

*The Founders of the Baltimore & Ohio Railroad,*

*Painted by F. B. Mayer.*

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## MARYLAND'S HISTORICAL PAINTER, FRANK B. MAYER.

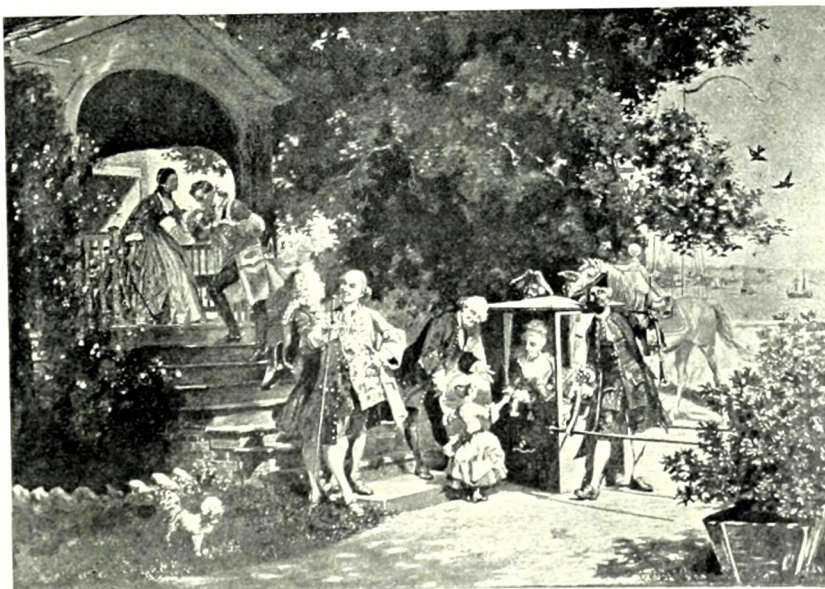
BY HENRY C. HOPKINS IN "DIXIE."



MARYLAND, that has contributed so generously to the political and literary development of this country, has in no less a degree assisted in the evolution of native art. From the settlement of the colony to the present day, her people have been distinguished for their elegance and taste, and every decade has produced a name that has won its way to national recognition. The sumptuousness of the colonial life,—which was housed in mansions, instructed by the best English models, waited on by slaves, and

amused by the highest art the theatre then afforded,—has plainly left its impress on the minds of succeeding generations. In whatever proceeds from Maryland is seen that largeness of conception, fullness of design, in either mental or material effort, that evidences the generosity and freedom that have always distinguished her mode of life.

Successively has each stage of American development received signal encouragement through the brains and hands of her people. When life became the price of independence, lives were sacrificed with the same grace with which they had been lived, and



Painted by  
F. B. Mayer.

By  
Courtesy  
of "Dixie."

"My Lady's Visit," or Annapolis in 1750.

when political science was fairly exhausted in the maintenance of a government that presented new and unsolved problems, many of its most serious difficulties were overcome by her men of law.

In the growth of American art,—which gave the first strong evidence of existence immediately after the Revolutionary period,—Maryland has held an honorable, if not a foremost, position.

But, strange to say, of all the men who, by means of their art, have added some-

of both the artistic and the practical sides of colonial life constitutes him an authority of recognized worth.

Mr. Mayer was born in Baltimore of parentage combining the traits of the South of Germany and the North of Ireland, people who from their first residence took a solid and recognized standing in the commercial life of the city. He early showed a keen perception of color and form and a quick sense of the ridiculous. A love for mechanics developed with the study of art,

“*The  
Old Clerk.*”

Painted by  
F. B. Mayer.

By  
Courtesy  
of “*Dixie.*”



what to the fame of their native state, but one has sought to preserve the charming and varied historical life and scenes with which she is so richly endowed.

As regrettable as this may be, no one has depicted colonial life with truer sympathy or approached the task more fully prepared than Frank B. Mayer, the artist who for over thirty years has striven to rouse the people of his state to an appreciative recognition of the beauties of history that surround them. He has succeeded in many instances, for his intimate knowledge

but the latter obtained the mastery under the tuition of Alfred J. Miller, whose prominence as an artist, and kindly qualities, had grouped around him a number of devoted pupils. Mr. Miller's training in the French school of 1830 and his subsequent experience as artist of the expedition of Sir W. C. Stewart in the then “*Far West,*” gave him great advantages as a teacher and a leader in historical art. He was succeeded as a teacher by Ernest Fischer, a thoroughly educated artist of the Antwerp and Dresden schools, who, during his

residence in Baltimore, gave instruction to numerous students.

