

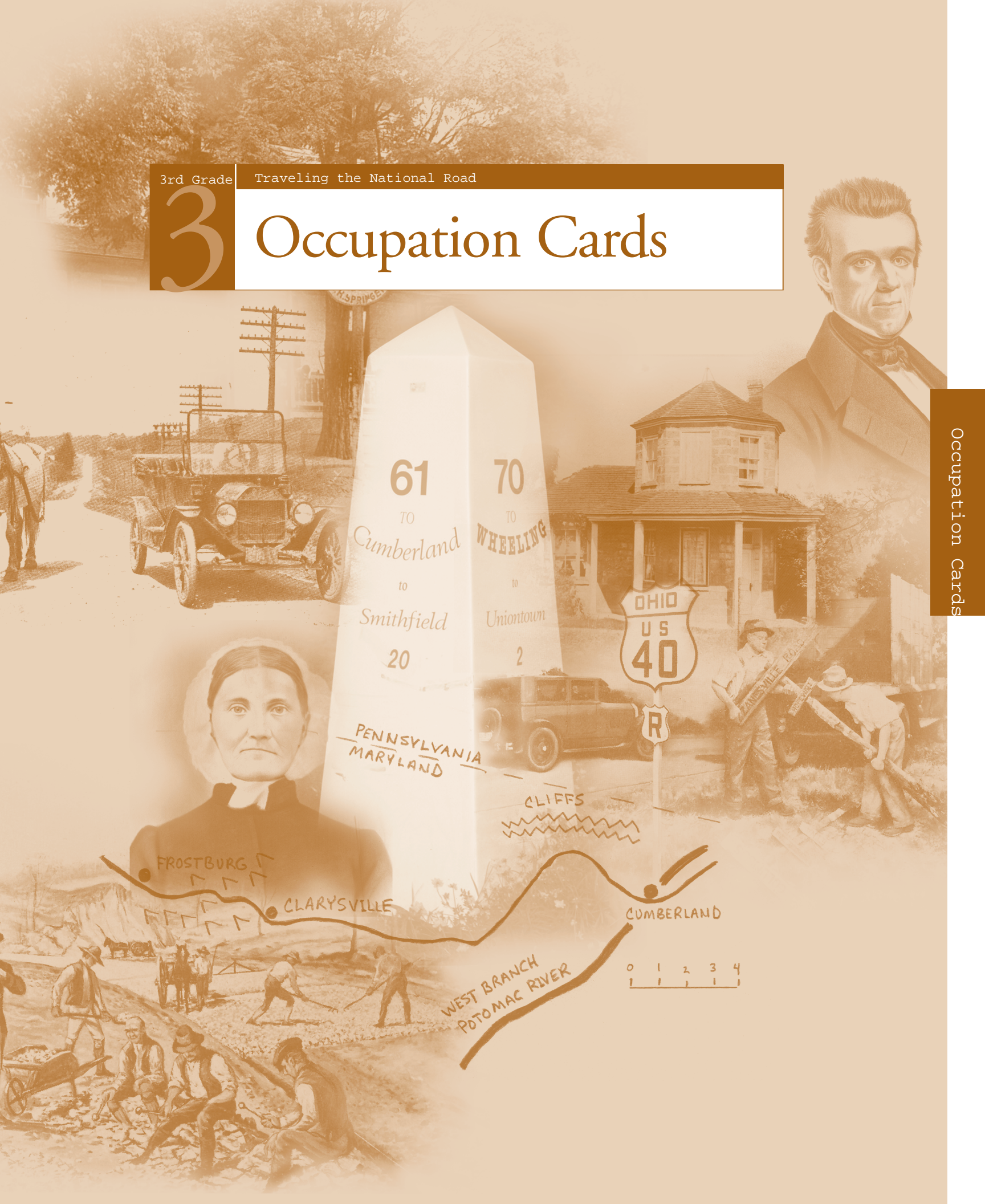
3rd Grade

Traveling the National Road

3

Occupation Cards

Occupation Cards



61 TO Cumberland to Smithfield 20

70 TO WHEELING to Uniontown 2

PENNSYLVANIA
MARYLAND

CLIFFS

FROSTBURG

CLARYSVILLE

CUMBERLAND

WEST BRANCH POTOMAC RIVER

0 1 2 3 4



Student Activity: Conduct an Interview

Materials

- Two copies of occupation cards for each pair of students.

