clerc, The Pelican*, Edward E. Corbett Editor, January 1985.

Clerc's motive for coming to America (and touring several places, including Boston, on a fundraising drive), what he brought with him and whose impact is still perceptible were revealed in an article in the American Annals of the Deaf, by Reverend William W. Turner:

"I believe the reason why I have come to Boston with Mr. Gallaudet and Dr. Cogswell and why we have invited you to honor this meeting with your presence is to speak to you more conveniently of the deaf and dumb, of those unfortunate beings who deprived of the sense of hearing and consequently that of speech, would be condemned all their life to the most sad vegetation if nobody came to their succor; but who entrusted to our regenerative hands will pass from the class of brutes to the class of men. It is to affect your hearts with regard to their unhappy state, to excite the sensibility and solicit the charity of your generous souls in their favor, respectfully to entreat you to occupy yourselves in promoting their future happiness".

From Clerc's speech above regarding his motive for establishing an educational process for the- deaf people in America, it is understandable that the deaf people should be treated as individuals with minds of their own. Clerc then exposed himself to the scrutiny of the skeptics on the usefulness of providing an educational system for the deaf. He satisfied the public curiosity as to his personal concept of education when a questioner asked him the meaning of education. In reply he stated, "Before the Abbe- Sicard, I had a mind, but it did not think. I had a heart, but it did not feel." Education improved the status of deaf people vastly because Clerc supervised the early steps in methodology of teaching. Gallaudet regarded Clerc as the living exponent of the French system of instruction, and the depository

of an art in the possession of no other person in the United States. [...]. The deaf people as all others have their rights the right to speak out. This right was instilled in them by Clerc because he, having lived through the years of the French Revolution, had felt the spirit of the revolution. He taught many of his contemporaries the art of teaching the deaf because he believed in the precept of Jesus Christ who said "Freely ye have received, freely give." With instruction once given to the deaf people, it was remarkable to see what education could do for them. It gave them the voice of independence, the right which we all cherish because it makes us individuals. The other right was the right to self-betterment. Clerc had advanced himself from an illiterate being to a literate being and continued to gain knowledge throughout life. He set both the pace and the goal. Therefore, as a result, today society regards the deaf people as a dynamic group within the social system. America is the only country in which the deaf enjoy full prestige. There are hundreds of deaf teachers employed in schools for the deaf throughout the nation. We must consider the important fact that it was Clerc who paved the way. He even inspired deaf people to take on studies leading to higher education. In recognition of his leadership Trinity College in Hartford, Connecticut, conferred upon Clerc the honorary degree of Master of Arts. Today hundreds of deaf people are employed in the field of graphic arts; a point of interest is that Clerc was a printer the first deaf printer in America. Clerc strongly advocated the social interaction of deaf people in the whole of society as well as in the working field. He opposed the idea that deaf persons should be considered objects of charity. He made sure that the deaf would function as an integral part of society even though they may form a minority group. To this end he organized the first association of the deaf by the deaf which ultimately led to the founding of the National Association of the Deaf. It must be remembered that T. H. Gallaudet believed that he would not have been able to undertake the education of the deaf as efficiently without the aid of Clerc. Gallaudet obviously felt that what Clerc had achieved, deaf people generally could achieve. He knew that deaf children would see Clerc as an "example of what they themselves might conceivably become." Clerc stood before them as a strict and demanding teacher who could tolerate nothing less than their very best efforts. Thus, Clerc stood before all of his deaf children, and his hearing colleagues, as a living precept for the deaf people of the United States. The legacy is Clerc's influence on American education of the deaf in its earliest years and more important, his influence on the perspective of deaf people and their place in society. Without Clerc the history of the education of the deaf in America and the socio-economic status of deaf people would be very much different from what it is today. It is true that the deaf in other parts of the world are not so fortunate because they did not have a "Laurent Clerc" to set for them a high standard of achievement. Clerc was contracted for three years by Gallaudet to help him establish the first school for the deaf. When the terms of the contract had expired, Clerc was free to return to France, but he did not do so because of his new love, Eliza Boardman and also he recognized that the deaf people could advance socially, economically and educationally in America; and Clerc, being a thinker, realized that he could help their cause by remaining in the United States.

Rev. W.W. Turner, *Laurent Clerc*,. *American Annals of the Deaf and Dumb* 15, no.1, 1870: 16-28.

This chapter will study Laurent Clerc and Thomas H. Gallaudet's legacy by examining:

- Their influence on the education of the deaf.
- Their impact on the perspective of deaf people and their place in society.

This will finally lead to consideration of the interaction between the individual and society and how they paved the way for forms of deaf emancipation and recognition as "whole" individuals and partners.

A - Their legacy in the field of education



Young pupils, INJS Paris (INJS Paris Private collection)

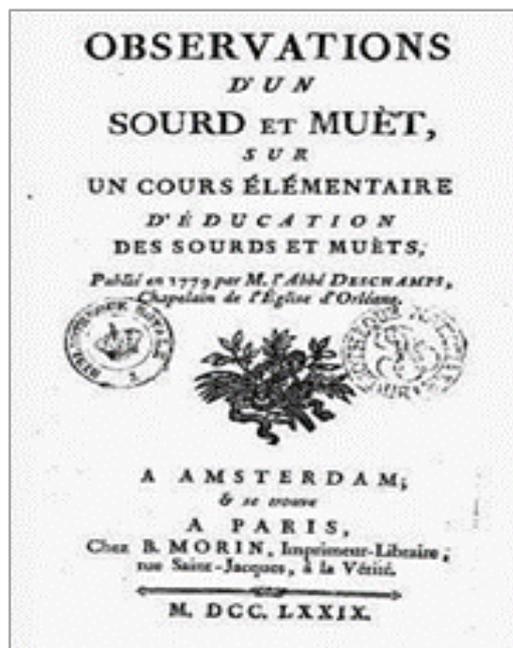


INJS Paris (INJS Paris Private collection)

1 - Schools

In chapter 3, the previous works of Pierre Desloges⁸⁶ (1742-1792), a precursor, have been analyzed and we know he had developed several issues concerning notably education, the importance of sign language, and the value of life experiences in his book: *Observations of a Deaf mute on an elementary Course of Education for Deaf Mutes* (1779), a first book giving a deaf point of view.

L'Abbé de l'Epée, Pierre Desloges (who was never instructed under Abbé de l'Epée) and Abbé Sicard were at the heart of instruction through the Old French Sign Language as we still know it today. They incorporated sign languages into the classroom. Deaf people develop sign languages naturally. The school clearly helped push the development of sign language as there was mass criteria for language development. The current French Sign Language, although derived from Old French Sign Language, has gone through significant changes during the long period of oralism in France.



The INJS, Paris, Library, Private collection

Their approaches and methods of education were in use at the National Institute of the Deaf in Paris where Laurent Clerc was a student before becoming an instructor. The “French School” or “Paris School”, as it was then called, was highly renowned and admired for its efficiency. Laurent Clerc, a pure product of this school exported it, so to speak, to America in 1816. He knew both how to teach and how to run a school and his double experience was very helpful to Gallaudet who was not a Deaf person and had no administrative experience. The controversies about oral and manual language culminated in 1880 at the Milan Conference with the interdiction of using

⁸⁶ Pierre Desloges (1747-~1792), Deaf contemporary of the Abbé de l'Epée

A bookbinder in Paris, who became deaf at the age of 7, Desloges describes, in a book, the deaf community of Paris, which practices sign language. His words demonstrate the existence of a Deaf community in Paris, long before the creation of the Institution of the Abbé de l'Epée. (Language, history, culture and social life of the Deaf, Geneviève Le Corre, 2013)

sign language in the classroom. However, it survived, both in America and in France, and its merits were recognized. For sign language to benefit larger numbers of people, schools had to be opened and instructors (later on, teachers) had to be recruited. This took a long time, as the enterprise was gigantic and minds were not ready to absorb such novelties.

Civilization in its progress has led to the development of education and its diffusion among all classes of the people. This progress, however, has been gradual. In ancient times its possession was confined to philosophers and sages and to a few individuals of the higher ranks of society. The introduction of Christianity accelerated its progress and increased the facilities of obtaining it. At length its advantages came to be generally appreciated and desired; and now the governments of the most enlightened nations consider it good policy, as well as an imperative duty, to provide free schools for all the children within their respective jurisdictions. For a long time, deaf-mutes were regarded as an exceptional class that, in common with idiots, could not be reached by any of the processes of education; and until the fifteenth century no successful effort had been made to teach them a written language. Then enough was done in a few isolated cases to show the possibility of educating them to some extent. But it was not until the middle of the eighteenth century that the first school was established for their instruction. In 1760 the Abbe de L'Epee was at the head of a school in France, consisting of a little company of deaf-mutes, which was commenced by him five or six years earlier, with two pupils. He was succeeded, on his decease in 1789, by the Abbe Sicard, who had previously received instruction from him in Paris, and had been conducting another school for deaf-mutes in France for about three years. It was at this Institution, while under the direction of Sicard, that the subject of this notice received his education.

William W. Turner, *Laurent Clerc, American Annals of the Deaf and Dumb* 15, no.1, (1870) : 16-28.

1-1 Deaf people can be educated.

Above all, prejudices against Deaf people died hard and any action had to be preceded by changes in mentalities. Aristotle's views were considered with respect and bore heavily and negatively on the recognition of Deaf people as human beings like any others.

By nature, animals are born with the faculty of sensation, and from sensation memory is produced in some of them, not in others. And therefore, the former are more intelligent and apt at learning than those who cannot remember; those who are incapable of hearing sounds are intelligent though they cannot be taught, e.g., the bee, and any other race of animals that may be like it. And those who, besides memory have this sense of hearing can be taught. (p 1552)

Johnathan Barnes, ed., *Complete Works of Aristotle*, Oxford translation, vol 2 (Princeton NJ, Princeton university Press, 1984).

With Laurent Clerc, Thomas H. Gallaudet spread and developed ideas that deaf people could be “educated”, like any other ones. This was far from the concept of the deaf person as an animal or an idiot. Thomas H. Gallaudet’s faith included the belief that God Almighty created equally human beings to be respected and dealt with. In his precepts and topics to be studied at school, Religion has always had a strong position.

Laurent Clerc was the prototype of the deaf child brought up alone in a small town and left to his own devices when he was a young boy. Thanks to his uncle (and due to the fact no school around could welcome him because he was deaf), he went to The Institute for the Deaf in Paris, which was a boarding school. There he revealed himself as a bright pupil with a particular gift for learning languages. He became a gifted instructor.

1-2 Deaf education for all

First, however I will call attention to the fact that compulsory education for the deaf can be said to exist only partially in the United States. Even in the Eastern States where compulsory education exists on paper, it is indifferently enforced, and in the West, and especially in the South, there are not even laws having compulsory education in view. There are, therefore, still many deaf, especially among immigrants, who do not receive any school instruction.

Lars A. Havstad, *Report of a Visit to the United States and the British Isles to Study the Education of Deaf Children and Other Matters Pertaining to the Deaf*, March 17-July 15, 1899, *American Annals of the Deaf* 45, no.2 February 1999.

Of course, time has passed and the situation today is not what it was in 1899. As deaf pupils had specific needs, local schools were not inclusive by offering instruction in sign language. It was nearly impossible to have deaf students in ordinary schools, and that’s why different states built specific schools. In France, students with special needs were previously educated only in specialized schools (SN Education: Special Needs Education). The fact that they depended and still do on the Health and Social Affairs Ministry entailed their image was biased.

Quite recently, the French tendency is to give parents a choice as deaf students can attend mainstream schools, but not without huge pedagogical problems. Boarding schools could welcome more deaf students coming from different parts of the country.

However, some parents were reluctant as they thought parents’ love and tender care was much better. Educating parents to the long-term benefits of public education was another task. Yet many families could not afford private tutors. In France, compulsory education applies to every child and with centralization of power being the rule, all territories implement the same policies. In some American states, compulsory education did not apply to the Deaf until quite recently*. Massachusetts was the first state to pass compulsory education (1855), and the compulsory education movement slowly picked up momentum until the end of the first half of 20th century. Today all states have compulsory education laws.

Laws should be passed and enforced to prevent young deaf people to waste so much time by not attending school and plodding their way along.

Adelaide H. Pybas, *Compulsory Education for the Deaf, American Annals of the Deaf* 54, no.4, September 1909.

A higher interest is at stake and the freedom of individual choice must be put aside when political threats can endanger the whole society.

This argument was presented in a paper at the Third Convention of the National Association of the Deaf, held in Washington DC in 1889. It was celebrating Gallaudet. No wonder then those addresses were education-oriented.

For a moral and intelligent people, a republican government is the best in the world; for an immoral and ignorant people, it is the worst. When the sovereignty of a nation is exercised by the citizen, it is essential that he shall be both morally and intellectually qualified to properly discharge the grave and responsible duties of citizenship. That republic is the most stable, and most nearly approximates the ideal of perfect government, whose citizens are qualified; and that is the weakest, where they are least fitted for those duties. In the universal education of the people lies the source of good government and the perpetuity of our liberties. The illiterate, ignorant citizen is the greatest enemy of the nation. The influx of a foreign anarchistic and socialistic element into this country is fraught with serious menace to the healthy life of the republic. Popular education is the true foundation of our country's greatness, and the common school is the bulwark of the nation. The first and highest duty of the state is to provide adequate means for the moral and intellectual advancement of its citizens, for upon this depends its own perpetuity and prosperity. Compulsory and restrictive legislation of all kinds meets with strong opposition. The cry is raised that it is contrary to the spirit of the Declaration of Independence, and assails the liberty guaranteed equally to all men by the Constitution. Thus is the sacred name of liberty made a shield for individual selfishness and oppression: Liberty, what crimes are committed in thy name!

J.L. Smith, *Compulsory Education for the Deaf, Proceedings of the Third Convention of the National Association of the Deaf*, Washington D.C. 1889.

Thomas H. Gallaudet was a clergyman, and helping others was part of his mission. Instead of accompanying people to become good believers and thus acquire spiritual salvation by preaching in churches, he shifted his mission toward education, to help all students (young or not so young) to learn how to read and write and, of course, learn signs to communicate. It is no wonder that at the end of his life, when he had retired from teaching, Thomas H. Gallaudet worked in an elderly home where he brought comfort, and certainly spiritual peace to elderly persons with mental illness. His religious mission expressed itself in his generosity toward people who were marginalized by society. Influenced by Dr Cogswell (with a strong leaning to help the destitute), they moved education from private teaching, for the elite of socially well-off deaf people, to all deaf people whatever their social class, by deciding to open a school for all. Alice Cogswell was not to be educated alone at home, but together with other children in a proper school.

Laurent Clerc was educated at the Institute for the Deaf in Paris, a residential school. There he saw the importance of living with peers of various social origins to develop sign language communication. Moreover, he knew how to structure and organize a school as he had served in the administrative staff too. When Thomas H. Gallaudet took him back to America, he was coming back with a wonderful asset: more than a mere collaborator, a man who was skilled in many ways: his educability, high intellect and achievements were facts. He was the ideal person to turn Thomas H. Gallaudet's projects into a successful enterprise.

