

# NOTES AND DOCUMENTS

WASHINGTON TO PITTSBURGH, 1851

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A DISTINGUISHED traveler through western Pennsylvania at the beginning of the sixth decade of the nineteenth century was the Honorable Peter Vivian Daniel, associate justice of the Supreme Court of the United States. He was on his way to the Mississippi Valley to hold judicial sessions in his circuit, and the first lap of his journey carried him as far as Pittsburgh, where he was to embark on a river boat. He took advantage of an overnight stay in the metropolis of the region beyond the mountains to write his daughter an account of his progress to that place. The letter describing Justice Daniel's "peregrinations," dated April 8, 1851, is in a collection of papers deposited recently in the Alderman Library at the University of Virginia by Mr. William Randolph Grymes, of Orange.

Peter Vivian Daniel (1784-1860) was a Virginian who had served long and ably in the legislature and the council of his native state. Andrew Jackson offered him a place in the cabinet as attorney general in place of Taney, but Daniel declined and later, in 1836, was made judge of the United States District Court for Virginia. At the time of the trip in question, he was approaching the tenth anniversary of his appointment to the bench of the highest tribunal in the nation. The daughter to whom he addressed the epistle was Miss Elizabeth Randolph Daniel (1810-79), who directed affairs at the family home during her father's absences.

The letter contains several passages of more than ordinary interest to the social historian. The principal theme is the great discomfort experi-

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enced by travelers at the period of writing. The description of the crossing of the mountains by railroad is notable for the comments on the "inclined planes" which were "so steep as to make it inconvenient to stand up in the Cars." The picture of conditions on the canal boat from Johnstown to Pittsburgh is vivid in the extreme, and one can readily believe the justice's appellation of that portion of the journey as "purgatory." Pittsburgh itself, even in that early day, was called "one great stithy" in which the atmosphere was "almost suffocating." The passing reference to the expensive style of Dr. Sampson's house indicates that there was some attempt to keep up with the grandeur which was popular in the eastern cities.

Pittsburg Apl 8t- 1851 (tuesday)

Dear Daughter —

I write to give to all at home some account of myself and my peregrinations. I reached this place this morning at 9 o'clock A. M. in usual health, which may be somewhat wondered at, after the fatigue and discomfort of the journey; but so much wearied, that I determined as the travelling phrase is, to "lie over" until tomorrow. On Saturday evening I came from Washington to Baltimore, thro' a perfect storm of wind and rain, which was incessant thro' the night. Sunday was a bright pleasant day—Monday the weather was lowering, & today there has been rain again. We travelled incessantly two nights and one day, and part of another, during which time my clothes were not taken off, nor even my boots.<sup>2</sup>

The rail road from Baltimore by Harrisburg to Hollidaysburg at the eastern base of the Allegany, is a very good one; but at the Town last mentioned, we commenced the ascent of five inclined planes, and the descent of an equal number; & one of these particularly, so steep as to make it inconvenient to stand up in the Cars. The passage of these planes employed the whole night, nearly as much time as was requisite to pass from Baltimore to the mountain, or as long a time to travel 36 miles, as it required to travel the preceding 221. At Johnstown on the western side of the mountain, we took the Canal Boat, 104 miles to this

<sup>2</sup> There are no paragraph breaks in the manuscript. Divisions have been made here for the sake of clarity.

place, requiring for the accomplishment of this distance one day, one night, & until 9 A. M. this morning.

The boat I dare say was as good as usual, & the motion was so smoothe that it resembles perfect stillness; but the discomfort of being shut up in immediate contact with all sort of people, some of the most vulgar & filthy in the world; women more disgusting if possible by their want of cleanliness than the men; with squalling children; and being required to use in common, two tin basins incrustated with filth, and one long towel for the whole male establishment, is a misery beyond which my imagination can scarcely picture any earthly evil. My washing therefore, was limited to wiping my eyes & mouth with my linen handkerchief—but I neither took off my clothes nor slept during this purgatory.

Here there is a spacious Hotel on the most modern plan; and having performed my accustomed ablutions, and changed my clothing, I am pretty comfortable. Tomorrow I shall go down the Ohio in a packet boat of the largest class; and being perhaps the first person entered for a passage, have been enabled to select a state room in what is deemed the safest part of the Boat.

A great portion of the Country in the Vallies of the Susquehanna and Juniata, thro' which the railroads pass, is fertile picturesque, & beautiful, and so too is that on the approach to Pittsburg; but how any human beings can live in the atmosphere of this place [Pittsburgh], is hardly conceivable. The whole air over the place is precisely like what you have perceived in a close room when sometimes in wet weather, there has been a large fall of soot, down a chimney—it is to me almost suffocating. The Town is one great stithy, or furnace; every house, walls and roof is black, and the interior & furniture thickly sprinkled with soot.

