

NOTES AND DOCUMENTS

The State of Pennsylvania: As Seen by Traugott Bromme

DURING THE EARLY PART OF THE 1800s, Europeans came to the United States in large numbers. One such person was Traugott Bromme. Born near Leipzig in 1802, Bromme arrived in the United States in 1820 where he lived and traveled for a while. Before returning to Germany he worked as a surgeon aboard a Columbian vessel of war, and spent time in a Haitian prison. During his travels he faced many of the problems encountered by all immigrants in a new land.

Many immigrants came to America for a new start in life. But many, including many Germans, arrived without the prospect of a job and could not speak English, the dominant language. In order to provide information that would aid prospective immigrants and help them know what to expect in America, Bromme wrote a travel guide for German emigrants. This book, first published in 1840, was quite popular, going through five editions under various titles by the year 1848. The 1848 edition is entitled: *Traugott Bromme's Hand- und Reisebuch für Auswanderer nach den Vereinigten Staaten von Nord-Amerika, Texas, Ober- und Unter-Canada, Neu-Braunschweig, Neu-Schottland, Santo Thomas in Guatemala und den Mosquitoküsten* (Traugott Bromme's hand- and travel-book for emigrants to the United States of North America, Texas, Upper and Lower Canada, New Brunswick, Nova Scotia, Saint Thomas in Guatemala, and the Mosquito Coast). 5th edition. Bayreuth: Verlag der Buchner'schen Buchhandlung, 1848.

Bromme's travel guide indicates that he did substantial research on the various states within the United States. The book has over 550 pages divided into two main parts. In the first section Bromme gives a general overview of the United States, including thumbnail sketches of most of the states, territories, or countries where an emigrant to North America might find himself. He devotes more attention to those places most likely

to attract immigrants (for example, Pennsylvania receives about seven pages) and less to those places he felt were less desirable (for example, "The Territory of Missouri and the Oregon Territory," where for "settlement, this recommendation comes still too early . . . in the two here-named Indian territories with wild inhabitants of the same," gets less than half a page). The Pennsylvania section runs from pages 153 to 161.

In the second part of the book Bromme deals with the question of who should and who should not emigrate, discussing about one hundred professions. Bromme proclaims his book "as the most urgent and accurate purveyor of information on the conditions of the western world, in so far as emigrants might be interested."

Bromme did not intend that all of his books be used solely as guides. For example, in 1842 he published the second volume of his two-volume set *Gemälde von Nord-Amerika in allen Beziehungen von der Entdeckung an bis auf die neueste Zeit—Eine pittoreske Geographie für Alle, welche unterhaltende Belehrung suchen und ein Umfassendes Reise-Handbuch für Jene, welche in diesem Lande wandern wollen* (Portrait of North America in all connections from the discovery to the most recent time—A picturesque geography for everyone who seeks entertaining instruction and a comprehensive traveler's handbook for anyone who wants to travel in this land). As he says in the title, he intended these volumes to provide "entertaining instruction" as well as travel advice. Bromme produced at least twenty-three titles, some multiple volumes, and some as supplements to the works of others, such as Alexander von Humboldt. All his works were geographic in nature.¹

I have left Bromme's spellings, errors, and omissions as they are in the original, trying not to intrude upon the author. However, I have changed his punctuation and word organization in order to bring the text more in line with modern idiomatic English. Modern spellings of place names are supplied in square brackets. Other editorial insertions also are enclosed in brackets. Bromme often indicates breaks with long dashes. I have converted these breaks into paragraphs, as well as adding others to make the text more readable.

¹ Joseph Sabin, *Dictionary of Books Relating to America, from Its Discovery to the Present Time* vol. 2 (New York, 1869), 516–18.

THE STATE OF PENNSYLVANIA

Pennsylvania, the trans-Atlantic Germany, lies between $39^{\circ} 43'$ and 42° north latitude and between $2^{\circ} 20'$ east longitude and $3^{\circ} 36'$ west longitude.² It is bounded in the north by Lake Erie and the state of New York, in the northeast by this same state, in the east by New Jersey, in the south by Delaware, Maryland and Virginia, and in the west by Ohio and Virginia. It has an extent from south to north of 153 miles, from east to west of 307 miles, and embraces an area of 45,954 square miles or 29,410,560 acres.

In shape Pennsylvania forms a complete parallelogram, which is separated by several mountain chains into three different parts. The eastern part is described by the slope of the Apalachian [Appalachian] Mountains, which are made up for the most part by alluvial deposition that is covered with sand and are fertile only in those places where fertile organic soil is washed up by streams. The middle part is formed by the mountain land of the Apalachians [Appalachians] and Alleghanys [Alleghenies], with its many ridges and romantic fertile valleys; and the western part, the rolling highland, with its hills and rich soil.

