THE STATE OF PENNSYLVANIA:
FROM BROMLEY AND JONES,
INSTRUCTIONS FOR THE EMIGRANT

This chapter about the Welsh settlements in Pennsylvania is translated from a book, *Hyfforddwr Yr Ymfudwr: Yn Cynnwys Crynodeb o Hanes Taleithiau Unedig America . . . [Instructions for the Emigrant: Containing a Summary of the History of the United States of America . . .]* by Owen Bromley and J. William Jones which was published in Dinbych (now more commonly known as Denbigh), Wales, in 1866. It partakes of two important traditions. First of all it is a guide for immigrants and was intended to encourage settlers to come from Europe to America to live. In this sense, it is like many such works published in various languages. On the other hand, it is somewhat more detailed than many of them in that it gives rather substantial details about where the Welsh were, in what numbers, and what religious and social benefits, along with the economic ones, a newcomer might encounter. In this it is most similar to Rev. R. D. Thomas' *Hanes Cymry America [A History of the Welsh in America]*, which was published in Utica, New York in 1872, a book which contains nearly fifty pages of material about the state of Pennsylvania.

The second tradition is that of the visit to the Welsh settlements. Bromley and Jones show signs of having visited the settlements extensively. So later did Thomas and William D. Davies, who like Jones, was connected with the *Y Drych*—the most important Welsh-American newspaper of the time—and who visited the Welsh in their settlements in the 1880s and wrote a series of articles for the readers of the newspaper because, apparently, they were interested to hear how friends and acquaintances were faring in the various parts of the land.
Owen Bromley was born in what was then known as Denbyshire, North Wales, in May 1825. Having come to this country in 1850, he worked in the coal mines of Pennsylvania for some years before he was sent to Iowa as a coal prospector. Apparently impressed with conditions in the new state, he settled there permanently in 1860, and four years later he was elected to the Iowa House of Representatives for one term. Although unfit for active service in the Civil War, he was instrumental in propagandizing for the support of the Union cause in southern Iowa where many southern sympathizers lived. He served in other governmental and industrial positions until shortly before his death in August 1907.

The co-author, John William Jones, was born in Caernarvonshire, Wales in 1827. His education was not extensive even though his father was a schoolmaster. In 1845 he came to America and worked at various jobs until 1853 when he became the editor of the newspaper mentioned above, Y Drych. He continued as editor until his death in 1884, having lived, it would appear, a rather quiet and scholarly life. His other major contribution to Welsh-American affairs was Hanes Gworphryfel Maur, an extensive history of the Civil War which he wrote jointly with T. B. Morris in 1866.

This chapter about the Welsh in Pennsylvania has been translated quite literally. Words in italics were in English in the original Welsh text.¹

¹ The only copy of Yr Ymfudwr... that I am aware of is in the National Library of Wales in Aberystwyth. Material about Bromley came from obituaries in the Des Moines Register of 9 August 1907 and from volume eight of The Annals of Iowa. Material on Jones came from an article of Y Cymro [The Welshman], published in Wales in December 1905, and from the private files of Mr. W. Arvon Roberts of Pwlheli, Wales, to whom I am very grateful for providing the engraving of the co-author.

THE STATE OF PENNSYLVANIA

This state began to be settled in 1631 by the Swedes, and by the English under William Penn in 1682. Harrisburg is its capital, and this state last year had fully three million inhabitants. It is on the southern [sic] side of the state of New York, and it is bounded on the western side by Ohio; by Maryland and Virginia on the south; and by New Jersey on the east. This is a large state with various characteristics and one which is rich in mines and good land. A great and high group of mountains runs across it from the north to the south. They
are called the Alleghany, but the slopes and tops of some of these mountains contain fruitful lands. The state is very varied in its surface, containing flat fields, great and beautiful valleys, but other parts are wild, cut and eroded, hilly, and very mountainous. Agricultural crops of the best sort are grown in it in many places; and Lancaster county is being called by very many very properly the "garden of America." The writer saw Indian corn growing there to a height of twenty-one feet, and I understand that Indian corn grows considerably higher at times there. Although this is a mining state according to its common reputation, still it has in it the most fruitful soil, and grains and hay and all sorts of agricultural produce is grown in it, as well as tobacco, sugar, and all kinds of fruits, grapes, etc. But its mines are as excellent as the above—particularly coal and iron. Also the social, religious, and educational establishments are excellent. Free schools have been established throughout it in every place, and its academies and colleges are numerous and high in their reputations as places concerned with higher knowledge. Generous preparations have been made for the blind, the deaf, the lame, and the insane. The Susquehanna river runs from the western parts of New York through Pennsylvania, to the border of Maryland where it empties into Chesapeake bay, not far from Baltimore. This river, in some parts within the state, is two miles across; but it is not navigable very far above its mouth. Still, it is very useful for floating large trees to the markets, and it is rich in various kinds of fish. Because there are many railroads going across and up and down in the state, along with several canals, the markets are convenient in almost every place. One is able to travel from one place to another with the greatest of ease.