I called a little while this evening on Doctor Sampson, who professed himself much gratified at my remembering him, & made particular enquiries after Ann<sup>3</sup> & yourself. He said that he had recently returned from a visit to his daughter in Philadelphia. I was struck with [the] gay & rather expensive style of the interior of the house when I first

<sup>3</sup> Ann Lewis Daniel (1822--?), the second daughter.

entered it; thinking he was living alone; but he told me that his mother was living with him, & soon after introduced me to a Lady as his sister, not very youthful and not an improved likeness of himself. They pressed me to spend the evening but I did not feel so inclined, and too tired also for formal company.

The boat of tomorrow takes me to Cincinnati only; about two days journey—I believe I have given you a full account of myself up to this time, and shall write from farther points of my progress, as opportunity shall offer. With love to all at home—affectionately yours

P V Daniel —

THE AUTHOR OF *UKRAINIANS IN THE UNITED STATES* ANSWERS DR. MARCHBIN

FIRST of all I wish to thank the editor of the *Western Pennsylvania Historical Magazine* for the permission given me to answer the statements of Dr. Marchbin, whose review of my book appeared in this magazine in September, 1939, but was only recently brought to my attention. From the time of the publication of the work in 1937, reviews of it have appeared in Europe and in America; and although, as was to be expected, not all the reviewers agreed with the book on every point, there was no necessity on my part to make answer to them. With several of Dr. Marchbin's statements, however, I wish to take issue.

His entire attitude in regard to the book brings to my mind the case of the high-school boy who early in the semester wanted to drop the study of geometry, because, he said, he did not like it. When pressed for his real reason by his adviser, he admitted he didn't like it because he didn't understand it. The first chapter of my book, which covers the entire history and geography of the Ukraine in a few pages, is naturally very much condensed, and unless one is a student of this subject, he would fail to gain a full understanding of it. So, apparently for this reason, Dr. Marchbin seems to condemn the entire chapter with the label "not even worth criticism" (p.215). On the other hand, when he continues reading and advances to western Pennsylvania and Pittsburgh, his own backyard, places that he knows well and understands, then he

finds something good in the book. However, I should like to answer some of his more pointed attacks.

Dr. Marchbin apparently has been imbued with the old Russian imperial ideology that even to this day denies the existence of the Ukraine and anything Ukrainian; this is evident from the fact that he writes the name Ukrainian in quotation marks. His first charge against me is my Ukrainian extraction, which in his opinion disqualifies me from being able to handle the subject. He refers to me: "Dr. Halich, who is of 'Ukrainian' extraction, tries hard to speak as a neutral American but his cultural make-up prevents him from doing so" (p.214). To this assertion I can honestly say that I did not try hard "to speak as a neutral," nor as a partisan of anything, but wrote on the basis of available facts. Dr. Marchbin's proof of his above statement is that I classed Ruthenians of East Galicia and Little Russians of Carpatho-Ukraine as Ukrainians. This is the most out of place statement the reviewer makes. Anyone who is thoroughly familiar with the groups mentioned above knows they are one and the same people in speech, music, religion, history, tradition, art, and everything. The accent of their speech does not vary as much as that of New England and the South. I know what I am talking about, for I lived and studied there for years, visiting practically every corner of western Ukraine.

A further attack on me by Dr. Marchbin is that I violated "the most elementary rules of a historian" because I referred to the oppression of the Ukrainian people by Poles, Russians, Hungarians, Rumanians, and even Czechs. In my opinion, the historian is to write the truth regardless of whose taste it appeals to: the entire Ukrainian history is, for the most part, a record of oppression similar to that now suffered by the people under Stalin, Hitler, and Hungary. This statement can be substantiated by court records, newspapers, and living people.

In regard to the charges I made against Czechoslovakia, on page eight of my book, my critic could easily have seen the facts if he had wanted to see them. I stated there that until 1935 the Czechoslovak authorities, of all the rulers of the Ukraine, were the least oppressive. From then on, however, the Czech democracy inaugurated the system of oppression of minorities, an outstanding illustration of which I cited.

Before he finishes with me he accuses me of treating the Jews with the "strong-arm methods of a Khmelnitzky Cossack," etc., and likewise accuses me of being "ignorant of the fact that Jewish traders and artisans had been active in that region before the 'Ukrainian' name appeared in writing." In regard to the first accusation, my critic does not disprove the facts; what apparently bothers him is the style of statement; he seems to read malice into what I said, where none was intended. In regard to the second, his purpose in making such a statement is beyond my comprehension, unless he wishes to show his own knowledge, a complaint that may be lodged against all too many reviewers of books. He assumes the role of mind reader in attempting to tell what I do or do not know about the Jews; this surely he could not deduce from my writing. It is true that because of the fact that two main routes of the Middle Ages which led from Asia and Asia Minor crossed in the Ukraine, there were some Jewish traders, Armenians, Arabs, Greeks, and others, especially in Kiev and Lvov, before the name of Ukraine was first printed (1187); but what has this to do with the business methods and ethics of the Jews in their relations with local populations?

