

THE GARRARD FAMILY IN FRONTENAC¹

It is impossible to understand the charm of Frontenac unless one knows its history, for the little village is an expression of strong personalities. Few beauty spots in America have been so long in the possession of one or two families and remained untouched by commercialism. This little settlement is located on Lake Pepin, a widening of the Mississippi River which forms the boundary between Minnesota and Wisconsin at this point. The scenery of the upper Mississippi Valley is unsurpassed in the West. High on either side of the river rise palisades of rock or wooded slopes that suggest the banks of the Rhine. Early explorers marveled at its beauty, and the tourist of today responds to its dignity and serenity.

Israel Garrard and his brother Lewis went up the Mississippi River from Kentucky in October, 1854, on a hunting trip and camped on the present site of Frontenac. Israel was then twenty-nine years of age and his brother was four years younger. In this beautiful place they found a few settlers. Evert V. Westervelt, a man of Holland-Dutch ancestry, had recently purchased a trading post on the site from James Wells, commonly known as "Bully Wells." It was located at the foot of a hill, where a little bay affords a harbor. To the left of the trading post, facing the lake, was Westervelt's stone house, and there were many Indian camps in the vicinity. The place was

¹The writing of this article was made possible by the courtesy of Mrs. George Wood Garrard, who assisted during its preparation and read the manuscript. The following residents of Frontenac contributed reminiscences and information: Mrs. John Brunner, Mrs. Louis Carlson, Mr. E. F. Huneke, Sister Mary Kostka of Villa Maria, Miss Celestine Schaller, Mr. John Schennach, Mr. Henry Strupe, and Mrs. Everett Westervelt, daughter-in-law of Evert V. Westervelt. The information regarding the ownership of land was kindly supplied by Mr. A. F. Hernlem of the Goodhue County Abstract Company.

called "Waconia," and this name appears in many transfers of property during the fifties and sixties, for it was used long after the town was platted with the name of "Westervelt."

Lewis Garrard returned to Kentucky when the hunting season was over and from there he went to Europe, where he remained for two years; but Israel stayed in Minnesota and became associated with Westervelt in the development of the town that was to be his home until his death in 1901.

Garrard was of distinguished ancestry. His father was James G. Garrard, twice governor of Kentucky, who had an estate near Covington that was known as Mount Lebanon. His mother was descended from Israel Ludlow, one of the original owners of the town site of Cincinnati. His grandfather came to Virginia from England, and it is said that the line extends back to Peter Garard, a French Huguenot who went to England in 1685. There is also a trace of Spanish inheritance. All this may have inspired Garrard to found an estate of his own and to carry forward the traditions of the family.

He arrived in Minnesota at an opportune time, as the famous "half-breed scrip" was issued in that year. With Westervelt, he proceeded at once to acquire a tract of several hundred acres, the purchases being consummated in May and June, 1857. They bought scrip that had been issued to Jane Wells, the trader's wife, and to Elizabeth Faribault, the wife of Alexander Faribault. In both transfers each man held an undivided half. The town was platted and given the name of "Westervelt." The map in the office of the Goodhue County Abstract Company bears the signatures of Garrard and Westervelt and is dated September 30, 1857. The town site contained 320 acres.

Westervelt and Garrard set aside four tracts as parks and divided the remainder of the land between themselves by mutual agreement, each taking the lots he most desired. The parks are still public park property. The streets were

named by the town-site owners, the road along the edge of the bluff being called "Garrard Avenue" and that between the village and the modern town of Frontenac on the railroad, "Waconia Avenue." Israel Garrard was a practical man, skilled in the various activities that pertain to the founding of a town in the wilderness. He was a surveyor, and the instrument with which he surveyed the town is now in the possession of Mr. E. F. Huneke of Frontenac, who uses it when necessary in various undertakings. It is of French manufacture, beautifully engraved, and bears the words "Langlois Paris aux Galleries des Louvres."

In August, 1858, Westervelt sold about half of his land to Lewis Garrard, and on October 13 of the same year Israel sold about half of his to his brother Kenner. Thus the property was divided into four parts. The four owners "by joint consent" changed the name of the town from Westervelt to Frontenac on September 13, 1859. After this transfers of real estate were frequent. Members of the Garrard family bought land in the outlying country but their association with Westervelt was limited to the town site of Frontenac. Westervelt died in 1888. Israel Garrard dealt in land through a region extending about twelve miles along the lake shore and four or five miles back into the country. The names of his brothers, Lewis and Kenner, appear in many of these transactions. A younger brother, Jephtha, went to Frontenac later. A tract designated as Garrard South Extension, platted in 1867, was owned exclusively by Israel, Lewis, and Kenner Garrard.