Seven parallel rows of mountains running from northeast to southwest cut through Pennsylvania. The first consists of broken steep mountains, which stretch from the Delaware to the Susquehanna, and end in the Conewango [Conewago] chain. The second row is formed by the Kittatumy [Kittatinny] or Blue Mountains, which cross the Susquehanna at Esterton, and is divided into two branches, the South and North Mountains, from which the last go into the Tuscaroras, which stretch northeastward to Juniatta [Juniata]. The third row is formed by the Mahantango chain, which spreads out between the Lehigh and the Susquehanna, and goes into the Broad Mountains. The fourth row, the Nittany and Muncey [Muncy] Ranges, rises on the bank of the Tioga, runs to the southwest, and splits south of Belfont [Bellefonte] into the small mountain strings that bear the names Shade, Tussey, Jack, Sideling, Alleguppy, Warrior, Builts and Wills Mountains. The fifth row is formed by the Alleghanys [Alleghenies], after which the entire mountain system of Pennsylvania is generally named. The sixth are the Laurel Hills, and the seventh the Chestnut Mountains, west of which only small isolated

² Bromme separates east and west longitude, that is, forms a prime meridian, at the present longitude of 77° west, which runs through the nation's capitol, Washington, D.C.

groups and crags appear. The largest part of Pennsylvania consists of ore-bearing and stratified mountains. Only a few primeval mountains lie to the east of the Alleghanys [Alleghenies]. All primitive deposits lie in the southern part of the land. These are followed by ore-bearing mountains, which spread to a width of 70 miles to the divide of the eastern and western rivers, and are broken up between Norristown and Reading by stratified mountains. Along this entire stretch the soil in the level places is rather good, and even rich where the rivers form alluvial deposits. Otherwise it contains much sand, and is therefore more suitable for meadow land. The mountain valleys are fertile throughout. From the heights of the Alleghanys [Alleghenies] to the Erie the entire western and northwestern slope of the land consists of stratified mountains and alluvially deposited land, which is exceptional for its fertility, especially in the river valleys. The lack of a protecting row of mountains, however, exposes the northwestern part of Pennsylvania to cutting northwest winds, whereby great and very unpleasant changes in the weather ensue.

Although not bordering immediately on the ocean, the state has three rivers which open a connection between it and the Atlantic Ocean and the Gulf of Mexico, and in the northwest Lake Erie, through which it can communicate with the St. Lawrence. The rivers are: the Delaware, which, coming out of New York, receives from the west the Lehigh [Lehigh] and Schuylkill, and carries to Philadelphia the largest ships; the Susquehanna, which empties into the Chesapeake Bay, forms 15 to 20 rapids and falls, and receives in Pennsylvania the Juniatta [Juniata], Conodogwinet [Conodoguinet], Conewago, Mahony and Swatara; and the Ohio, which is formed through the union of the Alleghany [Allegheny] with the Monongahela.

Pennsylvania unites all climates of the world: it has the dampness of Great Britain in spring, the heat of Africa in summer, an Egyptian sky in fall, and the cold of Norway in winter. West Indies storms and hurricanes, here called tornados, occur at almost any time of year, and the change of the temperature is extraordinary. The winter starts regularly at the beginning of November with ice and frost, but alternates until the middle of December with damp days and mild weather. Then, however, the winter lasts until the middle of March. Snowfall averages 8-10 inches, occasionally though as much as 2-3 feet. Spring is short but not unpleasant, changeable, and damp cold. Summer is extraordinarily hot. Often the thermometer climbs to 24°, 26°, even 29°, but the nights always remain

cool, and the difference between day and night temperature often amount to 12°. ³ Fall is the most pleasant time of year, [and] continues until the middle of October, and then goes into rainy weather.

The eastern part of Pennsylvania and most of the valleys of the mountain lands are all under agriculture, and farming flourishes as much as in any state in America. In many regions farming is like in Europe: good field location, a correct crop rotation, and attempts through manuring to give the depleted fields new fertility. The eastern and middle counties have reached a high level of agriculture, and German diligence has brought Pennsylvania to this stage. The west is only partially under agriculture, and miles-long stretches still wait there for industrious settlers.

