



*I am a bad farmer . . .*

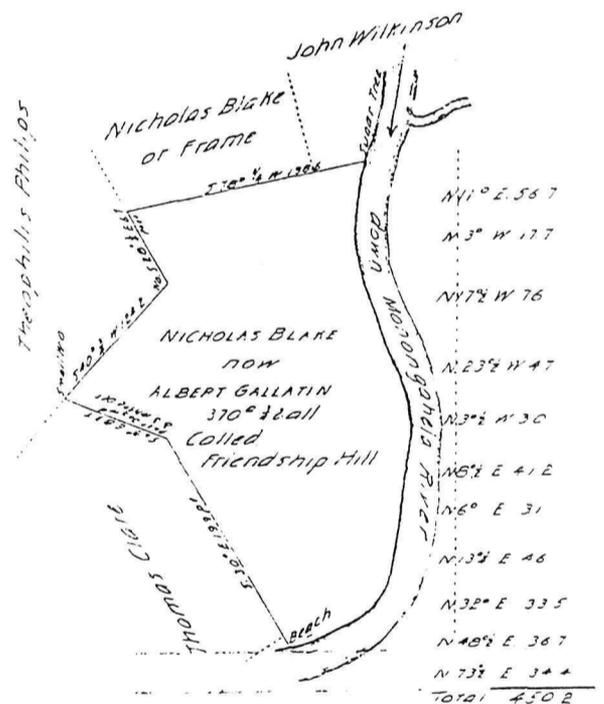
Albert Gallatin, 1798

*In a word, as I am lazy, I like a country where living is cheap, and as I am poor, I like a country where no person is very rich.*

Albert Gallatin, 1795

Gallatin came to the "Western Country" in the early 1780's. Spurred on by cheap land, the rivers and the rolling hills that reminded him of his native Geneva, Gallatin settled down to begin farming. With the help of friends, neighbors and employees, Gallatin began turning the virgin property into a working farm. During this time Friendship Hill never had fewer than six people actively involved in the farm with two of the most trusted being neighbor Thomas Clare and childhood friend John Badollet.

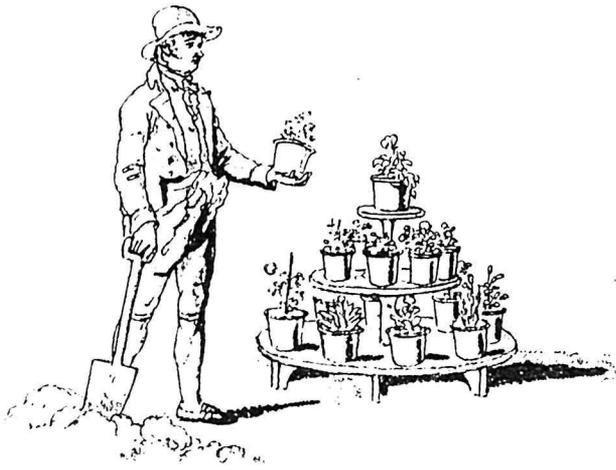
In 1789 Gallatin married Sophia Allegre. Content with his new wife, a productive farm and brick home, Gallatin settled into the routine of rural life. Her sudden death changed all that. With the farm losing its charm, Gallatin redirected his efforts down other roads, namely politics.



*Mrs. Gallatin was at first very much discouraged as to returning to the Western Country owing to her fears last summer . . .*

Albert Gallatin, 1795

Another factor taking Gallatin from Friendship Hill was his marriage to Hannah Nicholson in 1793. A highly intelligent woman bred to city life with its social circles, Hannah never adapted to a rural existence. For his "City Belle" Gallatin sought many ways to improve his home adding two new sections and landscape to please her. In the end it was not enough; Gallatin would sell his farm at great loss in 1832.



*We are extremely well satisfied with our gardener.*  
Albert Gallatin, 1825

Corresponding with James Witter Nicholson, a brother-in-law residing near Friendship Hill, Gallatin managed his farm from afar. A series of tenants and hired hands appear repeatedly throughout the letters. Persons such as Titus, Gough, Nailor, Wright, Hunt, Jacob Bufle, Andrew Oliphant, Edward Hare and J. Carlisle emerge over a forty year period. Best known is the English gardener, Edward Bates, whom Gallatin hired in 1824. Bates undertook the task of transforming the farm into a country estate with a formal garden and pleasure grounds.

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*How does Friendship Hill look? forlorn enough I dare say, abounding in nothing but ruined fences and rank weeds . . .*

Albert Rolaz Gallatin, 1827

Gallatin finds himself constantly in need of repairing his farm. Neglect took its toll on the landscape and Gallatin's wallet. When Gallatin could afford the attention, his farm was productive and is described by many as a beautiful site. Along with the main house the farm contained a barn, gardener's cottage and other outbuildings. Livestock included milking cows and horses. Upper and lower fields, woodlots, orchards, vineyard, haying meadow and garden yard are mentioned as well. Other than sugar and bacon, which Gallatin often ordered, his farm provided for the family and others who occupied the place. In this regard, an important one, he was a successful farmer.

Gallatin fails us in the details of his farm. Unlike his mentor Thomas Jefferson who stated *there is not a sprig of grass that shoots uninteresting to me* and compiled voluminous notes in his farm and garden books, Gallatin has left us little. We can only imagine what the farm was like with hired hands working the harvest, Edward Bates tending the garden or the Gallatins strolling the pleasure grounds of Friendship Hill.

List of plants grown at Friendship Hill:

*Orchard* - apple & peach

*Grain* - corn, rye & wheat

*Ornamental* - althea frutex [rose of Sharon], lilac & roses

*Vegetable* - artichoke, asparagus, beans, cabbage, carrot, celery, parsnip, peas & potato

*Fruit* - cantaloupe, grape, raspberry, strawberry & watermelon



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