Their dynamism and confidence were contagious and the number of deaf students in ASD and other deaf schools in other states kept increasing. All deaf students today are educated the world over and they now constitute a power with which to be reckoned.

Laurent Clerc had good reasons to rejoice:

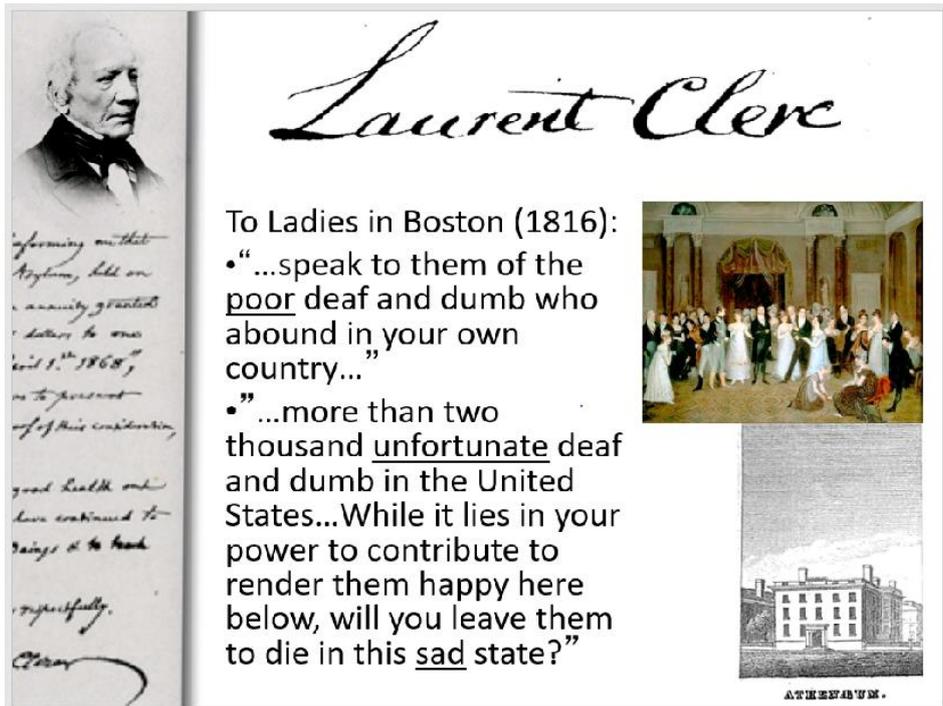
My dear friends:

The president elect of your institution, Edward M. Gallaudet, has invited me to come and attend the inauguration of a "National College for the Deaf and Dumb" in Washington, the capital of the United States, to take place on Tuesday, June 28, 1864. I have accepted the invitation with much pleasure, and here I stand before you to say that I feel a just pride in seeing that the American Asylum at Hartford, Connecticut, has been the means of doing so much good, and has produced so many evidences of intelligence and learning. Our school at Hartford was the first of its kind ever established in America, not only through the exertions of the late Rev. Dr. Thomas H. Gallaudet, and your humble speaker, but also by the generous subscriptions and contributions of both ladies and gentlemen in Hartford and other towns of New England. It has broken that barrier which had separated for several centuries the deaf and dumb from those who hear and speak. It has repaired the wrongs of nature in enabling them to replace hearing by writing, and speech by signs. It has also enabled many among you to become the teachers of your unfortunate fellow-beings. It has enabled your kind Principal, and many gentlemen and ladies who hear and speak, to teach deaf and dumb persons in this and other schools which have since sprung up in several other portions of the United States.

Laurent Clerc, Address, June 28, 1864, Inauguration of the National College for the Deaf-Mutes, Washington DC.

The National College for the Deaf and Dumb was established in less than 50 years since the founding of American School for the Deaf, a testimony that deaf people can be educated and with the right accessible resources (i.e., sign language), they can be elevated to higher education.

1-3 Deaf education as a public policy



*informing on that
Asylum, till on
a anxiety granted
letters to one
and 1. 1868,
on to present
of this institution,
good health and
have continued to
bring it to head
respectfully,
Clerc*

Laurent Clerc

To Ladies in Boston (1816):

- “...speak to them of the poor deaf and dumb who abound in your own country...”
- “...more than two thousand unfortunate deaf and dumb in the United States...While it lies in your power to contribute to render them happy here below, will you leave them to die in this sad state?”

ATHENEUM BOSTON.

(with C. Kurz's permission)

To set up a school, funding was necessary. Hence the idea of organizing meetings of local people and more particularly wealthy ones. Being convincing was an asset and both Laurent Clerc and Thomas H. Gallaudet knew how to appeal to women's sensitivity more particularly. In those days, caring for children was mostly done by a woman and a mother's full-time job at home and those ladies were easily moved. Laurent Clerc and Thomas H. Gallaudet knew those ladies were capable so as to convince their husbands and/or fathers to support the enterprise. Laurent Clerc's emotional pleas were decisive and money was raised.

Ladies—Yesterday we invited the most respectable inhabitants of Boston to meet us at the Atheneum, in order to speak to them of the poor deaf and dumb who abound in your own country. A great many gentlemen attended. I had hoped also to see some of you there; but I saw none. I expressed my wonder, and at the same time, my regret.

I am now fully indemnified. I see you; I look into your eyes, and by your eyes I can judge the bottom of your hearts. I feel it is good, tender and sensible. A tender and sensible heart is never inaccessible to the misfortune of others.

There are more than two thousand unfortunate deaf and dumb in the United States without instruction and consequently without any knowledge whatever of the charms of society, of the benefits of God toward us all, and of a better happiness in the other world! While it lies in your power to contribute to render them happy here below, will you leave them to die in this sad state? I hope you will be too good to permit it. Behold, ladies, what I should desire to obtain from you. Mr. Gallaudet and I are in the design of raising those unfortunates from their nothingness. We propose to establish an institution in their favor, and to collect them there. This institution must be in the middle of your country, that the deaf and dumb may

arrive there from all the states. The town of Hartford has seemed to us to be the most convenient place, and has consequently been chosen.

The deaf and dumb whose parents or friends are rich, will pay their own board; those whose parent are indigent, will be at the expense of your liberality; and as they are the most numerous, the charity of all the citizens of American is indispensable. It is then to solicit that charity that we have come to Boston; and thence we intend to go to the other principal cities for the same purpose, and we have no doubt of its success. If you remark among your husbands, relations or friends, some who may be insensible to this action of benevolence, I beg you to change them into better dispositions. You have naturally great sensibility; you are endowed with the talent of causing the insensible to feel, and of subduing the inexorable. Thus, my friends rely on you, kind ladies, and I place in the number of the obligations I shall owe to you, those which my companions in the same situation as myself, will owe to you; and when they are educated, they will doubtless themselves express their gratitude to you.”

Laurent Clerc, *Laurent Clerc, Connecticut Common School Journal* (1838-1853) 6, no.. 3-4, March and April 1852: 102-112.

Local authorities and politicians came into play. For instance, when the mayor of Hartford decided to rent some ground to build the first School. At first, Laurent Clerc and Thomas H. Gallaudet rented rooms at a city hotel for 1-2 years before moving to the second location (rented house). They eventually bought the land with the funds to build the school (third location) : first named “asylum” for the deaf, then Deaf School. By abandoning “asylum” (charitable connotation and a slightly condescending word) for “school”, a great step forward was made: ordinary children were not attending classes in an “asylum” but in a “school”. From now on, deaf children will go to school too.

The same rules and organizations were to apply to all schools, from an administrative and financial point of view with some funding by local administrative federal authorities.

Later on, Laurent Clerc addressed senators and convinced a president when he visited his school. The topic of educating the deaf was now in the politic arena too. Thomas H. Gallaudet had health problems that prevented him from going. He sent Clerc instead. That made a big difference.

2 - Opening up schools

➤ In France:

Valade-Gabel's⁸⁷ article: *Les institutions pour les Sourds-Muets en France* (*American Annals of the Deaf and Dumb* 24, no.4, October 1879) provides very complete documentation on the

⁸⁷ In the year 1862, Mr. Valade-Gabel, honorary principal of the Bordeaux Institution, formerly a distinguished teacher of the Paris Institution, and the author of several text-books and other valuable works relating to deaf- mute instruction, was requested by the French Government to make a very thorough examination of all the schools for the deaf and dumb not supported by the National Government; that is, all except the three national institutions of Paris, Bordeaux, and Chambéry. Mr. Valade-Gabel devoted six years to the execution of the delicate and important mission thus assigned him; and in 1875 published a summary of

schools for the Deaf and Dumb in France, whether they were private and religious or dependent on the government and financed by it. Statistical tables measure their quantitative evolution (number of establishments opened and number of children enrolled).

Ives Delaporte in his *Encyclopédie historique des Institutions françaises, L'Ecole des Sourds* (Editions du Fox, 2016) defines the meaning of "institution" as equivalent to "school", regardless of the number of students enrolled.

What is an "institution" in the 19th century? An institution is that which institutes. The deep meaning of the word is in its movement, not in its dimensions; there was created a place where deaf people, previously isolated, dispersed in the hearing world, were gathered. This is an anthropological definition, not an administrative one.

[Introduction, p.11]

This Encyclopedia is a cartography of France, region by region, and a census of the existing schools, especially the less known ones. Yves Delaporte underlines the difficulty of counting them due to the fact that in the beginning these schools were not considered as places of education, but rather of charity, connected to the Ministry of the Interior. Their closure was not always recorded. Yves Delaporte studies the separation of boys and girls, in order to avoid the appearance of sympathies that could lead to marriage. At that time, marriage between Deaf people aroused a certain distrust. He cites the division of Valade-Gabel into several groups of schools, according to their recourse to speech or the use of the methodical signs of the Abbé de l'Épée, or the natural signs of Bébien. Bébien was an excellent pedagogue who mastered the natural language of the Deaf. He was dismissed from the INJS following the Milan Congress and the return in force of oralism. His students, who were very fond of him, sent petition after petition to the government until he was reinstated.

Deaf teachers are undoubtedly more numerous than one might have thought and "in non-congregational schools, Deaf-Mutes are the majority" [Introduction, p 17].

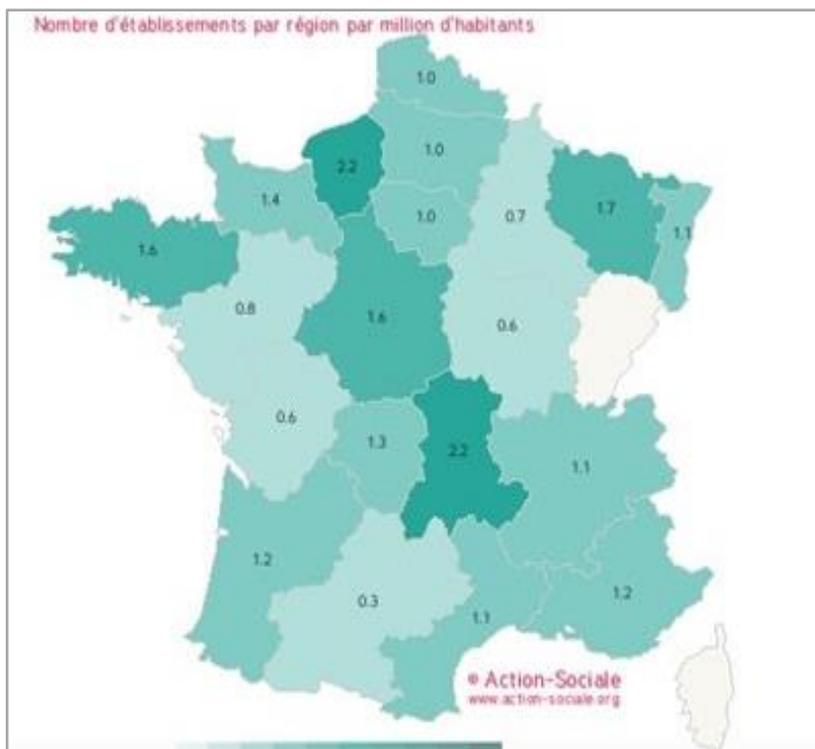
Many deaf schools have been opened in the first half of the 19th century, notably

- Amiens, 1710
- Paris, 1760
- Bordeaux, 1786
- Nogent le Rotrou, 1811
- Rodez, 1814
- St Etienne, 1815
- Besançon, 1819
- Albi, 1826
- Toulouse, 1826
- Clermont-Ferrand, 1828
- Nancy, 1827
- Rouen, 1835
- Laval, 1837
- St Brieuc, 1839
- Poitiers, 1838
- Orléans, 1839
- Fontainebleau, 1848
- Metz, 1856
- Nice, 1862
- Marseille, 1866
- Bordeaux, 1870

They were attached to the Health Ministry and provided specialized education. Their students could be partly educated in ordinary schools too, according to local contracts. Mainstream schools offer LSF courses to deaf students in the "inclusive school". A few bilingual schools provide all courses in sign language.

his observations and conclusions*, from which the present article - with many omissions and some abridgment - is translated. (ED-Annals)

Location of French specialized schools or institutes in France:



Map: number of Specialized schools or institutes for Deaf or hearing-impaired students per million of inhabitants
<https://annuaire.action-sociale.org/etablissements/jeunes-handicapes/institut-pour-deficients-auditifs-195.html>

➤ In the USA:

The first schools for Deaf students in the USA.

The success of the Hartford school was such as to incite neighboring states to imitate the model. As early as 1817, Thomas H. Gallaudet and Laurent Clerc started touring many cities: mostly in the Northeast region of the USA (Albany, NYC, Boston, Providence, etc.). And, schools for the deaf were built around in neighboring states, creating a network of appropriate schools in the same pattern.