Objectives

After completing the student activity, students will be able to:

- List four facts about an occupation associated with the National Road and its importance to Pennsylvania and U.S. history.

Standards

Pennsylvania Standards for History

- 8.2.3 C
- 8.3.3 A
- 8.3.3 C

Pennsylvania Standards for Economics

- 6.1.3 C
- 6.4.3 G
- 6.5.3 B



Procedures

1. Make copies of the occupation cards.
2. Put the students in pairs.
3. Give each pair two occupation cards.
4. Have the students read the cards they were given.
5. Have the children think about what they would like to ask their partner in an interview about the National Road occupation on their partner's card.
6. Suggest possible interview questions that will help students do this activity:
 - What do you do for a living?
 - Do you work outside, inside, or both?
 - What hours do you work (daytime, nighttime, both)?
 - How dangerous is your job?
 - What are some things that make your job harder or easier?
 - If you talk to people while you work, what do you talk about?
 - What adventures have you had on the job?
7. Have the students take turns being the one doing the interview and the one answering the interview questions.
8. Have the students being interviewed answer as if they were employed in that occupation.



Student Activity: What Is My Occupation?

Materials

- List of occupations on the board or on a handout.
- Occupation cards.

Objectives

After completing the student activity, students will be able to:

- List four facts about an occupation associated with the National Road and its importance to Pennsylvania and U.S. history.

Standards

Pennsylvania Standards for History

- 8.2.3 C
- 8.3.3 A
- 8.3.3 C

Pennsylvania Standards for Economics

- 6.1.3 C
- 6.4.3 G
- 6.5.3 B



Procedures

1. Have the names of the occupations on the board or on a handout for the students.
2. Tell the class that you have one of the occupations cards and you would like them to guess which one it is by asking you questions about the occupations.
3. Ask only questions that can be answered “yes” or “no.”
4. Provide the students with some samples questions such as the ones listed below.
 - Do you work with animals?
 - Do you get dirty doing your job?
 - Is your job usually done by a man?
 - Do you work outside?
 - Do you sell things?
 - Do you do a lot of traveling in your job?
5. Set some limit on the number of questions the class can ask.
6. If a student thinks he or she knows the answer, have him/her ask, “Are you a [occupation]?” Or have the students write their guess down at the end of the questioning.
7. Alternatively, arrange the students in pairs and have them complete this activity with each other. Give each student one turn knowing the “mystery” occupation and answering the questions, and another turn not knowing the occupation and asking the questions.



Student Activity: Essay about an Occupation

Materials

- A copy of an occupation card for each student.

Objectives

After completing the student activity, students will be able to:

- List one aspect of the occupation they read about that they would like and one they would dislike.

Standards

Pennsylvania Standards for History

- 8.2.3 D

Pennsylvania Standards for Economics

- 6.1.3 C
- 6.4.3 G
- 6.5.3 B



Procedures

1. Make copies of the occupation cards.
2. Give each student one card.
3. Have the students read the card they were given.
4. Have the students write an essay listing one thing they would like and one thing they would dislike if they had to work at the occupation they read about.
5. Have the students describe how their occupation is related to the National Road.
6. Have the students illustrate their essays.



Abolitionist



An abolitionist talking to people about slavery.

People who wanted to abolish, or do away with, **slavery** were called abolitionists. Most of the people who were abolitionists made their living working at other jobs.

