

SOME INTERESTING PITTSBURGHERS, 1911-1941

PART TWO

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WE have already looked at some Pittsburghers of the earlier part of this century who provided outstanding leadership for their hometown. Charles D. Armstrong, Homer D. Williams, Arthur E. Braun, the Mellons, James I. Buchanan, D. Lindsay Gillespie, and others took an active interest in Pittsburgh and worked hard to improve its image and upgrade the quality of life in the city. Though perhaps less well known, still others made lasting contributions to Pittsburgh and deserve our recognition.

Railroaders

In those days, the Pennsylvania Railroad contributed a good many memorable personalities to the city, and vice-presidents in charge of the central region (which meant the big area centering at Pittsburgh) were almost always vigorous, decisive, good mixers, and active in community affairs. Most of them were named Smith. The noted Jack Appleton came later, after World War II. Another railroad executive who was long one of our civic leaders was Curtis M. Yohe, who headed the Pittsburgh and Lake Erie Railroad. His opposite number at the Pennsylvania Railroad was Ethelbert W. Smith, who preferred to be called "E. W." He explained to me and others that he had become an intercollegiate boxing champion at Lehigh because he had had to fight his way up from "Ethelbert." He was a firm disciplinarian, but never in a boisterous way, and he ran a "tight ship."

Merchants

In those same years, we were fortunate in that our department stores were home-owned and frequently headed by men who became outstanding citizens, giving their leadership to many community affairs. The Albert Burchfields, father and son, were among them;

Mr. Ketchum concludes his reminiscences of the city and its residents in the early part of this century.—Editor

and another great name in that group is that of Edgar Kaufmann, a remarkably vivid and versatile personality to whose imagination and generosity we owe much, including the Civic Arena. He and his firm provided the famous domed roof for the arena, which, alas, is opened much less frequently than Kaufmann had hoped. He was a natural leader and a helpful supporter of the arts and other interests of the city. He was one of our city's true cosmopolites. I well remember the services of the Albert H. Burchfields as presidents of the chamber of commerce and as leaders in innumerable community efforts. "Al Junior" was a leader both in prewar and postwar years. He was a man who started his day very early and from then until late in the evening moved at the approximate pace of a cyclone. Many of the good things that came to Pittsburgh in the years of which I write would not have done so save for the devotion and ability of the Burchfields and the Kaufmanns and of a series of managers of Gimbel's who came in from outside and made themselves good citizens of Pittsburgh. Greer Yount of Sears provided similar leadership throughout his tenure here.

Since several of the department stores were absorbed by the big three, Gimbel's, Horne's, and Kaufmann's, and they have become members of national chains, we have had many good citizens among their heads, but they cannot exercise the full influence which their abilities might provide because they are always transferred out of here "a week from Thursday," and the Pittsburgh organizations which they serve well during what time they have here lament that they move at too frequent intervals.

Comparisons

Comparing, as well as my knowledge and memory permit, the leading and best known citizens of the 1910s and 1920s with those of recent years, I am inclined to believe that among the "old timers" I have mentioned a few were in general more distinct in personality and less conforming to pattern. A few of them, too, went deep into Pittsburgh's life and a variety of activities because they spent more of their time here and were less likely to be on extremely frequent trips elsewhere than their recent and current prototypes. None of them spent so much of his time crossing national boundaries as Jack Heinz, Jack Ryan, or Al Rockwell. Most of them were indigenous; only the big steel companies made a practice of bringing their head men in from other places. There were more rough ones than we have

seen recently — or let us say, there were more who were not smooth — and a good many who could not be compared to later groups of leaders either in education or social rating. They were forceful and colorful, and they thought of themselves as permanent Pittsburghers. Some apparently thought they *were* Pittsburgh.

