



Girard to the Rescue: Stephen Girard and the War Loan of February 8, 1813

– By Mark T. Hehnen –

Overview

By the first decade of the 19th Century, Stephen Girard was a well-known figure in the country and especially in Philadelphia. He was widely admired for his extraordinary actions in the Yellow Fever epidemic and his civic participation and well known as a successful entrepreneur and reliable businessman. He was elected to the Philadelphia City Council several times. He and John Jacob Astor were among the richest men in the country with reputations equivalent to later figures like Rockefeller, Carnegie or Warren Buffett. His financial reputation was to play a significant role in the war of 1812

In the early years of the 19th Century, the Republican party of Thomas Jefferson and James Madison was elected on a platform based on the belief that the government should meddle as little as possible in the economic affairs of the country. In keeping with the beliefs of many of the Founding Fathers, including George Washington, they focused on controlling and reducing the national debt. They maintained that by reducing the expenditures of the government, primarily by limiting military and naval appropriations, and with a general standard of frugality, they could afford to abolish internal taxes and still manage to pay off the debt through other sources of revenue. Led by Secretary of the Treasury Albert Gallatin, they were quite successful in the first decade but at the expense of maintaining military readiness. The debt was reduced by almost half between 1800 and 1812.

Their administrations were fully aware that with the advent of war, a major source of their revenue from customs receipts, tariffs and duties, would necessarily fall off sharply. Gallatin believed that the people of the United States, in an emergency, would gladly accept taxation. However, Congress proved to be reluctant to appropriate these funds, primarily because the opposition Federalist Party was opposed to the war and Jeffersonian financial policy. He also believed that it would be an easy matter to obtain

whatever loans were necessary, both from banks and private individuals, to meet unexpected expenses. He was wrong.

Another element of the financial stresses before the outbreak of war was chaos in the banking system. We have forgotten that in those long ago times banks were simple businesses that were able to borrow and lend money primarily on the basis of how much specie, i.e. gold and silver coinage, they actually had in the vaults. Banks could issue “currency”, promissory notes with a claim on the gold in the bank.

Congress refused to re-charter the Bank of the United States in 1811. As a result, numerous state banks sprang up throughout the country. With unrestricted issuance of bank notes of varying credibility by the various state-chartered banks, it soon became impossible to find a currency that was acceptable throughout the nation.

When the Bank of the United States stock was finally dissolved, Girard was the largest single stockholder. He then purchased the buildings of the Bank in Philadelphia and opened the doors of Stephen Girard’s Bank on May 12, 1812 including a large deposit of government funds. Girard’s unchartered bank fared quite well in large part because of his strong reputation as a citizen and businessman. When other banks were forced to contract their operations because of their unstable policies, Girard’s Bank was able to expand, which served to check the excesses of the other banks and the drain on currency.

As war with Great Britain became increasingly likely, Secretary Gallatin was successful in stirring Congress to authorize a loan of \$10,300,000 on March 14, 1812. This first loan was successfully subscribed. War was declared June 18, 1812 and Congress followed up by doubling the duties on imports and authorizing the issuance of Treasury Notes, which were short term one year loans. However,

these last minute measures were insufficient to cover the rising wartime expenditures, estimated by Gallatin to be a gap of almost \$20 million against a budget of \$32 million.

A loan bill was proposed early in the Second Session of the Twelfth Congress and was passed over heated opposition by both houses and made law on February 8, 1813. The important facets of the bill were that it set the loan at \$16 million, redeemable in thirteen years, and no provision was made to back up the loan or provide security to supplement the already overburdened national debt reduction fund. The government had overextended its credit.

Furthermore, at this time the war was not going well, so that in addition to there being no provisions to secure the loan, potential subscribers were concerned that losing the war would fatally jeopardize the repayment of the loan. When the subscription books were closed in March the loan was \$10 million short. The crisis had been reached!

