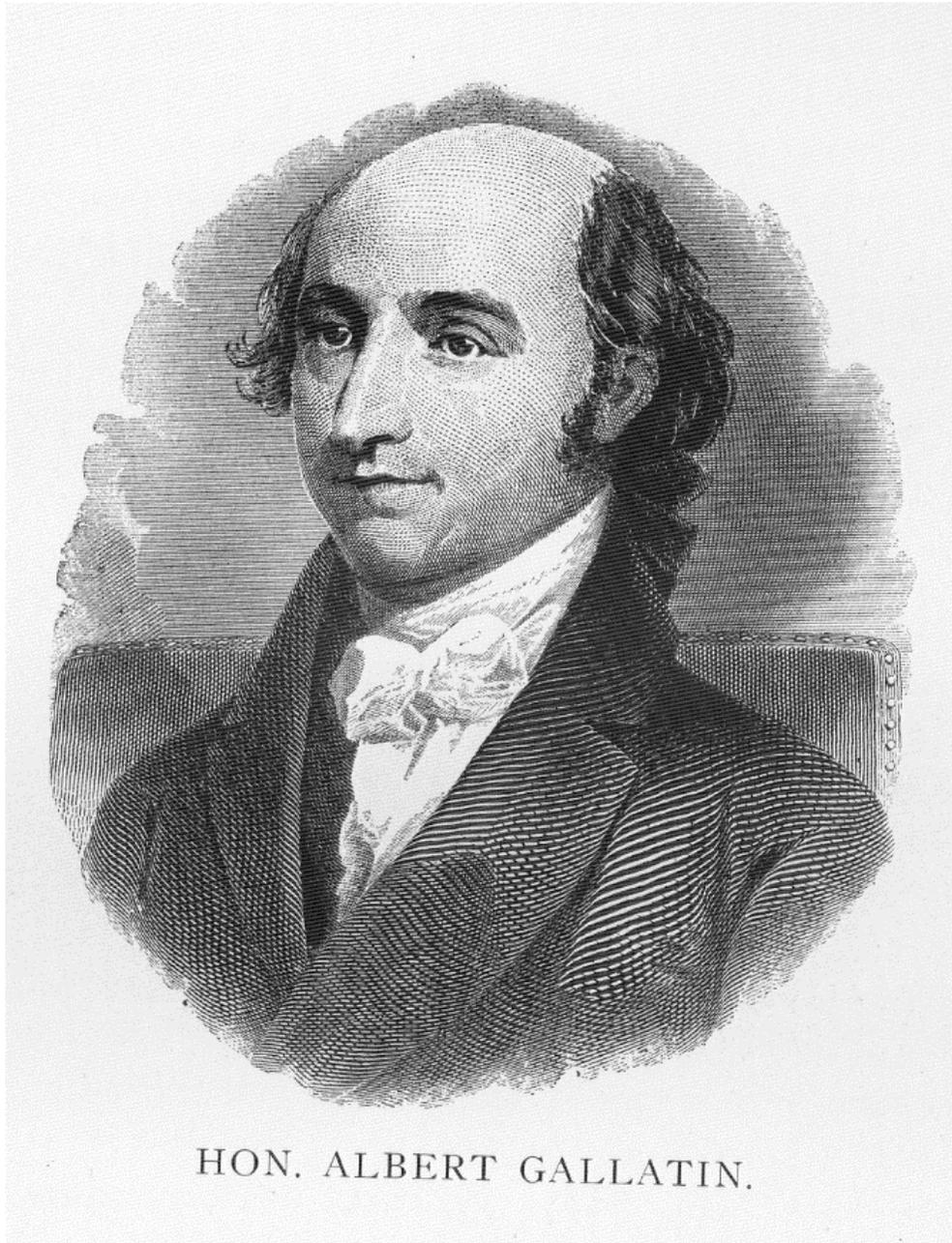


# Albert Gallatin: A Most Astonishing Man

Friendship Hill National Historic Site

## Teacher's Guide



# **Lesson: Gallatin and New Geneva**

## **Teacher Instructions**

Students will use the student reading to learn about Gallatin's business ventures. The activity work sheet has them identify reasons the businesses did not succeed. Then the students will work in groups to decide if Gallatin was a good businessman.

### **GUIDING QUESTION:**

Was Gallatin a good businessman?

### **OBJECTIVES:**

By the end of this lesson the students will be able to:

- List one reason land did not sell in New Geneva
- List two difficulties Gallatin had with the gun-making operation

### **MATERIALS**

- Copies of the handouts

### **PROCEDURES:**

1. Read the teacher background information on Albert Gallatin
2. Introduce the guiding question to students.
3. Hand out copies of the student reading and the activity sheet.
4. Have the students complete questions 1-3 on the activity sheet.
5. Put the students into groups to work on question 4 on the activity sheet.
6. Review the guiding question.