Comparison is not easy, and inevitably is somewhat subjective because not I nor other writers could have comprehensive knowledge of the ways in which each outstanding citizen contributed, nor most of the effects of what he did or did not do. I would offer the opinion that the best of our business and professional people of the past forty years (1940s through the 1970s) as a group were more attractive and more amenable than the ones who were active before Pearl Harbor, but I do not believe the later group were as interesting subjects for observation and discussion.

Colorful Individuals

Your older relatives who lived here between 1911 and 1941 will remember that we had some well-known people who were not presidents of steel companies, or prominent politicians, or leading bankers. For example, everybody knew Danny Nirella. Danny Nirella had a band, which always dressed in bright red coats, and he was always conspicuous in any celebration of whatever magnitude in the city. Danny was a character, famous for his vivacity and his wide acquaintance. He was a short man, born in Italy, who liked to tell Italian jokes in a distinctive accent. Danny's wife, Vera Kaighn, was about thrice his size, several inches taller, and had an excellent soprano voice, which was notable also for its power. No Fourth of July or Flag Day celebration was considered "official" without Vera Kaighn standing out in center field at Forbes Field, singing the Star-Spangled Banner, accompanied by Danny's band. She sang it very well, and we all rejoiced in the confident feeling that it must have been heard in Johnstown, Steubenville, and all intermediate points. She was the Paul Bunyan of sopranos.

Another Pittsburgher of these early years who influenced the growth of the city materially was Frank F. Nicola, who with the able help of his brother, Oliver, may be said to have been the creator of our great civic center in Oakland. He fought a stirring battle against all odds to have the Pittsburgh Athletic Association, the Soldiers and Sailors Memorial, Forbes Field, and other important enterprises located there. I believe he exerted quite an influence just a bit earlier

in the movement of the University of Pittsburgh across the Allegheny to Oakland. The Nicolas were still active between 1910 and 1920; so in our chronological list of outstanding men, they came after Carnegie and Westinghouse. They came to Pittsburgh from Cleveland, a smart change of base.

A man Pittsburgh talked about a great deal in the third and fourth decades of the century was John B. ("Jock") Sutherland, Pitt's football coach for fifteen of those years. He came here as a teenager from his home in Coupar Angus, Scotland, lacking any education beyond eighth grade, found a job in one of the mills, and by landing another one at night at the YMCA and working two full jobs all of the time, got himself to the point where he could obtain a high school level education.

When he entered Pitt, he had never played a game of American football, but he was tall, rawboned, and had great physical abilities. Sutherland learned the game quickly, became a star lineman, and after service in World War I, worked as coach — first at Lafayette College, and then back to Pitt, where he turned out championship contenders year after year and kept Pitt continuously in the top half-dozen in the football ratings. Despite his famous taciturnity, he had many friends, was highly popular, and was virtually an object of worship to the boys he coached. A whole generation of high school football coaches tried to imitate him. Like his own coach, "Pop" Warner, he was famed for his victories in games he was "supposed to lose." Jock was always an active, devoted alumnus, and a from-the-heart-out Pittsburgher.

I have seldom met an alumnus of any college more devoted to his alma mater or more generous to it than Jock Sutherland. He made the largest single contribution to the Scotch Nationality Room in the Cathedral of Learning and managed the campaign to raise additional funds for the room. Sutherland eventually wound up in a dispute with Chancellor Bowman, whose jealousy was aroused by the coach's popularity with nearly everyone. At one point Bowman attended a football dinner toasting another successful season. As the introductions went around, the chancellor was accorded a mildly courteous reception, while Sutherland got a rousing ovation. Bowman simply could not stand being upstaged by a football coach, even on an occasion like that, and he finally made it impossible for Sutherland to stay at Pitt without a real battle over authority. Sutherland's departure from the university was sad, and thereafter he became a sort of folk hero among football fans in Western Pennsylvania.

Leaders in the Professions

We had a famous architect named Henry Hornbostel, who designed the early Carnegie Tech buildings. He was a large man, who wore a beard when no one else did, and who never faltered in his faith in his own preeminence. He used to march in front of Carnegie Tech student parades. He had a memorable personality, a gift for self-promotion, and a talent for enraging his fellow architects.

