

TRIPS IN WHEELS

Where to go and
How to get there



OUR CYCLE TRIP NO. 36

1897-98.

Philadelphia to West Chester.
The West Chester Pike and Its Possibilities for Round Trips.

The West Chester pike is the most direct, but, up to the present date, the most wretched road to West Chester. For one-half of the distance the old pike has been modernized and affords besides a pleasant run to Newtown Square, opportunities for short round trips, by connections with the other popular highways, right and left of it; its second half, however, should not be attempted a year, especially at this time of the year.

My customary desire to see things for myself took me right through to the end of it a few days ago, when the various kinds of clay, red, yellow and green, of which the roadbed consists, had been thoroughly soaked by a couple of days' rain, and then solidified by a good hard frost. Take my word for it, kind reader, the Lancaster pike route to West Chester to be outlined by and by) would be a longer detour than it does keep to it for the time being, and until the long-proposed extension of the trolley line to the capital of Delaware county has materialized.

As you know, the transformation of the eastern half of the pike dates only a few years ago; you must have been struck with the appropriateness of the designation "Llanerch," but the "empty place" is presently well filled, and with specimens of the most up-to-date residential architecture at that. It would have taken half a century to

to R. W. Flower, the donor of this land, and to his beneficiaries. Even now you will find here, housed in a building of its own, an equatorial telescope of 15-inch aperture, set up just twelve months ago this October, and used for the observation of double stars and comets. You may see here the glass of it exhibited at the World's Fair, by a Pennsylvanian, Mr. Brashers, of Allegheny.

In the meridian building are to be seen a 4" zenith telescope in position for the determination of the variations of latitude, a 4" meridian arch for time and star co-ordinate observations, a universal micrometer transit instrument, a chronograph, a self-winding astronomical clock, and, if I stop my enumeration right here, don't you think the list is a pretty fair one, seeing that the construction of this observatory was begun barely two years ago by "slow" Philadelphians?

Readers of these roadside chitchats, you may have wondered what drove me suddenly into this awfully learned description, now you know it. Dear, old, "slow" Philadelphia!

LLANERCH.

Pretty Llanerch greets us about 8 miles from our starting point. "Llan" looks and sounds Welsh, does it not? Indeed, I doubt if there be another constituent in Welsh names of one so frequent as "llan."

One idle day I amused myself scanning the lists of the parishes, townships, of over 600 names beginning with this word for a prefix. In the large majority of cases it denoted a church. There were a dozen Llandwells (Church of David), of course, and a good score of Llanfair (Church of Mary), and half a hundred Llanfihangel (Church of the Angel); yet the original meaning of "llan" is "place," "ground," "land," and "llanerch" means "an open place in a wood," "an empty spot."

If you saw this particular spot some five years ago you must have been struck with the appropriateness of the designation "Llanerch," but the "empty place" is presently well filled, and with specimens of the most up-to-date residential architecture at that. It would have taken half a century to

men were the first to patronize it in a body. Under the present improvement in condition of the pike, a pleasant round trip can be made by coming here as we have just done (and returning by the road R which strikes the Lancaster pike at Alderbrook).

ADELE AND BROOMALL.

A long winding descent brings us to Darby Creek, at Adele Postoffice (3½ m. Adele). My darling "mule" name! You should have seen me jump off my saddle when I first spied the inscription on this new postoffice and inquire from a resident how it had got christened thus. "I guess I can tell you all about it," was his reply, "seeing that I was the proposer of the name myself. It's the name of the daughter of Congressman Jack Robinson, and he is the man who got us our postoffice."

Here a turn R goes to Cooperstown. We climb up out of the valley. This next turn R is the Radnor road, which goes through old Radnor P. O. (now Ithan) to the Lancaster pike, whence we might wheel home, as per Trip No. 8. This little town (1½ m.) is Broomall. It used to be the Drove Tavern until 1861, when it became a post-office and took the name of the late eminent lawyer John M. Broomall, who was then Congressman from the Seventh district.

At Broomall X another turn R to Cooperstown and on L Springfield road, by which you can go to Clifton on the Baltimore pike and further to Collingdale on the Darby road (see Trips No. 2 and 4).

We pass the last toll-gate for the present (32½ m.) on another long hill (L to Howellsville, 6 m., and to the Media road 1 m.), and have a fine view going down; our course is clear, we need not be afraid to look about us. At the foot R is Bryn Mawr avenue, and we climb up into Newtown Square. OLD NEWTOWN SQUARE.