THE WELSH SETTLEMENTS IN THE STATE

The Welsh came to this state very early, and there are districts there which have had some Welsh in them for many years, and they have lost the use of the old tongue. One finds old Welsh Bibles, books of hymns, etc., being succeeded on the shelves in the Americanized houses as memorials that speaking in the language of the old Welsh has come to be lost. This has taken place in places where the Welsh have intermarried with other nationalities, but it has not been fated to be this way since one comes upon meetings in the Welsh language in other places. No, we see Welsh who are sixty years old and have
been born in America who are unable to speak anything but Welsh. These two situations are but to show the extremes. The Welsh nurture their language in the settlements, and they are all worshiping in the Welsh language.

PHILADELPHIA

This beautiful city is 87 miles south of New York, and it is located on the banks of the Delaware river, and large ships come to it to the port of Philadelphia. This is a rich city and it is one of the foremost in factories, and it is noted for its colleges of various sorts, and especially for some medical ones. It is not easy to establish the number of Welsh in this city because they are so spread out. A good Welsh chapel was built there years ago, but I have heard that the cause of religion is very weak there, and it may not even continue to exist. There were very many Welsh in the city sixty and more years ago, but by this time, the descendants of the old settlers have been Americanized by time. One frequently sees Welsh names around the city, but it is those who have moved there fairly recently who are the Welsh there at present, and among them are those who are only able to speak Welsh. The population of Philadelphia is about six hundred thousand.

PITTSBURGH

This city is located in the western part of the state, 356 miles from Philadelphia on the central railroad. Here it is that the Ohio river begins by the uniting of two great rivers, that is, the Monongahela and the Alleghany. The Ohio connects this city and the other states in a maritime way for thousands of miles, and there one is able to see hundreds of steamboats at once, and some of them travel to Cincinnati, St. Louis, New Orleans, and other places. This is a factory town, and in it there is nearly every kind of factory; but coal, iron, and glass are its chief specialties. Pittsburgh is surrounded by 8,600,000 acres of coal land; and it is believed that one vein, which is eight feet in size, contains 53,516,430,000 tons of coal. Sixty-nine pits were opened on 12,896 acres of land since the year 1845, and the area is now worth 4,089,875 dollars. There are 3,485 coal diggers who have work in these pits, on the Monongahela alone, and they brought to the surface, from 1845 to 1865, 13,097,581 tons of coal. The mines of
Youghiogheny, slightly away from those just mentioned are twenty in number, and there 839 coal workers are to be found. The hills nearest to the city contain ten other working places where 1,240 people are working. There also, near the place, is a coal mine belonging to the Pennsylvania railroad, and in it 410 persons were working in 1865. Besides the above numbers, there are 450 workers digging coal in the Alleghany Valley pits which sent to the city in the period of 1862-3-4, 180,413 tons of coal. Without going into further detail, it is sufficient to say that there are half a thousand coal workers in the neighborhood of the city of Pittsburgh. Also, every one who wishes to work is getting good wages. It was reported in the newspapers, in giving a history of the coal business in Pittsburgh, that one family, containing a father and three sons—each one of the sons under 18 years of age—were receiving between them 80 pounds a month! Not in one month only, but for months at a time. One is paid commonly two pence a bushel (eight gallons) for digging coal; and the wages of workers in the banks are similar. Lads make from 18s. to 24s. a week. Many of the coal workers received a pound a day during the recent years. One is certain to be sure of getting from three to four dollars and a half easily. Prices of everything in the way of food are cheaper in Pittsburgh than they are in Wales. Therefore, the workers ought to think about this with an eye to emigration. Besides the working places which have been noted, the city and the neighborhood about it have many other working places; among them some that are able to be mentioned include the over 25 rolling mills, many smelting furnaces, and steel mills, etc.