<u>Year</u>	<u>School</u>
1815	1. School for the Deaf (Cobbs, VA)
1817	2. Connecticut Asylum for the Education and Instruction of Deaf and Dumb Persons/American Asylum/American School for the Deaf (Hartford, CT) – April 15, 1817
1818	3. New York Institution for the Instruction of the Deaf and Dumb/New York School for the Deaf (New York, NY) – May 12, 1818
1820	4. Pennsylvania Institution for the Deaf and Dumb/Pennsylvania School for the Deaf (Philadelphia, PA) – May 1820
1822	5. School for Deaf Children (Palmyra, NY)
1823	6. Kentucky School for the Deaf (Danville, KY) – April 27, 1823
1825	7. Central Asylum for the Instruction of the Deaf and Dumb (Canajoharie, NY)

1826	8. Ohio Asylum for the Education of the Deaf and Dumb/Ohio Institution for the Education of the Deaf and Dumb/Ohio School for the Deaf (Columbus, OH) – October 16, 1829
1827	9. Colonel Smith's School (Tallmadge, OH)
1837	10. St. Joseph's School for the Deaf (St. Louis, MO)
1838	11. Mariae Consilia Deaf Mute Institution (Carondelet, MO)
1839	12. Virginia School for the Deaf and Blind (Staunton, VA)
1843	13. Willard School/Indiana Asylum for the Education of the Deaf and Dumb/Indiana School for the Deaf (Indianapolis, IN) – October 3, 1844
1845	14. Tennessee School for the Deaf (Knoxville, TN) – June 1, 1845 15. North Carolina School for the Deaf and Dumb/North Carolina School for the Deaf (Raleigh, NC)
1846	16. Illinois Asylum for the Education of the Deaf and Dumb/Illinois Institution for the Education of the Deaf and Dumb/Illinois School for the Deaf (Jacksonville, IL) 17. Georgia School for the Deaf (Cave Spring, GA) – May 15, 1846
1849	18. South Carolina School for the Deaf (Spartanburg, SC) – January 22, 1849 in Cedar Spring
1850	19. Arkansas Deaf-Mute Institute/State School for the Deaf/Arkansas School for the Deaf (Clarksville, AR)
1851	20. Missouri School for the Deaf (Fulton, MO) – November 1, 1851
1852	21. Wisconsin School for the Deaf (Delavan, WI) – July 19, 1852 22. Louisiana Institution for the Deaf and Dumb and the Blind/Louisiana State School for the Deaf/Louisiana State School for the Deaf (Baton Rouge, LA) 23. Mr. Bartlett's Family School for Young Deaf-Mute Children (New York, NY)
1854	24. Mississippi School for the Deaf (Jackson, MS) – July 1856 (?) 25. Michigan Asylum for Educating the Deaf and Dumb and the Blind/Michigan Institution for Educating the Deaf and Dumb and the Blind/Michigan School for the Deaf (Flint, MI) – February 1, 1854
1855	26. Iowa Institute for the Deaf and Dumb/Iowa School for the Deaf (Iowa City, IA) – January 1, 1855
1856	27. Texas School for the Deaf (Austin, TX) – January 1857 (?) 28. J.B. Edwards' School (Lexington, GA) 29. P.H. Skinner's School (Washington, D.C.) 30. P.H. Skinner's School for the Colored Deaf Children (Niagara City, NY) 31. Columbia Institution for the Instruction of the Deaf and Dumb and Blind/Kendall School (Washington, D.C.) –1857
1858	32. Alabama Institute for the Deaf (Talladega, AL)
1859	33. St. Mary's School for the Deaf (Buffalo, NY)
1860	34. California School for the Deaf (San Francisco, CA)
1861	35. Kansas Asylum for the Deaf and Dumb/Kansas Institution for the Education of the Deaf and Dumb/Kansas School for the Deaf (Baldwin, KS)
1863	36. Minnesota State Institution for the Education of the Deaf and Dumb/Minnesota Institute for the Deaf, Dumb, and Blind/Minnesota Institute for Defectives/Minnesota School for the Deaf/Minnesota State Academy for the Deaf (Faribault, MN)
1864	37. National Deaf-Mute College/Gallaudet College/Gallaudet University (Washington, DC)
1867	38. Lexington School for the Deaf (New York, NY) 39. Clarke School for the Deaf/Clarke School for the Deaf – Center for Oral Education (Northampton, MA)

1868	40. Maryland School for the Deaf (Frederick, MD) 41. Presbyterian Mission Sabbath School/Western Pennsylvania Institution for the Instruction of the Deaf and Dumb/Pittsburgh School for the Deaf/Western Pennsylvania School for the Deaf (Pittsburgh, PA)
1869	42. Nebraska School for the Deaf (Omaha, NE) 43. Horace Mann School (Boston, MA) 44. Governor Morehead School (Raleigh, NC) 45. St. Joseph's School for the Deaf (New York, NY)
1870	46. West Virginia School for the Deaf and the Blind (Romney, WV) 47. Oregon School for the Deaf (Salem, OR)
1872	48. Maryland School for the Colored Blind and Deaf (Baltimore, MD)
1873	49. Lutheran Church of the Missouri Synod (Detroit, MI)
1874	50. Cincinnati Public School for the Deaf (Cincinnati, OH) 51. Chicago Day Schools for the Deaf (Chicago, IL) 52. German Evangelical Lutheran Deaf-Mute Institution/Lutheran School for the Deaf (Detroit, MI) 53. Colorado Institute for the Education of Mutes/Colorado School for the Deaf and Blind (Colorado Springs, CO)
1875	54. Central New York Institution for Deaf-Mutes/Central New York School for the Deaf/New York State School for the Deaf (Rome, NY)
1876	55. St. John's School for the Deaf (Milwaukee, WI) 56. New England Industrial School for the Education and Instruction of Deaf Mutes/Beverly School for the Deaf/Children's Center for Communication (Beverly, MA) 57. Western New York Institution for Deaf-Mutes/Rochester School for the Deaf (Rochester, NY) 58. Providence Day School for the Deaf/Rhode Island School for the Deaf/Rhode Island State School for the Deaf/Rhode Island Institute for the Deaf/Rhode Island School for the Deaf (Providence, RI)

Other States have nearly all one each, and there is a National College for Deaf-Mutes at Washington, D.C.

Some of these institutions are the offspring of the American Asylum at Hartford. Their system of education, with two or three exceptions, is mainly that which was originally brought over by Thomas H. Gallaudet and Laurent Clerc. The number of deaf-mutes in the United States was estimated at between 15,000 and 20,000.

Meanwhile, in France, the same need for a country network was felt and "specialized institutes or schools" were set up. This occurred in Bordeaux, of course, where Jean Massieu had been a student and then teacher and Abbé Sicard, the director, but in other big towns as well. What slowed down the process was the lack of specialized teachers, notably deaf ones.

Hearing teachers did not master sign language, at least at the beginning; moreover, deaf people claimed that deaf teachers might be hired as they did not want the hearing people to dominate, and this approach was to reappear strongly as years passed. Society resisted the idea of hiring deaf people as teachers.

The National French Federation of the Deaf, then the International Federation of the Deaf, repeatedly claimed the Deaf are able to fend for themselves.

The movement toward deaf emancipation and capability was on its way. It is to be noted that ASD logo says "Always able", underlining clearly a strong credo and a way of life.

Later, the Gallaudet University's movement: Deaf President Now (DPN) situates itself in the long line of deaf claims to assert themselves as being "able" to occupy managerial positions in society.

This "democratic" approach had the positive effect of making the education of the Deaf a public concern. Straight away, many parents declared they had a deaf child and only in Connecticut, they could number many deaf children. Based on the findings of the survey, Dr. Mason Cogswell and his group of benefactors found the number enough to justify the opening of a school.



3 - Comprehensive education

2-1 Religious education

Thomas H. Gallaudet was a staunch believer all his life and reading the Bible was part and parcel of his daily activities. Moral elevation of people, in general, could not dispense with being instructed in religious matters in public schools, as well as in private ones. Religious education had been a centerpiece in the American School for the Deaf during its first century. In the contract between Gallaudet and Clerc (1816), strict terms are set up concerning religious education:

[The original contract between Dr Gallaudet and Clerc, entered into at the time the latter accepted Dr. Gallaudet's invitation, to come to America as a teacher in the American Asylum, has recently come to our notice. As a matter of so much importance as this, relating to the early history of deaf-mute instruction in this country, is and must always be of interest, we publish it entire in the Annals. The original is written in French on stamped paper.]

Art.11. Mr. Clerc shall endeavor to give his pupils a knowledge of grammar, language, arithmetic, the globe, geography, history; of the Old Testament as contained in the Bible, and the New Testament, including the life of Jesus Christ, the Acts of the Apostles, the Epistles of St. Paul, St. John, St. Peter, and St. Jude. He is not to be called upon to teach anything contrary to the Roman Catholic religion which he professes, and in which faith he desires to live and die. Mr. Gallaudet as head of the Institution, will take charge of all matters of religious teaching which may not be in accordance with his faith.

Thomas H. Gallaudet, Laurent Clerc, S.V.S. Wilder and J.C. Hottinguer, *Contract between Gallaudet and Clerc, 1816*, American Annals of the Deaf and Dumb 24, no.2, April 1879, vol. 24, n°2, pp. 115-117.

At The Eight Conference of Superintendants and Principals of American Schools for the Deaf held at the Alabama Institute for the Deaf, Talladega, Alabama, June 30 to July 4, 1900, Principal Johnson noted that progress was made in deaf education and, as to teachers: "young men and

brains and energy coming into our ranks". Sunday afternoon was spent in discussing Sunday exercises in schools for the Deaf.

A majority of the schools reported exercises of a similar character, namely, a lecture or sermon by the superintendent or a male teacher, and a regular Sunday school. Seven schools out of the number represented at this Conference examine their pupils in Bible lessons. In one school, there is no regular Bible instruction but only ethical talks.

ight Conference of Superintendents and Principals of American Schools for the Deaf, June 30 July 4, Alabama, 1900. American Annals of the Deaf 45, no.6 (October 1900) : 446-453

In France, only religious schools could teach religion after 1905. The law of December 9, 1905, relating to the separation of Churches and the State is the result, under the Third Republic, of a long process of secularization and secularization engaged since the French Revolution.

2-2 Topics/curricula/workshops taught in these schools



Carpentry Workshop
(private collection INJS, Paris, wood work)

In the excerpt above of Gallaudet and Clerc's contract on what they will teach, the main topics are listed. It is to be noted that grammar and language come first in the list. And then mathematics, geography and history. These are the basic topics.

In his address at the inauguration of "National College for the Deaf and Dumb" in Washington D.C in 1864, Laurent Clerc provided the list of subject-matters that should be taught. He develops them and stresses why each is important.

Now, my dear friends, let me ask what is the object of the foundation of a college? It is for the purpose of receiving such graduates of the other institutions as wish to acquire more knowledge in natural science, astronomy, mathematics, geography, history, mental and moral philosophy, and belles-lettres. Science is a most useful thing for us all. It is one of the first ornaments of man. There is no dress which embellishes the body more than science does the mind. Every decent man, and every real gentleman in particular, ought to apply himself, above all things, to the study of his native language, so as to express his ideas with ease and gracefulness. Let a man be never so learned, he will not give a high idea of himself or of his science if he speaks or writes a loose, vulgar language. The Romans, once the masters of the world, called the other nations, who did not know the language of Rome, barbarians; so, now that there are so many schools for the deaf and dumb in the United States, I will call barbarians those grown-up deaf mutes who do not know how to read, write, and cipher. Finally, a well-educated man, a gentleman by example, ought to add to the knowledge of one or two languages, that of ancient and modern history and geography. The knowledge of history is extremely useful. It lays before our eyes the great picture of the generations that have preceded us, and in relating the events which passed in their time we are taught to follow what is good and to avoid what is bad in our own time. It lays before us the precepts of the wise men of all ages, and acquaints us with their maxims. The crimes of the wicked are of no less use to us. Seldom does Divine justice let them remain unpunished. The fatal consequences that always attend them preserve us from the seduction of bad example, and we endeavor to become good as much through interest as inclination, because there is everything to lose in being wicked, and everything to gain in being good. The degree of Master of Arts can be conferred on the deaf and dumb when they merit it; but, on account of their misfortune, they cannot become Master of Music, and perhaps can never be entitled to receive the degree of doctor in divinity, in physic, or in law.

Thomas Gallaudet was in favor of preparing their students to enter into the nation's workforce as well.

2-3 Learning sign language

Division between Oralists and sign language advocates occupied many years and culminated at the Milan Conference in 1880. But, before and after, champions of sign language had it their way, some losing their occupations meanwhile, as Bébien and others, pushed to resign.

The division was particularly visible at the 1900 Paris conference, where hearing delegates were on one side and deaf ones on the other side, culminating in another linguistic division between French (even though foreign hearing delegates were at pains) and sign language. Entitled "The International Congress for the study of questions of Education and Assistance of the Deaf", it was the first of a series where a great variety of "educational, philanthropic and professional subjects"

were debated “under the auspices of the French Republic”. The atmosphere was heated and some questions were rejected, such as the opportunity for higher education, as “elementary education was not fully provided for in Europe”. There were discussions on the effects of the oral system, finally considered as giving “unsatisfactory results”. A consensus was reached around the necessity for governments to “furnish means for the primary instruction of all pupils”.

On Friday 2 August 1912, at the International Congress of the Deaf and Dumb in Paris, the debate was based on the question: "Is religious instruction given in or out of school? How is it given, by mimicry or orally?" Louise Walser, a delegate from the Bordeaux Institution where she was teaching, created an incident. First, she explained that teaching in sign language is more suitable for deaf young people because during her time at the National Institution for Deaf Mutes in Bordeaux, she noticed the difficulty deaf girls had with oral teaching and she remembers translating a lesson into sign language to help them. Angélique Camau (or Mère Angélique), the superior and director of studies at the Institution nationale des Sourdes-Muettes in Bordeaux, responded directly to her former pupil, now a teacher, by signing that she was ashamed of her.

The Americans (notably a delegate from Ohio) supported Louise, who was in tears, and nicknamed her the “Joan of Arc of the Deaf Mutes” for the defense of sign language as that year was the 500th anniversary of the birth of Jeanne d’Arc.

She also pronounced herself favorably for religious instruction all the more so, since at the Bordeaux Institute the majority of instructors were sisters. She explained how she helped students understand a lesson on religious history that had been written on the board. Asked to read it aloud the students could not, evidence that the oral method left something to be desired.

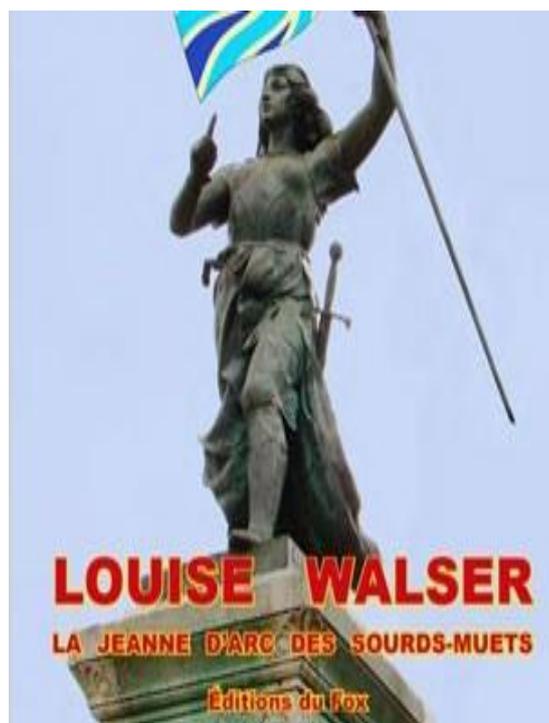
After this congress, Louise received American comfort: some thirty deaf women from Los Angeles sent her a letter of support.

After divorcing (first marriage), she married Henri Gaillard, Chief Editor of the Deaf-Mute magazine, a former INJS student.

She was a feminist and an activist. Deaf Schools depended on the Home Ministry; she wanted them under the authority of the Ministry of Education.

She died in 1920.

A public library in Paris bears her name (Paris, 9^{ème} Ar).



