

# HE WALKED ALONE

*A Biography of  
John Gilbert Winant*

*Bernard Bellush*

*Bellush* HE WALKED ALONE

MOUTON



# Poignant Biography Of Gov. Winant

We offer a bow to Bernard Bellush for a job well done in presenting the first biography of Concord's noted John Gilbert Winant.

It's aptly labelled "He Walked Alone," and is being distributed by Humanities Press of New York City, at \$9.50.

The 230-page story of the shy, tongue-tied St. Paul's School teacher who became a three-term Governor and wartime Ambassador to Great Britain, and then despondently committed suicide in 1947, is a monumental portrayal. This pioneer presentation of the life and works of a most unusual man is painstakingly authenticated from nearly a score years of research.

It is a warm and friendly depiction of Governor Winant's almost saintly consuming passion to better the world for the common man. But with equal depth and understanding, Bellush presents his shortcomings and inconsistencies with crystal clarity.

Bellush, a 51-year-old New York City professor of history, worked under Ambassador Winant during the World War II bombings of London. So he, like the rest of us who knew Winant well, no doubt came to admire his humanitarian dedication, along with his weaknesses.

But biographer Bellush studiously refrains from personalities. He meticulously permits the facts to speak for themselves. It is in the role of narrator, rather than interpreter, that Bellush presents the real Winant. It rings true, for the Bellush Winant of high posts in Washington, Geneva and London, is exactly the same person we worked with, lived with, rode with and argued with, as a newspaperman, when Winant served his final two terms as Governor in 1931-35, in the Great Depression years.

This Winant biography leaves us with a sense of sadness. But this is the full measure of Wi-

## Leon Anderson

(Legislative Historian and retired  
Concord Monitor political editor.)

nant's self-mistrust and self-misgivings, and his inability to pilot his idealisms over the shoals of life's realities.

Winant ever strove to greatness, and his achievements have become recorded high in New Hampshire and international annals. But there was a sadness to it all. For while he gave his heart and soul to betterment of mankind, he utterly lacked the ability to share himself with even his beloved family. Time and money, too, had no personal meaning for Winant. He continued completely devoid of their value, in all his affairs.

Bellush deserves much praise for presenting Winant in true focus, as we remember him so well. Best of all, he offers so many of us in so many distant places, the complete Winant of all his years, whereas most of us knew only some of his pilgrim's progress.

Bellush unveils two rather startling Winant developments, to most of his New Hampshire admirers. A prohibitionist who disliked liquor (and even wines) with a passion, Winant took up drinking in Geneva, while pioneering chief of the International Labor Office. He came to depend upon alcohol in London and during his brief retirement in Concord up to his shocking demise. Then, Bellush discloses, Winant remained in bankruptcy through his entire public life following his Governorship and died owing three quarters of a million dollars, in multiple ways.

Some have held that Mrs. Winant, a New York society belle of wealth in her own right, was remiss in failing to fully finance her noted husband's persistent mishandling of money. But the

Bellush biography gives simple answer to such unfairness.

Most impressive of all, perhaps, is the fact that this excellent biography of John Gilbert Winant, the mild-mannered man who looked like Abraham Lincoln, and tried to be like him (even to flagrant refusal to cut his hair), is solidly based upon access to the voluminous Winant papers, which are carefully guarded, at the Franklin D. Roosevelt Memorial Library at Hyde Park, New York. Bellush became the first, and possibly the only man, so far given family permission to full perusal of this privacy. We dare suggest that this trust has not been betrayed, or abused, by Bellush.

This Winant biographer admittedly fails to present full measure to his stewardship as three-term Governor of the Granite State. He frankly says so, and suggests it possibly represents a story in itself, especially for New Hampshire posterity.

Bellush is guilty of minor errors concerning our State House lore. But they pale into insignificance against the interesting panorama of the frailties of Winant as compared with his accomplishments.

We are intrigued by a rare foreword to this Bellush biography. It is written by the aged Allen Nevins of California, long one of our nation's most esteemed historians. Nevins, who also labored to preserve democracy under Winant at London, lends a haunting prelude in the form of a letter to the Governor - Ambassador, twenty years after his death. We can only say amen to this inspired tribute to John Gilbert Winant, and the questions which will never be answered.