Pennsylvania was the second state to pass laws that abolished slavery. But many people wanted to go further. They wanted to abolish slavery in all the states. The Pennsylvania Anti-Slavery Society was created to make slavery against the law in all the United States. The Society believed that all people should have the freedom not to be slaves. They believed it was their **duty** to free slaves.

Some people really disagreed with the ideas of the abolitionists. In Washington County, Pennsylvania, a crowd of people attacked a church where an abolitionist was speaking. The crowd chased the speaker when he left the church.

Abolitionists did more than talk about ending slavery. They helped people escape from slavery. The Underground Railroad was the name for a network of people who helped escaping slaves. The Underground Railroad was not underground. It was not a railroad. It was a system of safe travel and hiding places for escaped slaves.



Abolitionist

Free African Americans and white abolitionists joined together to help slaves escape. They secretly hid, fed, and moved the escaping slaves. In slave states, slaves were property, like a wagon or a house. Slave owners tried to get their runaway property back. They hired slave catchers to hunt for escaped slaves, capture them, and return the slaves to their owners. Abolitionists protected slaves from slave catchers when they could.

Charles Garlick ran away from slavery in Virginia in 1843. He described his own experience with the Underground Railroad along the National Road:

After a week I reached Uniontown, Pennsylvania. Agents of the Underground Railroad had told me to go there. In Uniontown I hid in the barn of a man who is a friend of escaping slaves. He fed me for three days. Then it was safe to move on. Just after dark I got on his fast horse and with an escort (other men on horseback) I rode on the National Road. The following night I reached Pittsburgh.

William Willey of Somerfield, Pennsylvania, was another friend of escaping slaves. He was a poor shoemaker. He hid, fed, and helped more people escaping slavery “than any other man on the National Road.” Once he had as many as 10 people hiding in his small house.



Runaway slaves often traveled at night.

-
- Agent:** Someone who arranges things for other people.
Duty: Some things a person must do or ought to do.
Slavery: The system where one person owns another person.



Blacksmith



The blacksmith hammers iron in his shop.

There was plenty of work for blacksmiths along the National Road. A blacksmith worked with iron or steel—heating, bending, shaping, cooling, and hammering it. Blacksmiths made horseshoes, metal parts for wagons and stagecoaches, chains, tools, locks, cooking **utensils**, and nails. For 25 cents the blacksmith at the Mount Washington Tavern put horseshoes on travelers' horses.

A blacksmith used a variety of tools: a **vise**, a hammer and **anvil**, **tongs**, and pliers. He had a **grindstone** for sharpening metal. He also had a **forge**: a raised brick fireplace. Blacksmiths on the National Road were often asked to put an iron “tire” on a wooden wheel. The tire helped the wheel last longer.

Blacksmiths on the National Road often had to work all night to get horses and vehicles back on the road as soon as possible. Joe Garver was famous for replacing a dozen wagon tires in a single night.



Blacksmith

Sometimes they had time for “ironing.” They weren’t talking about taking wrinkles out of their clothes. Ironing meant putting fancy pieces of iron on tool boxes or the sides of wagons. The iron was a decoration and could be very beautiful.

Whether they were making horseshoes or repairing wagons, blacksmiths kept the traffic moving on the National Road.

