

It would be interesting to learn what has become of the flag and the sword. Does any one know? These interesting treasures should be carefully preserved in Lancaster's museum when that new fire-proof structure is erected. The Lancaster County Historical Society will be very glad to receive any information of them.

RIDING ON THE COLUMBIA AND PHILADELPHIA RAILROAD

By WILLIAM FREDERIC WORNER

IN the Library of Congress, Washington, D. C., is a small volume of 148 pages, published, in 1836, by Grigg and Elliott, 9 North Fourth street, Philadelphia, Pa. The book is entitled, "A pleasant Peregrination through the Prettiest Parts of Pennsylvania. Performed by Peregrine Prolix." "Peregrine Prolix" was the pen name of Philip Holbrook Nicklin, a prominent citizen of Philadelphia. The work was dedicated to John Guillemard, Esquire, Fellow of the Royal Society, London, England.

On Friday, July 31st, 1835, Mr. Nicklin, started on a tour of Pennsylvania, which took him as far west as Pittsburgh.¹ In a letter dated "Lancaster, August 1st, 1835," he described his journey as follows:

"We sat down to breakfast [in Philadelphia] at half past seven, and were just *in medias res*, compounding in a large wine glass that 'nauseous mixture,' composed of a little chloride of sodium, or muriate of soda, or common salt, and a soft-boiled fresh egg, (one of Captain Hamilton's American horrors), when the anticipated Automedon of the omnibus, drove to the door, a bad half hour earlier than the agent had promised, causing us to swallow our coffee furious hot with haste; as there was no remedy, leaving a longing, lingering look behind at the rescued half of our breakfast, we stowed ourselves and baggage as quickly as possible.

¹ In a letter dated "Philadelphia, July 30th, 1835," Mr. Nicklin stated that he had engaged passage for himself and companion on the Pioneer Line for Hollidaysburg, and the omnibus would call the next day to take them to the rail-road.

“We first drove to the corner of Eleventh and George [now Sansom] streets to pick up a man, then to Arch and Ninth to take in a boy, then a good mile up Ninth to find Wood street; but our Jehu, not being cunning in the city topography, now thought of asking a Dutch baker-boy, who was walking under a huge basket of smoking bread, ‘Where is Wood street?’ ‘Dis izh Puttonwood zdreed,’ said he, under the basket; and a little native, who was near, told the driver he had left Wood street far behind; so he retraced his erring steps, and took in a man and woman in Wood street. He then took a turn into Eleventh street, where he got a great haul, consisting of two women and two children, one of whom was a young gentleman who had not yet cast off the nether garment of the nursery. This was a welcome addition to our party, for we are superstitious, and are always glad to have an infant mingled in our cup, whether the draught be by horses, steam, wind, or water; like the pearl in Cleopatra’s draught; it increases the value of the compound, and gives assurance of the general safety.

“Being now full, we proceeded to the depot in Broad street, to be transferred to a rail-road car. After a quarter of an hour of confusion, the passengers and their trunks being at length segregated, the former were packed inside and the latter outside. We had chosen a unilocular car of oval shape, with a seat running round the entire inside so that the nose of each passenger inclined towards some point in a straight line drawn between the two foci of the ellipse. There were in the car about twenty good-looking people, of all sexes and sizes; of whom one was an old woman in a red cloak, and one was an old gentleman in a red nose; the former amused the company with dreadful accidents supposed to have happened on this self-same road; and the latter was fully occupied in parrying from his ignitable proboscis the dangerous sparks emitted by the engine, which constantly flitted, like fire-flies, in every direction through the car.

“There was a tall, good-looking, gentleman-like Englishman, who seemed like one who had dissipated three-fourths of a large patrimony in liveried servants and other necessaries, fashionable in old England, and who might have crossed the Atlantic with a view to nurse the remaining fourth, and to see the New World

and its odd inhabitants. By way of gathering information and shortening the ride to Lancaster, he took a long nap.

“Two cars, filled with passengers and covered with baggage, are drawn by four fine horses for about four miles to the foot of the inclined plane, which is on the western bank of the Schuylkill, and is approached by a spacious viaduct extending across the river, built of strong timber and covered with a roof. The cars had scarcely begun to move when it was discovered that they were on the wrong track, in consequence of the switchmaster having left the switches open, and everybody wished them applied to his own back. This error being rectified by a retrograde movement, at length the cars started on the right track, at the rate of six miles an hour.