In the course of last year, The Inquirer had an interesting notice of the old-time hotel on our right—"Pratt's House, as it was formerly called,—and its associations with the early days of our painter, Benjamin West, of whom we spoke in our Trip No. 24). You were there then told how the

down to that covered bridge over Crum creek. Round about it our best hopes are centered; you wonder why; well, I was told last year that the Traction Company had purchased some forty acres of that Castle Rock estate; and you don't imagine they are going to let those \$20,000 lie idle a day longer than they can help, do you?

CASTLE ROCK ESTATE.

By the way, round about that same Castle Rock estate centered the interest of some of the most blood-curdling tales in connection with the highway robberies of our Revolutionary period. There was a cave on that estate, the haunt of many an American desperado, and in particular of a certain outlaw chief named Fitzpatrick, whose crimes were said to be unparalleled. He was saved perhaps by those of his accomplices, Dougherty, the hostler at Pratt's House, at Newtown. Fitzpatrick's ultimate betrayal and punishment were told in The Inquirer article referred to above. He was then betrayed by a woman, with whom he had fallen in love. She used to wander around doing occasional work in the tavern, where she met a man who tried to induce her to leave her outlaw master and lead a better life. Her benefactor was finally waylaid and robbed by Fitzpatrick. Her pleadings to induce the robber to give back the money were rudely repulsed and as a means of revenge she led the village constables to his den. He was shortly afterward hanged.

Up the several sections of this long hill we pedal to Edgmont (16½ m.). Here, a good road R (I am told) to Sugarloaf and Malvern; L to Chester, 1½ m.; one-half mile further, L to Valley road, for Howellsville.

INTO CHESTER COUNTY.

A mile beyond Edgmont we climb up to Penn Hill. At the first X we meet in Chester county, which we have just entered, the turn L is the Valley road above mentioned; the R is another avenue to Sugarloaf.

Up and down we run to Ridley creek; keep straight on at next X, and don't be tempted that better-looking road up L; it would lead you some miles south of West Chester.

We now get a little green maul to vary the color of our roadway, but its roughness does not vary a bit, as we pass the once widely known Willistown branch of the Chester creek (18½ m.), and travel to Willistown on the east branch of Chester Creek (21 m.).

The new reservoir you notice on R at the bridge is for the water supply of West Chester; this turn L goes to Westtown School, 1 m.; R to State road 1½ m.

Just one more mile of up and down brings us to a point where the Rocky Hill road converges from R with our own, and a short distance farther, a rideable roadway presents itself to us. We so eagerly wish to get on that we almost pass by the Gentlemen's Driving Club of West Chester

ANOTHER NEW BIKE

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THE PHI

STODDARD DEPARTMENT

riding is geared to 112 and has a 98-gear pedal speed. The wheels are equipped with lever chains. There will be nearly as much interest in Hale's new bicycle next week as there will be in the performances of the men. Experts desire to see the wheel working and, to compare it with the new bevel-gear and chain wheels that will be used.

Too Many Monuments.

A Washington correspondent of the Nashville American says that a party of Southern gentlemen recently visited the national capital for a week of sight-seeing. As they returned into Pennsylvania avenue they found themselves next to a saloon. "Let's take a drink," said one of the party.



Philadelphia to West Chester. A Trip Taken Within the Past Week by the present writer. (The stroke lines indicate the roads described).

template with anything short of agony a ride over the abominable stones of that thoroughfare. One fine day, however, Market street awoke and found itself asphalted, at least on one side, from Thirty-second street out; then the pike was repaired as far as Newtown Square; now who knows what next year may have in store for us?

OUT OF TOWN.

Come and see what we can enjoy of it at present. If we start from the Public Buildings we go out Chestnut or Walnut, up Thirty-third and out Market; or if we start from uptown we can follow Spring Garden street all the way out to Forty-second and strike Market street there.

build up such a town as this in the Old World!

ANOTHER SHORT ROUND TRIP. Would you care to make a round trip home from this point via Darby? The latter is just 5 m. off.

Take that turning L at the toll-house and be careful when you cross the railroad track going down to the first hill. Then you cut across State Cemetery R and the Drexel School L past the Garrett road and Marshall road (we shall probably see them

elder West moved into the hotel when Benjamin was an infant, and later "when he was 7 years old he pulled enough hair out of the family cat's tail to manufacture for himself a paint brush, with which he used to daub around on the walls with the red and yellow earth, which the friendly Indians would give him."

The town, however, goes considerably farther back than the hotel, for this so-called "New Town" is all out four years old as Philadelphia. It had been in existence for 90 years at

on L and a turning L to Westtown and another R the Matlack Homestead and Fern Hill and Green Hill without noticing them.

Is a few moments we strike another fork; the road meeting our own from R is the Paoli route to which I shall refer again.

The bare walls of an old stone house stood for years in the family of that fork, they were a familiar landmark to many wayfarers. Their disappearance seems worthy of mention.

WEST CHESTER.