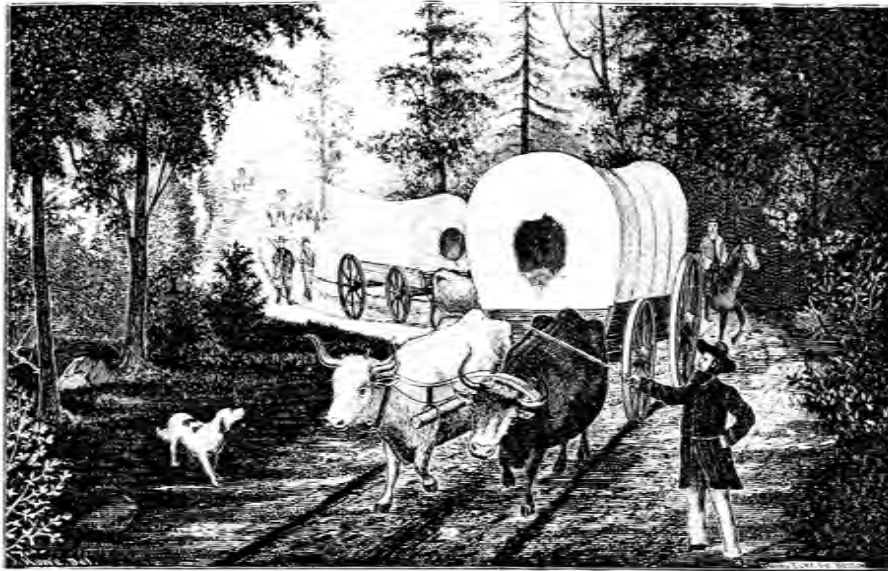


The blacksmith’s tools — anvil, hammers and tongs.

-
- Anvil:** A heavy block of iron on which metals are shaped by hammering.
Forge: A special fireplace where metals are heated.
Grindstone: A special stone used to sharpen something.
Tongs: A tool used to pick things up.
Traffic: Moving vehicles.
Utensils: Tools with a special purpose, often used in a kitchen.
Vise: A tool used to hold an object firmly in place.



Emigrant



Emigrants moving to a new home.

Emigrants were people who left their home in order to live in another place. They were people on the move. Emigrants on the National Road might have started in one of the states in the eastern part of the United States. Or they might have come from another country. Wherever they came from, they were on their way west to the **frontier**. Land was for sale on the frontier. Maybe they had been unlucky in business or pushed out of their home. Maybe they felt pulled to move west to find a better life for their family.

Often families of emigrants moved together. Their wagons were usually pulled by two horses or two oxen. Most family members walked behind their wagon. Only people who were sick, or very young or very old, rode in the wagon. Everyone else was more comfortable walking.



Emigrant

Emigrants' wagons contained all their belongings. That meant furniture, clothes, and cooking pots. It meant tools and supplies for starting a new life on the frontier. If the emigrants were bringing books and family treasures—a valuable clock, a music box, a painting—they worried about keeping them safe.



The things a family may have packed in their wagon when they moved.

At the end of the day the travelers looked for a place to stop. Some tavern keepers kept one-story emigrant-houses for people on the move. In an emigrant-house the family paid a fee to stay overnight. They could wash some clothes, cook their own food, and feed and water their horses or oxen.

Best of all, at an emigrant house they could meet other emigrants. They might meet someone from the country they had left or from their hometown. No matter where people were from, everyone wanted to talk about where they were going. Emigrants shared stories and ideas and news about the road ahead. Someone might tell them about cheap farmland in Ohio, Indiana, or Illinois. The land was good for growing **crops**. They could buy land and pay for it using the money they made on what they grew in a few seasons.

In the morning the family would get up early, eager to start out, following the National Road—all the way to the frontier.

Crops: Plants grown in large amounts, usually for food.

Frontier: The far edge of a country where few people live.



Farmer

Most people were farmers in the 1800s. In the spring they plowed their fields and planted their **crops**. Farmers near the National Road grew crops such as corn, oats, wheat, hay, and tobacco. In the summer and fall they were busy **harvesting** their crops. Farmers also raised animals such as cows, pigs, sheep, and chickens. The animals produced milk, eggs, wool, and meat. The farmer and his family used many of the farm's crops and animals themselves. He sold any extra products.

He might sell his crops or animals to a tavern. Tavern keepers bought food from neighboring farms to cook for travelers and to feed horses.

There were slow times of the year for farmers. It was during these slow times that farmers generally did other work to make more money. Some farmers sold firewood or made barrels. Some farmers near the National Road became **sharpshooters** or **drovers**.