An architect of that period who also found fame not only in Pittsburgh but in cities far away was Benno Janssen, and we had other good ones. We also had Frank Wilbur Main, a young man who, starting with nothing, built a big accounting business that spread over much of the country, and Peter Loftus, whose engineering firm did the same. A number of important professional as well as business organizations helped create the Pittsburgh that was growing then, and we never since have been exclusively a "big industry" town.

Great Men of Earlier Years

Most of the greatest all-time business leaders in Pittsburgh's early industrial history were gone by the time this period started, but the parents of the people who were citizens here in the second, third, and fourth decades of the 1900s knew them and told many stories about the greatness, the prominence, and the eccentricities of George Westinghouse, Andrew Carnegie, Henry Clay Frick, and "Judge" Thomas Mellon (who was the Pittsburgh founder of that family which has provided three generations of leadership in business and civic affairs). In that same era, preceding the one I am describing, when the younger citizens still knew the leading men of the 1890s, there were Captain Bill Jones of Jones and Laughlin; and Charlie Schwab, who grew up here and went on to head Bethlehem Steel. We had a choice citizen of that notable generation in the original H. J. Heinz, who was very widely acquainted in his later years (which extended into this period), and who was a Pittsburgher by birth. He was noted not only for his beans and his benevolence, but as a national leader in the Sunday School movement and a universally respected citizen. The old doctrine that "It's only three generations from shirtsleeves to shirtsleeves" does not apply to the Heinzes, who already have exceeded that number of generations.

Politicians and Politics

In 1911-1912 when I was new to Pittsburgh, and for twenty

years after, the public affairs of the city and county were controlled by a group of Republican politicians, always factionalized and battling each other. They could afford to use all their energy wrestling with each other because the Democratic party at that time was very small, feeble, and controlled by one William J. Brennan almost solely for the sake of selecting occupants of a couple of offices where the law required a minority party representative.

When I first knew Pittsburgh, its mayor was William Addison Magee, who was a genuine professional and commonly regarded as a capable administrator. Since then, in addition to Magee's serving an extra term after an eight-year hiatus, we have had ten other mayors, most of whom were men of little ability and little dedication. Perhaps this was because of the fact that during all of that time one or the other party was always overwhelmingly outvoted so that it could provide little check on the incumbent party. Our municipal "First Citizen" has not often been one about whom the voters did much boasting. Measuring them against the attributes of the first-class municipal administrator, the strongest were David L. Lawrence (1946-1959) and Peter F. Flaherty (1970-1977), neither of whom was of my party. I did not like Lawrence, and I am usually completely confused by Flaherty, but they had more on the ball than the other occupants of the office since Magee. The present mayor, Richard Caliguiri, can and may achieve that standing.

The leading politicians early in this century were Senator William Flinn, who got his title from a term or two in the legislature, Max Leslie, who controlled two or three wards of "The Strip" running along the Allegheny River, and the aristocratic Oliver brothers, whose ownership of the *Gazette Times* and *Chronicle Telegraph* gave them potent weapons. Other well-known politicians of that time were E. V. Babcock, Joseph G. Armstrong, Charles C. ("Buck") McGovern, and William McNair. Many were the anecdotes about them, and while some of the stories beyond doubt were apocryphal, they were such bizarre individuals that many of the yarns were based on solid performance.

One of the most colorful figures of Pittsburgh in the first half of the twentieth century was Bill Flinn. Like most of our other more famous citizens, Bill Flinn started down near the bottom of the ladder and climbed up. He formed a contracting company, known as Booth and Flinn, which did many big jobs, including the Liberty Tubes and similar major construction elsewhere; but there was a period early in this century when Booth and Flinn depended largely

for its business on government contracts and work for the Pennsylvania Railroad.

