Lehigh Water Gap. The scenic and economic features of the Lehigh Gap have been commented upon by almost all the early visitors in the region. A typical quotation is given.

Die Lecha Wasser-Kaft, i.e., the Lehigh Water Gap, in the Kittatiny, or Blue Mountain, the dividing line between Carbon County and that of Lehigh and Northampton, is so named from the river Lehig, which steals its way through the Gap, prominently walled on both sides, forms a sublime object of admiration, and presents to the observant spectator, one of the most picturesque prospects in east Pennsylvania. At almost every season of the year, the diversified defile is exceedingly attractive. The writer visited this place in September, 1844. In ascending the eastern bank some hundred feet, the scene heightens in grandeur, and the stream—the beautiful, yet curling, rippled waters of the Lehigh River, add much, nay every thing, to make it impressive beyond oblivion. Though it is seemingly a rugged stream here, yet as you follow it in its course, through a fertile region of country, receiving tributaries of different sizes, until itself is a considerable river, before it reaches its silvery recipient, the Delaware. It is in all its ways, as well as at the Gap, where it rolls majestically over a ruple bed, and reflecting a sombre shade of the impending mountains, a grand stream.

To return to the Gap. The eastern bank is bordered for the distance of about a mile by craggy cliffs, towering to an amazing height, and of forms the most bizarre. Between which wall of rocks and the river the road winds along. Hastening to leave these black abodes, which seem to afford shelter to none but the ravenous beasts of the forest, the Lehigh appears eagerly moving on towards the fertile low lands, which succeed in view, on the eastern bank.

Ascending the eastern height, the traveler is amply rewarded for the exertion of climbing from rock to rock, in scaling the pine-covered side of the mountain, by the rich and extensive prospect which the eye then commands. At his feet roll the waters of the majestic stream—on the opposite side is a towering ridge, near the summit of which appears, right opposite, emerging from the surrounding woods, a lonely pile of rocks, whimsically called, "Die Teufel's Kanzel," i.e., "The Devil's Pulpit," which indignantly suffers but a few blasted pines to shade its sullen brow. At a distance an extensive country, variegated with woods and farms, watered by the meandering Lehigh, and ridge retiring behind ridge, till lost in the faint tints of the horizon, all bursts upon the sight, and fill the mind with sublime ideas of the greatness of the Creator. The shattered rocks, thrown together in wild confusion, and the strata of rounded stones, which are to be met with in passing through the Gap, have given rise to the supposition that the Lehigh, being obstructed in its course by the Blue Mountain, was formerly dammed up into a lake, which at length bursting the barrier, formed the chasm now called the Lehigh Gap. The learned have not agreed, as yet, in the decision of this mooted point. (Rupp, 1845, pp. 113-114.)

To account for the origin of water gaps it is not necessary to assume that Lake Ontario or some other lake once extended to Kittatinny (Blue) Mountain and suddenly burst the barrier, as dams collapse under abnormal water pressure; nor to assume the breaking of a mountain ridge by a great earthquake or the formation of the gap at the time of Creation. With the modern conception of geologic time measured by hundreds of millions of years rather than by hundreds or thousands, we realize the great effects produced by slowly-acting but long-continued natural forces.

The water gaps are solely the work of the rivers themselves. Whether there was an original depression or a zone of weakened rocks that determined the place where the Lehigh River crosses Kittatinny (Blue) Mountain cannot now be demonstrated. Some geologists think