<https://injs-bordeaux.org/louise-walser-2/>

2-4 Learning a trade/industrial education

Vocational education

Valade-Gabel, in his article previously mentioned, dated 1879, underlines a difference between girls and boys as far as industrial education is concerned:

The majority of deaf-mutes belong to poor families. As apprenticeship to a trade is necessary for the greater number, it is a reasonable requirement by the Administration that the time devoted to their instruction should be divided between the class- room and the workshop.

The institutions devoted to the education of young girls are of necessity more favorably situated for industrial instruction than those open to boys. Girls find work adapted to them everywhere; from the time of their entrance into the institution they are set to knitting, mending, and sewing under their teachers' direction; while the boys, not having at the age of nine or ten years the strength requisite for handling tools, do not begin their apprenticeship until a year or two later.

Valade-Gabel, *The Institutes for the Deaf-Mutes in France, American Annals of the Deaf and Dumb* 24, no.4, October 1879).

It is worth noting that at the very first National Deaf-Mute Convention, in 1880, the speakers' addresses were centered on industrial education. The main care was to prepare deaf students to get jobs. In the early days of the first Deaf schools, it was too early for Deaf students, however brilliant they were, to envisage pursuing studies at a higher level, all the more since high schools were not yet opened or applying for jobs elsewhere than in the industrial field were not yet available. They were employed, for instance, as book binders, or printers for boys and dress makers for girls, among other occupations. The chart below provides a representative listing. Some of them could get into the Custom-House or the Post-office in Washington, but those positions were rare.

Thomas H Gallaudet, owing to respiratory troubles (a form of natural incapacity), had successive jobs far removed from his graduation from Yale in 1805, just before he was 18. He started working in a law firm where he could not stand the other lawyers as they were heavy smokers; then he had been a tutor at Yale where he did not stay long either as doctors recommended him to spend more time outdoors; then he heard of a company selling tools and trinkets and became a door-to-door salesman. The people he visited in Kentucky and Ohio were rather poor families, and he understood quickly that the children did not attend schools as there were none in the vicinity. He started telling them stories and teaching them some basics in geography or history. Finally, it occurred to him that going into the ministry would allow him to teach people and help them along the road. Back to Hartford, he met Alice Cogswell and found his vocation.

No wonder Thomas H. Gallaudet insisted upon training his students to become good workers, as well as doing studies.

A Census established to study deaf occupations is revealing: we see that carpenters are the most numerous (137), followed by painters and glaziers) (85), cabinet makers and upholsterers (75), printers (55), and bookbinder (40).

Much less numerous:

Opticians (1), plumbers (1), locksmiths (1).

V. INDUSTRIAL CLASS.			
9.	Publisher, Bookseller, Librarian.....	1	
	Bookbinder.....	40	22
	Printer.....	55	1
	Newspaper Agent, News Room Keeper.....	2	
	Lithographer, Lithographic Printer.....	26	
	Map and Print Colorer, Seller.....	4	
10.	Engine and Machine Maker.....	7	1
	Fitter and Turner (Engine and Machine).....	26	
	Boiler Maker.....	9	
	Spinning and Weaving Machine Maker.....	6	1
	Agricultural Machine and Implement Maker.....	6	
	Tool Maker, Dealer.....	4	
	Cutter, Scissors Maker.....	8	1
	File Maker.....	6	
	Saw Maker.....	1	
	Needle Maker.....	1	1
	Steel Pen Maker.....	1	1
	Domestic Implement Maker.....	1	
	Watch Maker, Clock Maker.....	11	
	Philosophical Instrument Maker, Optician.....	1	
	Electrical Apparatus Maker.....	3	
	Weighing and Measuring Apparatus Maker.....	2	
	Gunsmith, Gun Manufacturer.....	1	
	Musical Instrument Maker, Dealer.....	3	
	Die, Seal, Coin, Medal Maker.....	4	
	Toy Maker, Dealer.....	1	
11.	Builder.....	7	
	Carpenter, Joiner.....	137	
	Bricklayer.....	41	
	Mason.....	61	
	Plasterer, Whitewasher.....	7	
	Paper Hanger.....	1	
	Plumber.....	1	
	Painter, Glazier.....	85	
	Cabinet Maker, Upholsterer.....	75	7
	French Polisher.....	21	1
	Furniture Broker, Dealer.....	2	
	Locksmith, Bellhanger, Gas.....	1	
	Gas Fitter.....	1	
	House and Shop Fittings Maker, Dealer.....	5	
	Funeral Furniture Maker, Undertaker.....	1	
	Wood Carver.....	22	

The Deaf mute at work in Great Britain and Ireland, C.J. Bromhead, Lincoln, England, Proceedings of the 6th Convention of the Deaf, Saint Paul, Minnesota, July 11-14, 1899 (Private collection, INJS, Paris)

We consider the industrial education of the deaf and dumb to 'be of equal importance with that of the ordinary classroom instruction, and although book-learning is held in far greater general estimation, it is rarely of itself sufficient to enable the pupil to earn his own living after he leaves school. And we believe that a time will come, though it may be slow in coming, when a school for deaf-mutes will mean something more than a place to commit sentences to memory, and the ideas of both teacher and scholar will embrace a wider range than text-books, when the industries, which are now so undervalued or ignored, will receive their full share of attention, and when the graduate will leave his Alma Mater fully armed and

equipped to meet the obstacles which he will have to encounter in his struggle for daily bread.

E.A. Hodgson, *Industrial education of Deaf Mutes*, Proceedings of the First National Deaf-Mute Convention, Cincinnati, Ohio, August 25 1880.



Tailor Workshop (collection privée INJS Paris)



Ironing room in Bordeaux

from *L'Ecole des Sourds, Encyclopédie historique des Institutions Françaises*, Yves Delaporte, Editions du Fox, p.42, 2015 [Deaf Schools, Historical Encyclopedia of French Institutes]



Lingerie - Embroidery in Lyon-Vaise,
from *L'Ecole des Sourds, Encyclopédie historique des Institutions Françaises*, Yves Delaporte,
Editions du Fox, p.370, 2015 [Deaf Schools, Historical Encyclopedia of French Institutes]



Embroidery room in Poitiers,
from *L'Ecole des Sourds, Encyclopédie historique des Institutions Françaises*, Yves Delaporte,
Editions du Fox, p.303, 2015 [Deaf Schools, Historical Encyclopedia of French Institutes]



Alumni work room in St. Etienne,
 from *L'Ecole des Sourds, Encyclopédie historique des Institutions Françaises*, Yves Delaporte,
 Editions du Fox, 2015 [Deaf Schools, Historical Encyclopedia of French Institutes]

At the sixth conference, G. Tize of Karisrona gave a presentation on the intellectual, industrial, social and moral condition of the Deaf in Sweden:

The trades taught at the school for the deaf are mainly wood-working, tailoring, shoemaking and carpentry for the boys. The girls receive instruction in housekeeping, washing, ironing, weaving, knitting etc.

The large majority of the educated deaf are mechanics and laborers in a great variety of occupations and are generally doing well. The ability to speak does not, as a rule, help the speaking deaf to secure higher wages than those who cannot speak, as the pay is generally governed by ability and skill in the trade rather than by the ability of the workman to speak.

A list of the male members in one of our deaf mute associations shows them to be engaged in the following occupations: 72 shoemakers, 48 carpenters and joiners, 37 tailors, 28 laborers, 11 factory operatives, 9 printers, 9 farm hands, 8 bookbinders, 6 blacksmiths, 4 farmers owing farms, 3 burnt clay workers, 2 landlords owning houses or farms, 2 sculptors, 2 teachers, 2 painters, 2 wagon makers, and one in each of 38 other occupations.

Among the women members of the same society are seamstresses, tailoresses, factory girls, housekeepers, servant girls, bookbinders, glove makers, type setters, milliners etc. From the above it will be observed that the occupations followed by the deaf present quite a variety.

It is to be noted that workers are paid according to their skills, not their capacity for using oral language.



Gardeners (INJS Paris, private collection)

And, at the same Convention, P.M. Emery of Illinois delivered a paper entitled Love of Labor where he stated: “All labor is honorable”.

Moral values of hard work, honesty and perseverance, following the Prussian educational system, were constantly highlighted by educators.

At the present-day, deaf-mutes embark in many independent enterprises, and are occupying positions where they are brought into active competition with persons who have the enjoyment of all the senses. Here they have to stand or fall upon their own merits.

E.A Hodgson, *Proceedings of the First Deaf-Mute convention.*

And later, in 1917, Henri Gaillard, visiting the New York institution depicts the situation as follows:

- **As to subject matters:**

Ten trades are taught at the school: printing and typography; cabinet- and furniture making; tailoring; baking; sign painting; making dresses, shirts, underclothes, and coats; cooking, gardening. The principal object of study is the English language with emphasis on phraseology, sentences, narrative and descriptions, dialogues and letters. Elementary education also includes arithmetic, geography, history, natural science, comportment and morals, civics, health and physiology—in short, the essentials of what every man and woman should know. There are thirty-one oral classes and nine manual classes for those who cannot profit from the pure oral method. Some of the latter have been put under the direction of deaf instructors, among whom Thomas Francis Fox (M.A., D.Litt.) and William G. Jones (M.A.), that is, signing and the finger-alphabet are permitted in the classroom, while instruction emphasizes writing and lip-reading. There is also a class for those who are blind and deaf.

The ratio of pupils taught orally to those taught manually is not constant and can vary with the subject matter. The teaching of music starts with the very real fact that the deaf perceive musical vibrations and this has proven useful in the acquisition of speech and in perfecting enunciation. It also appears to improve the aural receptivity of the hard of hearing. In fact, through the practice of musical instruments, in particular woodwinds and brass, which require the control of the breath, the deaf pupil acquires a sense of moderation and harmony and can eventually learn to shade his voice. The hard of hearing have made progress in the sense that such regular exposure sharpens their auditory perception. For the rest, the reader is advised to consult Currier's newspaper articles and pamphlets on the subject. What is certain, I have been told, and what I have read in the deaf press as well as newspapers, is that the concerts given by these deaf musicians charm the ears of their audience and have been extremely successful. "The band played patriotic airs of all nations most acceptably," writes Mrs. Sarah Harvey Porter, in the American Annals of the Deaf.

- As to industrial training leading to jobs:

Here too they print the institution's reports, wonderful products of the typographer's art, and other works, some of which are commissioned by outside agencies, and some by other organizations of the Deaf.

It is not just rote composing that the apprentices learn, line by line, as is the case on the rue St. Jacques in Paris. They learn all about commercial printing as well, invitations, advertisements, announcements, flyers, invoices, catalogs, business cards, programs. Here there was a rich collection of fonts and rules, some very artistic. Both classic American and the latest imaginative typefaces were represented. Mr. Hodgson is a very skilled typographer. All the apprentices that he trains find good positions without difficulty and earn good wages. We cannot say so much for those who graduate from the typesetting program at the Paris institution, despite the good will of the

Administration and the rigorous criticism of competent people, among whom the former Paris deputy Allemand, himself once a typesetter.

But Mr. Hodgson is also an accomplished writer, in both prose and verse, and a fine journalist, with a nose for news, extensive knowledge of the deaf community and of the means to further their social advance.

Henri Gaillard's visit to NY Institution in 1917

4 - Teachers and teachers' training: from "instructors" to "teachers"

Successful training requires effective instructors and to become effective instructors requires solid training.

Hearing or deaf instructors? Who's going to pay them?

In France, the Parliament in May 1790 supported education of the Deaf. Jean Massieu was the first deaf instructor paid by the Government.

*What was it to be “a good teacher” at the beginning of the 19th century?
He was regarded as the living exponent of the French system of instruction, and the depositary of an art in the possession of no other person in the United States. It is not surprising, therefore, that a large sum of money was collected in a short time, and that the asylum for the instruction of the deaf and dumb was ready for the reception of pupils much sooner than its friends and patrons had expected. It was opened on the 15th of April 1817, with three scholars, which number was increased within a week to seven, and within a year, to thirty-two.*

William W. Turner, *Laurent Clerc, American Annals of the Deaf and Dumb* 15, no.1, (1870) : 16-28.

When looking at Laurent Clerc's contract signed in Paris before they left for America, with Thomas Gallaudet (abridged text below) and ready as soon as they arrived in Hartford, we see how demanding it was, how competent in many subjects the instructor had to be, and the instructor's daily obligations:

The undersigned, Thomas H. Gallaudet, a citizen of the United States of America, of the first part, and Laurent Clerc, professor in the Royal Institution for Deaf-Mutes, situated at Paris, where he resides, of the second part, do make the following contract:

ARTICLE 1. Mr. Clerc engages to take up his residence during the space of three years, to date from the day of his arrival at Hartford, in the Institution for Deaf-Mutes which Mr. Gallaudet proposes to establish in the United States of America.

ART. 2. Under the direction of the head of the Institution, Mr. Clerc shall be employed in the instruction of deaf-mutes for six hours of each day except Saturday, on which day the time shall be but for three hours. He shall be entirely at liberty on Sundays and on holidays, and he shall have, moreover, six weeks of vacation annually. All these exceptions shall be made without any deduction in the pecuniary compensation below specified

ART. 3. He shall be present and assist at all the public lectures, as well at Hartford as in other cities of the United States, always being under the direction of the head of the Institution; and, in case of removal, every expense whatever to which the change may give rise is to be at Mr. Gallaudet's charge without appeal.

ART. 4. Mr. Clerc shall have no connection whatever with any other establishment, and shall give no instruction or public lectures, (this stipulation not conflicting with that contained in Art. 5,) except under the direction of Mr. Gallaudet. This restriction shall remain in force only for the duration of three years; which limit having expired, Mr. Clerc shall no longer be bound by these engagements, and shall have the right, according to his own judgment and wherever he shall desire it, to continue the work of deaf-mute instruction, publicly or privately, under his own direction or in any other manner; this being a particular and indispensable condition of the present agreement.

ART. 5. Mr. Clerc shall have the privilege of giving private lessons, in his own room or in the town, during the hours that he is not occupied with his class.

ART. 6. Mr. Gallaudet pledges himself to defray all Mr. Clerc's travelling expenses from Paris to Hartford, viz., for food, lodging, washing, and transportation for himself and his effects, by land and water; and this to the same extent and in the same manner as Mr. Gallaudet's own expenses.

ART. 7. From the day of his arrival in Hartford, Mr. Clerc shall be given apartments near the Institution until further arrangements are made. He shall take his meals at the table of Mr. Gallaudet; and shall also have provision made for his washing, fires, lights, and attendance.

ART. 8. In consideration of the engagements above stipulated, Mr. Gallaudet promises and binds himself to pay to Mr. Clerc at Hartford, as his annual salary, two thousand five hundred francs (argent de France) in quarterly instalments; the first quarter to date from the day of his arrival in Hartford.

ART. 9. At the expiration of three years, if Mr. Clerc desires to return to France, Mr. Gallaudet shall pay to him before his departure, to indemnify him for the expense of going back, the sum of one thousand five hundred francs, in addition to what has already been promised.