Of these Mr. Mayer was one, and while acting as librarian of the Maryland Historical Society he made the illustrations for the works of his uncle, Col. Brantz Mayer, on Mexico and for the "Twenty Years of an African Slaver." The result of his labor enabled him to accomplish the cherished wish of actual acquaintance with our aborigines and as a traveler to know his own country. A summer spent among the Da-

Thunder Dance," two pictures founded on these drawings, have been engraved for the United States Government. After attending the treaties of Traverse de Sioux and Mendota, which precluded the departure of the last red man from the banks of the Mississippi (Mechasibi), an extended tour, including the Mammoth Cave and Mackinaw, followed, and proved an object lesson in home scenery and humanity.

In the interval between the instructions of Miller and Fischer, Mr. Mayer was em-



*"Benjamin Franklin's First Walk in Philadelphia."*

*Painted by  
F. B. Mayer.*

*By  
Courtesy  
of "Dixie."*

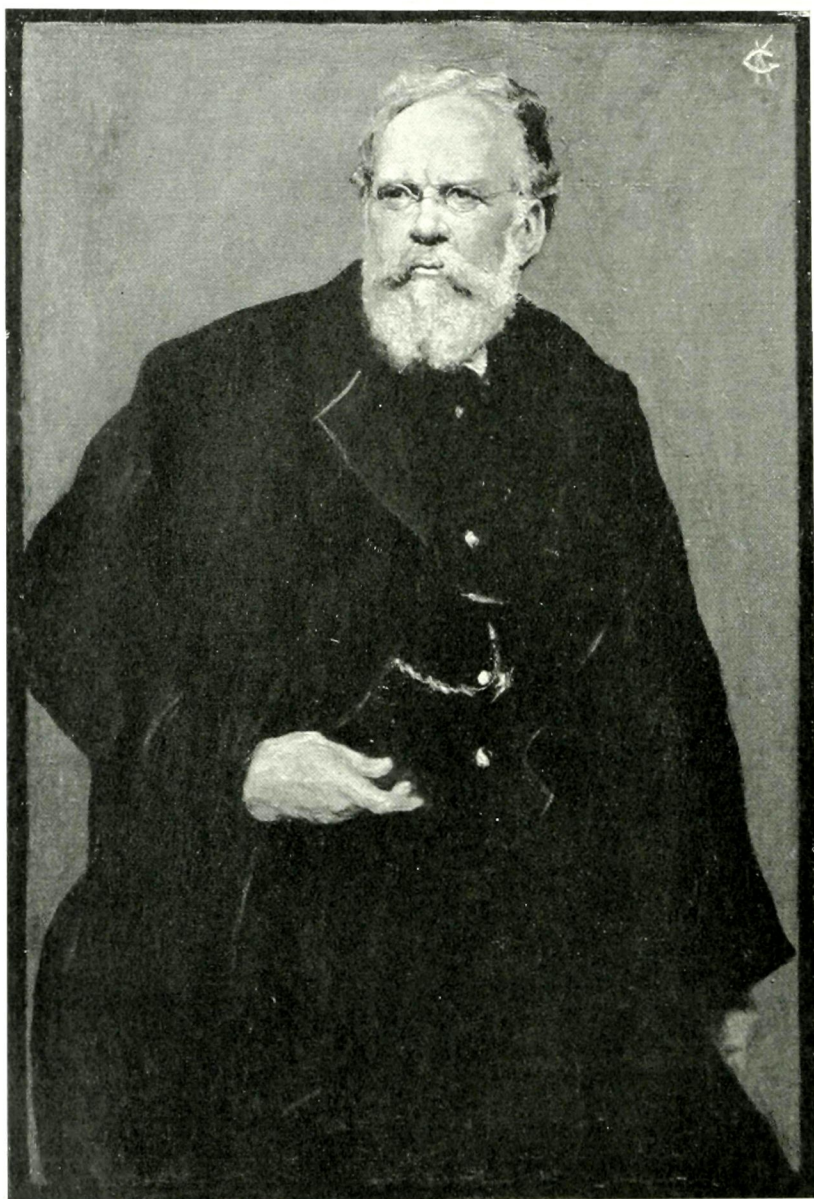
kota Indians, as one of the party accompanying the Commissioners of the Government who were to make the treaties which created the State of Minnesota, and the Dakotas, offered a rare opportunity to observe ceremonies and scenes which ordinarily took place only at long intervals, and to see many types of the Indian collected in an important council. The artist, with ever-busy pencil, filled sketch book and journal, which are already valuable as unique records of a rapidly disappearing race. "The Feast of Mondawmin" and "The