Flinn took an active and effective part in Republican politics, which at that time was the only kind that made any difference in Pennsylvania, and he was appropriately known as "Boss" Flinn. He was frequently lampooned by the cartoonists and attacked, often savagely, by the editorial writers; and he used to collect both the cartoons and the copy criticizing him, showing it to his friends and preserving it. He was a redoubtable character, who gave no ground to anyone and admitted freely that much of his earlier participation in politics was in the interest of business for Booth and Flinn. When Theodore Roosevelt in 1912 broke away from the Republican party to form the Progressive or "Bull Moose" party, which had a crusading platform, Flinn joined the reform movement and fought vigorously for his hero, the great "Teddy." He and Mrs. Flinn had a half-dozen children, most of whom became prominent in the community in one way or another, and his own influence lasted for a long time.

In the 1914 political campaign, I attended a rally in the old Nixon Theater (where the Alcoa Building now stands) and witnessed Flinn in action. Senator Hiram W. Johnson of California, Roosevelt's running-mate in the 1912 campaign, was the featured speaker. Johnson was widely respected among progressives, and since I was a Roosevelt supporter myself, I was anxious to hear what he had to say. Bill Flinn presided at the meeting. When he rose to introduce the speaker, a man in the crowd, seated well back, also rose, demanding that Flinn shut his mouth and expressing his opinion of Flinn in the most insulting, blasphemous, and obscene terms. Three of Flinn's sons leaped up and rushed toward that section of the theater, but were stopped by the strident voice of "Old Bill" himself, ordering them back to their seats. George, Rex, and Ralph, accustomed to instant obedience to their father, did as he told them, and Flinn himself from the front of the platform then said in clear, calm tones, "Will the gentleman who expressed that opinion of me kindly rise again so that I may come down to him?" The gentleman did not rise again. A pity!

Flinn, in his later years, took a quite active part in philanthropic efforts and I came to know him through his leadership on behalf of the West Penn Hospital.

E. V. Babcock was a huge individual who came here as a young man and was in the lumber business with his brother, Fred. E.V., as he was always known, was a hearty, loud-voiced, aggressive, and

dominating sort, who also held the offices of county commissioner and mayor during his extensive career as a public figure. I believe he gave the North and South Park areas to the city, and Babcock Boulevard was named for him. One of his continuing interests was in the Pitt band, for which he bought uniforms. He gave largely to the university, too.

Joe Armstrong started out as a glassworker, went early into ward politics, and eventually served both as county commissioner and as mayor. He was a genial but somewhat raunchy type, the idol of the union members and of the "other side of the tracks" types. Many of the Armstrong stories dealt with his bibulous activities. My brother, Kenneth, a reporter for the *Chronicle Telegraph*, which supported Armstrong, was assigned by the Olivers to keep track of him when it was feared his drinking would interfere with an important campaign. Kenneth always carried a card with Armstrong's remarks on it, and he would give it to him just as he started up to the speaker's platform. One day an important meeting was coming up, and no one could find old Joe. Kenneth set out to find him, but seemed always to be one saloon behind him in the search. Finally, it was time for the meeting and Kenneth gave up and returned to the hall, taking a seat in the front row so he could see both doors on either side of the platform in case Armstrong materialized. Sure enough, after a while, Armstrong came in, slipped his way past my brother, and weaved his way up the steps to the platform with some difficulty. He was obviously happy, laughed a lot, and generally created quite a disturbance. The presiding officer at the meeting, realizing that Armstrong was in no shape to deliver an address, had everyone else precede him at the rostrum. Finally, it was Armstrong's turn, and after a long introduction, he made his way to the podium. Leaning against it, he said in his customary and familiar manner, "I am supposed to endorse three fellows. I can't think who the hell they are. There is a young fellow who is supposed to chase me and see that I got here, and he must have got — *There he is down there!*" My brother was understandably uncomfortable at that time. Armstrong then leaned over and said to Kenneth, "Ken, who the hell am I for?"