A farmer plowing with his horse.

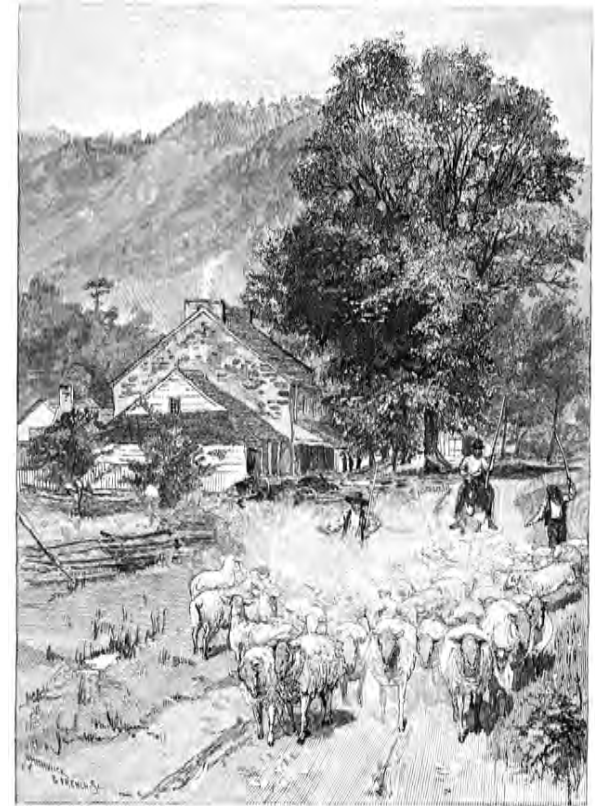


Farmer

Sharpshooters were farmers who drove wagons on the National Road for part of the year. Sharpshooters drove wagons east loaded with wool, bacon, corn, and other farm produce. For the return trip west, they might bring iron, clocks, salt, or manufactured goods.

A drover was a person who walked farm animals such as pigs, sheep, cattle, or turkeys to market. There the animals were sold. Along the National Road lots of drovers walked their animals all the way to Baltimore, Maryland. These animals and men had to find food, water, and a place to stay for the night just like other travelers. Luckily there were taverns along the National Road that provided fenced areas for large numbers of animals. The drover and his animals could rest there for the night.

One wagoner described all the animals he saw one night at a National Road tavern. He wrote that there were 180 wagon horses in the yard, 100 mules in the next field, 1,000 pigs in another pen, and 1,000 cattle in another field. He said he would never forget “the music made by the large number of hogs eating corn on a frosty night.”



Drovers herding sheep to market.

-
- Crops:** Plants grown in large amounts, usually for food.
Drover: A person who walked farm animals such as pigs, sheep, cattle, or turkeys to market.
Harvest: To gather in the crops that are ripe.
Sharpshooter: A person who drove wagons on the National Road for part of the year.



Merchant



A woman buying items at the store.

A merchant is someone who sells things, usually in a store. The National Road was a big help to merchants. They could travel by stagecoach to a big city like Baltimore, Maryland. There they bought things to sell in their stores and shipped the items back by wagon. Merchants were important to their communities. In stores, people bought things they could not make themselves: combs and jewelry, mirrors, buttons, pails, spoons, needles, cloth, and thread.

A merchant might make two buying trips a year: one in the spring and one in the fall. In Baltimore, merchants could find wonderful things to sell back home.

In 1823 two merchants became greedy. On a stagecoach trip to Baltimore these two merchants met Abraham Boring, a merchant from Ohio. All three were going to Baltimore for the same reason. They were going to buy things to sell in their stores back home.



Merchant

In Baltimore, Mr. Boring bought a lot of expensive things to sell in Ohio. The two greedy merchants were very helpful. They even found two wagoners who agreed to haul Mr. Boring's purchases back to Ohio. Mr. Boring thanked his two new friends and went home by stagecoach.