Lewis Hector Garrard was a doctor of medicine, but he did not practice his profession. He made a trip across the western plains and in 1850 published at Cincinnati a book entitled *Wah-to-yah and the Taos Trail; or Prairie Travel and Scalp Dances*. In later years his Frontenac home was Dakota Cottage, but he lived much of the time in the neighboring town of Lake City, where he was president of the First National Bank and twice mayor of the town.

Kenner Dudley Garrard was born in 1827 and was graduated from West Point in 1851. After serving with the First Dragoons in New Mexico, he was cavalry instructor at Carlisle Barracks in Pennsylvania. During the Civil War he took command of the Second Cavalry Division of the Army of Cumberland. In 1866 he retired to private life, having received the brevet rank of major general "for faithful and gallant service." He never married.

The first pretentious house built in the village was Westervelt's residence on Garrard Avenue. He demolished an earlier stone house and used the stone in the foundation of his new home. The woodwork and interior finishings were brought from Cincinnati by steamboat. The architecture is dignified and in excellent taste, and the house, with its beautiful grounds, is unchanged at the present time. It was occupied until recently by the builder's sister, Miss Mary Westervelt.

In 1855 Israel Garrard began the erection of St. Hubert's Lodge, built after the style of the pre-Civil War southern homes. The house is battened and whitewashed, and there is an upper and lower veranda or gallery. The "coat of arms" of this residence is a stag's head with a cross between the antlers. This is still in the hall of the lodge. The region around Frontenac abounded in game, including deer, bears, and foxes, and Israel Garrard chose the insignia of St. Hubert, the patron of hunters. Many of the original furnishings remain in the house, the interior and exterior have not been changed since the death of the owner, and the grounds are maintained with care. It is as though Garrard had stepped out of his home for a day.

When Garrard had completed building St. Hubert's Lodge he stood on its balcony and looked out upon the marvelous beauty of lake and hills. Looking down the lake he saw Point au Sable, where the first fortification in this part of Minnesota was built by the French in 1727 and named Fort Beauharnois, after the governor of Canada.

Opposite Point au Sable is Maiden Rock, Wisconsin, from which a Sioux Indian girl, denied her lover, is said to have leaped to her death. Looking up the lake he saw the point of land on which the Frontenac Inn now stands, and Point-no-point, with its shore so wonderfully curved that one never passes the point that seems so near.

To St. Hubert's, in May, 1856, Garrard brought his bride, the eldest daughter of George Wood, a distinguished New York lawyer. Their son, George Wood Garrard, succeeded his father in the Frontenac estate; a daughter, Margaret Hills, resides in Bellport, Long Island; and a third child is buried with its mother, who died at its birth in 1867. Garrard did not marry again.

The next Garrard residence to be built at Frontenac was Dakota Cottage, at the extreme northern end of Garrard Avenue. This was the home of Dr. Lewis Garrard and his mother, who, after the death of her husband, James Garrard, married Judge John McLean of the United States Supreme Court. It remained in the Garrard family until 1927. The architecture is excellent and the residence is one of distinction. The third Garrard residence was Winona Cottage, the present home of Mrs. George W. Garrard. It is a beautiful home, unchanged in either interior or exterior. The extensive grounds resemble a park and are surrounded by a low wall of native stone, laid without plaster. Splendid old pines are in the grounds, and sturdy oaks, placed in attractive groupings.

The erection of these and other buildings required a large number of workmen, many of whom were brought from the South. They were Germans, Swiss, and Scandinavians. These men bought lots in the village and built houses which are now occupied, in many instances, by their descendants. The building operations gave rise to a business center near the steamboat landing. On the end of the point was a government light house. Farther up the lake shore were a brewery, a sawmill, and a lime kiln.

When the Civil War began Israel Garrard hurried south. At Cincinnati he raised a troop of cavalry, which he equipped at his own expense and presented to the governor of Ohio. He was made colonel of his regiment, which was designated as the Seventh Ohio Volunteer Cavalry. After Stoneman's capture at Atlanta, Garrard commanded a division, and on June 21, 1865, he was promoted to the rank of brigadier general by brevet. On July 4 of that year he was mustered out of the service.