Buck McGovern was another colorful individual. He had been a Rough Rider in the Spanish-American War and was a rather typical Irish politician, but with a good deal more conscience than some of his prototypes. Like Flinn, he was an ardent Teddy Roosevelt man. As a rule he was in vigorous disagreement with Babcock, Armstrong, and their group, and when Roosevelt organized his Bull

Moose party in 1912, "Buck" was one of its leaders. At one time he ran a detective agency.

William N. McNair was about as different from those just mentioned as is possible. He was a not-very-successful attorney who loved public life, was always engaged in one reform movement or another, and lucked into the mayoralty in a year when political upsets were common. He moved his desk and chair out into the hall of the City-County Building, where he sat eating apples and filling a wastebasket with the cores, and engaged in conversation with anyone who came by, regardless of their importance or whether they had any city business in mind. His day in the limelight was rather a short one, the Democratic organization hastening to slough him off. He provided, at least, a refreshing contrast to the hard-nosed, self-seeking politicians of the time.

The bosses and a numerous set of lesser lights, some of whom had substantial control over a ward or two, formed combinations that shifted from election to election. They were cartooned and lampooned freely and sometimes viciously by the opposition papers — notably the *Leader*, owned by Alex P. Moore, who was otherwise famous as the fourth husband of Lillian Russell, the noted actress, who by this time had retired.

Moore's paper led a precarious existence and apparently had a circulation much below that of his competitors, because he always refused to give any figures to the Audit Bureau of Circulation, which then, as now, published the important business facts about newspapers. The methods by which the *Leader* got its advertising were suspect. Its staff, business, and news, was largely composed of employees who had been dropped from rolls of the other papers.

Robert Garland was another of the city's famous citizens for a long period. He was one of the pillars of the north of Ireland community, himself an arrival from Halifax, and in his beginnings was something of a satellite of the prominent and highly successful Oliver family. He took an early interest in politics, and when the city began to live under its new charter with a council of nine, he was one of its members, continuing so for an incredible time after the Democrats had acquired all the other offices.

Garland was a ruddy, hearty man, square-shouldered, big-chested, and with a voice to match. It was generally believed that no public meeting was ever held in Pittsburgh without his presence. There were several other members of the original small council who held their positions in it a long time, but "Old Bob" outlasted the

also famous Enoch Rauh, John Herron, Peter McArdle, and all the rest. Garland was in business for some time with a brother. It was never very successful because, for one thing, he could not spare time from his handshaking and political operations to give to the business. He was second only to his friend and backer, D. Lindsay Gillespie, in his record of digging up jobs for fellow Ulstermen arriving on these shores.

Newspapers and Newspapermen

The Oliver papers were generally regarded as the most respectable of our journals of that time along with the *Press*, which is the only paper remaining today of the group of eight with which I was familiar in my early years here. It was not then a member of the great Scripps-Howard chain. The *Dispatch* and *Post*, two of the three English-language morning papers, were habitually undernourished, while the *Volksblatt*, having a sufficient circulation of German readers, existed then and for several years after without quite so many money problems. The *Sun*, owned first by T. Hart Given, a successful businessman who bought it just because he wanted to own a newspaper, went in the settlement of his estate to Arthur E. Braun, president of the Farmer's Deposit National Bank, who brought in some able newspapermen and produced a paper that was bright, original, and appealed to the more intellectual readers. The *Press* was always regarded as the best advertising medium, meaning, of course, that it had to have enough reader attraction to build up a good circulation. There was a constant battle for circulation among the papers, marked by liberal offers of various kinds of dishes, clocks, or groceries, for new subscriptions. At that time, no one dreamed of billion-dollar banks competing for customers in that same undignified fashion. The Mellons, Hillmans, and McCunes of the early 1900s would have regarded such procedures as demeaning.

I soon became familiar with the newspaper offices and a good many of the people who manned them. While I was working my way through Pitt, I supplemented my very modest income from the university by acting as an extra sports reporter on busy weekends, chasing election returns once or twice, and once in a while doing a news story.