### **STANDARDS**

- Pennsylvania Standard Area - 8.1: Historical Analysis and Skills Development
  - Standard - 8.1.5.A, 8.1.6.A, 8.1.7.A, 8.1.8.A
- Pennsylvania Standard Area - 8.2: Pennsylvania History
  - Standard - 8.2.5.A, 8.2.6.A, 8.2.7.A, 8.2.8.A
  - Standard - , 8.2.5.C, 8.2.6.C, 8.2.7.C. 8.2.8.C
  - Standard - 8.2.5.D, 8.2.6.D, 8.2.7.D, 8.2.8.D
- Pennsylvania Standard Area - 8.3: United States History
  - Standard - 8.2.5.A, 8.2.6.C, 8.2.7.D, 8.2.8.D
  - Standard - 8.3.5.C, 8.3.6.C, 8.3.7.C, 8.3.8.C
  - Standard - 8.3.5.D, 8.3.6.D, 8.3.7.D, 8.3.8.D

### **SUPPORT FOR STRUGGLING LEARNERS**

You can read the material out loud to the students or go over the material as a class.

#### ENRICHMENT ACTIVITIES

Gallatin's businesses in New Geneva were generally not very successful, however, at the same time Gallatin was developing a reputation for being a good financial leader in Congress. Do you find this unusual? Explain your reasoning.

Glass from the New Geneva glasswork was sold in Pittsburgh and Kentucky. Research the Monongahela River and explain how the glassworks location on the river would help it succeed.

#### ASSESSMENT

1. Why do you think the land in New Geneva didn't sell and make money?
  - The situation in Geneva got better so that Europeans were not interested in coming to America.
  - The students may use what they have learned in other lessons to surmise that transportation across the mountains was such a barrier that Americans were not that interested in New Geneva.
2. How did Gallatin being in Congress effect his businesses?
  - His time in Congress took him away from his businesses. The businesses always seemed to have problems when he was gone.
3. What were two factors that contributed to the failure of the gun-making business?
  - One factor would be the difficulty in getting employees.
  - Another would be the difficulty in getting good metal.
  - The students may also write that it was a bad idea to depend on one gunsmith.
4. Do you think Gallatin was a good businessman? Explain your answer.
  - Students may answer this either way as long as they explain their answer. They may say he was a bad businessman, because he was gone so much of the time and he didn't devote his energy to his businesses. The students may also point out that it wasn't the best practice to build and stock the store before there were lots of people in the town. They may say he was a good businessman, since when he was on site things seemed to run well.

## Lesson: Gallatin and New Geneva

### Student Reading

Albert Gallatin loved life at Friendship Hill on the Pennsylvania frontier. When he heard from some people in Geneva, Switzerland that they might like to come to the United States due to the unrest in Europe, he had an idea. He would establish a town for them called New Geneva. He formed a company, "Albert Gallatin and Company," with some of his friends becoming his partners. They bought land right next to his property at Friendship Hill. The plan was that they would make money by selling the land and operating a store in town.

Things got better in Geneva and no one bought the land. The company tried to sell the land to Americans and very few people bought it. Without lots of people in the town the store, which they had built and stocked with goods, also did not do well. It was selling "little or nothing."

The company was not making money. The partners in the company began to fight. Some left.

One partner met some glassblowers and thought they should make glass in New Geneva. The town was right on the Monongahela River, so the product could be shipped out on boats. Also, they could get the sand it needed close by. If they decided to do this, the company needed to spend more money building the glass works. Gallatin did not think highly of this new idea, but they went forward. In 1798 they began blowing glass. By the end of the year they were making a profit. His friend wrote him saying "the quality of our glass is superior."

Still looking for a way to make back the money they had put into the company they came up with another idea. They would make muskets for the state of Pennsylvania. A gunsmith in the area would manage all the work and train the new employees. Unfortunately it was hard to find people to work. Additionally, they could not get good metal locally and had to have it shipped in at a high cost. The muskets were not delivered on time and Gallatin lost money.

Only the glassworks made any money for him. The businesses did well when he was there to supervise them. However, he was usually gone for at least half of the year to attend sessions of Congress. It is strange that in Congress one of the things he became known for was **finance**, or his ability to manage money.



## **Student Handout: Gallatin and New Geneva**

### **Activity Worksheet**

Directions: After reading about Gallatin and New Geneva answer the first three questions. Then following your teacher's directions get into groups to answer the final question.

1. Why do you think the land in New Geneva didn't sell and make money?
2. How did Gallatin being in Congress effect his businesses?
3. What were two factors that contributed to the failure of the gun-making business?

Work as a group to answer the final question. Each person should read their answers to questions 1-3. As a group discuss the question, make a decision and present a group report.

4. Do you think Gallatin was a good businessman? Explain your answer.