Among the products of farming wheat, rye, corn, barley, oats, buckwheat, hemp, flax, and tobacco stand at the top. Fruit is harvested in quantity and cattle breeding is excellent. The forest, in which all the types of trees of North America are represented, deliver valuable timber for construction. Mining is carried out for iron, coal, and lead. Iron is found in all parts of the land; coal at Pittsburg [Pittsburgh], on the Susquehanna River, on the Schuylkill and Lehigh; marble and limestone quarries are numerous; gypsum in significant quantity at Pennsborough [Pennsboro], at Westmoreland; petroleum on Oil Creek, in Crawford County.

Industry and manufacture are on the upswing. At present there are in the land: 235 woolen mills, 337 fulling mills, 106 cotton mills with 146,494 spindles, 213 blast furnaces, 169 foundries, 87 paper mills, 1,149 tanneries, 30 powder mills, 28 glass factories, 128 porter breweries, 1,005 distilleries, 87 breweries and 725 wheat mills. There are 2,977 persons employed in anthracite coal mining and 1,798 in brown coal mining, and the first delivers about 900,000 tons annually, the latter about 12 million bushels of bituminous coal. The coastal trade with the neighboring states is significant. It sends out wheat, flour, pickled meat, and iron, and brings in from the northern states: train oil, spermaceti, fish, cheese, and so on, and from the southern states: tar, resin, turpentine, cotton, wood, and rice. The export of products of the land to over-seas harbors is quite significant, and the land trade in foreign products stands only a little behind New York. The over-seas trade is conducted by 194 wholesale and 178 commission businesses, and the land and retail trade by 6,534 merchants. The export of the state amounted in 1845 to 9,827,311 dollars, the

³ Bromme uses the Reaumur scale, in which water freezes at 0° and boils at 80°. Thus, 29° R would be approximately 97° F. A difference of 12° R would be 27° F.

import to 8,283,951 dollars. There are 49 banks in the state, with a subscribed capital of 24,286,405 dollars.

Half the inhabitants are Germans and their descendants, a quarter are English, and the remainder are Scots, Irish, Dutch, Swedes, and so on. Their number approaches at present 1,885,629, among which are 22,874 free Coloreds and 1307 slaves. Presbyterians and Quakers are the most numerous religious groups, and the former have about 400 preachers, the latter 150 congregations. But there are also many Baptists, Episcopalians, Methodists, Lutherans, Calvinists, Moravians, Reformed, Swedenborgians, and so on. German inhabitants of Pennsylvania number 908,250 souls, and as a result the state could even now with full right be called a second Germany. The German settlers are noted for simplicity of customs, prosperity, religiosity, thoroughness, German fidelity, and honesty above all other inhabitants of the Union, and only one reproach can be made of them, their obstinate retention of the old and the traditional, and the little attention they pay in general to the school and instruction system. For several years, however, they have managed to have the laws and resolutions of the legislature translated and published in the German language. Churches and schools among them are for the most part in German. There are many settlements whose inhabitants—although individual settlements are already 150 years old—speak almost no English, and are scarcely able to read the English Bible. Should the thousands who annually emigrate from Germany turn here, where the German element could be so easily elevated, here they would not miss the Fatherland and prosper happily. Even though the state is already rather populated, there are always large stretches of unimproved land in the north and west to cultivate, and the proximity of large markets and the ease of remaining in contact with the Motherland make settlement here of more value than in the more distant, if even more fertile, west. Friedrich Pauer, an able observer of the American situation, expresses himself most truly in his sound work about the United States, concerning the gentler half of Pennsylvania's population.

While in all parts of the Union the women are useful only for dressing up, going out and squandering; while there it is considered a shame to let wife or daughter work, the daughters of the German farmers in Pennsylvania cheerfully go out into the field, bind the yellow golden bundles of wheat, turn the fragrant grass, and on winter evenings sit at home busy at the spinning wheel. They offer the husband a face exuberant from health

instead of cheeks pale from night reveling and dark rimmed eyes; instead of weak arms covered to the shoulder in kid gloves, arms vigorous for field and cows; instead of railroad stocks purchased at 20% at (bankruptcy) auction, full barns and proudly waving fields; instead of a work by Eugene Sue⁴ bound in red leather and gilt-edged, the old Bible, with the family almanac therein; and instead of a nose-wrinkling society smile, a true, honest, German heart.⁵

Art and science were introduced here later than in the northern states, for which the institutions of the Quakers are probably responsible, which did take care of elementary instruction in arithmetic, writing and reading, but regarded any further instruction as unnecessary. At present, about 15 institutions of higher learning, academies, colleges, seminaries, and universities can be found in all parts of the state, where they are deemed necessary; 290 academies [middle and high schools] with 15,950 students and 4,968 elementary schools with 179,989 students.