Included in the notice of the attempted opening of subscriptions for a second time was a request for proposals to cover the residue of the loan, since there was little doubt that re-opening the subscriptions would meet with failure. Acting on this request, three men volunteered to accept the remainder of the loan. Stephen Girard, David Parish and John Jacob Astor met in Philadelphia on the 5th of April and stepped in where the rest of the country had failed and sent proposals to Gallatin. On April 1st, 1813, the Treasury was completely empty and could not meet any demands put on it, and by the 17th the business of the Treasury was well in hand.

An essential point about the War Loan of February 8th 1813 is that, among other things, it was a vote of confidence in the government at a crucial time and the vote was very nearly negative. In addition to lending his own funds, Girard undoubtedly realized that by including his name as an agent for the loan, public credit would be enhanced.

Among the original buildings found on the grounds of Girard College were, in my time, three, named Banker, Merchant, and Mariner Halls. These buildings were so named to honor the achievements by which Stephen Girard was widely known in his own lifetime. To these, of course, may be added Humanitarian; both for his actions in life, most notably his efforts during the Yellow Fever epidemic of 1793, and his legacy at death, the establishment of Girard College.

The purpose of this paper is to elucidate a little known aspect of the life of Stephen Girard and to thereby give justification for adding another title to his name, that of Stephen Girard, Patriot.

I. Jeffersonian Finance and the War Loans

Thomas Jefferson was elected to the Presidency in 1800 on a platform that is best characterized by a single phrase; *laissez faire*. Foremost on this platform was opposition to the financial policies of his predecessors. Believing that the government should meddle as little as possible in the economic affairs of the country, Jefferson's party promised to rid the country of the evil of taxation. They proposed to spend their constant efforts to reduce the national debt as well. They maintained that reducing the expenditures of the government by limiting military and naval appropriations, reducing bureaucracy in government office, and generating

a general standard of frugality, they could afford to abolish internal taxes and still manage to pay off the debt.

Jefferson's choice for Secretary of the Treasury was Albert Gallatin, a Congressman from Western Pennsylvania, and a Swiss by birth. Gallatin had distinguished himself as the foremost authority on financial matters in the Republican Party, to the point where he was indispensable to the new government, and had long and ably contested Federalist financial policies as a member of the House of Representatives. Gallatin believed that the primary consideration of all government should be to reduce the national debt, and that a government could not be devoted to the best welfare of the nation until the debt had been cancelled. He therefore devoted the early part of his career in the Treasury to the attainment of this goal. In order to achieve debt reduction, Gallatin immediately set about recommending ways to reduce the expenses of the administration. Jefferson had promised the early repeal of taxes in his campaign, and thus set about the task of securing their repeal as one of his first official acts. The taxes were abolished by Congress in April of 1802, with the understanding that the resultant loss in revenue would be balanced by a corresponding reduction in appropriations, particularly for the Navy Department. Gallatin's financial policy was founded on the belief that by depending on revenue based solely on the receipts from customs and the sale of public lands, and reducing expenditures wherever

possible, the government could devote a large segment of its annual budget to a Sinking Fund, pledged to debt reduction. This policy was highly successful in the first decade of the nineteenth century. The debt was, in fact, reduced from \$83,000,000 in 1801 to \$45,200,000 in 1812, in spite of the cost of the Louisiana Purchase.

However, Gallatin was always fully aware that the condition absolutely necessary for achieving the goals the Republicans had set for themselves was the continuation of peace. He realized that with the advent of war, customs receipts would necessarily fall off and could not be relied upon. In the event of war, Gallatin theorized that the extraordinary expenses thus incurred could be met by doubling the import duties, reviving the tariff on salt, careful management, and reinstating the Mediterranean Fund, essentially an increase of duties on foreign imports. He also believed that the people of the United States, in an emergency, would gladly accept taxation. He indicated this view to President Jefferson as early as November 16th 1801, writing,

If the United States shall unavoidably be drawn into a war, the people will submit to any necessary tax, and the system of internal taxation which then shall be thought best adapted to the then situation of the country may be created instead of engrafted on the old or present plan.