There he waited and waited, but the wagons from Baltimore never came! So Mr. Boring traveled back to Baltimore to find out what had happened. He followed the wagons' route to Hagerstown, Maryland, and then lost track of them. At a tavern, he recognized a fancy comb in a girl's hair. It was exactly like the fancy combs he had bought in Baltimore. The girl told Mr. Boring where she bought the comb. He went to the nearby store and found his other missing items for sale there. The store belonged to one of the two "friends" he had met in the stagecoach. It turned out the two merchants and the two wagoners were all part of a plot. The four men had stolen Mr. Boring's items from the wagons. They had divided up all of his goods. Abraham Boring went to the police to have the men arrested.

NEW STORE.

THE subscriber having just received a new and General assortment of

**Dry Goods,
Groceries,
Hardware,
Queensware, &c. &c.**

purchased almost exclusively in Philadelphia, has established himself in the store room recently occupied by J. & E. Brownfield, No. 1. Stewart's Row, where he is prepared to sell goods low for cash, or country produce, and respectfully solicits a share of public patronage.

T. S. BATTELLE.

May 28th, 1834.

A CARD.

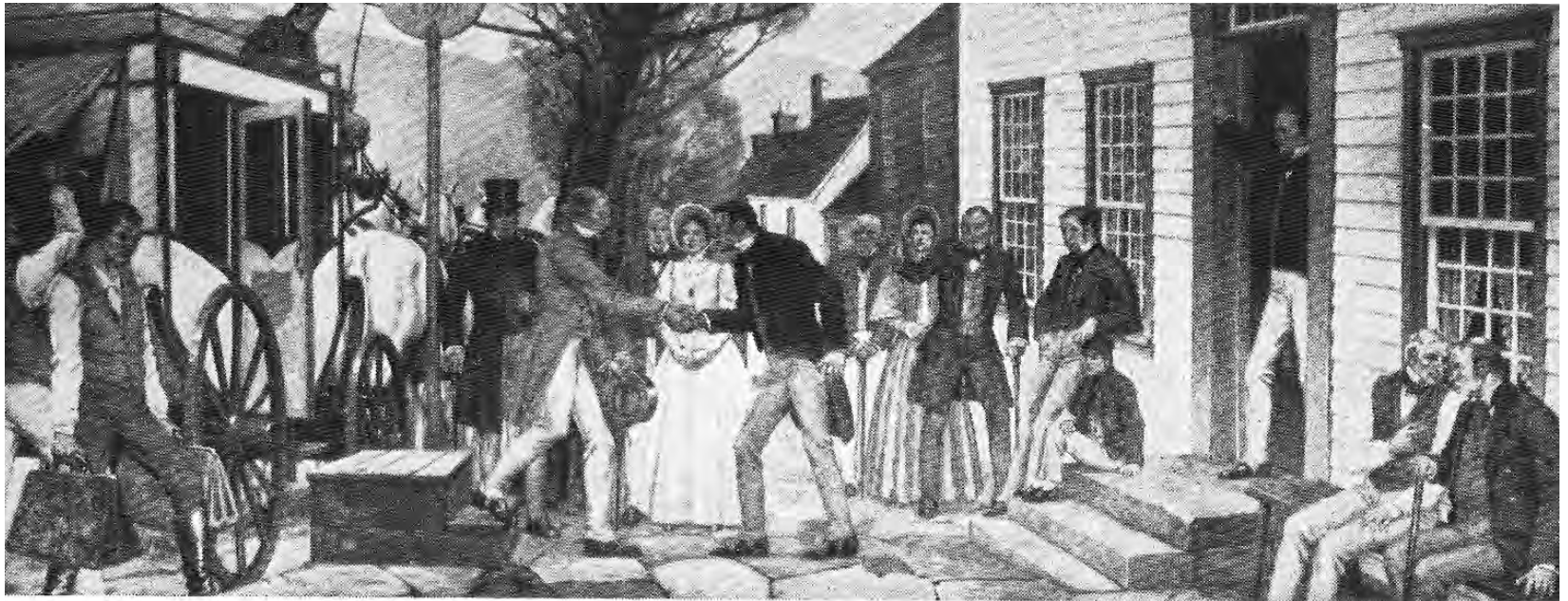
To the Ladies and Gentlemen of Union town and Vicinity.