In the year 1825 Pennsylvania began great improvements of its interior, and since that time gigantic works, publicly as well as privately funded, have been carried out in this state. The most significant is the canal that connects Philadelphia with the Alleghany [Allegheny] at Pittsburg [Pittsburgh]. It consists of an eastern and western division, which are connected between Johnstown and Hollidaysburg by a railroad 37 miles in length. The extent of the entire work amounts to 400 miles. Other canals are: the Schuylkill Navigation Canal, which stretches 108 miles from Philadelphia to Port Carbon; the Union Canal, 82 miles, from Reading to Middletown; the Lehigh [Lehigh] Canal, 84 miles, from Easton to Stoddartsville; the Lackawaxan [Lackawaxen], 25 miles, from Delaware to Honesdale; the Conestoga [Conestoga], 18 miles, from Lancaster to Safe Harbor; the Codorus, 11 miles, from York to the Susquehanna; the Bald Eagle, 25 miles, from the western division of the great canal to Bellefonte; the Susquehannah [Susquehanna] Canal, 45 miles, from Wrightsville [Wrightsville] to Havre de Grace; and several

⁴ Eugene Sue was a French novelist (1804–1857).

⁵ Friedrich Pauer lived during the first half of the nineteenth century. He, like Bromme, published handbooks for immigrants. Two of his titles are *Texas. Ein sicherer Führer für Auswanderer . . .* (Texas. A sure guide for emigrants . . .), published in 1846, and *Die Vereinigten Staaten von Nord-Amerika . . .* (The United States of North America . . .), published in 1847. There is very little information on Pauer. However, he apparently had been living in Boston for twelve years when his second book was published. He bore the title "doctor" and was a member of the Agricultural Society of Boston. Quote from Pauer, *Die Vereinigten Staaten von Nord-Amerika: nach erfolgtem anchluss der republik Texas; mit besonderer beziehung auf deutsche auswanderer* (Bremen, 1847), 229–30.

smaller canals.

Even more numerous are the railroads: the Columbia Railroad, 81 miles in length, goes from Columbia to Philadelphia; the Valley Railroad, 20 miles, from Norristown to the Columbia road; the Harrisburg-Lancaster Railroad is 35 miles long; Cumberland Valley, 50 miles, from Harrisburg to Chambersburg; Westchester, 10 miles, from the Columbia road to Westchester; Franklin, 30 miles, from Chambersburg to Williamsport; the York-Wrightsville Railroad, 13 miles; Strasburg, 7 miles, from Cumberland Valley to Strasburg; Philadelphia-Reading, 95 miles, from Reading to Pottsville; Little Schuylkill, 23 miles, from Port Clinton to Tamaqua; Danville-Pottsville, 44½ miles, from Pottsville to Sunbury; Little Schuylkill and Susquehanna, 106 miles, from Tamaqua to Williamsport; Beaver Meadow Spur, 12 miles, from Lardner's Gap to the Beaver Meadow Railroad; Williamsport-Elmira, 73½ miles; Corning and Blossburg, 40 miles; Mount Carbon, 7¼ miles, from Mount Carbon to Norwegian Creek; Schuylkill Valley, 10 miles, from Port Carbon to Tuscarora; a spur of the same of 15 miles length: Schuylkill, 13 miles, from Schuylkill to the valley; Mill Creek, 9 miles, from Port Carbon to the coal mines; Mine Hill and Schuylkill Haven Railroad, 20 miles; Mauch Chunk [now Jim Thorpe], 9 miles, from Mauch Chunk to the coal mines, with 16 mile spur road; Room Run, 5¼ miles from Mauch Chunk to the coal mines of the same; Beaver Meadow, 20 miles, from Parrysville to the coal mines; Hazelton and Lehigh, 8 miles, from Hazelton [Hazleton] to the Beaver Meadow Railroad; Nesquehoning, 5 miles, from the Nesquehoning Mine to the Lehigh River; Lehigh and Susquehanna, 19½ miles, from White Haven to Wilkesbarre [Wilkes-Barre]; Carbondale and Honesdale, of 17½ miles length; Lykin's [Lykins] Valley, 16½ miles, from Broad Mountain to Millersburg; Pine Grove, 4 miles, from Pine Grove to the coal mines; Philadelphia-Trenton, 26¼ miles, from Philadelphia to Morrisville; Philadelphia-Germantown-Norristown, 17 miles, from Philadelphia to Norristown, and the Germantown spur, 4 miles; and the Philadelphia-Wilmington Railroad of 27 miles length.