In addition to these plans for emergency funds, Gallatin became firmly convinced that as a result of the steadily improving credit of the republic, it would be an easy matter to obtain whatever loans were necessary, both from banks and private individuals, to meet unexpected expenses and drains on the Treasury.

Nevertheless, as the nation began to drift toward the eventual war with Great Britain, the situation became more and more acute because Congress refused to take any action to prepare for the war. When, in 1807, Secretary Gallatin became sufficiently alarmed, he felt compelled to present his suggestions concerning war finance in his annual report. He again mentioned that it would be financially sound to rely on war loans, because with the return of peace, the unlimited resources of the United States could easily handle the added debt. In spite of the fact that he repeated these suggestions with increasing urgency in the ensuing years, Congress failed to make adequate preparation for the conflict with Great Britain that eventually started in 1812.

Another factor that greatly heightened the crisis was the refusal of Congress to re-charter the Bank of the United

States, allowing the charter to lapse in 1811. As a direct result of the Bank having to close its doors, numerous state banks sprang up throughout the country. These had a ruinous effect on the economy and on the government as well. With the loss of the stabilizing influence of a national bank, the banking situation in general became chaotic. With unrestricted issuance of bank notes by the various state-chartered banks, it soon became impossible to find a currency that was acceptable throughout the nation. Without the national bank and its branches to carry on its business, it became necessary for the government to rely on a number of banks to hold its funds and carry out its transactions. When banks in different areas refused to honor the notes of their contemporaries, the Treasury was incapable of transferring funds from one region to another. As a consequence, funds were rapidly drained in the large commercial centers and efficient transfer of money to meet the demands of the times became impossible. In addition, Washington had to accept this devalued currency as revenue, which they often had trouble spending.

One bank that did not indulge in these excesses was Stephen Girard's Bank of Philadelphia. When it became obvious to Girard that with the commencement of hostilities his wide-spread commercial activities would have to come to a halt, he began to look about for other areas in which to do business. At the time, Girard possessed a large balance of credit with the banking firm of Baring Brothers, London and, fearful that his funds would be confiscated by Great Britain at the declaration of war, he instructed Baring Brothers to buy up as much stock as they could in the United States Bank. Thus, when the bank stock was finally dissolved on June 1, 1812 Girard was the largest single stockholder. To protect his investment, he purchased the buildings of the Bank for the bargain price of \$115,000 and opened the doors of Stephen Girard's Bank on May 12, 1812. As part of the sales agreement, the Treasury was required to keep some three million dollars of its funds in the vaults. Girard's Bank opened operations with \$1,135,000 of his own capital, which Girard had successfully transferred from England.

In spite of the opposition of the other chartered banks of Philadelphia, Girard's unchartered bank fared quite well. When the other banks were forced to contract their operations because of their unstable policies, Girard's Bank was able to undergo a timely expansion, which served to check the excesses of the other banks and the drain on currency. At this point, the government and the country as a whole were little prepared for war. Congress had refused to enact timely measures to provide funds for fighting the war

and went so far as to dissolve the one institution capable of providing a restraining influence on the nation's economy. Revenue steadily decreased as commerce was cut off by the impending war. Because of the retrenching policies of the past decade, a biographer of Gallatin, Henry Adams, wrote "Mr. Gallatin knew what was known to every member of Congress and every newspaper editor in the land that both the Navy and Army Departments were wholly unequal to the war" and "The burden would fall chiefly upon Mr. Gallatin, who knew that the Treasury must break down" Gallatin was still confident, nevertheless, that with most of American floating capital stranded in the United States, there would be sufficient capital available to finance the war by loans at least until Congress could be made to adopt a more realistic program to finance the war.