“The ride to the foot of the plane is very interesting, first passing through a deep cut made forty years ago for a canal that was never finished, and then by a number of beautiful country seats successively arranged on the eastern bank of the Schuylkill, affording occasional glimpses of the romantic river itself, and the lovely scenery on its western bank. The view from the viaduct towards the north is particularly fine, embracing a long reach of the river, with a beautiful island in the foreground, and the banks on both sides occasionally rising into bold hills, crowned with romantic villas.

“At the foot of the inclined plane, the horses were loosed from the cars; several of which [cars] (the number being in the inverse proportion of the weight), were tied to an endless rope, moved by a steam engine placed on the top of the plane, and presently began to mount the acclivity with the speed of five miles an hour. No accident occurred, notwithstanding old Mrs. Redriding-hood had frightened one of our company out of the car by a direful tale of broken ropes, and necks, and legs, and arms. When the cars had all arrived at the top of the plane, some twelve or fourteen [of them] were strung together like beads, and fastened to the latter [?] end of a steam tug, which was already wheezing, puffing and smoking, as if anxious to be off. All these little ceremonies consumed much time, and the train did not leave the top of the inclined plane until ten o'clock.

“The inclined plane is more than nine hundred yards in length,

and has a perpendicular rise of about one hundred and seventy feet. It occasions much delay and should be dispensed with, if possible.

“The country between Philadelphia and Lancaster is excelled by none in the United States in cultivation, fertility and beauty. It is all occupied by a thrifty and industrious population, whose comfortable farm houses, and substantial and capacious stone barns, are scattered in every direction. In this part of Pennsylvania, until the construction of the rail-road, all the houses, mills, barns, bridges and roads, were made of stone. Solidity was the peculiar characteristic of the State. The fashion has changed, and there are now an iron road and wooden bridges.

“After many stoppings to let out passengers and let in water, and after taking into our eyes many enchanting views, and millions of little pestilent triangular cinders, we arrived at Lancaster at three P. M., without accident or adventure; the passengers demeaned themselves in the most approved fashion, each after his own idiosyncrasy,—some talking, some holding their peace, others sleeping, others seeming to be awake, and all being extremely agreeable, particularly the little infantile gentleman, who was perfectly at his ease in doing his little occasions, smiling the while in the faces of the other passengers, and keeping his mother very busy in the proper adjustment of his nether garment, and reminding us of the royal conduct of the little king of Rome, when a deputation of the French senate called to congratulate him on the first anniversary of his birth, thus described in a French paper:

“Lorsque le Senat s'adressa au Roi de Rome, dans sa couche, 'Messieurs' disait il, 'vos discours me touche,' (Faisant son caca) cela passe de bouche en bouche.”

“The Columbia rail-road is made of the best materials, and has cost the State a great sum; but it has some great faults. The curves are too numerous, and their radii generally too short, in consequence of which the journey to Columbia (eighty miles) consumes seven or eight hours, instead of four or five. The viaducts are built of wood instead of stone, and the engineer, doubting their ability to bear the weight of two trains at once, has brought the two tracks on them so close together, as to prevent two trains passing at the same time. Thus, in shunning Scylla, has he rushed

into the jaws of Charybdis, for in several instances accidents have occurred from the collision of cars upon these insufficient viaducts. The roofs are so low as to prevent the locomotives from having chimneys of a sufficient height to keep the cinders out of the eyes of the passengers, and to prevent the sparks from setting fire to the cars and baggage. The chimneys [funnels] of the steam-tugs are jointed, and in passing a viaduct the upper part is turned down, which allows the smoke to rush out at so small a height as to envelope the whole train in a dense and noisome cloud of smoke and cinders.

“Notwithstanding these inconveniences, a fine day and a beautiful country made our day’s ride very pleasant; as we soon found that the smoky ordeals could be passed, without damage, by shutting our mouths and eyes, and holding our noses and tongues.

“Lancaster is an older-looking city than Philadelphia, for the *furor delendi* does not seem to have yet taken possession of its citizens, and they are wise enough to be satisfied with old houses as long as they are comfortable. The houses on the outskirts are of one story, and increase in size and stories as they approach the central square, in the middle of which stands the court house, a middle-aged building of brick. The sides of the square are composed of respectable three story brick houses, one of which is Mrs. Hubley’s [White Swan] hotel, where we took up our quarters for the night, and found the accommodations very comfortable. It was a long time, however, before ‘nature’s sweet restorer’ took complete possession of our eyes, on account of the vigorous resistance made by the tormenting little cinders, which during our fiery ride had insinuated themselves into those luminaries.

“The population of Lancaster exceeds eight thousand souls.”