On taking leave of his regiment Garrard was presented with a cavalry standard on which is embroidered the following epitome of his service: "Carter Raid, Dutton Hill, Monticello, West's Gap, Nuffington Island, Cumberland Gap, Blue Springs, Blountville, Rogersville, Morristown, Cheek's Cross Roads, Bean Station, Dandridge, Massy Creek, Fair Garden, Synthiana, Atlanta, Duck River, Nashville, Plantersville, Selma and Columbus." On the staff of the standard is an engraved metal plate, with an inscription expressing the regiment's confidence in Garrard as a leader and its respect for him as a patriot and a gentleman. This standard, a regimental guidon, his dress swords, cavalry pistols, spurs, and other war accoutrements are on the wall of the main staircase in Winona Cottage.

After his return from the Civil War, General Garrard resumed his residence in St. Hubert's Lodge and his work in the development of Frontenac as a river town. Physically he was a large and handsome man, with the manner and bearing of a soldier. During the life of Mrs. Garrard there were great gatherings at St. Hubert's Lodge at Christmas, all the workmen and their children being invited for a feast and frolic. This was not continued after her death. But General Garrard took a friendly interest in his workmen and the people of the village, and it is said that "the general always kept the flour barrels filled." If an old man wanted to work he went to the general, who always replied "Come tomorrow and bring your rake."

The old men were employed chiefly in cutting weeds on the unused streets and in raking the beach and the entire village. If the day was hot, the general, passing by, would probably give the men some tobacco and tell them to sit down a while and not work too hard. Ordinary laborers were paid a dollar a day and skilled laborers, at the current scale of wages. The men went to St. Hubert's on Sunday mornings to receive their pay.

Jeptha D. Garrard, the youngest brother, went to Frontenac to make his home after the Civil War. Like Israel he had equipped a troop of cavalry and presented it to the governor of Ohio at the outbreak of the war. This was designated as the Sixth Independent Ohio Cavalry. Jeptha was a captain in 1861, and he received the rank of brigadier general by brevet in 1863. In Frontenac he was familiarly known as "the Colonel." His home was on the knoll opposite the Episcopal church.

The hotel on the point was opened at an early date under the name of the "Lakeside Hotel." A register beginning in 1871, is still in the office of the Frontenac Inn. To this hotel Mississippi River boats brought many guests from the South, with their servants, horses, and carriages.

The building of the Chicago, Milwaukee, and St. Paul Railroad in the early seventies marked an epoch in the development of the Lake Pepin region. General Garrard opposed the laying of the tracks along the lake shore. This was a turning point of his career and the fullest expression of his character. He had devoted the best years of his life, except for those spent in service in the Civil War, to Frontenac. He and his brothers had invested a fortune in land throughout the region, with a view to establishing a business center on the upper Mississippi River. He regarded the river as the natural highway between the South and the agricultural Northwest with its vast resources as yet undeveloped. But when he had to choose between a possibility of commercial success and a sacrificing

of the natural beauty of the landscape, with the radical change in the character of the town that such a sacrifice would involve, he made the choice of a southern gentleman and took the consequences. He strenuously opposed the routing of the railroad through his little village and donated the land for the present railroad right of way, stipulating certain conditions favorable to a new town to be established as a railroad station. This town, about three miles from the lake, was named "Frontenac." The streets surveyed by General Garrard are quiet today and many are grass grown, but in the other Frontenac on the railroad there are filling stations, stores, little lunch rooms, a pavement, and all that pertains to a modern town on a highway.

General Garrard loved books, and the library at St. Hubert's Lodge is still lined with his bookcases. Many distinguished guests were entertained at St. Hubert's. Joseph Jefferson stayed there and enjoyed many fishing trips in the vicinity, and officers of the United States Army always found the latchstring out. General Charles King was a frequent guest, and he wrote *From the Ranks* and *The Colonel's Daughter*, two of his most successful novels, at the lodge. The desk and silver inkstand that he used are still in the room he occupied. He made the hotel and cottages the scene of several stories.