II. The "Sixteen Millions Loan" of 8 February 1813

When it finally became painfully obvious that the United States was going to go to war, Secretary Gallatin was successful in stirring Congress to action. An act approved March 14, 1812, authorized a loan of \$10,300,000, which was successfully subscribed. War was declared June 18, 1812 and Congress followed up by doubling the duties on imports, re-establishing the Mediterranean Fund, increasing duties on goods carried in foreign ships, and authorizing the issuance of Treasury Notes, which were short term loans generally bearing 5.4 per cent interest and redeemable after one year. However, these last minute measures were insufficient to fill the gap created by the rising estimates of wartime expenditures. Even so, Congress had been reluctant to appropriate these funds, primarily because the opposition Federalist Party were opposed to the war and Jeffersonian financial policy.

Despite the success of the first loan, doubt of filling future loans seems to have taken hold of Gallatin's mind. In a letter to President Madison, written in October 1812 concerning the loan needed for 1813, he said, "I think a loan, to that amount (\$21,000,000), to be altogether unattainable". Nonetheless, there was no alternative and revenues would have to be produced within the limitations imposed by Congress. Accordingly, Gallatin made a report to Congress in December 1812, the following abstract of which appeared in a New York newspaper, The War:

<i>Estimated Revenue of the Next Year</i>	
<i>From Custom House Bonds</i>	\$11,500,000
<i>Sale of Lands</i>	500,000
	12,000,000
 <i>Expenditures</i>	
<i>Civil List</i>	\$1,500,000
<i>Interest on Debt</i>	3,300,000
<i>Payment on account of principal,</i>	
<i>Treasury Notes, &c.</i>	5,200,000
<i>Military expenses, Indian Dept., &c.</i>	17,000,000
<i>Naval Establishment</i>	4,925,000
	<hr/> 31,925,000
 <i>Revenue</i>	 12,000,000
<i>Balance to be provided for</i>	<hr/> 19,925,000

Of this sum more than one million is already contracted for and there remains in hand a balance of about a million and a half in Treasury Notes not yet disposed of. An authority to issue new notes for about two millions and a half more, being the amount reimbursable in 1813, will still keep the whole amount issued at five millions and reduce the amount of the loan to about fifteen millions of dollars. The preceding estimates do not embrace the expense incident to the proposed increase of the Navy nor any other expenditure not yet authorized by law. In order to meet any new expenses which may be thus authorized by Congress, it will therefore be necessary to increase the loan to a corresponding amount.

This estimate of expenditures later proved to be too low by about eight million dollars but was accurate enough to demonstrate to Congress that unless a large loan was authorized, and unless that loan could be met, the United States was in a serious dilemma and would be unable to carry on the war effort for another year.

The loan bill was approached early in the Second Session of the Twelfth Congress and soon met heated opposition. Possible failure of the loan was in the minds of many, prompting Langdon Cheves, chairman of the Committee of Ways and Means to comment, "suggestions for its failure seem to be unfounded". At this, the opposition proceeded to make more than mere suggestions of its failure. Representative Bigelow of Massachusetts made the following statement, maintaining that there was not an adequate foundation for repaying the loan, and if means were not provided the ruin of public credit would result,

"Without such a fund, even the friends of war will not lend you money. Money is not loaned from motives of patriotism, but gain and I have no hesitation in saying the loan will not be obtained."

He further stated that if a security fund were not authorized, the loan would fail, the army would not be paid, and, as a consequence, the nation would suffer the horror of a military insurrection and despotism. Representative Milford of Philadelphia then added that although it had been alleged that his city alone could subscribe to the total of the loan, he did not believe so, for the banks had already done all in their power, and private capital would have to be relied upon.

The bill was passed over this opposition by both houses and made law on February 8, 1813. The important facets of the bill were that it set the loan at sixteen million dollars, redeemable in thirteen years, and that no provision was made to back up the loan or provide security to supplement the already overburdened Sinking Fund. The government had overextended its credit.