Wages—The wages for these workers in 1865 were as follows:—

**Puddlers**, 4p. to 4s. a ton; **rollers**, 1p. to 1p. 10s. a day. **Rollers**, in Guide Mills, make from 2p. to 2p. 8s. per day. Good **hammermen**, 1p. 10s. a day. Workers in steel: **pullers**, 10s. a day; **converters**, 8s. a day; **hammermen**, 1p. 14s. for a ton of 2,000 pounds; 1p. 16s. a ton for **finishers**. Melters of **cast steel**, 2p. 16s. a ton. **Turners**, **filers**, **fitters** in **machine shops** make from 8s. to 1p. a day. **Blowers** of glass, from 4p. to 6p. a week; **cutters**, 3p. to 4p. a week; **flatners**, 4p.; **packers**, 4p.; **founders**, 5p. Wages are as much as 8s. to 9s. per day; **Wood cutters**, 8s.; **marble cutters**, 10s.; **stone cutters**, from 10s. to 12s.; **makers of barrels** (**coopers**), from 12s. to 16s. a day because of the great call for barrels to be used for the oil which issues from the ground.
Thousands of Welsh are in the city and its neighborhood, and among them there are many educational advantages, beautiful chapels, and religious services.

JOHNSTOWN

This town is full of iron and coal works. It is located on the side of the railroad which runs from Philadelphia to Pittsburgh, 278 miles west of the former, and 78 miles east of the latter. This is a growing place in the center of enough iron and coal, and here one finds one of the foremost rolling mills in the country along with many blast furnaces, etc. The Welsh Congregationalists, the Methodists, the Baptists, and the Wesleyans all have chapels there. The town is located in Cambria county, the capital of which is Ebensburgh on the Alleghany. This is an agricultural district where there are very many Welsh living in independence and abundance. The Reverend George Roberts from Llanbrynmair, came to this district in the early days, and I understand that the first emigrants from the Llanbrynmair districts were George Roberts, Ezecliel Hughes, Edward Bebb, Richard Thomas, and David Francis, etc., and that some came there in 1795. Ebensburgh is a very Welsh place where there is an abundance of religious services and several chapels in the town and in the country. The way to get there is to take the train in Philadelphia to Cresson Station, 254 miles away, and from there on the branch which runs to Ebensburgh, a distance of 11 miles.

It is likely that one can buy a ticket to go through Philadelphia to Ebensburgh. The railroad charges from a cent to a cent and a half per mile in first class, but if one goes on the emigrant trains, the expenses are about half of that.

COLUMBIA

This is a beautiful city on the banks of the Susquehanna river, and the railroad from Philadelphia to Pittsburgh goes through it—the distance from the former city being 79 miles. There is a large rolling mill here, and many Welsh work under Mr. David Richards, lately of Danville. There is also a Congregational chapel here.

2. The Methodists mentioned here are more properly termed the Calvinistic Methodists (see p. 342). The Welsh-language sect was disbanded in 1919 with most of its membership joining the United Presbyterian Church in the United States of America. It has best been described as "Methodist in enthusiasm, Calvinistic in theology, and Presbyterian in church government" by Dr. Edward G. Hartmann, America's foremost Welsh-American scholar.
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HARRISBURGH

This is the capital of the state, located on the banks of the Susquehanna—107 miles west of Philadelphia. It contains many Welsh who are working in the rolling mill under Mr. Joseph Richards, formerly of Danville. I do not think that there is a Welsh chapel there yet, but because the factories are in hopeful condition, doubtless there will be one there quickly.

WEST BANGOR AND SLATE HILL

These settlements are on the southern bank of the Susquehanna on the border between Pennsylvania and Maryland, and about 45 miles from the city of Baltimore. Some of the Welsh have chosen to come here by way of Baltimore which is 186 miles away from New York. Having reached Baltimore, one takes a letter-wagon from there to West Bangor. Others take a train from Philadelphia to Oxford and a carriage from there to Peter's Creek, on the banks of the Susquehanna; then in a boat over the river to West Bangor and Slate Hill. This is the most convenient, the shortest, and the cheapest. It is only 49 miles from Philadelphia to Oxford, and one can get from there to Peter's Creek in a few hours. Slate quarries are the main characteristic of these settlements, and people from North Wales are living there primarily. They are good places for quarrymen, and there are many Welsh who have succeeded notably there. The village is located in York county on rocky hill land which is healthful and pleasant. There are all religious advantages, good Welsh chapels, etc.

PETER'S CREEK

This place is on the other side of the river. There are slate quarries there and several Welsh people, a Welsh chapel, etc. Because these places are convenient to Philadelphia, Lancaster, Harrisburgh, Baltimore, Washington, etc., it is easy to get to the markets for the slate. There is an abundance of it there, but there are enough quarrymen to work in the pits.