Readers who are in a position to recall Pittsburgh in the three decades before World War II must remember some of the highly colorful newspapermen who informed and entertained us. Having had

considerable to do with the papers in those years, I knew a good many, and of them Arthur Burgoyne and Ray Sprigle stood out. There were many others who did not lack for color and notable qualities, but the names Henrici, Leech, Merchant, Lancaster, Lewis, Fagan, Fee, Zehner, and others that have meaning to a few of us old-timers signify less to the younger generations.

Arthur Burgoyne was known for his writing ability, his fearlessness, and his imaginative gifts. All those traits existed when he was sober. At intervals of a few months, Art would go out on a tear, be missing for a couple of weeks, then sober up, promise to quit drinking, and go back to work until the next binge. He was fortunate that he worked for the Oliver papers, whose owners were extremely patient with him. One of his many celebrated feats was on the occasion when, thoroughly drunk, he and a friend went to the Press Club, which was on the sixth floor of an old building in the courthouse area, and succeeded in lifting the piano and pushing it out the window, of course, taking the window along with it. Burgoyne was a man of enormous physical strength, and I presume his companion on that occasion must also have been. All of this culminated in a disappearance which lasted two or three months. He was finally found in Jersey City, helpless, emaciated, and blind. It was said he had lost his sight a week or ten days before police picked him up and notified A. K. Oliver, who paid for medical attention and brought him back to Pittsburgh, put him into a hospital, and saw him through until he regained his vision. At that point, Art really swore off, married a lady whom he had been courting for many years and who would not have him until he was off the booze, and spent his last years serving his paper faithfully and acting the part of a good citizen.

Ray Sprigle was like Burgoyne in his ability to write, and he had a variety of eccentricities. He was strictly fearless, as witnessed by his famous series in the *Post* on the brothels of Pittsburgh, naming names, giving addresses, and telling what was going on when he visited each. During the Prohibition period, he also had a series identifying the local bootleggers, which did not please them greatly. Many other citizens, however, considered him the best and most interesting reporter whose copy they had ever read.

One episode which had the flavor of others in his spectacular career came when he was sent down to Louisville to cover a devastating flood. Sprigle sent back some fascinating stories and finally showed up in the city room, to which he had come straight from the airport, cursing his bad luck because the high boots he had bought to wear in

stalking the flood waters, "are killing me!" Those in the city room who went to his rescue to pull off his boots were convulsed when they discovered that he had them on the wrong feet and, of course, they had been torturing him. He had had them on for several days and nights. But there was never anything lame about his copy. He was a noted braggart, but, like "Dizzy" Dean, claimed that "It ain't braggin' if I really done it."

Max Henrici, an able reporter and widely cultured, took a good many trips and sent back letters for publication by his paper which gave vivid pictures of the places he visited. They were read by many — and collected by some. Cy Hungerford illustrated many of them.

Hungerford, one of America's greatest cartoonists, came to Pittsburgh from Wheeling about the time I arrived here and achieved high standing in very short order. He was liked by everyone. Cy's success over a half century of cartooning rested on the fact that he, at the beginning of his career, developed a simple style understood by any literate person and he stuck to it. His cartoons drawn when he was seventy-five were just like the cartoons he drew when he was twenty-five. They were always topical and always were of persons or events that had wide appeal. One of Cy's entertaining idiosyncracies was that he seldom knew the name of anyone except his cartoon subjects. He sat at a desk almost adjoining that of his managing editor for almost twenty years and one day he said, "What was that guy's name?" Pittsburgh took him to its heart and he became one of its most popular citizens.

Our city had some truly fine editors, too. Ed Leech was editor of the *Press* for years. He was another stalwart character who feared no one and was perfectly willing to take on any opponent, however influential. He had the faculty of keeping every subordinate on his toes. He was as quick to commend as to censure, and he rose to the top of Scripps-Howard's national organization.