Forebodings of disaster soon followed the passage of the act. Indeed at this juncture the feats of American arms were the objects of considerable and justifiable ridicule. "*Hull has in an unaccountable manner surrendered all his troops, (about 1,800) prisoners of war to an inferior force*" wrote Gallatin to his wife in August, 1812, and other generals had done even worse in the Northwest. The War Department was on the verge of collapse and the only bright lights of the war were the victories of the American frigates.

The response to the first subscription offer was, as had been predicted, falling far short of the mark. When the books closed on March 13, 1813, only \$3,956,000 had been subscribed. In desperation, the books were ordered reopened from March 25th to March 31st. When they were again closed, only \$1,881,800 had been received. The loan was \$10,162,200 short; the crisis had been reached!

III. Girard Fills The Breach

Although Stephen Girard's Bank was not one of the places mentioned in the first notification for subscriptions, we find that subscriptions were taken there and a record of them is found in the Ledger for Subscriptions at S. Girard's Bank to the loan of XVI Millions, 1813. Under the column given to the subscription efforts of the 12th and 13th of March, there are only six names, for a total of \$122,600, \$100,000 of which was pledged by Stephen Girard himself.

Gallatin, a longtime friend of Girard's, wrote to him on March 19th to announce the reopening of subscriptions for a second try. After the public announcement was made of the reopening of the books, Girard's Bank's Ledger shows five more entries, amounting to the paltry sum of \$19,500.

Included in the notice of the opening of subscriptions for the second time was a request for proposals to cover the residue of the loan, since there was little doubt that the re-opening of the subscriptions would meet with failure. Such proposals would be received by the Secretary of the Treasury until April 5th, and were required to state exactly the amount of the residue of the loan left on April 1st desired to be taken. The proposals had to be made for over one hundred thousand dollars, but any person who collected subscriptions for the purpose of lumping them together in one proposal would be entitled to a commission of one quarter of one percent. The proposals were to include the terms under which the money would be lent. Any persons making such proposals would be entitled to any terms proposed by anyone else, if they proved to be more advantageous.

This request was the last hope of the Administration, for if no individuals could be found willing to lend the government money on their own terms, the nation was in a sorry state, and could look forward to disaster. The situation was becoming increasingly urgent since Congress had already made appropriations for 1813, totaling \$39,975,000. The Sixteen Millions Loan, even if filled, would not be sufficient to balance the budget, and its failure assumed even more critical proportions.

Acting on this request, three men volunteered to accept the remainder of the loan. Stephen Girard, David Parish and John Jacob Astor met in Philadelphia on the 5th of April and stepped in where the rest of the country had failed and sent proposals to Gallatin; Girard and Parish volunteering eight million dollars, 50% of the loan, and Astor, \$2,056,000. Gallatin had already arrived in Philadelphia on the 2nd of April and accepted the proposal on the 7th. The terms offered by the government to the original subscribers were for six percent stock, redeemable after December 31st 1825, with an annuity of one dollar per hundred per year. The terms offered in Girard's proposal did not differ substantially from those original terms, and were, in fact, more advantageous to the Treasury in spite of the fact that the three men could easily have been more harsh in their requirements because of the desperate situation. The terms asked by the group were six per cent stock at eighty-eight per cent, or one hundred dollars of stock for eighty-eight dollars cash. No annuity was asked, therefore their proposal was for stock costing eighty-eight dollars, whereas, including the annuity, the original stock went at eighty-seven dollars.

The next entry in Girard's Ledger, for the 15th of April, after it had become known that Girard, Parish and Astor had covered the residue of the loan, shows that 122 people now desired to accept part of the amount pledged by Girard. This amount had been reduced to \$7,055,800 when it was found that the proposals exceeded the amount authorized by \$944,200. The amount subscribed to in Girard's Ledger was \$5,347,800, of which \$1,303,500 appears after the name of David Parish, and \$1,191,500 after Stephen Girard. However, Girard actually lent Parish \$1,191,500 to subscribe to the loan and thus Parish's share was actually only \$111,500, while Girard's personal share (including the \$100,000 already lent on March 13th) was \$2,483,000. The remainder of their proposal (\$1,708,000) was subscribed to by people outside of Philadelphia.

