

The OLDEST
RAILROAD
in
AMERICA
THE SWITCH-BACK



FIVE-MILE TREE BRIDGE

MAUCH CHUNK
SWITCH-BACK R'Y

H. A. BUTLER, GEN'L MANAGER

MAUCH CHUNK, PA.

The OLDEST
RAILROAD
in
AMERICA
THE SWITCH-BACK



TWO MILE TURN

MAUCH CHUNK
SWITCH-BACK R'Y

H. A. BUTLER, GEN'L MANAGER

MAUCH CHUNK, PA.

THE SWITZERLAND OF AMERICA AROUND THE SWITCH-BACK



MAUCH CHUNK STATION OF THE SWITCH-BACK R. R.

Mr. Henry, in his history of the Lehigh Valley, says of this ride: "Up, up we go, until the mountain tops, which just now towered above us, sink into the valleys and become pigmy hills; and the whole face of the surrounding country, in an immense circuit, opens under us like one vast flower bed, enriched with all the glowing garb of autumn, and glittering in the sunlight, which intensifies every beauty and color."

Novel emotions crowd upon the mind, as the enchanting and exciting scene unfolds itself with new and almost appalling grandeur, as the summit is approached, and the soul is transported with awe as the works of the Great Creator stand out in their imposing contrast to our littleness, as we hang suspended, as it were, in mid-air.

We have now reached the summit of Mount Pisgah, and attained an elevation of fifteen hundred (1,500) feet above tide-water.

And now what a glorious, what a sublime, what a varied landscape bursts upon the enraptured vision!

Passing through the engine house, and slowly over a trestle spanning a wild ravine, to the right and north you see Broad Mountain, and in a ravine some two miles distant, half-way between the summit and river, can be seen Glen Onoko, a piece of nature's handiwork, well worthy of a visit.

To the left (and southeast), high above, tier upon tier of mountains loom — Lehigh Gap, through which the river forces its way beyond the Blue Ridge; and still beyond the Gap, one distinctly sees Schooley's Mountains, near Hacketts-town, New Jersey, distant by rail sixty-five miles. The Gap is only twelve miles away.

Immediately below, the Lehigh shows itself again, rushing past the town of Mauch Chunk, of which place a splendid view is also obtained from this point.

In all other directions mountains in long ranges piled on

THE SWITZERLAND OF AMERICA AROUND THE SWITCH-BACK

other mountains; beneath, the towns, which look like groups of toy houses.

Mountains and valleys, hills, ravines, little villages and mining settlements below us, with long blue ridges of mountains rising all about us, as far as the eye can reach, attract the tourist and add to the novelty of the scene.

Everything seems to have been twisted and scrunched, and hurled and piled together; then turned, piled and hurled together again, as if the elements of nature had been in rebellion when this part of the country was finished or perfected, if we may call this rugged broken grandeur below us, and far outreaching, the perfection of nature. To this fascinating spot have been justly applied the favorite lines from Scott:

"So wond'rous wild, the whole might seem
The scenery of a Fairy dream."

The fall of the grade to the next plane (6 $\frac{2}{3}$ miles from Pisgah) is 47 3-10 feet to the mile. Four miles from Hackel-bernie, we find Bloomingdale Valley, and the plane of Mount Jefferson; no halt is made longer than the time required to place the safety car in position, when we again ascend by means of machinery similar to that employed at Mount Pisgah. This plane is 2,070 feet in length, and has an elevation of 464 feet. Again we see the earth seeming to recede from us, and again after reaching the summit (1,660 feet above tide water), drawn by invisible chargers, we hurry along, over a mile descent of forty-five feet, to the quaint mining village of Summit Hill, with a population of three thousand.

But the supreme pleasure of our ride is yet in store for us; it is the return by the old mule-track route over the nine miles of continuous descending grade to our starting point.

A single turn of the brakes, and off we start, faster and



THE HOME STRETCH

THE SWITZERLAND OF AMERICA AROUND THE SWITCH-BACK

faster, down through long stretches of shaded roadway, around wondrous curves, along giddy cliffs, under shadows of great ivy-grown crags, and still down, down, down, at a dizzy speed, and as if borne on the wings of the wind; there, like a toy village in the distance, before and far below us, we once more descry Mauch Chunk, with its familiar church spires so indelibly impressed upon all who have visited the town.

How fast we seem to be approaching it! and so, indeed, we



ASCENT OF MOUNT JEFFERSON — CROSSING THE DOWN TRACK

are, for almost ere we know it our fleet charger has drawn rein, and we are safe and sound, but breathless with delight and excitement, at the platform from which we so recently started on our ascent.

The route is up hill and down, over rugged uncultivated country; rocks, stones, mountains, ravines, hills, cliffs; rocks set up endwise and stuck on edge, and you have a very good picture of the crooked circuitous route by which we went and came on this, the pleasantest railroad ride in our life.