For a long time, Leech's opposite number at the *Chronicle-Telegraph* was Frank Merchant, a thorough professional whom the pros considered to know everything about newspapering (then, as now, only the amateurs and the neophytes spoke of it as "journalism"). He was one who "never lost his cool" — or his eye for the most important news of the hour. The name Charlie Lancaster has come down in the lore of the profession here as that of a city editor of unfailing judgment and unusual ability to train young reporters and deskmen. Something of that same reputation is attached to a famous *Press* city

editor, Larry Fagan, and to Dwight Fee of the *Chronicle-Telegraph*. A genuinely superior editorial writer who contributed much to our city was Charlie Lewis of the *Sun*, later executive of the Buhl Foundation. He had the whole confidence of Arthur Braun, who gave Charlie all the backing he needed. He was one of the city's best history students, and as a foundation executive, he set an example of philanthropic acumen.

The sporting editors of that era were a highly diversified group. Many of them were pretty raucous characters. Survivors of those years will remember Dick Guy, Ralph Davis, Florent Gibson, Havey Boyle, and James J. Davies. To many, the best man in the group was the really outstanding Jimmy Long, who was for many years sports editor of the *Sun* and who was a man of character and ability recognized by all of his confreres. Jimmy had a low opinion of most of them, and made no effort to conceal it. They were all afraid of his sharp tongue. He was very kind to me as a struggling youth, and was a friend to anyone he regarded as honest and decent. He brought more innovations into sports editing and writing than anyone else in Pittsburgh, and the completeness of his files was such that his competitors frequently borrowed from him. Jimmy had a high sense of responsibility and loyalty. He had seen a good deal of minor league corruption on the part of some newspapermen and was so determined not to allow for any misunderstanding of his integrity that he would not let even an intimate friend buy him so much as a five-cent Coca-Cola. He invariably lunched alone. He did many kindnesses for many people but was also a pretty good hater. He sat several hours a day only a desk away from another sports writer whom he did not like and who was a fellow Irish Catholic, another bachelor, and a man with a great many friends. Jimmy would not speak to him.

The sports writing of the Pittsburgh papers and their contemporaries in other cities then was matter-of-fact and much more related to actual happenings in the games. They did not have to be continuously witty or otherwise entertaining, and only a few of them tried to give us their opinions and emotions on all subjects. One did not have to be either for or against a Bob Prince or a Bill Currie. The gentlemen who told us about the athletic events of the times wrote more factual accounts in a much more consecutive and orderly way and the commentary came only in the column of the sports editor. The first one of those who was popularly regarded as humorous was Chester L. Smith of the *Press*. Al Abrams, until recently the dean of the modern sports writers, much more closely resembled in style the

old-timers than the others we have now, and he was brought up on the varying procedures and formats of Jimmy Long, Havey Boyle, Florent Gibson, Chilly Doyle, and the others, most of whom sat at the same desks for a long period of years.

Theatrical Greats

Pittsburghers of the era of which I write were proud of some of their boys and girls who achieved fame in the arts and in the world of entertainment. For example, we were proud of Gene Kelly, a Peabody High and Pitt graduate who made good in Hollywood and on the metropolitan stage as well; we boasted of Dick Powell, for several years master of ceremonies at the Enright in East Liberty, who went on to Hollywood and stardom; and of Regis Toomey, another Pitt product, who did not fly so high as that, but was a well-known movie actor for many years. We bragged about the really great opera star, Louise Homer, daughter of one of our well-known ministers, who grew up in the East End somewhat earlier. Adolphe Menjou grew up in Pittsburgh, went to Central High, but apparently few remembered him, and he was not so celebrated here as the others.

We still played the records and talked about Bert Williams, one of the many products of our Welsh colony, most of whose male members came here to work in the steel mills. They formed numerous singing societies and held an annual eisteddfod — in imitation of the one in their “Old Country” — to which all the good Welsh choirs came. We were proud that Oscar Levant, long a great figure on Broadway, was a Pittsburgh boy. We were proud when baritone-bass Julius Huehn, Pittsburgh-born and reared, left to take a long-held place in the Metropolitan Opera.

