

**PROCEEDINGS AND ADDRESSES ATTENDING
THE PRESENTATION OF A SILVER CENTRE-
PIECE; REPRESENTING AN ANCIENT AZTEC
TEOCALLI - TO THE AZTEC CLUB, AT ITS
ANNUAL MEETING, IN NEW YORK CITY,
OCTOBER 13TH, 1892, BY COL. DE LANCEY
FLOYD-JONES, U.S. ARMY**

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AN ANCIENT AZTEC TEOCALLI—TO THE
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NEW YORK CITY, OCTOBER 13TH, 1892, BY
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AT the forty-fifth meeting of the Aztec Club, held at Sherry's, in New York City, on the afternoon of October 13, 1892, and in due course of business, the following letter was read by Colonel Floyd-Jones:

" AZTEC CLUB, 37th Street and Fifth Avenue,
NEW YORK CITY, *October 13, 1892.*

"To the Officers and Members of the AZTEC CLUB:

"GENTLEMEN: I take pleasure in presenting to this Club a souvenir in the form of a centre-piece for your dining table, which, I trust, will serve as a reminder of the land where this Club had its birth. The idea is taken from the design on the Club's diploma, and has been carried out by Tiffany & Company. It represents an ancient Aztec teocalli (God's house), from which are growing plants common to Mexico, conspicuous among which are several varieties of cacti, the agave Americana, or pulque plant, and the royal palm.

"To those of us who had the good fortune of serving in that country, this design will readily recall old associations and pleasant memories; and to those who are gradually filling our places it may commend itself as a work of art, and possibly may be the means of inducing some to visit the beautiful country of the ancient Aztecs. Should it have the effect of adding in any manner greater interest in this Club, my object will be fully accomplished.

"I now leave the token for your acceptance and enlightened criticism, with the hope that all who are present to-day, and our absent comrades as well, may long be spared to gather about it from year to year, and renew around the flowing bowl the memory of those days when we roved among the royal palms, drank the juice of the maguey, stood at the foot of

ancient teocalli ruins, and let our fancy fly back to the olden time when their tops smoked with the blood and ashes of human sacrifice.

"Yours very cordially,

"DE LANCEY FLOYD-JONES,

"Colonel U. S. Army (retired)."

Professor Henry Coppée, having been designated by President Porter a committee of one to draft the proper preamble and resolutions for accepting the centre-piece, reported the following, which were unanimously adopted:

"AZTEC CLUB, 37th Street and Fifth Avenue,
NEW YORK, October 13, 1892.

"*Minute of Record.*—The beautiful and appropriate silver centre-piece, presented at this meeting to the Aztec Club of 1847 by our friend and comrade Colonel De Lancey Floyd-Jones, deserves special notice in our records. It was a generous thought in him to make us such a handsome present; it was a happy thought to take for its subject such a reminiscence of ancient Mexico, a ruined temple, the like of which many of us saw in our sojourn there, and a drawing of which is at the head of our diplomas.

"The care which he has bestowed, and the charming taste he has displayed in the execution of this work, especially in encircling it with tropical foliage, add at once to its intrinsic and memorial value. His letter of presentation contains all that need be said by way of preliminary, and to elicit our thanks. Later it is hoped that he will give us additional information with regard to it. Meantime it is the duty and great pleasure of the Club to place upon the record of this meeting the following resolutions:

"*Resolved*, That the hearty thanks of the Aztec Club are eminently due, and are hereby offered, to Colonel De Lancey Floyd-Jones, for his generous and tasteful gift of a silver centre-piece representing an ancient Mexican teocalli in ruins.

"*Resolved*, That his letter accompanying the gift be spread upon the minutes of the Club, and Colonel Floyd-Jones be requested to give us further information of Aztec ruins, etc.

"*Resolved*, That the centre-piece be always placed upon the table at our annual and other banquets, and that it shall be confided to the keeping of the Treasurer.

"*Resolved*, That an engrossed copy of this minute and these resolutions be sent by the Secretary to Colonel Floyd-Jones."

In reply to the *Minute of Record*, Colonel Floyd-Jones briefly expressed his high appreciation of the cordial manner in which his present had been received, and added that he had prepared a paper, chiefly relating to the Aztecs, which he would read to them at the banquet in the evening.

The banquet in the evening was held at Sherry's, and was attended by the following members, viz.:

General Fitz-John Porter, *President*,
 General Stewart Van Vliet, *Vice-President*,
 Colonel De Lancey Floyd-Jones, *Treasurer*,
 General Z. B. Tower,
 General Rufus Ingalls,
 Admiral Alexander C. Rhind,
 General C. C. Augur,
 General James Oakes,
 General James B. Fry,
 General D. M. Frost,
 Professor Henry Coppée, LL.D.,
 Colonel Thomas Y. Field,
 Colonel Frank Huger,
 Colonel George B. McClellan,
 Captain Henry P. Kingsbury,
 Lieutenant Richard G. Davenport,
 Mr. Augustus Porter Barnard,
 Mr. John H. Barnard,
 Mr. Charles Biddle,
 Mr. John Winter Brannan,
 Mr. Edward H. Floyd-Jones,
 Mr. Graham Frost,

Mr. J. A. Hays,
 Mr. Winfield Scott Hoyt,
 Mr. J. Watts Kearny.