Little groups of artists from Minneapolis were invited to stay at St. Hubert's and make sketches of the vicinity. Their appreciation of the beauties of Frontenac delighted the general, who loved the woods and an outdoor life. Among the artists thus entertained was Alexis Jean Fournier, the landscape painter. To St. Hubert's in 1883 came Christopher Grant La Farge, son of John La Farge, and George L. Heins, who remained part of the winter. Tramping through the hills they visited the stone quarries and admired the Frontenac stone, a limestone of a rich, creamy color. Later, as the firm of Heins and La Farge, they became architects of the Cathedral of St. John the

Divine in New York City. Many specimens of stone were submitted and Frontenac stone was selected for part of the interior decoration of the cathedral.

Jeptha Garrard raised stock and owned several outlying farms, but his hobby was the making of airplanes. He conducted on a large scale experiments that were far in advance of his time. General Garrard chose the building of sailboats and iceboats as his hobby, and he himself made the working drawings for the earlier models. His favorite sailboat was the "Daisy," which carried eight or ten passengers and was equipped with a mainsail and jib. Horse racing was another recreation at Frontenac. Some of the guests from the South brought their own horses with them. The general raised horses, as he wanted to introduce into the North a particularly fine strain of Kentucky horses. At the time of his death he owned twenty-two horses. A mile track was located in what is known as Meyer's pasture, on top of the high bluff beyond the present railroad station. There were pigeon hunts in the park for the Garrards and their guests. Wild pigeons were plentiful in the country and these were caught in nets and released in the park for the hunters.

The summers were filled with activity—executive work, building, and recreation—and winter was the time for wood work. Most of the doors and wainscotings in the Garrard houses were made by hand, from rough lumber. Emmanuel Schennach, one of the wood workers, came from the Tyrol, where he was a wagon-maker. His son John, who lives in Frontenac, relates that "General Garrard wanted work done just so and didn't care how long it took."

The generosity and benevolence of General Garrard were as wide as his sympathies and interests. Although he was not a member of any church, he contributed liberally to the Episcopal and Lutheran churches in Frontenac, and he gave to the Ursuline nuns the land on which Villa Maria stands. The circumstances leading up to that gift were related by

Sister Mary Kostka. General Garrard called at the Ursuline academy in Lake City and presented the sisters with some views of Frontenac. Later he invited them to see these places. Mother Liguori accepted his invitation and took with her Sister Mary Kostka and Sister Liguori Hewitt. They visited three beautiful sites. After an interesting drive General Garrard invited the sisters to the upper veranda of St. Hubert's Lodge. In his courtly manner he said "Will you ladies do me the favor to accept anything you have seen this afternoon as your own?" The sisters did not speak for some minutes. John B. Bowman of East St. Louis, Illinois, the great benefactor of the Ursuline Sisters, had offered to purchase land and to erect a new school. They had already visited three possible sites in the vicinity of Lake City, but without further hesitation they expressed their choice of the present site of Villa Maria. The entire gift comprised about a hundred and twenty-four acres, affording beautiful and spacious grounds. The transfer was recorded in 1890. The general was always a generous friend to the school.

General Garrard was devoted to his seven dogs. Among them were two Scotch terriers and two fine greyhounds, but his favorite was Wappie, an Irish water spaniel that followed him everywhere. While Villa Maria was under construction the general went to the third floor and Wappie, as usual, followed him. One of the workmen startled the dog and he fell down through the open well of the stairway to the basement and was killed. Wappie was buried in the grounds of St. Hubert's Lodge. The general had his other dogs buried in a secluded place two miles away, but Wappie stayed near his master. An oblong slab of Frontenac stone covers the grave, bearing the words "Faithful Wappie" surrounded by sprays of leaves—the best work of a Frontenac stone cutter.

General Garrard's philosophical attitude toward life is shown in the following incident. In the fall of 1884 a cir-

cular stone coping was constructed at the end of Frontenac Point. The stone was cut in the general's quarries and he took pride in it. But the ice in the lake broke up unusually early the next spring. From his upper veranda General Garrard watched the turmoil in its wild magnificence. Great blocks of ice piled themselves on the point, and crushed his coping as though it had been made of eggshells. "Didn't that disturb you?" asked a friend. "No," replied the general, "such things will happen." The coping was replaced the next summer and this circular lookout has been enjoyed by thousands of visitors. One who knew the general recalled two characteristic sayings. He said "The honk of the wild goose is music to me," and he told that, when walking on the bluffs, he "didn't kill the little snakes and kept out of the way of the rattlers."