ART. 10. It is agreed, moreover, that in case Mr. Clerc is obliged, by circumstances beyond his own control, to leave America, and in consequence to give up the work of instruction there, these articles of agreement are to be considered void and of no effect. But Mr. Clerc shall still have a legal right — 1st, to the indemnity of fifteen hundred francs above stipulated, even though the period of three years shall not have expired; 2nd, to the promised compensation at the rate of twenty-five hundred francs per year for whatever time may have already elapsed.

ART. 11. Mr. Clerc shall endeavor to give his pupils a knowledge of grammar, language, arithmetic, the globe, geography, history; of the Old Testament as contained in the Bible, and the New Testament, including the life of Jesus Christ, the Acts of the Apostles, the Epistles of St. Paul, St. John, St. Peter, and St. Jude. He is not to be called upon to teach anything contrary to the Roman Catholic religion which he professes, and in which faith he desires to live and die. Mr. Gallaudet, as head of the Institution, will take charge of all matters of religious teaching which may not be in accordance with this faith.

To these presents bear witness Messrs. Jean Conrad Hottinguer, banker, No. 20 Rue du Sentier, Paris, and Sampson Vryling Stoddard Wilder, an American merchant, now in Paris, No. 1 Rue du Sentier; who, after having acquainted themselves with the articles of agreement above stipulated, have voluntarily declared that they each and jointly constitute themselves sureties of Mr. Gallaudet on account of his engagements to Mr. Clerc as stated in the above contract; and in case of failure by Mr. Gallaudet to fulfil them punctually, they pledge themselves, singly and conjointly, to pay to Mr. Clerc at his new place of residence the promised amounts in the sums and at the times previously fixed upon.

Thus contracted, finished, and signed at Paris, the thirteenth day of June, one thousand eight hundred and sixteen.

-Signed and sealed-

THOMAS H. GALLAUDET,
LAURENT CLERC,
S. V. S. WILDER,
J. C. HOTTINGUER.

Thomas H. Gallaudet, Laurent Clerc, S.V.S. Wilder and J.C. Hottinguer,
Contract between Gallaudet and Clerc, 1816, *American Annals of the Deaf and Dumb* 24, no.2, April 1879, : 115-117.

When the American School for the Deaf opened its inaugural doors on April 15, 1817, the teachers followed four propositions for instruction for deaf students:

1. *Instruction should commence, with borrowing from the deaf and dumb themselves their own natural language of pantomime, in its full extent.*
2. *The instructor should carefully ascertain how far the ideas of his pupils extend before instruction, and how far they are just: he should know the extent, that he may build upon it, and the limit, that he may not exceed it.*
3. *He should avail himself of those materials, possessed by the deaf and dumb in common with us, to aid in the formation of a system of ideas, corresponding to that represented by the words of our language.*
4. *He must present to the eye of his pupil, language under a visible form, and under this form must teach him to associate its terms directly with their corresponding ideas.*

Fredrick A.P. Barnard, *Education of the Deaf and Dumb*, *The North American Review* (1834) : 323.

The general tendency was to believe that deaf people were the best to teach deaf children, as they would be straight away on equal footing and deaf instructors would immediately understand their pupils' difficulties and needs. Although the Deaf instructors were not formally trained, their pedagogical skills were the fruit of their observation and experience.

Thanks to the memorable and honorable struggle of these first graduates, the door to education has finally opened for deaf people, provided they are able to meet the same standards as hearing applicants. For the deaf who wish to teach, it is still the only route available today, as the national education system is still closed to the deaf.

We have to remember that before 1980 many deaf people were teaching vocational courses in institutions such as Saint-Jean-de-la-Ruelle near Orleans, the Persagotière in Nantes the Institution départementale des Jeunes Sourds de Saint-Brieuc etc... However, although they were fully qualified in their respective trades (carpentry, industrial drawing etc....) they were not qualified as teachers and were therefore not fully recognized as such. They were called workshops instructors which shows that deaf teachers were only admitted to the world of vocational education in a roundabout way, hidden from view.

André Minguy⁸⁸, *The Deaf Awakening in France: for a bilingual perspective*, L'Harmattan, 2019.

⁸⁸ André Minguy, born in 1949 in Brittany. He discovered the world of visual gestural communication at 7. He worked in carpentry, then he became a special needs technical teacher. He has been an active member in Deaf Associations. He has been fighting for the recognition of sign language and bilingual education for deaf children.

Delegates at the First National Deaf-Mute Convention, Cincinnati, Ohio, 1880, expressed worries concerning political changes among governing institutions and positioning of new teachers as well. The number of deaf instructors was too small: they could not be replaced quickly enough as they had to be trained. Thus, there was the real danger of calling up hearing instructors.

Teachers and Clerc have been unceasingly advocating the purity of sign language and obviously, only strict instructors could guarantee the teaching quality. Clerc himself would ask his own students to do the same signs again and again and clearly stated that several years of intense and daily practice could get some good results. Discipline, necessary to obtain good results, was strict and was to be respected by all.

*informing me that
Mr. Waters had on
a number of occasions
before the year
1868, on the ground
of his conduct,
good health and
has continued to
bring it to the
attention of
Clerc*

Laurent Clerc

Student Behavior - Disrespect to Mr. Clerc (1818-1819)

"Otis Waters, one of the pupils, had been guilty of disobedience to the Superintendent, of disrespect to Mr. Clerc, and of absenting himself one day & a half from the school without permission."

"Backus, Barns, Turberville, Templeton & Starr, had been guilty of improper conduct..."

"Waters continued to be disrespectful to the Instructors, & that he excited the other pupils to similar conduct."

"...Waters had proceeded to blows with one of the pupils & had been guilty of gross disrespect & threatening to Mr. Whittelsey & the Instructors & had also threatened the life of the person whom he attacked..."

(with C. Kurz's permission)

Students were wearing uniforms and as early schools were boarding schools, a kind of military discipline prevailed. Quite recently in France wearing uniforms again has become an issue.



Tenue de sortie.

Tenue de classe.

Tenue d'atelier.

Tenue de la classe religieuse.

Les différentes tenues des Élèves de l'Institution Nationale des Sourds-Muets, à Paris

(Gravures extraites de la Notice publiée par M. le directeur Desiré Girault
à l'occasion de l'Exposition universelle de 1900, imprimée à l'Atelier de typographie de cette Institution.)



(Uniforms at the INJS Paris. Private collection.)

Some teaching precepts are still valid today; and, in the field of languages, practicing with a native speaker is by far the most reliable course. Is it better to have an English native speaker to teach English, or a French teacher fluent in English?

Ideally, teachers of the deaf are linguistically and pedagogically models.

Pierre Desloges, as early as 1779 had given his answer:

When a deaf person encounters other deaf people more highly educated than he, as I myself have experienced, he learns to combine and improve his signs.... in intercourse with his fellows, he promptly acquires the supposedly difficult art of depicting and expressing all his thoughts.

It has been noted that many deaf educators had been students before in the same institution: continuity and experience were at work.



(INJS, Paris, Private collection)



(Wooden logo of the INJS Paris, private collection)

It is Auguste Colas who realized the framed pastel

This pastel, of a beautiful size, is in the library. It is very symbolical:

- *the quill pen representing writing, erudition, a field to which the deaf claimed access,*
- *and the pretty pansy, by its name in the 1st degree, (the french word “pensée” refers both to a flower and to “thought”) which symbolizes the intelligence (hidden by the Deaf-Mutes: because the pansy is a flower which also symbolizes discretion) that education will put forward.*

Auguste Colas added cherubs to the 4 corners:

One with a compass at his feet is doing mathematics, the other is reading, the 3rd is writing with a pen and finally the last one is sculpting a bust of the Abbé de l'Epée, recognizable even from ¾ back.

Sciences, arts and letters, all fields of culture therefore are represented here.

These coats of arms were put absolutely everywhere, official stamps of the establishment, uniform buttons decorations on cuffs, letterheads etc.

Anne Picaud, Head of Department, Cultural and Historical Heritage Development, INJS Paris.



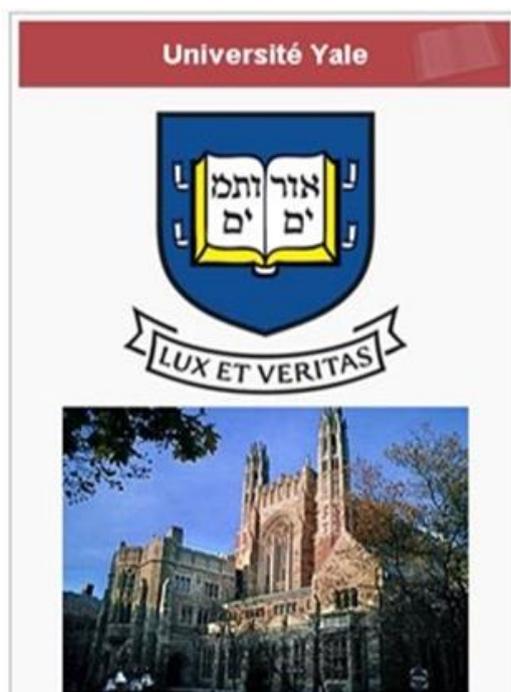
Button for uniforms



Pen

(INJS Paris, private collection)

The deaf population was not certainly educated enough, but in America, thanks to papers, what happened in France and around the National Institute for the Deaf in Paris, did not pass unnoticed. The press spoke of the successful education of the “Paris School”. And some were willing to emulate it.



Yale University (created in 1701) played a decisive part in spreading deaf education and culture. It is noteworthy that Yale provided early graduates to work with deaf pupils, Thomas H. Gallaudet among them.

Rebecca A.R. Edwards offers some explanations in her work: *Words made flesh: Nineteenth century deaf education. A Yale man and a deaf man open a school and create a world*, 2013.

The early educators such as Thomas H. Gallaudet, Lewis Weld, William W. Turner, studied theology.

There was a great interest for the art of pantomime which fascinated the manualists. It was a “high Roman art”, and for Yale men “a way of entering a world of the past, of sharing in what the ancients had themselves cultivated and revered”, and “of connecting with the greatness of civilization past”.

The first five principals of the American Asylum were all Yale graduates: Gallaudet, Weld, Turner, Stone, and Williams. Woodbridge and Orr were teachers too, and were in the limelight.

PRINCIPALS.

	Elected.	Retired.
THOMAS H. GALLAUDET,	1817,	1830.
LEWIS WELD,	1830,	1853.
WILLIAM W. TURNER,	1853,	1863.
COLLINS STONE,	1863,	1870.
EDWARD C. STONE,	1871,	1878.
JOB WILLIAMS,	1879.	

As Edwards underlines, when Orr became Principal of the New York Institute, their ideas started spreading out and gained ground. Gallaudet and Clerc held conferences in many big North Eastern cities. Furthermore, Timothy Dwight, president of Yale University from 1795 to 1817 had paved the way for the advancement of the Deaf. He wanted his students to have a high level of morality on the grounds that virtuous graduates would impress more and be followed. He had an interest for minorities too, whether they were Native Americans or African Americans and he “provided an ideological framework” that was both creative and efficient.

Gallaudet University followed suit with Edward M. Gallaudet, son of Thomas H. Gallaudet and also a Yale graduate. It was founded in 1864 and is the only higher education institute welcoming deaf and hard of hearing students.

ASD, the National Technical Institute for the Deaf at Rochester Institute of Technology in Rochester, California State University in Northridge, Ohlone College in California and other schools cater to deaf education at a level of excellence. There are several large schools for the deaf, serving over 300 deaf students. ASD serves around 150 students, so it is a small-medium school in terms of student population.



In France, 4 Institutes: Paris, Bordeaux, Nancy, and Chambéry are meant for deaf or hard of hearing students.

The Deaf were more and more educated in higher education, in France too, with for instance, Ernest Dusuzeau⁸⁹ getting the baccalaureate in 1864 (he was 19) and then the Math’s Agregation in 1871.

When the 2005 Law for Equality of Opportunity in Education was passed in France, clearly positioning French Sign Language (LSF) as a full language, the Ministry of Education launched a vast program in favor of the Deaf. The first sign language curriculum was published in 2010; an LSF assessment was introduced as an option at the Baccalaureate, and the DCL LSF was created (DCL= Diploma of Competences in Languages).

But, above all, the CAPES⁹⁰ of LSF was created with the first session in 2010. The General Inspector, designed and appointed by the Minister of Education, and the group of university

⁸⁹ Ernest Dusuzeau (1846-1917) - brilliant studies; fluent in English; in 1875, he married Mathilda Freeman, a former student at the New York Institute. He was an activist after his dismissal from the Institute as he was against oral methods in 1887, after the Milan Conference., an excellent orator and a pro- sign language. He also militated in favor of the equality between deaf and hearing people. Many articles on him have been published by Henri Gaillard, in “La Gazette des Sourds-Muets”. He was awarded the Legion of Honor in 1900.

⁹⁰ **CAPES** (Certificat d’Aptitude au Professorat de l’Enseignement du Second degré), une qualification requise pour devenir « professeur ». (a required qualification to become a teacher. Candidates who pass this competitive exam are “professeurs certifiés” and are entitled to teach in secondary education and upwards.

specialists and pedagogues working together made sure that two sets of papers were available: one for hearing candidates, the other one for Deaf candidates.

Thus, deaf people could become “LSF teachers” on a par with science teachers, English teachers, and all other teachers in France. This is an historic move forward: deaf teachers taught sign language (difference between “enseignants” and “professeurs”: professeurs are teachers with CAPES.)

Moreover, some science, history and math teachers having competences in LSF could teach those topics in sign language if their level of LSF is sufficient. It is to be assessed by a jury previously.

The possibility for deaf people to become “LSF teachers” was a tremendous step forward and undoubtedly an historic landmark in the story of Deaf education in France.

Deaf people in the United States can graduate and teach a variety of subject matters (e.g., elementary, preschool, physics, mathematics, social studies, English language arts, American Sign Language, fine arts, technology, among others). They would have to complete a teacher training program and pass state certificate examinations. Some states offer alternative assessments. Most states require them to pass the same as their hearing peers, although linguistical and cultural bias exist in some assessments.

During Clerc’s teaching years in the United States (1817 - 1857), 40 to 50% of the teaching faculty were deaf (McGregor, 1893). The adverse impacts of the Milan conference in 1880 and the linguistical and cultural eugenics in the United States during the turn of the 20th century, the percentage of the K-12 teaching faculty who were deaf fell to under 20% at the turn of the century and into the first half of the twentieth century, and the number has decreased to slightly under 20% now.

However, several research centers are joining their efforts and private initiatives are developing Deaf education in the spirit established by Laurent Clerc and Thomas H. Gallaudet.

