



Governor Mandel stands with the French ambassador, Jacques Kosciusko-Morizet (center), and Count Rene de

Chambrun, a descendant of the Marquis de Lafayette, after wreath laying ceremonies at French monument

Sunpapers photos—Ralph L. Robinson

Count is citizen

Nobleman gilds Assembly opening

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Annapolis—The French nobleman who lent a wisp of aristocratic elegance to yesterday's opening of the General Assembly glided in and out of town with the flourish of a visiting monarch.

Today, Count René de Chambrun—great-great-great grandson of the Marquis de Lafayette—is at Lagrange College near Atlanta receiving an honorary degree from the institution that bears the name of his forebears' (and now his) home in France.

The count, who also is president of the renowned French crystal firm of Baccarat and is a prominent Paris attorney, had come to Annapolis to bring and receive honor for France, the United States, his illustrious ancestor and himself.

"My wife and I received about 20 invitations to come to this country," he said yesterday after speaking at St. John's College, "but to do this I would

have had to close my law office and close Baccarat."

He chose to accept his state invitation, he said, because "My allegiance is to Maryland," a state that gave him citizenship in fulfilling its pledge to Lafayette and all his male descendants.

That citizenship allowed him as a young man to take the New York state bar examination and eventually to practice law there.

In his speech before the Maryland Legislature, the 69-year-old count talked of "two centuries of friendship and good will between two great countries" and called Maryland "closest to my heart of any other state in the union."

He spoke of his ancestor, of the Treaty of Paris, of George and Martha Washington.

Later yesterday, Louis L. Goldstein, the state comptroller, told him that his words had the delegates "eating out of your hand."

The count presented to the Governor

speech notes written by Lafayette and letters to Washington announcing the last negotiations of the Treaty of Paris. Later Governor Mandel gave Count de Chambrun two silver goblets, replicas of ones bought by Lafayette and given to his Baltimore hosts on the Marquis's last visit.

Before closing his speech to the Legislature, the count looked at his watch and said he was thinking of his Fifteenth-Century home, Lagrange, where daylight was almost over:

"Night is falling over those towers; Madame de Chambrun is lighting the candles in [the] library," the aging aristocrat said softly.

And then of Lafayette:

"His soul can see now what is happening there in his home and what is happening here in Annapolis this morning where one of his descendants is feeling, as deeply as I do, the warmth of your words that I will never forget."