As novel and entertaining as this excursion is during the summer season, its interest, beauty, and pleasure are enhanced by a visit to and over the road in the autumn.

Riding around the mountain with locomotive speed, the numerous landscapes stretching about on every side, changing as rapidly and charmingly as the views in the kaleidoscope, keep the tourist rapt in a continual state of enthusiastic admiration; the cool, bracing atmosphere, the novelty of whirling along the road at so great an elevation without any apparent motive power, the valley lying so far below, the various ranges of hills and mountains with their trees and vegetation in an endless variety of colors, are all calculated to make the beholder think himself in some enchanted fairy land.

You may travel thousands of miles and it will be difficult to find any other locality so truly picturesque.

THE SWITZERLAND OF AMERICA

AROUND THE SWITCH-BACK

BY taking the electric car, the tourist, after a most interesting ride through Mauch Chunk and up the mountain side, arrives at the Switch-Back Depot. We take our seat in the pleasant summer cars, and, time being up, the brakes are released, and the car runs by gravity to the foot of Mount Pisgah Plane.

The plane is 2,322 feet in length, with an elevation of 664 feet, being a rise of about one foot in three. There are two tracks and upon each runs a safety car, to which is attached two heavy steel bands, each six and one-half inches wide.

These bands are fastened to iron drums, twenty-eight (28) feet in diameter, in the engine house at the head of the plane; the motive power being two stationary engines of 120 horse power each.

The signal is given to the engineer at the head of the plane, the safety car is drawn slowly from the pit behind the car, and the train begins to ascend until we arrive at the top, nearly 900 feet above our starting point, or river.



MOUNT PISGAH PLANE

MMIT HILL
STATION

MT. JEFFERSON

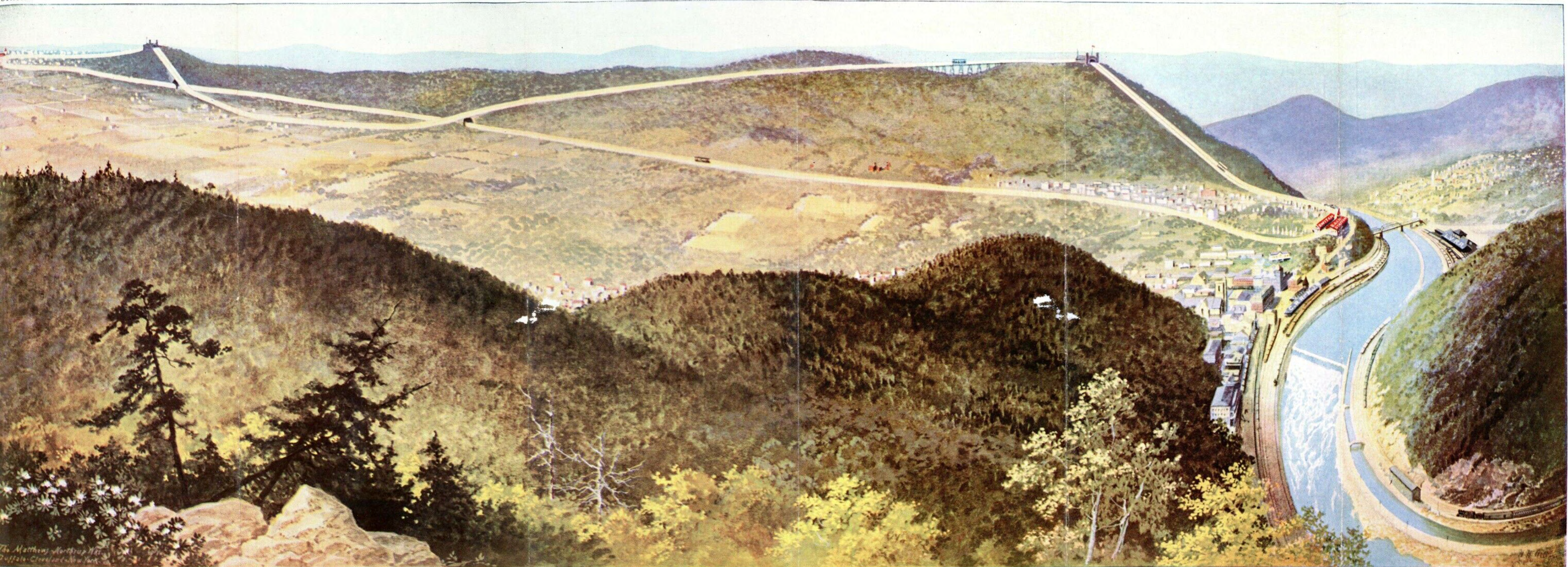
WHITE BEAR

FIVE-MILE TREE

HACKELBERNIE MINES

MT. PISGAH

STATION



The Matthew Anthony Mc
Buffalo, Cleveland, New York

THE SWITCH-BACK RAILROAD, MAUCH CHUNK, PENNSYLVANIA