Two examples:

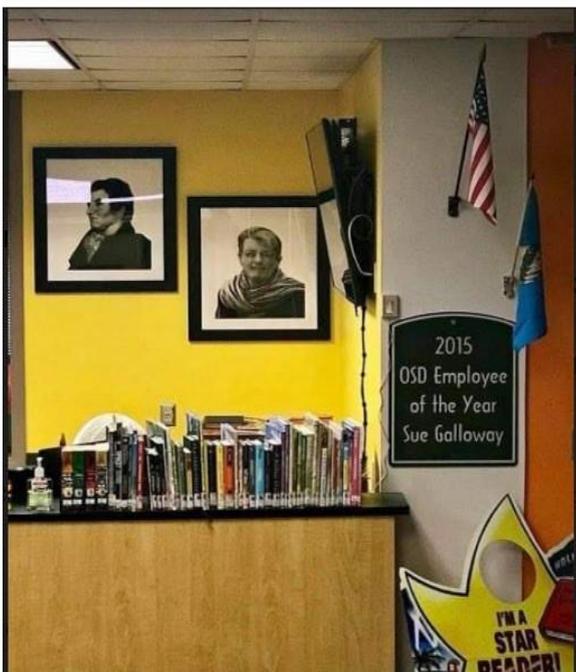
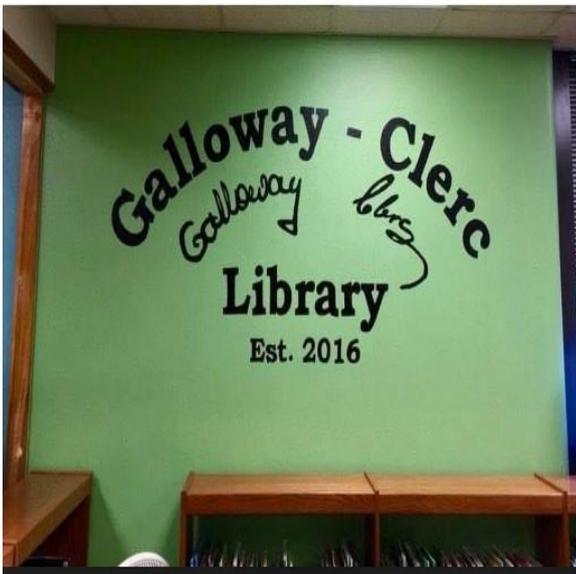
- Collaborative Center;

The Learning Center for the Deaf is a Center for Research and Training, which is a collaborative educational enterprise between Boston University and the Learning Center for the Deaf in Massachusetts. The primary focus is developing research-based tools and approaches to K-12 instructors of Deaf Children, emphasizing the primary use of American sign language (ASL) in the classroom, with paralleled written English instruction as appropriate.

- Individual initiative:

The desire of working with deaf people continues through Laurent Clerc's family generations. His son Francis Clerc was a minister to deaf churchgoers. His great, great granddaughter, Susan Hull Gall, learned sign language after moving to Oklahoma City, OK and was a children's librarian. She eventually took a librarian position with the Oklahoma School for the Deaf in Sulphur Springs and worked there until 2016. Upon her retirement the board of the school decided to dedicate the library to her and renamed the library the "Galloway Clerc Library."

The pictures below include the sign on the wall and a wall with her picture and Clerc as a young man.



B - Their legacy in the field of society/community

1 - Socializing



informing on that
Bygones, held on
a annuity granted
I desire to see
April 1st 1868,
in to present
of this institution,
good health and
have continued to
bring it to head
respectfully,
Clerc

Laurent Clerc



**Accused of
Fraternization
with Students**

“...to have an opportunity out of school hours, of enjoying the pleasure of social conversation with the young ladies. They esteem this, too, a peculiar privilege, & I may add, also, that it is a singular advantage to them, inasmuch as their chief business here is to acquire language, & his language of signs is the foundation of all their improvement. ...the origin of the charge, which has been made, that he is too attentive to them.

I know his disposition well. He is as far aloof from any pretty jealousy or retaliation as any man I was every acquainted with”
(THG, Sept 1817)

(with C. Kurz's permission)

Needless to say, Laurent Clerc and Thomas Gallaudet encouraged all meetings and gatherings of deaf people: then, they can communicate among themselves and increase their fluency in sign language.

Social Status of the Deaf, by Thomas P. Fox.

Considering more particularly the change in their social state we discover, without much effort, the vast difference existing between the deaf-mutes of the past and those of the present day. There is little need to call attention to the opinions which prevailed in the early days of deaf-mute instruction, when the silent and speechless were looked upon as uncouth specimens of human nature; when they were believed to know but little concerning the world around them, and could, consequently, have no business transactions nor any links of sympathy with the surrounding population; when they were regarded as forming a distinct and secluded community, their deafness precluding all communication with others. That such opinions prevailed in former times is hardly to be wondered at, when we remember that in those days an educated deafmute was a rarity. Schools were not then flourishing; the very science of deaf-mute instruction was as yet undeveloped, or at best in its earliest infancy.

Thomas P. Fox, 1893, *Fourth National Convention held in Chicago with the Second World Congress of the World Federation of the Deaf*. Thomas Francis Fox is elected President. A resolution is passed opposing pure oralism as a universal means of instruction of the deaf.

1-1 From isolated individual to community

For unlike other cultures, Deaf culture is not associated with a single place, a “native land”. Rather it is a culture based on relationships among people to whom a number of places and associations may provide common ground.

Harlan Lane, Robert Hoffmeister and Ben Bahan, *A Journey into the Deaf World*, 1996.

The authors provide the American Heritage Dictionary definition for “world” (in Deaf-World) : “a class or group of people with common characteristics or pursuits and a particular way of life”. The proceedings of the National Conventions are very instructive: they show how eminent speakers addressed the attendants with topics of a higher importance, testifying on how they held Deaf people in high esteem as to their potential and capacities. This is the prerequisite for teachers who believe that students can improve. It was Laurent Clerc’s and Thomas H. Gallaudet’s credo. The addresses at those conventions are kind of manifestos delivered by optimistic speakers. The opening of the American School for the Deaf on April 15, 1817, and the subsequent founding of schools for the Deaf in the United States have paved a path for deaf communities to form and expand.

1-2 Importance of boarding schools and beginnings of co-education.

The importance of boarding schools has been carefully underlined by historians and sociologists alike. Not only did they allow offering education to children who were isolated and scattered in rural areas, they gathered them, thus making it possible to create strong links. If Laurent Clerc’s uncle had not taken his nephew to Paris, he would have lived stranded in a small town with no school to welcome him and with no deaf person to play and talk. Laurent Clerc’s correspondence recalls how difficult it was to abide by collective rules, but also how influential they were to provide a well framed setting where one can find his bearings. There he was in a family and its members shared the same language for efficient communication. There he made friends too.

Around 1863 there were more than 22 schools for the Deaf in America and they offered elementary grades only. Starting in 1850s, the schools for the deaf offered high classes for those students who desired to learn beyond the elementary education. At the time, colleges did not accept deaf students. In 1864, a Senate Act was signed by President Lincoln and The National Deaf-Mute College was set up. Girls were not allowed in here before 1887. Initially, female students enrolled at the college when it opened in 1864. They were in a preparatory program. Edward M. Gallaudet decided to close the doors to female students in 1868.

Christopher Kurz, and Kim B. Kurz, *Genesis of a College for the Deaf: The National Deaf-Mute College*, *Deaf Studies Digital Journal* 4 (2014).

Collegiate co-education began very slowly though: some women were educators, the reason being that being paid less than men, they were saving money to the institution. In 1864, five women were enrolled at Gallaudet College for the period starting in 1864 up to 1869.

It was a difficult time for these girls often were mocked by the boys. The “Don’t take any aprons to College”, said by a boy to a girl, epitomizes the kind of sarcasms directed at them. Chaperones were there to watch them and accompany them along the corridors or when they were getting out of the class-rooms.

Thomas H. Gallaudet himself confessed later that he had had some fears about co-education. Yet, the woman he married (Sophia Fowler) had been one of his students and the same happened to Laurent Clerc and Eliza Boardman. Very often girls got married to college students.

Gradually relationships between male and female students improved from blatant hostility to mild acceptance, thanks to some female activists and papers they published in magazines. Graduation Day also was important: members of the Congress and religious personalities were invited and this was evidence that they no longer tolerated, but approved co-education.

The most important aspect of the women’s collegiate opportunity was that it enriched their lives and made them better people. Even if none of them had responsibly handled positions of public and family service, their own lives were broadened by their experiences. Mrs. Hanson remembered how her college years “eliminated as far as possible the depressing realization of deafness as a handicap” and enabled her to perceive an ideal of what constituted a real lady and gentleman, which has remained my standard of measurement through my life.

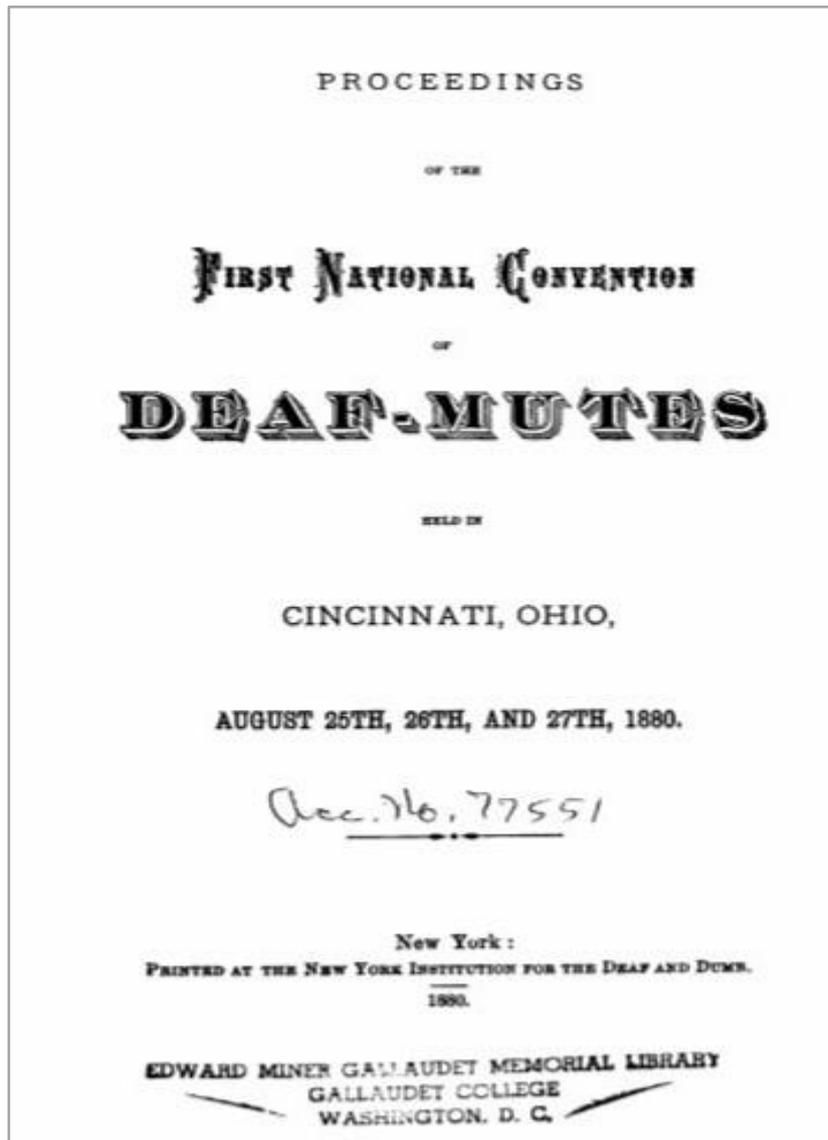
Nancy Carolyn Jones, *Don’t take any aprons to college. A study of the beginning of co-education at Gallaudet College*, thesis, 1983.

1-3 Importance of Associations among deaf people and Conventions for mutual improvement

This object of making us capable to enter upon all vocation of life, I think can be best gained by fostering and forming associations where an interchange of thoughts tending to improve the intellectual faculties can be exercised and where those of higher attainments may be able to impart their knowledge to the less favored ones, and thus give opportunity to all for improvement.

Theo A. Proehlich, *Institute of the Deaf*, New York.

All social gatherings were encouraged: sports activities, clubs, banquets, cafés.



The Proceedings of the National Deaf-Mute conventions (The first one was held in Cincinnati, Ohio in 1880; the second, in New York in 1883) show that they were popular gatherings and instrumental in having renowned personalities exchange ideas and debate useful topics, such as dealing with education and the place of the Deaf in society, among others. They met every third year (with the exception of the Third, delayed in 1889 to make sure the unveiling of Thomas Hopkins Gallaudet and Alice Cogswell's Memorial at Gallaudet's Kendall Green campus was possible) and contributed to the advancement of a community reflexion.

The New England Gallaudet Association of the Deaf was founded in 1850, serving as a predecessor for the first National Deaf-Mute convention on August 25, 1880. The convention chair, Edmund Booth, announced the needs for the deaf as a class for rights to education and sign language. The organization eventually was renamed to National Association of the Deaf in 1889. The conventions in the late 19th century passed resolutions: opposing pure oralism as a universal means of instruction of the deaf; removing "asylums" as reference to schools for the deaf, objecting to discriminate against the deaf in Civil Service, and requesting state legislatures not to place state schools for the deaf under the departments of Charities and Corrections.

➤ The Laurent Clerc Cultural Fund:

<https://www.gallaudet.edu/alumni/alumni-association/the-centennial-funds/laurent-clerc-cultural-fund/>

The Purpose of the Fund: to promote projects and activities that will lead to the cultural enrichment of deaf people. The fund may be devoted to programs such as the following:

- Endowment of four awards for meritorious achievement:
 - The Laurent Clerc Award for outstanding social contributions by a deaf person.
 - The Alice Cogswell Award for valuable service on behalf of deaf people.
 - The Edward Miner Gallaudet Award to international or national leaders, deaf or hearing, working to promote the well-being of deaf people of the world.
 - The Amos Kendall Award to a deaf person for notable excellence in a professional field not related to deafness.
- Community leadership in which public speaking, civic responsibility, literary activities, and the arts are encouraged for the benefit of adult deaf people.
- Dramatics.
- Educational programs for parents of deaf children, for those involved in training deaf people, and for deaf adults.
- Information media to foster communication within the deaf community and between deaf and hearing people.
- Literature.
- Memorials in the form of portraits, sculpture, and other comparable media.
- Motion picture and television production such as documentary, entertainment, and visual instructional aids.
- Talent Bureau to bring to the deaf community top-grade performing artists and speakers.
- Research relating to deafness.

The World Day of the Deaf, created much later by the World Federation of the Deaf in 1951 in Rome, served the same purpose:

1. Improve the status of national sign languages,
2. Better education for Deaf people,
3. Improve access to information and services,
4. Improve human rights for Deaf people in developing countries,
5. Promote the establishment of Deaf organizations where none currently exist



With a notable difference however: at the preceding National Conventions of Deaf Mutes, delegates were mostly intellectuals (heads of schools, eminent Reverends, journalists) and the addresses were for an élite attendance. Many decades later, all Deaf mutes could organize special events in all parts of the globe on the World Deaf Day to celebrate their actions and belonging to a global community. Modern technologies amplify the spreading of information that can reach even the most remote corners of any country.



World Deaf Day, often abbreviated to WDD, is an international day dedicated to raising awareness of deafness and presenting deaf culture, including sign language. It takes place on the last Saturday of September. It started as a day, but has become the highlight of a week of events, World Deaf Week.