employed by a Philadelphia publisher in drawings on wood, illustrative of scenes in the then recent war with Mexico, attention having been drawn to his work by a lithographic composition of the charge of "Captain May at the battle of Resaca de la Palme." While at work in Philadelphia he passed his evenings in the life-school of the Pennsylvania Academy of Arts in acquiring a knowledge of the human form and action. He now resumed the use of the crayon in making portraits, notably those of Chief Justice Taney, Chief Justice

*Frank B.  
Mayer.*

*Drawn by  
Katharine  
Gassaway.*

*By  
Courtesy  
of "Dixie."*



Legrand of Maryland, McMahon, W. H. Collins and others, and began the practice of oil in pictures of cabinet sizes, either as scenes of familiar life or in subjects of historic tendency clothed in the picturesque dress of the last century, an anticipation of the present interest in our colonial life. Of these the picture in the Corcoran Gallery, "Doing and Dreaming," "Independence," "The Violinist," "Plato," Henry Clay as "The Mill Boy of the Slashes," and "The Open Gate," are examples. In the direction of historic illustration the artist found

which town is interesting because of its association with the reliable records of the Baron Munchausen. The artist profited by the opportunities afforded by his captain's familiarity with the Hollanders, for the Staffords, father, son and grandson, had sailed ships from Baltimore in that trade and were in a measure adopted citizens of Batavia. The success of the artist's commercial venture in the way of tobacco was no hindrance to his enjoyment of the galleries of Rotterdam, Amsterdam and Hague, nor of the hospitality of the con-



"The  
Washington  
Cockade."

Painted by  
F. B. Mayer.

By  
Courtesy  
of "Dixie."

not only a congenial field, but his true work subsequently developed in more important works executed either in Paris or in his present studio in Annapolis.

The cabin of the ship *Casilda* of Baltimore, at sea, during a voyage from this port to Rotterdam, furnished Mr. Mayer with a subject for one of his pictures, as well as nautical scenes, such as "The Look-out" and "Splicing a Hawser," the result of material gathered at sea while a passenger on the *Casilda* in 1862. His first acquaintance with Europe was made in the quaint old seaport of Helvoetsliuis, in Holland,

signees of the *Casilda*. The marked peculiarities of Holland and the riches of her art treasures were calculated to make a deep impression. Antwerp proved not less interesting, and Lille was so attractive that the artist remained there for a while, but soon pushed on to Paris, where, suddenly, he came into a world of different character and essentially modern.

In Paris Mr. Mayer entered the atelier of Gleyre, the foremost exponent of classic purity and precision, and found a friend and adviser in Brion, the Alsatian artist, noted for his fullness of design, richness of color

and effect and sincerity of purpose and sentiment. The facilities which Paris affords for the execution of works of art and the liberalizing influence which the exhibition of every style of excellence produces incited the exertions of the artist and resulted in the favorable reception at the annual salons of Mr. Mayer's work, figure subjects, in treatment based on the style of Meissonier, but varied in their selection, as shown in "Pascal," "The Attic Philosopher," "The Jester," "The Nineteenth Century," "The

downfall in the surrender of Sedan in 1870.

The artist shared the privations and anxieties incident to life in a besieged city encircled by perpetual combats and the certain doom of eventual conquest. Reduced to a small allowance of food per day, augmented by occasional supplements of horse flesh, disguised or embellished with artistic cooking; without communication with the outer world, the routine of a non-combatant varied by witnessing the cannonades and combats from the walls of Paris, he

"The  
Burning  
of the  
Peggy  
Stuart."

Painted by  
F. B. Mayer.

By  
Courtesy  
of "Dixie."



