of Fifth avenue and Smithfield street, Pittsburgh, in 1815. The andirons are stamped “McClur Pgh,” but it is not known for certain that they were cast by the steel processor.

The precious quality of Mr. Kauffman’s book is not in doubt, however. It supplements popular knowledge of collectors’ items as such but it also stimulates creative activity in the arts and crafts of modern as well as future times.

Historical Society of Western Pennsylvania

Lafayette, the Guest of the Nation. By Jane Bacon MacIntyre.

Lafayette, the Guest of the Nation is at once a fascinating coverage of his 1824-25 visit taken from newspaper accounts, journals, letters, and is an invaluable picture of the United States at this period. It furnishes a panoramic view of the young country, since Lafayette in thirteen months covered the twenty-four existing states by coach, canal boat, and by pioneer steamers that risked his life in their races on the Mississippi, Ohio, and Potomac. During his stay, he met nine of the first ten Presidents of the United States, visited Mount Vernon and Monticello, the unfinished Erie Canal, Niagara Falls, battlefields, forts, Navy yards, colleges, log cabins, mansions, Indian reservations, and the White House, keeping his health and sanity despite constant travelling and pressures.

The receptions in towns large and small followed a pattern: a bedecked triumphal arch, a banquet, odes and speeches, military escorts, school children singing, a Masonic banquet, a reception by the Society of the Cincinnati, church services, and a Lafayette Ball to become the lifetime treasure of the women; theater parties, torchlight processions, music, cannon fire. It was impossible, of course, to keep to schedule. But towns waited all night, their windows ablaze with candles. Although tired, Lafayette always had the perfect response. He never failed to recognize a face, recall a name or the circumstances under which he had last met the speaker.

Forty years had passed since his last visit at twenty-seven, “enchanting the eye with his silvery powdered hair and brocades, fascinating everyone with his delightful manners, with the charm and magne-
tism which had far from left him as the years had passed." He had suffered much during those forty years, which included a long imprisonment in Olmutz during the French Revolution and the death of his beloved Adrienne. Time was when he had bought ships and outfitted soldiers in the American cause. Now he could not leave France until American friends had satisfied his creditors. He thought that he would be forgotten by the average American, and was overwhelmed by his reception.

His experiences presented striking contrasts. Fishermen offered him broiled fish, renaming the fish Lafayettes, and Lafayettes they are to this day. He visited Washington’s loyal men of Marblehead. He received $200,000 from Congress and a 24,000 acre township near Tallahassee, Florida. He received the hospitality of a poor and tiny inn near Norfolk: "fir boughs had been placed about, a clear pine wood fire burned . . . ; on a table, set with spotless white cloth, were decanters of brandy and whiskey, wine glasses and a plate of neat slices of bread — all laid out as immaculately as on a communion table . . . ." At Fort McHenry the shell-pierced star-spangled banner was out in his honor. He loved his quiet stay at Monticello. He became lost in a pine forest and spent a night in a pioneer cabin. He was interested in a magnificent Indian chief, Chilly McCullough. In New Orleans the Cabildo had been luxuriously decorated for him; later one hundred Choctaws paraded, single file, silent. He experienced a steamboat wreck on the lower Ohio. In Nashville his George Washington watch was stolen, to be returned to his grandson as a gift from the United States forty-eight years later, when it was found in a pawnshop. Kentucky enjoyed him, then West Alexandria, Uniontown, and Gallatin’s home in New Geneva.

Such was his reception, except in Missouri and Pittsburgh. In Missouri, Governor Fred Bates refused to meet Lafayette, "to spare him more adulation, and as an individual, it would be altogether immaterial whether I kissed the hem of his garment or not." Former Governor Clark graciously took over for Missouri. In Pittsburgh, the Allegheny Democrat stated: "The nearer he approximates to the Western section of the union, he will find the people more plain, more independent and more republican, and when he arrives at Pittsburgh he will neither find fools enough to drag his carriage or blackguards enough to form a wondering and admiring mob at his heels. The gross infatuation that disgraced the citizens of New York and Philadelphia, cannot operate upon people devoid of sycophancy, and although we may give the General a decent and appropriate welcome, still there is
too much self respect among the people of Pittsburgh, to fall down and worship the man who deserted the great Napoleon in the hour of need and who has just pocketed $360,000 of our money in a manner most unprecedented — without any claim on the national treasury, and relying solely on our generosity.” (Brandon) The article was greatly in error about Lafayette’s relationship to Napoleon and the “claim.” It was the most vicious of all the critical articles.

Pittsburgh, however, extended Lafayette a warm welcome. Revolutionary veterans flocked to see him. Clergymen of all denominations called. One of thousands of American babies named for Lafayette was a Pittsburher, Gilbert Lafayette Beelen Fetterman, and Lafayette was the godfather. Lafayette was given some Bakewell glass. He was banquetted.

To conclude: It is comforting to read about genuine affection extended to a genuine hero and to look back nostalgically on the past in this day of the anti-hero in literature and movies when the Bonnies and Clydes take the public fancy. Mrs. MacIntyre states, “Lafayette was, and still is, the only hero honored continuously by this country, and without reserve, without a murmur of criticism, without the slightest taint of jealousy.”

Florence C. McLaughlin


In the “Author’s Preface to the Second Edition” of Toward the Flame, Hervey Allen wrote that there had been several editions and a number of reprints of the book. Forty-two years later, this recollection of one officer’s experiences in World War I continues to have meaning. The world and its standards have changed a great deal since the first world war. Wars also have changed. The current conflict in the Middle East is a particularly nasty war.

No war of course is entirely pleasant for either combatants or the civilians through whose territory it rages. But what Hervey Allen attempts to convey in Toward the Flame is not the heroism of war nor its brutality, but how the war appeared in his own experience. As he puts it, “how it looked ‘over there’.”

The experience is told simply and undramatically. Allen recounts the nervous strain he and his company felt as they began their march