An ad from the Uniontown newspaper.



Politician

Politicians are people who are trying to get **elected** to a government job or who have already been elected to a government job. President, senator, governor, and mayor are just a few of the government jobs politicians are elected to. They are elected by people called voters, who **vote** for them. Politicians need to listen to what voters want if they expect to keep their job. The National Road helped politicians. Many of them used the National Road to travel to Washington, D.C.



Henry Clay getting off a stagecoach.



Politician

Traveling on the National Road meant stopping in taverns. There a politician found lots of people to talk to. Tavern keepers, stagecoach drivers, passengers, local citizens, and wagoners all had ideas about how to run the government. Politicians could learn a lot from the people they met.

Henry Clay of Kentucky was a leading politician who served in **Congress** for many years. He was famous in towns and taverns along the National Road. Henry Clay was one of the people who worked to get the National Road built and to get the government to pay for it. The town of Claysville on the National Road was named for Henry Clay.

Henry Clay was a politician who put the United States above all else. He wanted to make sure the United States did not divide into North and South. He said the National Road “was so important” to the United States that he did not want the states take it over. Even though Mr. Clay did not think it was a good idea, the states did take over the National Road in the 1830s.

Once Henry Clay was traveling to Washington, D.C., in a stagecoach on the National Road. The stagecoach hit a pile of limestone rocks in Uniontown, Pennsylvania, and tipped over. The driver was the only one hurt. Henry Clay was helped out of the stagecoach. Then he made a joke that was repeated for many years. He said, “This is mixing the Clay of Kentucky with the limestone of Pennsylvania.”



Andrew Jackson talking to a crowd.

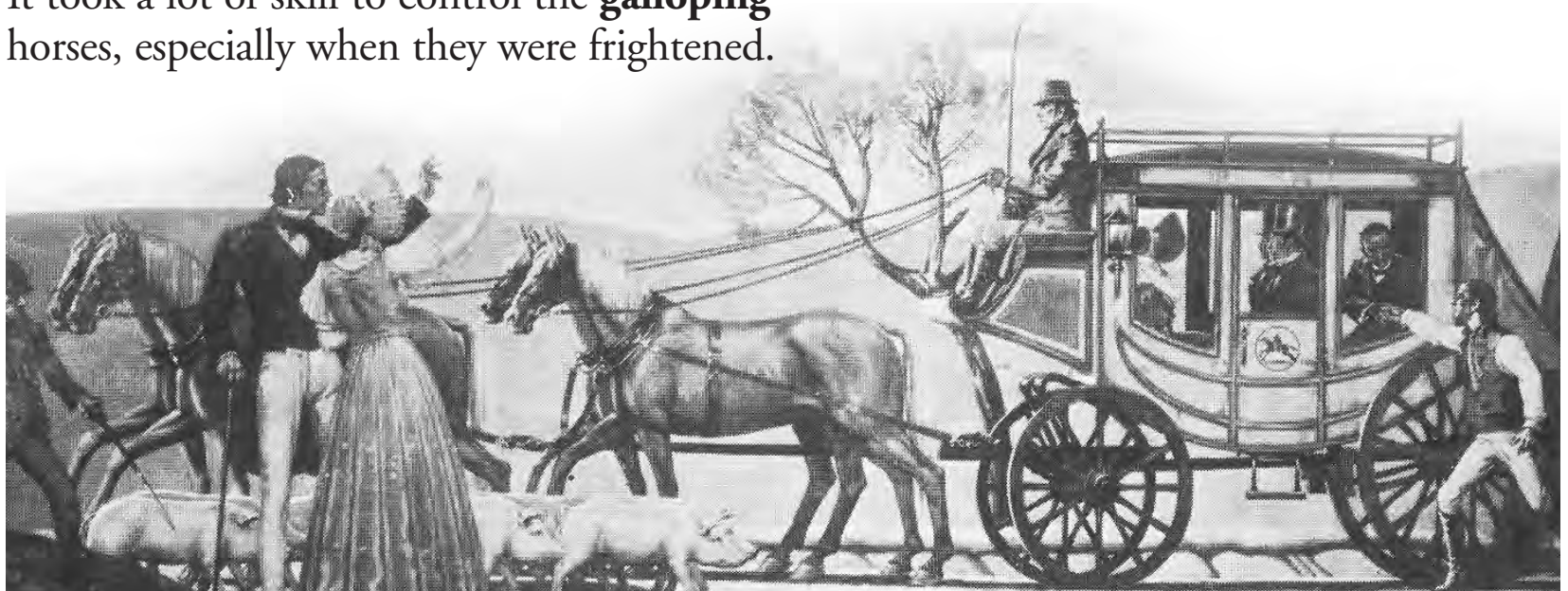
-
- Congress:** The governmental body of the United States that makes laws.
Elect: To choose someone by voting.
Vote: To make a choice in an election.