And the following guests :

General John M. Schofield, Commanding U. S. Army,
 Major Clifton Comly,
 Mr. Edward Floyd De Lancey,
 Mr. Charles B. Fosdick.

After the dinner and while enjoying the wine and cigars, General Porter toasted Colonel Floyd-Jones, and asked him to comply with the request, as made in the resolutions at the business meeting, to which the colonel responded as follows :

Mr. President and Comrades of the AZTEC CLUB :

In rising to respond to your toast, I feel that I cannot fully convey my grateful thanks for the warm terms and kind words in which the Aztec Club has received this centre-piece, representing an ancient Aztec teocalli, and I am afraid that I have not words which will adequately express my feelings; but rest assured that I shall prize more than I can tell the engrossed copy of the *Minute of Record* which the Secretary has been requested to furnish me, and which conveys in such agreeable terms your appreciation of this gift.

In regard to the subject upon which I propose speaking this evening, as requested in one of your resolutions, and which chiefly relates to the Aztecs, I fear that our worthy President, General Fitz-John Porter, has, in his introductory remarks, raised your expectations too high, but on one point you can rest assured, I shall aim not to tire by too long a talk.

And first, I think it appropriate to allude to the origin of this Club, which was started in the City of Mexico, on the 13th of October, 1847, within a month after the occupation of that city by the army under General Scott. Hence the date we celebrate is the anniversary of the foundation of this club in Mexico. We formerly kept the 14th of September, the date on which the city fell into our hands, but it was thought that the later date was more appropriate, and hence the 13th of

October was adopted. Some resort of this description seemed essential to the officers stationed in the capital, as a promoter of good-fellowship, and as furnishing a home where they could pass their spare hours in social intercourse; and also as giving them a restaurant where more palatable and healthful viands could be procured and at a much less price than at the best *fondas* of the city.

As far as I have been able to learn, the chief promoters of it were General Charles F. Smith, Colonel John B. Grayson, General John B. Magruder, General Robert Buchanan, General Charles P. Stone, and Professor Henry Coppée, all of the regular army, and General Franklin Pierce of the volunteers, afterwards President of the United States. I have given the highest rank to which these officers attained, for at the date of our organization scarcely any were above the rank of captain. General Winfield Scott and Chaplain M. McCarty were the only honorary members elected, and the former proved an excellent friend of the Club, the supplies for which were largely brought from New Orleans, and introduced without duty, or the expense of ocean freight or land carriage, from Vera Cruz up to the city. The initiation fee was \$20. I have not been able to learn that any annual dues were exacted.

The original home of the Club was a handsome one, as it occupied the splendid mansion of Señor Boca Negra, who had been formerly Minister to the United States from Mexico. The entire building, which was furnished, was at the disposal of the Club, and supplied most of the plant with which the Club began housekeeping. Handsome dinners were given, and almost every person of distinction who visited Mexico during its occupation were put up at the Club, and so popular did it become that after it was fairly in working order admission was rather difficult. The building occupied was located on one of the streets leading out of the Calle Plateros, and but two blocks from the Grand Plaza, a most convenient situation, and not far from the headquarters of General Scott, Commander-in-Chief.

It may interest you to learn that the Calle Plateros, or Silver-smith Street, is one of the most prominent in the city, and

corresponds with our Broadway. It has more fine shops upon it than any other in Mexico, hence it is the popular promenade and driving street, and the resort of the fashionable young men, who there have the opportunity of meeting their fair friends. Many of the principal hotels and restaurants are located upon it and its extension—for in Mexico the streets often change their names every second block. To reach the Alameda or principal park, or the Paseo, the fashionable drive, one is likely to pass through the Calle Plateros.

Personally I did not become a member of this Club while in Mexico, although solicited to do so, as I and most of my regiment were quartered, during much of our stay in the valley, in Tacubya, some five or six miles away from the city, and under these circumstances the Club would have been of little service to a second lieutenant who was closely confined to his company duties, whose only income was his monthly pay of \$65.50, and to whom a dollar looked about "the size of a cart-wheel." This simile I borrow from a captain of the Fourth Infantry, who used to call up his little son and ask him how big a dollar looked to a second lieutenant, and the little fellow would put on a quizzical look and say, "About the size of a cart-wheel!"

The records of the Club show that liquors and cigars were pretty freely indulged in, as the sales sometimes reached as high as \$100 per day, and, as before stated, the restaurant was fairly well patronized; but the greater share of the company officers lived in their company messes; officers detached from regimental or company duty were the principal frequenters of the Club restaurant.*

And now a brief reference to Hernando Cortez. It is not my purpose to tell you of the conquest of Mexico. This has

* At the time the "Army of Occupation" left Mexico the Aztec Club numbered 166 members.

Of these there are living, about.....	27
Mexican war officers, army, navy, and marines, since elected and now living, about.....	37
Associate members, and successors to members elected and living, about.....	136
Total approximate strength of Club.....	200