SLATINGTON

This is the chief Welsh settlement in Lehigh county, and it is noted because of its slate rock. In the neighborhood there are very many
Welsh, nearly all of them quarrymen. Slatington is the chief station on the railroad which runs from New York through the place, a distance of 108 miles. There is no need to go to Philadelphia in order to reach this place. Several small settlements are not far from it, and where the slate is worked on by the Welsh; for instance, Danielsville, Williamstown, etc. The place just mentioned was named for Mr. Henry Williams, formerly of Llanberis, if I remember correctly, who is a noted quarryman and gives work to very many people. There are all kinds of religious services there as well as educational advantages, and beautiful chapels of the various denominations. There is excellently good slate there and enough of it. Also, the markets are very convenient and the railroads run in every direction with New York and Philadelphia being within a few hours away. The quarrymen merely need to blast the rock and cut the stone. Almost all of the settlers are from North Wales.

BATH is another Welsh settlement which is not far from the one just mentioned. There are many Welshmen there, nearly all of them quarrymen. It is said that the quarries at Bath are particularly good, and a William Chapman carries the great work forward. There are several other places in this neighborhood, but I have no room to give details about them. I have given all the necessary information to the emigrant concerning getting to Slatington, the main city in the settlements.

BEAVER MEADOWS AND JANESVILLE

These settlements are in Carbon and Luzerne counties where the Welsh are very numerous. Most of them are people from South Wales, and they, with scarcely an exception, are diggers of coal. It is easy to get to this place on the railroad from New York—a distance of 144 miles. Then the emigrant will be in the middle of the coal fields. The coal which is found here in this neighborhood is called hard coal. It is completely different in its quality from the coal which is to be found in Pittsburgh. It seems that the coal on the western side of the Alleghany mountains is soft, while all the coal which is gotten from the earth on the eastern side of the same mountains is hard coal which is bright and black. Many Welshmen are scattered around throughout Carbon county besides those who are living in Beaver Meadows. One Welsh chapel was to be found in the place when I was there some time ago, and that was a Congregational one. The Calvinistic Methodists worship in dwelling houses.
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SUMMIT HILL, OLD MINES

There are Welsh settlements in the same county as those which were just mentioned. And the way to get to them is to take the train in New York for Mauch Chunk, a distance of 121 miles; then, one takes a small carriage which moves with speed, to get to the settlement, some few miles away. These coal fields are strangely productive, and a very strong Welshman by the name of Mr. Thomas Phillips, formerly of Hyde Park, in the same state, is the overseer over all of them. I saw one vein of coal in this place which was over a hundred feet thick. It is judged that there is enough coal under this country to answer the call for all of the world for a great number of ages to come. The various Welsh religious denominations have chapels in these districts along with all social advantages for their profit and comfort.

TAMAQUA

This place is located some six or seven miles from the settlement just mentioned in a south-westerly direction on the side of the railroad which runs from Philadelphia to Williamsport, 98 miles from the former city. This is a populated city with great coal fields surrounding it. There are not as many Welsh as there used to be there. The Congregationalists have a beautiful chapel in the city.

POTTSVILLE

This is a large and beautiful city in Schuylkill county, 93 miles from Philadelphia by the railroad. It is 163 miles from New York, through New Jersey to Reading, and from there to this city it is a distance of 35 miles. There one is in the middle of an inexhaustible coalfield where thousands of Welsh are living. Also, Pottsville has iron works, rolling mills, etc. There are the following Welsh settlements in the neighborhood and in the same county: Minersville, Llewelyn, Belmont, Swatara, St. Clairs, New Philadelphia, Ashland, and Mahanoy City. The Rev. R. D. Thomas (Iorthryn Gwynedd) is the minister. 3 There were probably not very many Welsh in this place some years ago, but now it is a flourishing settlement with a beautiful

3. This is the same Thomas mentioned in the introduction. He was born in Wales in 1817, came to America permanently in 1855, and died in 1888. “Iorthryn Gwynedd” is his “Bardic Name,” evidence that he had won an important prize at an Eisteddfod. (see note 4).
Congregational chapel, to say nothing of the other denominations. It seems that there is an unusual wealth of coal in the locations just mentioned, and this will assure the future success of the new settlements. There is an abundance of religious advantages, educational ones, etc. in these parts, and literary meetings and flourishing eisteddfods, etc. 4

DANVILLE

This town is in Montour county on the Catawissa railroad, 154 miles from Philadelphia. There are many Welsh here working in the rolling mills, the blast furnaces, etc. and in the iron mine works, etc. Danville is a pretty and pleasant place on the banks of the Susquehanna, and its Welsh are very much in the forefront in literary societies, religious services, etc. There are also three Welsh chapels there. Nearly all of the Welsh are from South Wales, and the smelting workers get good wages. Bloomsburgh is not far from Danville. There are some Welsh there and there is a Baptist religious group. But I am not certain about the condition of the other religious denominations.