Furthermore, Dr. Marchbin is so scornful of my source material that this he likewise dispatches in quotation marks. To this I will state that anyone who is a serious scholar of immigration groups in America, especially of more recent nationalities, finds himself in difficulty in getting the facts. Not all of them are in government documents or secondary books; therefore, whenever it is possible to meet the living leaders of such groups or get their letters or diaries, such are highly valued materials. Otherwise almanacs and papers are often utilized. My critic, however, does not approve of them. But his most misleading statement is the one that labels the priests as heroes of my book; he should have added, in his opinion. I am sure that if Dr. Marchbin would re-read the passages referring to the priests and the part they have played among the immigrants, he would find that I described the good work and the bad work, the good men and the otherwise. Furthermore, I attempted to cover all the religious leaders of the various groups, both Catholic and Protestant. None of the priests thus far have objected to my statements in regard to them, for they know I told the facts.

None of them were idolized in my work nor victimized, and my critic's statements in this regard bespeak his attitude and not the facts. My acquaintance among the Ukrainian leaders in America is very wide; in fact, I have known hundreds of them—of all the religious groups, Protestant, Orthodox, and Catholic, and whenever they had some information that was of any immediate or ultimate value I took it with thanks and highly treasured their letters in my collection. As to my critic's complaint that I did not give sufficient space to Bishop Takach, I wish to inform him that I wrote to the bishop twice asking for some more detailed facts in regard to his diocese but received no reply whatsoever. Therefore I had to confine myself to the two leading papers of Takach's diocese for this topic; namely, *Prosvita* (McKeesport) and the *Amerikan-sky Russky Viestnik* (Homestead).

Dr. Marchbin's further objection is that the Ukrainian National Association and its organ the *Svoboda* (Jersey City) are my favorites, in that I mention them very often. The truth of the matter is that these institutions have played so important a part among the Ukrainians in America that the facts speak for themselves. It is the above organization and the paper that furnished the leadership for nearly fifty years. As I examined most of the material that was ever printed in America concerning the Ukrainian groups, it seemed to me that the *Svoboda* paper had the most to offer and consequently I employed it. In regard to Dr. Marchbin's statement that the Ukrainian newspapers and almanacs were "written for the most backward members of the ethnic group in question," let me say that this assertion does not coincide with the facts. The publications I utilized were written for the most part by educated people and for the more intelligent readers. Those that Dr. Marchbin refers to I did not use, and he condemns me for it when he accuses me of referring often to the *Svoboda* paper. "Other organizations are non-grata and appeal to Dr. Halich to spread the gospel to 'Panslavism,' 'Communism,' and that of the 'Roman Pope.'" In this connection perhaps it would have been better had my critic proved the above accusation on the basis of my book and not his personal opinion by naming the Ukrainian organizations that I accused of communism that are not openly communist, listing the groups that I accused of Panslavism falsely, and tell-

ing wherein I was incorrect in my reference to the loyal servants to the Pope of Rome.

If Dr. Marchbin accuses me of Ukrainian nationalistic sympathies, i.e., Ukrainians should rule themselves, which I do not deny, what can he say about such non-Ukrainian writers as Allen H. Eaton, H. A. Gibbons, Vernardsky, Mirsky, H. Hessel Tiltman, and W. E. D. Allen, all of whom have written concerning the Ukrainians and seem to sympathize with the Ukrainian cause? On the other hand, Dr. Marchbin surely shows his prejudice against the Ukrainians in the way he handles the name Ukraine and Ukrainian. He substitutes the now obsolete Ruthenian or uses the one artificially coined by Russian imperialists, "Little Russian," when he must refer to the word which he appears to hate, in other words Ukrainian. It is apparent that he is one of those few who do not wish to recognize the existence of over forty million Ukrainians. Does sympathy with an oppressed people prevent one from being a scholar? Most Americans today sympathize with the Norwegians, Belgians, Poles, etc. Why is it more of a sin to sympathize with the Ukrainians—as long as the G.P.U. is not after your life in America for doing so?

Though Dr. Marchbin is very critical of my work, he shows more than once that the subject he criticizes is not altogether too familiar to him in the way he misspells the following names: Petlura becomes "Pel-tura," Ruthenians, "Ruthianians," Don Diver, "Dom River," and Svoboda, "Swoboda."

*Superior, Wisconsin*

WASYL HALICH