About ten years before his death General Garrard had his workmen construct a stone burial vault in the family plot next to the grave of his wife. This is a beautiful, circular plot at the end of the ridge on which the Frontenac cemetery is located. He also had a slab of Frontenac stone taken to the shed where the sailboats were built and cut by Casper Carsteson with a large shield on its surface—a fit covering for the body of a soldier. When it was finished, except for the lettering, the general gave directions for its setting and had it stored. The slab is similar to the one which covers the grave of his wife and infant child, except that theirs has a cross on its surface. After these preparations were completed, the general's life went on as before. He rode to Lake City every afternoon at two o'clock in his "red wagon," with Jim Sells as his driver. He retained his military bearing and his health was unimpaired until the accident which caused his death.

The end came to General Garrard on September 21, 1901. He was working in the evening and his favorite dogs were around him. One of the dogs is said to have been responsible for the tipping of the frail table at which

he was writing, thus overturning a kerosene lamp. The general extinguished the fire himself, dashing the flames from packets of valuable papers, but he was terribly burned. Although his injuries were serious, he refused to allow a telegram to be sent to his son, who was in New York. For ten days he suffered with the heroism of a soldier, attended by his faithful men. At last the doctor insisted that telegrams be sent and, although Mr. and Mrs. G. W. Garrard and Jephtha Garrard started for the West immediately, they did not arrive until after the general had passed away.

Funeral services for General Garrard were held in the little Episcopal church. He had made a request that he be buried in his uniform and that his large army flag be buried with him. The pall bearers were his employees, E. F. Huneke, John Schennach, Louis Carlson, William Patton, Casper Carsteson, and Charles Gohrke. They lowered the casket into the vault that had been prepared under General Garrard's direction, and covered him with the stone from his own quarries. Under the snow of winter and the sweet shadows of summer trees the master of St. Hubert's Lodge lies asleep. There is dignity and seclusion in his resting place. A wooded, winding road separates it from the cemetery, which consists of one avenue. On either side of this avenue, in land given by General Garrard, are many who knew and served him. Today their graves are between him and the world of people.

George Wood, son of Israel Garrard, was born in Peekskill, New York, on August 20, 1863. He was graduated from Morgan Military Academy in Chicago at the age of eighteen, went abroad, and studied a year at Tours, France. Frontenac was his home during the remainder of his life, though he traveled extensively. He took a keen interest in all that pertained to the welfare and progress of the community and his donations to charity and religious movements were liberal. During the World War he promoted the sale of Victory Liberty Loan notes and purchased these

notes himself to the amount of more than twelve thousand dollars.

His marriage in 1889 to Virginia Colden Hoffman and the establishment of their home in Winona Cottage brought into Frontenac a hospitality which differed from that of St. Hubert's Lodge, but was equally charming. Mrs. Garrard came from an old New York family. Her father, Lindley Murray Hoffman, was a member of the old Union Club, and her mother was of Quaker ancestry. The three daughters of Mr. and Mrs. George W. Garrard are Beulah Murray, Evelyn Stuart, and Catherine Wood. They were educated chiefly in Europe, where they were a year at Brighton, England, and two years in Brussels, Belgium. Beulah married Major Leonard C. Beecroft, and she now resides in London. Evelyn is the wife of Lieutenant E. Chester Beck, who was an American aviator and an instructor in aviation during the World War. Catherine married Lieutenant Frederic W. McMahan of the United States Navy. Each daughter has two children. A grandson, Garrard Beck, comes sometimes to the ancestral home and is welcomed by those who knew the Garrards of past generations. George W. Garrard died in 1927 and is buried in the family plot. Mrs. Garrard still resides in Winona Cottage.

Frontenac can never be an ordinary village. Its opportunity for becoming commonplace passed when the railroad turned inland. Today the only sidewalk is along one side of Frontenac Inn. There is not a street light in the village, nor a filling station, nor a shop of any sort—not even a place to buy a newspaper. On Garrard Avenue, from Graystone to Dakota Cottage, only one house has been built in more than forty years. To those who respond to the atmosphere of Frontenac it is a haven of rest and a place of beauty, the home of a grace and a culture with roots in the past and a flowering in our own age.

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