

BOOK REVIEW

Albert Gallatin—Jeffersonian Financier and Diplomat. By RAYMOND WALTERS, JR., The Macmillan Company, New York, 1957. 380 pages of text plus 52 pages of notes, a bibliography and index. Price \$7.00.

Following ten years of ardent research Mr. Raymond Walters, Jr., has written a biography of Albert Gallatin giving him his merited place in history.

Of all the great men to whom the United States owes its beginning none has received less recognition than Albert Gallatin. While he did not fight in the Revolution or participate in the framing of the National Constitution, yet for nearly half a century he was one of the country's forward looking leaders. As Secretary of the Treasury no man, not even Hamilton did more to set the young government on a solid financial path.

He spent three terms in the Pennsylvania state legislature where he advocated with others a state-wide establishment of public education and the abolishment of slavery. Later, while serving four terms in the National Congress, he originated the idea of super-highways and presented his road building scheme to Congress. He was so influential in the financial problems of the young republic that he was made Secretary of the Treasury by Thomas Jefferson. In that office Albert Gallatin served longer than any other in the history of our country.

Later Mr. Gallatin became successively Foreign Minister to Russia, to France, and to Great Britain. He was one of the five Commissioners who drew up the Treaty of Ghent following the War of 1812. On his return to the United States, Mr. Gallatin was a candidate for the office of the Vice-Presidency.

Each chapter of this biography is absorbing and rich in facts. Mr. Walter's description of the Whiskey Rebellion, with all its sidelights is most interesting to people of Western Pennsylvania. So vivid is his portrayal, that one almost expects to see Mr. Gallatin strolling by. Mr. Walters' account of Gallatin's entrance into politics and the casting of his first vote in Uniontown is intriguing.

Mr. Walters makes one cognizant of the marked and worthy characteristics of Gallatin. He tells us that in addition to the numerous positions in public life Mr. Gallatin enjoyed a wide variety of occupa-

tions in private life: college teacher, storekeeper, farmer, land speculator, glass manufacturer, banker, scientist, and educator.

The author stirs one's emotions when he tells the touching story of the romance and tragedy of Gallatin's first marriage and of the marked imprint of grief upon him. Later he married Hannah Nicholson, who came of a long line of notable ancestors. Six children were born in the happy home life of this marriage.

Unquestionably Mr. Walters has elevated Mr. Gallatin to his rightful place not only as one of the great leaders of the period but as an interesting personality. Born in Geneva, Switzerland, 1761, Mr. Gallatin came from a distinguished and aristocratic family, which had been powerful for centuries. As a young man in Europe, his environment was with intellectuals for he was scholarly and cultivated.

Though a member of the aristocracy in Switzerland, in his adopted country of America, he forever held to the conviction "that the rights of the people were inalienable."

As a native Pennsylvanian I am grateful for this fascinating biography of Albert Gallatin.

Pittsburgh

LENA GALLATIN GALLEY*

Pittsburgh: Forge of the Universe. By FRANK C. HARPER. Comet Press Books, New York, 1957. Price \$4.00.

Pittsburgh: Forge of the Universe, by Frank C. Harper, presents the history of Pittsburgh in a unique way, in that it deals with subjects—over one hundred and sixty of them—rather than the stereotyped array of events in chronological order. By so doing he makes it possible for each reader quickly to find what he wants, and with sufficient time to encompass the history of Pittsburgh over the last two hundred years. To illustrate, we find a chapter on the Frick and Carnegie fall-out and the formation of the United States Steel Company, another on how a lot of Carnegie partners became multi-millionaires overnight, others on the role Pittsburgh has played in coal, oil, glass, electrical appliances, aluminum and steel.

It all adds up to the wonderful developments which have made Pittsburgh a city of world interest and service, including its colossal contribution to the Allied victory in World War II.

Other chapters deal with its cultural, civic and social progress, its splendid accomplishments in eliminating smoke, and in protecting low-lying lands from floods, thus making possible the recent achieve-

* The reviewer is a descendant of Albert Gallatin.

ments and building programs in the Point Park and Gateway Center areas. And all of this is revealed through the work and accomplishments of the individuals who had the vision and industry both to conceive and plan, and who thereby made their contributions toward the creation of a Pittsburgh greater in material, cultural and spiritual values. Mr. Harper begins with George Washington two hundred years ago, and brings the story down to our present progressive leader, Richard K. Mellon, with full recognition of all that Mellon Park means to Pittsburgh.

He closes with a look at the Pittsburgh of tomorrow and the coming celebration on November 27, 1958 of its two hundredth anniversary.

But perhaps the most remarkable thing about this splendid chronicle of Pittsburgh is the author himself. In his ninetieth year, he tells the story of Pittsburgh with the fervor and enthusiasm of youth, and with a clarity and grasp which would do credit to an applicant for a master's degree.

The only hint of criticism I have heard is that perhaps it is a bit too optimistic about Pittsburgh.

CHARLES K. ROBINSON