Mr. Nicklin arrived in Lancaster on the afternoon of Friday, July 31st, and remained here until the morning of Sunday, August 2nd, when he continued his journey. In a letter dated “Duncan’s Island, August 3rd, 1835,” he described his departure as follows:

“We awoke yesterday at the flight of night, and in the process of ablution detected all the marauding little cinders in the corners of our eyes, endeavouring to sneak off without further notice, as if to escape punishment for the damage they had done. Throwing no impediment in the way of their welcome departure, we left Lan-

caster at five A. M. in a rail-road car, drawn by two horses, tandem; arrived at Columbia in an hour and a half, and stopped at Mr. Donley's Red Lion Hotel, where we breakfasted and dined, and found the house comfortable and well kept.

"Columbia is twelve miles from Lancaster, and is situated on the eastern bank of the noble river Susquehanna; it is a thriving and pretty town, and is rapidly increasing in business, population and wealth. There is an immense bridge here over the Susquehanna, the super-structure of which, composed of massy [massive] timbers, rests upon stone piers. This bridge is new, having been built within three years. The waters of the Susquehanna, resembling the citizens of Philadelphia in their dislike to old buildings, took the liberty three years ago, to destroy the old bridge by means of an ice freshet, though it was but twenty years of age and still in excellent preservation. The views from the bridge, up and down the river, are very interesting.

"Here is the western termination of the rail-road, and goods from the seaboard intended for the great West are here transhipped into canal boats. Columbia contains about twenty-five hundred souls.

"The State does not afford the public as good a commodity of traveling as the public ought to have, for the money paid. For locomotive power, each passenger car pays two cents per mile, and half a cent per mile for each passenger: for toll, each passenger car pays two cents per mile, and one cent per mile for each passenger; burthen cars pay half the above rates. The estimated cost of working a locomotive, including interest and repairs, is sixteen dollars per diem; and the daily sum earned is twenty-eight dollars; affording a daily profit to the State of twelve dollars on each locomotive. Empty cars pay the same toll and power-hire as full ones, which is unreasonable, and unfavourable to the increase of business.

"At four P. M., we went on board the canal boat of the Pioneer Line, to ascend the canal, which follows the eastern bank of the Susquehanna. The pretty town of Marietta is two miles above Columbia, on the same side of the river. That part of the river lying between the two towns, in some points of view resembles

closely the scenery of Harper's Ferry, and is quite equal to it in beauty and sublimity."

Mr. Nicklin arrived in Pittsburgh on Saturday evening, August 15th, and remained there until Tuesday evening following, when he started on the return journey in the canal packet, "Cincinnati," commanded by Captain Fitzgerald. At three, on the morning of Saturday, August 22nd, 1835, he arrived in Harrisburg and spent the remainder of the morning in refreshing slumber at Wilson's hotel. At noon, he sallied forth to see the town, including the capitol buildings. Several hours later, he departed for Lancaster.

He described the journey from Harrisburg in these words:

"At three P. M., we entered a stage coach bound to Lancaster. There were nine grown persons and one child inside, and three grown persons outside. Fortunately, the road is good turn-pike, and the country is beautiful and well cultivated. At nine miles distance from Harrisburg, near the mouth of the little river Suetara, (called by the natives 'Sweet Arrow'), stands the village of Middletown, where the Union canal comes to its western termination. We arrived at Lancaster in safety at nine P. M., and stopped at Mrs. Hubley's, our former comfortable quarters, for the night."

Poulson's Advertiser, a newspaper published in Philadelphia, on Friday, December 31st, 1830, contained the following:

"Mr. Buchanan, of Lancaster, Pa., is of a tall person, elegant in his manners, large eyes, countenance open, expressive and benevolent, all which added to the scrupulous neatness of his dress and general air of gentility must highly recommend him to the softer sex. Yet he is a bachelor, probably on the wrong side of forty. On the floor of the House none can appear to greater advantage. The height and gracefulness of his person, the singular union of strength and sweetness of his voice which, while it pours forth its silver tones, fills full the wide compass of the Representatives' Chamber, the boldness, decision and directness with which he marches up to his point (not assumed for an occasion or an effect, but indigenious to his character), his integrity and virtue, his acknowledged talents and habits of application, and the investment of his whole mind and heart with the subject before him—all combine to make up a character of which not only Lancaster but our country may be proud. The House of Representatives and the nation at large are about to lose the benefit of Mr. Buchanan's services in his present sphere, as it is his purpose to return to his professional practice at the expiration of the present session of Congress."