Finally, we now appreciate, for the first time, why the Winant family recently had his body moved from Blossom Hill Cemetery, to the private burial grounds at St. Paul's School. As

so graphically shown by Bellush, throughout all his years of travail which studded his successes, an unhappy Winant found his only solace in recalling his happiest years as a student and then an instructor, at St. Paul's School, under the late Samuel Drury, the rector, who so well rendered succor and fortitude to Winant in his periods of greatest need. We now agree that the peace which Winant so tragically sought has come by return to his beloved St. Paul's environment.

This story of Winant will never become popular reading. But it is a must for all who came to know, and respect, his burning zeal as a humanitarian. And now it has become assured that the worth of John Gilbert Winant has become properly etched, in the warp and woof of his time, and for this, we again express a thank-you to Bernard Bellush.

## Today In History

Today is Saturday, Aug. 9, the 221st day of 1969. There are 144 days left in the year.

Today's highlight in history:

On this date in 1945, the second atomic bomb was dropped on Japan.

On this date:

In 1831, the first train in the United States to be drawn by a steam locomotive made a run between Albany and Schenectady, New York.

In 1842, an acute border dispute between the United States and Canada was settled short of war by the Webster-Ashburton Treaty.

Ten years ago—The vice president of the Soviet Academy of Sciences, Dr. Nikolai Semyonov, proposed a radical reorganization of Soviet scientific research.



# HE WALKED ALONE

A BIOGRAPHY OF JOHN GILBERT WINANT

BY

BERNARD BELLUSH

*The City College  
The City University of New York*

FOREWORD

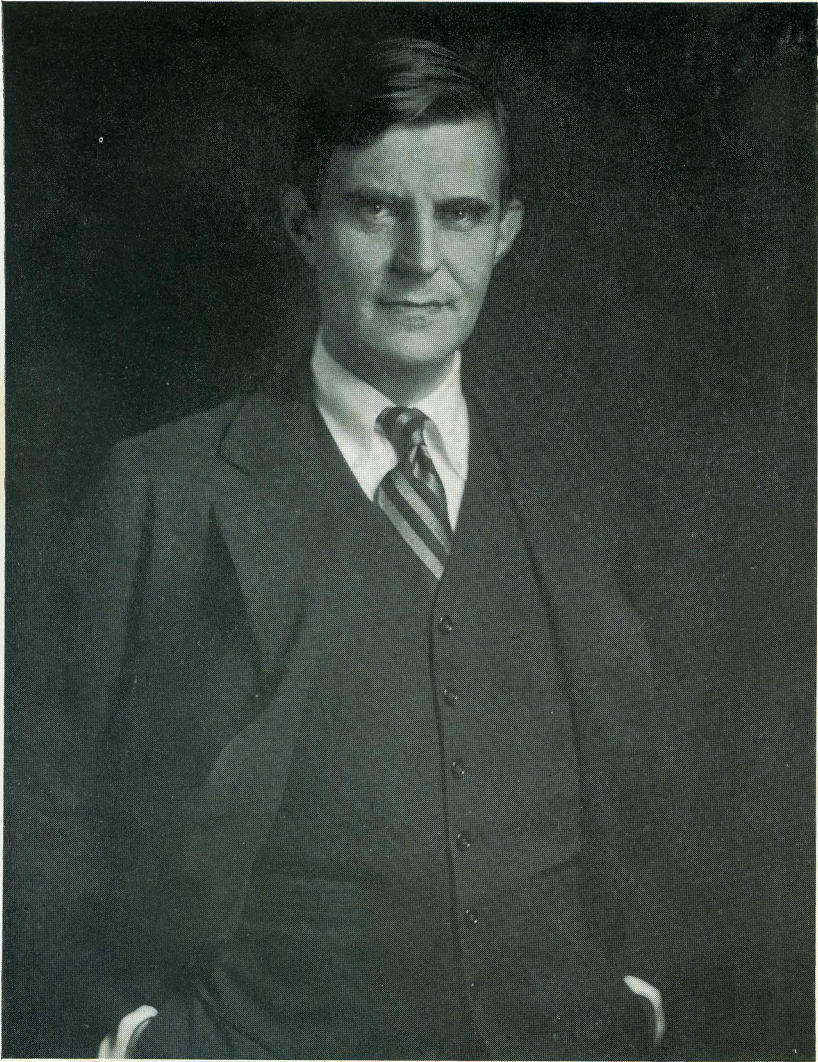
BY

ALLAN NEVINS

1968

MOUTON

THE HAGUE • PARIS



*John Gilbert Winant*