In parallel, with WFD lobbying and proposal, the UN adopted International Sign Language Day on 23 September in December 2017.

UN web site: www.un.org/en/observances/sign-languages-day



Sign Languages Are for Everyone!



The International Day of Sign Languages is a unique opportunity to support and protect the linguistic identity and cultural diversity of all deaf people and other sign language users. In 2020, the World Federation of the Deaf is issuing a Global Leaders Challenge. This challenge aims to promote the use of sign languages by local, national, and global leaders in partnership with national associations of deaf people in each country, as well as other deaf-led organizations.

According to the World Federation of the Deaf, there are approximately 72 million deaf people worldwide. More than 80% of them live in developing countries.

Collectively, they use more than 300 different sign languages. Sign languages are fully fledged natural languages, structurally distinct from the spoken languages. There is also an international sign language, which is used by deaf people in international meetings and informally when travelling and socializing. It is considered a pidgin form of sign language that is not as complex as natural sign languages and has a limited lexicon.

The Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities recognizes and promotes the use of sign languages. It makes clear that sign languages are equal in status to spoken languages and obligates states parties to facilitate the learning of sign language and promote the linguistic identity of the deaf community.

The UN General Assembly has proclaimed 23 September 2017 as the International Day of Sign Languages in order to raise awareness of the importance of sign language in the full realization of the human rights of people who are deaf.

The **resolution 72/161** establishing the day acknowledges that early access to sign language and services in sign language, including quality education available in sign language, is vital to the growth and development of the deaf individual and critical to the achievement of the internationally agreed development goals. It recognizes the importance of preserving sign languages as part of linguistic and cultural diversity. It also emphasizes the principle of “nothing about us without us” in terms of working with deaf communities.

Arnaud Balard, a French Deafblind artist, designed an international flag, *Sign Union Flag* in 2013, promoting natural sign languages all over the world. He also created a franco-american group, *The Surdistis United 2018*. Il a aussi crée un groupe franco-américain *The Surdistis United 2018*, managed by artists such as Nancy Rourke and David Call.



NTID@RIT - <https://deaf-art.org/profiles/arnaud-balarid/> Sign union flag Adagp.fr, Paris

1-4 Importance of peers

Laurent Clerc was educated at the Institute for the Deaf in Paris, a boarding school. There he saw the importance of living with peers of various social origins to develop sign language communication. Exchanging face to face with peers (and teachers, more particularly his deaf teachers and also mentors) is a prerequisite and offers a unique experience for improving one's fluency. He moved easily in his studies from one level to the next one before becoming himself an instructor. He knew all the rules of the game, from the bottom up. There he developed good teaching skills. He was deaf, had learned L'Abbé de l'Épées's signs and was teaching them. Sign language is passed from the older generation to the younger generation through deaf peers. Ted Supulla suggests that we are now in the 6th to 8th generation of the sign language, passed from Laurent Clerc.

2 - From isolated childhood to responsible citizenship

Laurent Clerc was setting an example. Basically, his actions and dedication to deaf students were the result of his philosophy, expressed in his Address to the Connecticut Legislature on May 28, 1818:

Every creature, every work of God is admirably well-made; but if anyone appears imperfect in our eyes, it does not belong to us to criticize it.

What could better express a sense of alterity through equality? His respect for differences of all kinds no doubt helped his admirers and then followers to promote those he called "the unfortunates" and gave some impetus (whose impact he was not aware of) to their movements to emancipation. It is made easier when there is confidence in one's potential, individually and collectively.

2-1 Deaf mutes in Politics

Social changes are under way:

We have reason to be thankful for the great changes in our social and political condition which has taken place within the last half-century, time was when a deaf-mute was classed with idiots and lunatics, or other irresponsible persons, and deprived of all legal and political privileges. Locke, in his Commentaries on the Law, pronounced us as an imbecile and irresponsible class, without any legal rights whatever. Today, we are recognized as equals with our more fortunate brothers or sisters, in the eye of the law, in all save the precious possession of hearing, and our political rights are assured to us beyond the power of recall. We possess the right of suffrage, which, of itself, is a manifest recognition of our intelligence and capabilities.

Harry White, Massachusetts, *Deaf-Mutes in Politics*, paper delivered at the Second National Deaf-Mute Convention of the Deaf, New York, 1889.

Response by Mr. Bond:

Deaf-mutes ought to go into politics with all the circumstances possible. They are but handfuls here and there, but they could accomplish some good with national issues, and also with State governments if they combined. We would be recognized did we go into a party united. If deaf-mutes neglect politics, they cannot be citizens of the United States. So long as they take no interest in politics, they are fit to remain on foreign soil. Politics protect the Union and its constitution, and deaf-mutes ought to study all they can from national politics to local politics. From the Federal Government down to the local city government, all are run by politics. If mutes do not take interest in politics, they become ignorant of the system of Federal Government. I advise all deaf-mutes to take the interest they can in politics, regardless of party measures.

Education and deaf schools enabled the Deaf to acquire a language and then some knowledge, which opened many doors.

Obviously, Laurent Clerc and Thomas H. Gallaudet are the initiators of the creation of a Deaf identity within the social sphere too. Let it be remembered that Dr. Mason F. Cogswell's decision was to educate his young deaf daughter, Alice, in a school, among her peers. It is worth remembering that Dr. Cogswell, a renowned physician did not try the medical approach with his daughter. No time was lost as soon as the three personalities met.

Schools are microcosms of society, the workshop where living together is experienced and where "community" rules must be shared by all. Dr. Cogswell, Laurent Clerc and Thomas H Gallaudet pooled their intelligence and a sense of the importance of a social belonging to provide deaf people with the best conditions to bloom, as individuals, and as citizens too.

Their progressive ideas have developed in the years following their death up to present times.

Research in many fields has formalized their ideas in scientific studies, well documented papers and scholarly essays; and when reading them, we can see how the original nucleus, formed around 1817 in Hartford, is central.

The legacy of Laurent Clerc and Thomas H. Gallaudet, with the efficient help of Dr. Cogswell, is to be found in their individual genius and in their collective interaction. Their views on education were eminently social and egalitarian: it was "school for all" that they gave birth to. A school for every deaf individual regardless of their social level and a school everywhere so that no Deaf is deprived of education regardless of their geographic location. Each French region, each American state has opened its own, establishing the conditions for education everywhere from the prototype created in Hartford and imported from the INJS in Paris. This geographic network has given visibility to the Deaf. No longer being likely to be ignored, it was then necessary to go further in the recognition of their social status and their identity

2-2 The legal status of the Deaf

One condition to be recognized as a citizen is to abide by the collective laws of the society. In France the legal system derives from the Roman law, which is still in force.

Theoretically [...] a deaf mute in France is not deprived of any of his legal rights and privileges, but only of the exercise of them, because of the physical impossibility of his compliances with the formalities required by the French Law". Deaf-Mutes, for example, can marry if they are able to express their consent in unequivocal signs. The Deaf asked for the Code to be amended as to provide for an interpreter." In the French code, capacity is the rule, incapacity, the exception. Source: Albert C. Gaw, "The development of the legal status of the deaf, a comparative study of the rights and responsibilities of Deaf-Mutes Rome, France, England, America", American Annals of the Deaf 52, no.5, 1907.

Being deaf himself, Clerc was true to the cause of the Deaf. Had he been a "lesser" man, the cause would have been lost forever. He had the faith and zeal to show deaf people how fallacies can be corrected by their own achievements. Through his own personal example, he advanced the cause of the Deaf for all future generations.

William W. Turner, *Laurent Clerc, American Annals of the Deaf and Dumb* 15, no.1, (1870) : 16-28.

James Howard, in a paper entitled "Our pupils and their future" wrote:

Given a brain capable of development, there is no reason that the deaf should not become as worthy members of society and as responsible citizens as persons who possess all their faculties. In the transformation of the Deaf from irresponsible childhood to responsible citizenship, the place and power of language is most marked; and to give them this language, and with it the ability to understand and use the privileges of life to the advantage of themselves and the community, is the reason for the provision and work of our special schools and institutions.

James Howard, *Our Pupils and Their Future*, read at a meeting of the Midland Branch of the British national Association of Teachers of the Deaf, held at the North

2-3 Creating “whole” individuals in a vibrant community

For Deaf people, as Carol Padden and Tom Humphries make clear, their signed language is “life-giving”, and is at the center of a rich cultural heritage. There is a gap between how Deaf people view themselves and the way hearing people view them. It is best expressed in their stories where they show their idiosyncrasies with much humor.

Deaf in America: voices from a culture, Carol Padden and Tom Humphries.

<https://www.hup.harvard.edu/catalog.php?isbn=9780674194243>

Identity is an evolutive process as Irene Leigh⁹¹ underlines it:

It is important to recognize that the culturally Deaf identity will be shaped through interactions with all the other minority identities. Recognizing all of these intersectionalities will help the Deaf person feel like a “whole” person.

[...]

Finally, at the universal level, we are all human. Because of this, we share many similarities, including biological and physical similarities, common life experiences such as birth, death, emotions, awareness about ourselves, and the ability to use symbols, especially language. Each dimension involves a process of reflecting, accepting, and selecting identity labels based on psychological motivation, cultural knowledge, and the ability to perform appropriate roles (e.g., student, parent, worker, etc.) [...] It is important to understand that the meaning of each identity category will tend to change throughout life, depending on time, age, and situation. For example, what it means to be a female at age 6 is not the same as at age 20, 50, or 80. When we ask a group of deaf older students or adults how they may describe themselves, very often the word deaf will come up. Some individuals are born deaf. They may accept or not accept calling themselves deaf or Deaf, depending on their situation or experience. This can change over time. Those individuals who identify themselves as culturally Deaf are individuals who use ASL or a signed language, who feel strongly that being Deaf is a benefit or a gain, socialize with other culturally Deaf persons, and live a visual way of life. They feel at home with each other.

[...]

Irene W. Leigh, Jean Andrews, Raychelle Harris and Topher Gonzalez Avila, *Deaf Culture: Exploring Deaf Communities in the United States, 2nd Edition, 2020.*

⁹¹ Irene W. Leigh, a psychologist. Dr. Leigh serves on review boards of professional journals and was associate editor of the Journal of Deaf Studies and Deaf Education from 2005 to 2011

2-4 Social interactions

Sylvain Kerbourc'h analyzed the evolution of the way deaf people perceive themselves and are perceived by hearing people, and the role played by language in social interactions in the city. Specifically in Chapter 2: From the Deaf Movement to Deaf Social Speech, identity is an ever-present issue.

From a historical perspective, he highlights the importance and role of *Coup d'Oeil* magazine, but also of the workshops and international meetings at Gallaudet College and... especially from 1978 and 1979:

These meetings and workshops are above all the time of individual awareness of the social relations of the field of deafness, for example through what LS means to a deaf and a non-deaf person, or what it means to "be deaf" in a talkative society. In contrast to what has gone before - with the exception of T.V.I. - the American epic constitutes a shared experience which allows to solidify the bases of a collective action and to pass from the dream to the reality: the question of the LS is henceforth durably put.

In the conclusion of his analysis, he underlines the "ambivalence" "of the social relations between deaf and non-deaf people". We can note here that hearing people are designated as "non-deaf", thus replacing the traditional division between deaf and hearing people.

Indeed, at the very moment when a new law in favor of the "handicapped" of February 11, 2005 for "equal rights and opportunities, participation and citizenship of the handicapped" is voted, the question of identity reappears publicly. From something that many deaf people did not know what to do with until then or preferred to ignore (Decourchelle, 1994), this question of identity becomes the cause of a debate that opens around the claimed term of "deaf citizenship", a debate that is at least that of the conditions of the social participation of deaf people in the City. What is not without recalling, in an ironic way, what Bernard Mottez said about the American deaf people in the 1970s or more generally about the French deaf people: namely that the question of the place of the City is always situated between the register of the "handicap" - because taken in the public policies - and the register of the identity - because having a language. In other words, that the social relations between the deaf and the non deaf, between the deaf and the society are ambivalent social relations. Ambivalence that it would be necessary perhaps to begin to take into account, avoiding thus to some - deaf persons, parents even professionals of the deafness - to have to make choices and not others among the resources that they have that they are individual or collective. It is a question of allowing each one to be able to articulate in a coherent way the social and the cultural, the similar and the different, the common and the particular.

Sylvain Kerbouc'h, *Du Mouvement Sourd à la parole publique des Sourds; Les Sourds dans la cité*, Ehess, November 2006. [From Deaf movement to the public language of the Deaf; the Deaf in the city]. HAL Archives Ouvertes, hal.archives-ouvertes.fr/hal-00351622/document

HAL Archives Ouvertes, hal.archives-ouvertes.fr/hal-00351622/document

CONCLUSION

A legacy to always grow.

In Philadelphia, on December 7, 1816, Laurent Clerc and Thomas H. Gallaudet addressed a public meeting held in Washington Hall, on South Third Street, at which the Chief Justice of Pennsylvania, William Tilghman, presided, and John Bacon acted as secretary. Great interest was aroused in the subject of the education of the deaf, and the meeting appointed a committee of prominent citizens to solicit contributions for the proposed school.

William Tilghman, chief justice, was called to the chair and the opening of his address was more than optimistic and over confident:

*Ladies and gentlemen,
There exist no longer between the Deaf and Dumb and those who hear and speak
that barrier which separated them for many centuries and which a charitable
philanthropist of France has had the courage and talent to overcome.*

Thus, in the 19th century, LC, Thomas H Gallaudet and their followers initiated further modern developments as we know them today. We are far from the opposition between oralists and manualists (symbolized by Desloges' opposition) and from Itard's attempts as the champion of physiological education. If there is only a handful of schools that are truly bilingual in France, it is still the result of a lack of resources to set them up.

In France, much later, The Deaf Awakening⁹², IVT⁹³, bilingual Schools, are headstones in activists' movements to give more visibility and equality to the Deaf. The DPN (Deaf President now) movement in the USA, to elect a Deaf president for Gallaudet University, is symbolical in many ways.

I did not become deeply committed to the cause of bilingualism by pure chance; my commitment stemmed from my own observations and thoughts on the communication situations that I had experienced throughout my personal and professional life. Before describing the birth of the bilingual education movement, this book recalls the gradual rise of the interest in sign language that then developed into the struggle for bilingualism, starting in the nineteen seventies and right up to the present day. This growing interest and the many different initiatives and actions that it prompted through the French bilingual movement in the final

⁹² After a century of prohibition of sign language in the institutes, the Deaf have a surge of awakening towards the end of the 1970's (the "Deaf Awakening"): they claim a bilingual education including sign language in their schools. This movement will lead in 1979 to the creation of the association "Deux Langues Pour une Education" (2LPE) (2 languages in education. It is created in 1979, notably by Christian Deck, André Minguy, Michel Lamothe.

⁹³ IVT - International Visual Theatre is an emblematic cultural place of the Deaf culture, constituted in three poles: a theater, a training center and a publishing house.

In 1976, the American deaf artist Alfredo Corrado went to France to work for the Nancy University Theatre Festival. He met Jean Grémion, a French director who was already engaged in research on non-verbal theatre.