Boar's Head," and "The Savoy Tailor." Several summers and parts of winters were passed by Mr. Mayer in the beautiful and picturesque region of Savoy in the higher Alpine villages. A visit also to relatives in Wurtemberg, whose dwelling lay within the shadow of one of Germany's greatest cathedrals, surrounded by mediæval gables, was enjoyed as a realization of romance. The last days of the Empire were seen in the spectacular glory of the exhibition of 1867, with the sovereigns of Europe as the guests of France, followed by its

availed himself of the last opportunity afforded by diplomatic negotiations to leave the beleaguered city in company with a brother artist, a *Herald* correspondent and two friends.

They had purchased a landau and two horses and joined the procession of Americans and Russians who entered the German lines, and diverging at Versailles, sought different routes to their destinations. Under safe conduct the party of the landau were directed to reach Belgium by passing from post to post of the invading army.

The journey amid the realities of war, but through a picturesque country, was replete with incident, though not devoid of danger, the party being exposed on one occasion to the fire of a French battery and again menaced by the danger of lawless "franc-tireurs" or freebooters. Sedan and its battlefield, the ancient cities of Rethel and Rheims, and, after passing into Belgium, the Forest of Ardennes and the old castle of Godfrey de Bouillon, were visited. Through Dinant and Namur the party reached Brussels and thence, after a stay in Antwerp, renewing former pleasant

magazines and in the pictures he has produced. Of these the more important are: "My Lady's Visit," or "Annapolis in 1750;" "The Founders of the Baltimore and Ohio Railroad," in the Directors' hall of the company; "The Planting of the Colony of Maryland," recently purchased by the State; and numerous smaller works of great interest and technical excellence. A number of these paintings have been engraved. At the Centennial of 1876, held in Philadelphia, Mr. Mayer was awarded the medal and diploma for figure painting, in which he has made his greatest successes. Many of the



"Talking  
Business."

Painted by  
F. B. Mayer.

By  
Courtesy  
of "Dixie."

F.M.

impressions of the City of Rubens and Van Dyke, the artist reached London.

Since his return from Europe Mr. Mayer has resided chiefly in Annapolis, where one of its old houses serves him as a workroom, and from its many windows commands on all sides the ever-varying views of cloud, city and water, an advantage and luxury unattainable in the midst of our commercial metropolis and dear to the artist as a constant school of instruction.

His aim has been the illustration of Maryland life and history, and he has used brush, pencil and pen in contributions to

artist's recent works are included in the collection of the Crescent Club of Baltimore, among them several figure studies of uncommon grace, and the large paintings, "St. Tammany," "The Marching Forest," and "Portrait of Capt. Cornwallis," the first two of which are extremely interesting subjects drawn from Indian life, executed in strong color and very original in treatment.

As a valuable record of the Sesqui-Centennial of his native city, the artist illustrated the memorial volume with sixteen outline designs, giving the prominent



features of the great procession. Among his portraits are those of Cecilius Calvert, presented by J. H. Rieman, Esq. to the Cincinnati Museum; Mayor Latrobe, in the City Hall of Baltimore; and Dr. James Hall, Governor of Liberia, which was sent to Africa. Mr. Mayer painted the Coat-of-Arms of Maryland which hangs in the hall of the Commercial and Flour Exchange of Baltimore, and also made the designs for the proposed further decoration of the hall. One of his most popular paintings is "Seventy-Six," or "The Continentals," which

is known the length and breadth of the country. It has been reproduced in many forms and is considered one of the representative pictures of the period of which it treats.

"The Burning of the Peggy Stuart," a memorable event in the Colonial history of Annapolis, is the subject of the artist's latest important work. It was acquired by the State very soon after its completion, and now hangs in the House of Delegates as a companion to the large canvas, "The Planting of the Colony of Maryland."

Painted by  
F. B. Mayer.

By  
Courtesy  
of "Dixie."



"The Planting of the Colony of Maryland."

EDITOR'S NOTE:—In 1891 Mr. Mayer finished one of his most famous historical paintings, entitled: "The Founders of The Baltimore & Ohio Railroad," which is the frontispiece of this article. The painting now adorns the walls of the Directors' Room of this Company in Baltimore. In it are the portraits of twenty-nine of Maryland's renowned sons; each figure being an exact copy of the best portrait of the subject represented, in existence at the time the work was executed. These great men are gathered together in an allegorical picture, attired in the fashions of their day. This painting is remarkable, not only for its artistic merit, but for the national prominence of the men who appear in the group.