The following article appeared in The War, in the edition of April 20, 1813.

The Sixteen Millions Loan

The following is said to be a correct statement of the manner in which the new loan was filled:

First and second subscriptions	\$4,600,000
Offers in different places	1,400,000
Philadelphia	1,000,000
J.J. Astor and others in New York	2,000,000
Parrish and Girard in Philadelphia	7,000,000
	<hr/>
	16,000,000

The terms of the loan are as follows 88 percent for 6 per cent stock or at par with an annuity of one and a half per cent per annum. Of the \$7,000,000 taken by Girard and Parrish, \$2,600,000 are for themselves, 2,700,000 for sundry persons in Philadelphia and 1,700,000 for sundry persons elsewhere.

Indignation seems to have arisen, documented in Niles Weekly Register, that foreigners, including Gallatin, had managed to save the Union at a crucial moment (David Parish was English born). Consequently a full report was requested by the Senate on July 27, 1813, to assure that Gallatin had acted within his powers. It was felt by the Secretary's enemies that he had not obtained the most advantageous terms possible for the government, although in the light of events that accusation was totally unfounded, and that he had acted in collusion with Girard to bilk the government. The subsequent report to Congress determined that the conduct of the loan was perfectly in order, and people soon realized that, as stated in a local news journal "*three foreigners by birth... saved the United*

States government for the time from bankruptcy, and perhaps from evils more fatal".

IV. Conclusions

On the First of April, 1813, the Treasury was completely empty and could not meet any demands put on it, and by the 17th, the business of the Treasury was well in hand. The Army and the Navy had some eighteen million dollars credit, tax bills were being acted upon by Congress, and a draft for a new National Bank charter was prepared and ready to be presented. Thus, in a little more than two weeks, the timely action of Stephen Girard and his compatriots had given the government the necessary impetus to continue the war, and, equally as important, had restored public faith in Washington.

An essential point about the War Loan of February 8th 1813 is that, among other things, it was a vote of confidence in the government at a crucial time and the vote was very nearly negative. In spite of the fact that the loan was offered at profitable terms, there were very few people who had enough faith in the United States to risk their capital. As one contemporary author in Desilver's City Directory put it in 1833,

"The loan was taken by Mr. Girard in the darkest hour of the war and when, trembling at the brink, or rather, floundering in the gulf of bankruptcy and discredit. & It was an hour that 'tried men's souls,' and locked up the capital of the country in the vaults of fear and suspicion. Great as was the temptation of profit few were found willing to put their capital in jeopardy, under the frowning aspect of the times; when the Union was hanging by a single hair."

It remained for Stephen Girard to put his faith in his adopted country above the risk to his fortune. As was stated earlier, only private capital was free to fill the loan and the majority of private capitalists would not venture their funds. The loan was left to the few men in the United States who could fill it almost singlehandedly, and, among these Girard was at the top of the list. Only three such men could be found who had enough confidence in the nation to subscribe to the residue of the loan, and by so doing, they performed the inestimable service of giving courage to those "summer soldiers who could not muster it on their own. Certainly it was not merely motivation of profit that prompted Girard, for he could have easily requested more lucrative terms, which the government could not have disregarded. It certainly was not for the one quarter per cent commission, of which Girard's share was \$8,819.75, especially in view of the amount risked, since that was a

sum hardly worthy of a man accustomed to much larger profits. There were those who claimed that Girard, sure that the Treasury is willing to accept large subscriptions, on fantastic terms, skillfully acquired stock at a cutthroat price. This view simply does not conform to facts and was rebutted by the Congressional report. It is traceable to that same antipathy, widespread in Girard's own lifetime that depicted him as "Stephen Graspall. At the time of the loan, in fact, he had just learned of the capture of one of his ships by the British, and stood to take a tremendous loss on it, although eventually did not. He still sank over two million dollars of his own money into the government.