In 1977 they founded IVT - International Visual Theatre, the first theater company for Deaf actors, thanks to the Franco-American collaboration of the International Theatre Institute. They quickly called upon Bill Moody, an English - ASL interpreter and founder of the Chicago Deaf Theatre, who became IVT's first interpreter. The creation of IVT corresponds to the awakening of the deaf movement, through theater. It is a moment of awareness of the deaf of their social position.

IVT became known to the general public, first in 1992 thanks to the play *Les enfants du silence* by Mark Medoff, in which Emmanuelle Laborit played the lead role. It was this play that allowed Emmanuelle Laborit to become the only deaf actress to win the Molière for theatrical revelation. (Wikipedia).

decades of the 20th century, finally led to the official recognition of French Sign Language in 2005.

André Minguy⁹⁴, *The Deaf Awakening in France, For a Bilingual Perspective*, l'Harmattan, 2009. Preface of Christian Cuxac.

In France, it was in 1970, under the impetus of the National Confederation of the Deaf of France (CNSF) that a "committee of interpreters" was created, the main purpose of which was to interpret the congress of the World Federation of the Deaf. (FMS) held in July 1971 in Paris. It was after this that, in 1978, Christiane Fournier, a teacher and trainer, and daughter of deaf parents, created the French National Association of Interpreters for Hearing Impaired (ANFIDA). At the time, the use of the expression "French interpreter - LSF" was not common. She understood the need to train these people, to give them visibility and status.

AFILS: French Association of Sign Language Interpreters. www.afils.fr

The process at work of opening up and emancipation continues. All human beings living in society stand at the crossroads between nature and culture. The social approach is no longer a normative one, but moves toward the acceptance of differences, more particularly with the presence of cultural minorities in mainstream society.

More and more deaf students, both in France and in the USA, have taken other modern/foreign languages besides their country's written and signed languages, French and LSF or English and ASL, and studying them. Every language conveys some culture. Opening up to the culture of the other one operates both ways. Laurent Clerc and Thomas H. Gallaudet both insisted on language learning.

We interviewed two students at RIT to know what they learned about Laurent Clerc and Thomas H. Gallaudet and how they appropriated Deaf culture.

Student 1:

I don't remember but I don't think I knew about them [Laurent Clerc and Thomas H. Gallaudet] until after I arrived at RIT. I arrived at RIT with almost no knowledge of ASL, Deaf Culture, or Deaf History (100% mainstreamed/oral background). If I did know about them, I probably just knew the very basics like they were important figures in US Deaf History or something very vague like that. They were probably the first Deaf History historical figures I learned about. [...] I would like to see more complex depictions of both Laurent Clerc and Thomas H. Gallaudet as well as early US Deaf History. The past informs how the present is shaped so I think their legacies and early Deaf Education History is still important/relevant today. Their legacies is why today's ASL has a lot of Old LSF influence and alumni of American School for the Deaf went on to found other Deaf Schools in other states that still exist today. If Clerc and Gallaudet made different choices during their lifetimes, ASL, US Deaf Education, and maybe even French

⁹⁴ André Minguy: Specialized carpentry worker, then specialized technical teacher for the deaf. - Activist for the recognition and teaching of French Sign Language and founder of the movement 2 languages for an education

Deaf Education would probably look different than it does today. Their legacies established the historical link between US Deaf History and French Deaf History. The sign languages used today in many countries in the Americas, Africa, and specific Asian countries are descended from ASL (and therefore also have Old LSF influence) so both Clerc and Gallaudet are thus indirectly part of this historical context.

At the same time, I feel that the way their legacies are told is often over-simplified and elevated to a myth-like status. Realistically, there were probably a number of other less famous or unknown people who also made important contributions to early US Deaf Education and History (as well as French Deaf Education and History). Also, several sign languages and different fingerspelling alphabets were already in use in the US at that time and I believe there was an earlier attempt to found a Deaf School in Virginia (?). If things occurred differently back then, Gallaudet might have imported the oral method into the US due to how he first attempted to contact the Braidwood Institution in Scotland and was denied, leading him to go to France. Both Clerc and Gallaudet (as well as Abbé de l'Épée) were (perhaps inadvertently) part of a movement of growing interest by religious figures and governments in Deaf Education in the 1600s, 1700s, and 1800s. Finally, French perspectives on Clerc and Gallaudet seem to be rarely mentioned within the US. Basically, I think that their legacies are still important/relevant today but what actually happened and who they were as people living in the 18th and 19th centuries in France and the young United States was likely more complex than most depictions today seem to suggest.

Becki Anderson. She graduated with a Bachelor of Science last May. She took the Study Abroad course in Deaf Studies and Transatlantic roots in France two years ago and visited Balme, Lyons, a few different locations on the way to Paris and finally Paris for 2 weeks as part of the course.

Student 2:

[...] When I was in CSD Fremont, they taught the history of Laurent Clerc and Thomas H Gallaudet. Before the lesson, I had no idea who they were. I know that they are fathers of American sign language and American Deaf education, that's all.

Maya Penn who went to Fremont is a graduate student in MSSE (Secondary Education).

This recalls the testimony of a French former student who attended courses in history and Deaf culture at Gallaudet University (2008-2013) (see chap 1, Private testimonies)

In American history and Deaf culture classes, the professor talked about it a lot. It was thanks to him that I finally understood the impact of the Abbé de l'Épée and Laurent Clerc on the development of sign language in the world. We can say that ASL is the daughter of LSF since ASL is made up of 60% old LSF and 40% regional American Sign Language.”

Martin Dayan

In *The Deaf community in America on the making*, Melvia Nomeland underlines the evolution too:

This volume tracks the changes in education and the social world of deaf people through the years. Topics covered include the attitudes toward the deaf in Europe and America, the evolution of communication and language and increasing influence of education. Of particular interest is the way in which deafness has been increasingly humanized, rather than medicalized or pathologized"--Provided by publisher.

The deaf community in America on the making, Melvia Nomeland, jefferson N.C.: Mc Farland, 2012.

Rebecca A.R. Edwards' synthetic statement brings us back to the beginning where the concept of an enlarged community and citizenship had its roots in a particular "partnership":

They were an unlikely pair to start a revolution in American education. Thomas Hopkins Gallaudet (1787-1851) was a hearing American, a minister by training, a graduate of Yale. Laurent Clerc (1785-1869) was a Deaf French-man, a fluent signer, a gifted teacher at his former school, the National institute at Paris. A series of fortunate events brought the two together from an ocean's distance. Their meeting has slipped into legend in the Deaf community, but it is worth recounting the tale here. For with their partnership, these courses constitute the moment of individual awareness of social relationships in the field of deafness, for example through what LS represents for a Deaf and a non-Deaf, or what means "to be deaf" in a hearing society. Unlike what has happened before - with the exception of IVT. - the American epic constitutes a shared experience which makes it possible to solidify the bases of collective action and to move from dream to reality: the question of LS is now raised on a lasting basis, they founded not just a school, but an American community, a Deaf world.

R.A.R Edwards, *Words made flesh: nineteenth century deaf education and the growth of deaf culture. A yale man and a deaf man open a school and create a world*, *American Annals of the Deaf* 14, no.1 (Fall 2013).

Thomas Hopkins Gallaudet and Laurent Clerc
A Yale Man and a Deaf Man Open a School and Create a World
R. A. R. Edwards

Complementary teaching material

On a USB Flash Drive, or on the Consortium website: <http://consortium-laces-lsf-pour-tous.fr>, you can access:

- 15 Unité (and their listing) + 15 matching Power points
- Teachers' Guidance
- LSF and ASL video clips.

Sources and Bibliography

Note des auteurs : Les auteurs fournissent une traduction française ou anglaise des titres des œuvres citées, entre parenthèses, comme aide à la compréhension du sens. Ce ne sont pas nécessairement les titres de traductions publiées. Des liens utiles vers des sites internet sont aussi exceptionnellement indiqués.

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Il a aussi créé un drapeau, le "Sign Union Flag" in 2013, (drapeau de l'union des signes) pour promouvoir toutes les langues des signes dans le monde.

[Arnaud Balard is a deaf-blind artist at the origin of *Surdism*, [Le Surdisme] and he created The Sign union flag to promote all sign languages in the world.] NTID@RIT - <https://deaf-art.org/profiles/arnaud-balard/> Sign union flag Adagp.fr Paris

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Activities that promote the long history of the U.S. France relationship and build people-to-people ties, including, but not limited to commemorations of key historic events and commemorative programs.

The project dealing with the Franco-American partnership in Deaf Education around the two figures of Laurent Clerc and Thomas H. Gallaudet was submitted in July 2020 and validated in September 2020.

From September 2020 onward till the end of August 2021, we've been accompanied by the Department of cultural Affairs at the Embassy in Paris and we want to express our gratitude to the persons who helped us.

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A Project of the scope of ours needed someone to deal with the editing process to publish all contents on the Consortium platform at first. Making all contents properly laid out and attractive looking, as an incitement to a pleasant and effective training, was the main prerequisite. Corine Niget, administrative and web design assistant, was up to the task. Our thanks too to Loïc Kervajan, the Consortium webmaster and platform manager who downloaded all material (French and English) and made them easily accessible.

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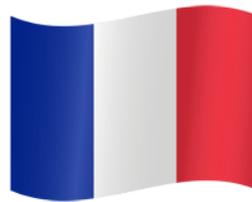
Our sincere acknowledgments to all those around us who lavished on us encouragement and support: many Deaf and hearing teachers, professionals, colleagues, peers and friends, families, who enabled us to achieve our goal.

We want to dedicate this book to Laurent Clerc Holt and to Kathy Clerc Galloway, as well as Edward Clerc Galloway, the living descendants of Laurent Clerc. They have accompanied us all along and we hope we haven't betrayed in any way the positive image they must have of their illustrious ancestor.

Laurent Clerc and Thomas H. Gallaudet are the ones deserving the most part of our thanks, full admiration, respect and gratitude: they were pioneers and they remind us that breaking ground is always possible, come what may.

Mireille Golaszewski
Christopher Kurz

The Authors



Mireille Golaszewski: A former student of the Ecole Normale Supérieure (ENS Lyon), Mireille Golaszewski holds a master's degree in general linguistics, an agrégation in English, and a degree in literature and linguistics from the University of Edinburgh (Scotland). She has taught English and American literature in the Classes Préparatoires Khâgne. She has published articles and books in this field. She is also the co-translator of E.P. Thompson's *The genesis of the English-working class*, published by Gallimard [La formation de la classe ouvrière anglaise] and translator of *Introduction to Deaf Culture* by Thomas K. Holcomb (Introduction à la culture sourde, Editions Eres, 2016).

In 1998, she became General Inspector of the French National Education System, in the Modern Languages group. She contributed to the development of school twinnings between French academies and American states to favor students' linguistic exchanges.

She was then entrusted with successive ministerial missions following the law of February 11, 2005, concerning the education of hearing-impaired and deaf students. She co-directed the drafting and publication of the LSF teaching programs, created the optional LSF test for the baccalaureate, the complementary LSF certification test for teachers holding a CAPES in any subject matters, the LSF Competence Diploma (DCL LSF) and opened the first LSF Capes, one of which ("*Third competition*") was accessible to deaf candidates, thus allowing them to access, for the first time, to the title of "teacher". She chaired the first session in 2010. She helped to set up the PASS (Pôles pour l'accompagnement à la scolarisation des élèves malentendants et sourds), today called PEJS (Pôles pour l'éducation des jeunes Sourds), in the académies. All this was achieved by mixed teams of hearing and deaf teachers, pedagogues and linguists that she coordinated.

Today, she is an honorary General Inspector and co-founder of the L@cces-lsf-pour-tous Consortium (<http://consortium-laces-lsf-pour-tous.fr>) in 2013. She continues to bring her linguistic and pedagogical expertise to the national Education system, higher education and vocational training more particularly aimed at deaf or hearing students around LSF and Deaf culture.

The L@cces-lsf-pour-tous Consortium has a wide range of online training courses, on its digital platform, which has developed distance learning for the target groups. It is also a research center, as evidenced by its creation of the *Face à Face fr-lsf-angl -asl* free Application, (online in June

2021) which has mobilized teams in France and in the United States, and which allows for the cross-learning of four languages French, LSF (Langue des Signes française), English, ASL (American Sign Language) in a linguistic immersion situation , with accompanying and practicing exercises. Similarly, the present work devoted to Laurent Clerc and Thomas Gallaudet, supported by the U.S. Embassy in Paris, brought together a Franco-American team in the spirit of partnership emphasized in the title.

Mireille Golaszewski is a Knight of the Legion of Honor (2010).



Christopher Adam Noel Kurz is professor for the Master of Science in Secondary Education program and director of the Mathematics and Science Language and Learning Lab at Rochester Institute of Technology (RIT). After earning his Bachelor of Science in Applied Mathematics from RIT, he taught mathematics and science to high school and college deaf and hearing students for more than 15 years. He is currently teaching courses in history of deaf education thought and practice, methods, and sign language pedagogy in the graduate program at RIT. He has published articles and books in those fields.

After completing his doctoral dissertation using historical research, *A historical analysis of mathematics education for the deaf during the nineteenth century*, analyzes the trends and issues in mathematical pedagogy for deaf students at schools for the deaf and the national college for the deaf during the 19th century, at University of Kansas, he has published articles and book chapters on history of deaf education, including Laurent Clerc, Amos G. Draper, and Edward M. Gallaudet. He and Susan Lane-Outlaw, ASL-English specialist and current executive director of Metro Deaf School in Saint Paul, Minnesota, have developed a Deaf Pioneer Series of ASL-English storybooks, highlighting the lives of Deaf people who overcame obstacles to become contributing citizens of the American community.

Dr. Kurz is leading a team that has built a free and open crowdsourcing multilingual platform, All Children Reading: World Around You (WAY) (deafworldaroundyou.org) to promote sign and print literacy through storytelling. His team works closely with multiple countries to translate and/or develop shared storybooks in their sign and print languages. His team is currently implementing a new program, Project TREE: Transforming Reading in Early Education for Deaf Children, a multi-layered signing-reading curriculum designed to transform language learning experience for deaf and hard of hearing younger children in Fiji, Papua New Guinea, and the Philippines. It addresses the global literacy gap by providing training and assessment modules in Sign Language Rhythm and Rhyme and Shared Multilingual Reading Strategies to promote sign and print language development, utilizing the early childhood developmental principles of sign language play and family socialization with literacy.

His lab is dedicated to understanding processes involved in accessing, acquiring and producing content knowledge and skills in mathematics and science with support of multimodal literacies, including American Sign Language and English. His research interests include content language and literacy in mathematics and science, Deaf experience with math and science learning, ASL/English bilingual education, gaming, and international deaf literacy and sign language documentation.

He is a recipient of the RIT Eisenhart Outstanding Teaching Award* (2015).
(For some of his publications, go to Bibliography.)

*Eisenhart Award for Outstanding Teaching was established in 1965 through an honorary endowment fund from the late Mr. Herbert and Elsa Bausch Eisenhart to commemorate excellence in teaching.