The government of Pennsylvania consists of a senate, which is elected for four years, and a house of representatives, which, together with a quarter of the senate, is elected every year. The governor is elected for three years, and in 12 years can be elected only three consecutive times. There is no lieutenant governor. The judicial power is independent. The state

debt amounts to 34,723,261 dollars.

Pennsylvania is divided into 58 counties, which break up into 1,284 townships. The most important cities of the state are: Harrisburg, at 40° 16', the capitol of the state and seat of government, on the Susquehannah [Susquehanna], over which a fine covered bridge 2,876 feet long passes, with a capitol, a council house, 9 churches, 2 banks, 1 academy, 600 large brick houses, and 5,980 inhabitants, who maintain shops and carry on land trade.

Philadelphia, the second city of the Union, at 39° 56' north latitude, on a wide plain between two navigable rivers, the Delaware and the Schuylkill, over the latter of which span several bridges. It consists of 7 parts: the city proper, the northern independent suburbs, Southwark, Moyamensing, Kensington, Spring Garden and Passyunk, and it is further divided into 20 wards. It is one of the most regular and prettiest cities on earth. It has, with the exception of the crooked-running Dock Street and the streets in the suburbs, regular streets throughout, which cross at right angles, are well paved and have sidewalks on each side, and are throughout 50–80 feet wide. Philadelphia has more public places than any city of the Union. The houses, which the city estimates to be about 20,000, are in part built in stone, in part of brick, and almost throughout 2–3 stories high. Wooden houses are no longer permitted to be built in the inner city, although there are still many left from earlier times. The number of inhabitants amounts to 298,056.

Among the public buildings the following are the most remarkable: the old capitol, 2 city halls, the county hall, 6 market halls, the Washington Hall, Peales Museum, the Franklin Institute, the University buildings, Girards College, the famous waterworks, 13 banks, 4 theaters, and 150 churches and houses of worship. Elementary schools of all types and academies are present in quantity. Scholarly societies, technical associations and charitable institutions are here in great number, and in addition 1 academy of art, 1 athenaeum, 4 large public libraries, 1 observatory, and 1 botanical garden.

The inhabitants are respectable and orderly: swearing and drunkenness are uncommon. Disturbances occur rarely in the streets, houses, or inns, and even children conduct themselves peacefully and decently. On Sundays the streets are desolate, the numerous churches packed full. The dress of both sexes is completely English; everyone takes pride in respectable dress and conduct. Although luxury is already uncommonly

great, it has not had positive effects on all classes of people as in New York and Boston. The income of the inhabitants is based on industry, shipping, and trade. One can find artisans, artists, and manufacturers of all types. Ship building is considerable. The breweries that produce porter rival those in London, and about 70 book publishers and book dealers satisfy the literary needs of the Union.

Pittsburg [Pittsburgh], at 40° 32' north latitude, at the forks of the Alleghany [Allegheny] and Monongahela, which form the Ohio here, is one of the most flourishing and industrious cities of the interior of the Union, with 2,000 houses; fine straight, 40-50 foot wide streets; 1 town hall; 35 churches; 1 federal arsenal; 1 prison; 3 banks, and 39,427 inhabitants, who direct significant trade, mills, manufactories, and coal mining. Of the suburbs of Pittsburg [Pittsburgh], Alleghany [Allegheny] City, on the northwest bank of the Alleghany [Allegheny], is the most important and is connected with Pittsburg [Pittsburgh] by 3 bridges. It already has a population of 11,205 souls, possesses 15 churches, 1 seminary, 3 academies, 12 schools, 1 state prison, 58 shops, and several manufactories and mills.

Lancaster, on the Conestago [Conestoga], is a flourishing mill town with 10,000 inhabitants, 983 houses, 1 town hall, 9 churches, 3 banks, and many mills in pleasant surroundings. Bethlehem, chief location of the Moravians, where the Manakissy [Monocacy] flows into the Lehigh [Lehigh], [is] a friendly, industrious, city situated on the slopes of limestone hills. Allentow[n], [is] on the Lehigh, with an educational establishment for homeopathy. Reading, on the Schuylkill, [is] a mill town with 6,000 inhabitants, mostly German. York, [is] on the Codorus; Columbia, on the Susquehanna, over which leads a scenic bridge; Gettysburg [Gettysburg], on Rock Creek, with 1 German Lutheran seminary; Chambersburgh [Chambersburg], on the Conococheague [Conococheague]; and Bedford, on the Juniatta [Juniata]. All are flourishing, industrious towns.

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