In addition to lending his own funds, Girard undoubtedly realized that by including his name as an agent for the loan, the public credit would be enhanced. The chances of filling the loan would be increased, which would, of course, at the same time increase the probability that the loan would be repaid. Nevertheless, from the timing of the proposal and the subsequent rush to obtain a portion, it is apparent that Girard and Parish were ready to stand for the full seven million if necessary.

Girard's patriotism and concern for his country are unquestionable and are well illustrated in the following letter written when Girard was 63 years old. It was written to William Jones, Secretary of the Navy and acting Secretary of the Treasury, on May 11, 1813:

The situation and disposition of our Enemy in our Bay and River is very alarming. I have several ships in the port with 28 fine Swedish guns, ten of which are Six Pounders and Eighteen Four. I will lend them and give my services gratis for the defense of our country, provided expenses, losses & damages are reimbursed to me.

The offer was turned down, as was a later offer to sell his ship, the North America, to the government for service as a cruiser.

Girard's actions at a crucial crossroads in American History, and his offer of his ships and services for the defense of his country, are certainly worthy of note. In the words of President Madison, as noted in the Annals of Congress,

In recommending to the National Legislature this resort to additional taxes, I feel great satisfaction in the assurance that our constituents, who have already displayed so much zeal and firmness in the cause of their country, will cheerfully give any other proof of their patriotism which it calls for. Happily, no people, with local and transitory exceptions never to be wholly avoided, are more able than the people of the United States to spare for the public wants a portion of their private means, whether regard be had to the ordinary profits of industry or the ordinary price of subsistence in our country, compared with those in any other. And in no case could stronger reason be given for yielding the requisite contributions. By rendering the public resources certain, and commensurate to the public exigencies, the constituted authorities will be able to prosecute the War more rapidly to its proper issue; every hostile hope, founded on a calculated failure of our resources, will be cut off; and by adding to the evidence of bravery and skill, in combats on the ocean and the land, and alacrity in supplying the treasure necessary to give them their fullest effect, and demonstrating to the world the public energy which our political institutions combine with the personal liberty distinguishing them, the best security will be provided against future enterprises on the rights and peace of the nation.

His remarks most certainly were directed to Stephen Girard, Patriot.

My deeds must be my life; when I am dead, my actions must speak for me.

From the Will of Stephen Girard

About the author. Mark Hehnen was born in Middlesboro, Kentucky on February 28th 1941. He entered Girard College in September 1947 and graduated in June 1957. After a year at Lehigh University he entered the United States Naval Academy where he graduated in June 1962, commissioned as a second lieutenant in the U.S. Marine Corps. Hehnen served on active duty for 12 years including two tours in Viet Nam as a rifle company commander. During that time he received a Master's degree in Operations Research (applied mathematics) from the Naval Postgraduate School. He retired from the Marine Corps Reserve as a Lieutenant Colonel.

Hehnen left active duty to return to graduate school at Oregon State University and graduated with a Ph.D. in Operations Research and Statistics in 1977. The family moved to the Seattle area after he was hired by the Weyerhaeuser Company, where he was engaged in research and development for the next 26 years. Hehnen worked on several projects implementing mathematical decision systems for operations, then as an R&D manager in technology intelligence, intellectual property management, new business development, new product development, and strategic thinking.

Mark met his wife, Vicki, at his first duty station in Hawaii in 1963 and they were married for 45 years until her death in 2009. They have two children and four grandchildren. Hehnen's article on Stephen Girard and the financing of the War of 1812, appearing on this website, is an updated version of a larger work he did as a fourth year midshipman at the Naval Academy. His original treatise resides in the archives of the Stephen Girard Collection at Girard College, Philadelphia, PA