Writers

In the 1920s and early 1930s, those who knew that son of an old Pittsburgh family, Pitt graduate, and war hero Hervey Allen, rejoiced in the distinction of his poems and his great biography of Poe. Then in 1933, after five years' work, he came out with *Anthony Adverse*. It swept the globe, and we really did boast. It was after this period that he wrote his fine historical novels, all with a Western Pennsylvania background.

The Pittsburgh old folks, middle-aged folks, and some of the young folks of those early decades of the century talked of how the brilliant Willa Cather had been one of our teachers and Mary Roberts

Rinehart one of our nurses. And we were starting to brag about Gladys Schmitt, eminent among modern novelists. Those whose concept of Pittsburgh took in the contiguous counties, honored as fellow townsmen the Roeblings, father and son, of whom it was proudly said that they were to the building of bridges what Michelangelo and Rembrandt were to painting. We liked to mention that O. Henry lived here a couple of years while writing some of his widely-read short stories. We extended the eastern border of our city to take in the Westmoreland County home of Agnes Sligh Turnbull, the novelist of Western Pennsylvania's earlier days who died just this year.

Clergymen

Pittsburgh, like any other city, has felt the influence not only of its politicians and officeholders, industrialists, merchants, and its educators, but also of its more outstanding preachers. In the three decades about which I am writing, there were quite a number of those who exerted an unquestioned influence that survived them and that started into action many worthy efforts on the part of men and women who listened to those ministers. Do not expect a full list or a fair balance between those of various denominations. I can only comment on those I have known or have known much about, so there is a Presbyterian bias here that I cannot avoid. Of course, Pittsburgh is the center of Presbyterianism in the United States, so there have been more notable church leaders of that communion here than of others — a situation which, of course, would be reversed in most sections of the country.

Among those remembered by many laymen and present-day pastors as men of outstanding leadership during that thirty years were Dr. Hugh Thomson Kerr of Shadyside Presbyterian, Dr. Stuart Nye Hutchison of the East Liberty Church, Dr. Clarence Macartney of old First Church, Dr. A. R. Robinson of the Sixth United Presbyterian (which after a couple of mergers is now the Eastminster Church), Dr. William McEwan of the Third Church, and Dr. Edward C. McCown of Mount Lebanon Presbyterian Church.

Another very noted preacher of that time and one who was listened to by many outside his own congregation or community was Dr. Carl Wallace Petty of First Baptist. (How many of you know that the First Baptist edifice, or Bellefield Baptist as some call it, is listed in books on church architecture as one of the most beautiful church buildings in the United States, along with the lovely Heinz

Chapel on the campus of the University of Pittsburgh just three or four blocks away?) I strongly urge you Methodists, Episcopalians, and Catholics — and others — to put down the names of the great ministers of your denominations in the first part of this century and record them in the book about Pittsburgh that you are going to write.

Another religious institution which is famous for a long list of eminent pastors is the Rodef Shalom Congregation, Reformed Jewish. During parts of the period about which I write, its senior rabbis were Dr. J. Leonard Levy, Dr. Samuel H. Goldenson, and Dr. Solomon B. Freehof. These were men of great eminence, and I am glad they have had warm friendships with many of the Christian ministers who knew them.

Reminiscences such as these are the stuff of which local history is made. Your grandchildren have the right to see and feel all you can pass along to them of what their town has been while it was still your town. Do not wait too long to start. Make notes — I wish I had — and you will write better and more useful recollections than these. Good luck to my younger neighbors in your writing and in your living in our Pittsburgh. And the best luck I can wish you is that you are spending your years here with the kind of people who have been and are my neighbors, business associates, fellow workers, and fellow citizens. There are *no* people like *our* people.