SCRANTON AND HYDE PARK

These two strangely flourishing Welsh settlements are in Luzerne county, 142 miles from New York. There is no need to go through Philadelphia in order to reach this pleasant valley where there are some of the most successful Welsh settlements in America. There are coal fields and iron works there also, but the most important is coal. And because the extensive market of New York is so close, and because the coal is being sent there on the railroad, it is evident that it is difficult for coal mines which are further away in the country to compete successfully with those which are being mentioned. Scranton is a beautiful town, lying on the plain of a beautiful valley, and Hyde Park is much the same, surrounded by hills and mountains with rocks which are various in their scenery so that they form especially beautiful views, and especially so in the summer. There are all sorts of social and religious advantages there, and the various denominations have beautiful chapels. These places are also noted because of their litera-

4. An Eisteddfod was a competition among the Welsh in Wales or this country in which prizes were given for poetry, singing, and various literary and musical performances. They were the central point of Welsh literary and artistic endeavors.
ture, and this is especially true of Hyde Park. There are literary and philosophical societies, and they hold yearly eisteddfods where prizes are given which are nearly as high and some are higher than are given in Wales. In truth, the emigrant, having come here, is in the center of all the advantages and privileges which are equal to those which he left back in Wales, and perhaps they are even better. A little up in this valley are Providence, Dixon, Olyphant, and Carbondale. Welsh live in all of these, but the old and truly notable Welsh settlement is Carbondale which was honored years ago by the name of the Athens of the Welsh in America because of the numerousness of its literary societies, its eisteddfods, and the enthusiasm of the Welsh for literature and knowledge. Although there are still many Welsh living there now, yet the place is not as noteworthy for its Welsh characteristics as it was because so many of the Welsh have moved from here to newer places. The various Welsh religious denominations have good chapels there along with educational advantages for the youth, etc. Some miles out into the country there is the Welsh settlement of Dandaff where many Welsh farmers live comfortably. One finds there also all religious advantages—Welsh chapels, Welsh sermons, and Sunday Schools, etc.

PITTSTON

This Welsh settlement is nine miles to the south of Scranton on the railroad which runs to Bloomsburgh and joins with Philadelphia railroad in Newport. Pittston is 151 miles by the railroad from New York. Many Welsh live here, nearly all of them in the coal business. The village lies on the banks of the Susquehanna, and is not far from the top part of the Wyoming valley. This is the most beautiful valley in the state. It is over twenty miles long and from two to five or six miles across, and a beautiful river winds through the center of it. There are beautiful hills on one side and the other, and there the coal mines can be seen. There are several of them here, and also, this valley is notably fruitful and the land is rich and productive. It is not often that one gets an abundance of coal and agricultural land together, but so it is in the valley being discussed. The Welsh, in this settlement, as in all the rest, have established very good school houses, and there are chapels of the various denominations: the Baptists, the Methodists, and the Congregationalists. They are both large and beautiful. Also some Welsh live in Wilkesbarre, 17 miles from Scranton, and in
Plymouth, Nanticoke, and Shickshinny, a few miles away on the same road. They are all coal workers, and many have done very well in these parts. Besides the places which have been mentioned, there are other places in the state with small Welsh settlements, but we are compelled to omit any treatment of them. For instance, there is Spring Brook, which is not far from Scranton, and which is an agricultural settlement. Brady’s Bend is a Welsh settlement in Armstrong county, and it is convenient to get there from Pittsburgh. There are iron works there. One finds iron and coal works in the neighborhood of Sharon which is near the boundary with the state of Ohio. Also, there are many Welsh living in Blossburgh and its neighborhood, and in Tioga where there are large coal fields.

CORRECTION

The footnotes on page 229 of the July 1981 issue were dropped during the printing process. These footnotes are listed below for your information.

22. Wood to John B. Purcell, 14 June 1864, “Cincinnati Papers,” UNDA.