Stagecoach Driver

It took brains and talent to be a good stagecoach driver. Four horses pulled the stagecoaches. The horses were expected to run from one stagecoach tavern to the next. There the tired team of horses was taken off and a new, rested team was attached. Since the horses were running, the stagecoach went very fast. It often covered 10 miles in 1 hour. It took a lot of skill to control the **galloping** horses, especially when they were frightened.

The stagecoach driver also had many other duties besides holding on to his horses. He had to make sure the horses had food, water, and rest. He had to keep a list of the people on the stagecoach, where they were going, and the amount they paid for the trip. He had to be sure that the passengers and the mail arrived safely and on time. He had to decide when a road was unsafe.



The stagecoach leaves a tavern.



Stagecoach Driver

Robbers, called highwaymen, were a threat. Highwaymen robbed stagecoaches in areas where there was not much **traffic**. One night highwaymen put sticks in the road to stop a stagecoach and grabbed hold of the horses. They asked Samuel Luman the driver to give up. He would not. Then one of the highwaymen tried to shoot Mr. Luman, but the gun didn't work right. In the confusion Mr. Luman hit the highwayman holding the horses with his whip. The highwayman let go. Mr. Luman drove the horses and stagecoach right over the sticks. He drove away as fast as possible.

Accidents were common too. A driver named William Robinson suffered an "upset" with a full load of passengers. Mr. Robinson tried to turn the team of horses, but they were going too fast. When the stagecoach tipped over, the passengers "all tumbled out in a pile." Luckily no one was badly hurt.

Children grew up wanting to be stagecoach drivers. A.J. Endsley wrote about his boyhood dream: "In my eyes no job had so many **attractions** as driving a stage team."



The men prepare their pistols to help scare off highwaymen.

Attractions: Interesting or exciting features.

Gallop: To run as fast as possible, usually referring to a horse.

Traffic: Moving vehicles.



Stagecoach Tavern Keeper

At stagecoach taverns travelers could get a meal, a drink, and a place to sleep. In the stagecoach tavern **stable**, the stagecoach horses could rest and be fed and watered.

It was hard doing all this work. A stagecoach tavern kept many people very busy. The tavern keeper was in charge of the barroom, the stables, and collecting the money. If he was married, he only had to do half the work. His wife managed the cooking, serving of meals, and cleaning of the guest bedrooms. The family's children helped too.



The tavern keeper talks with guests in the barroom.



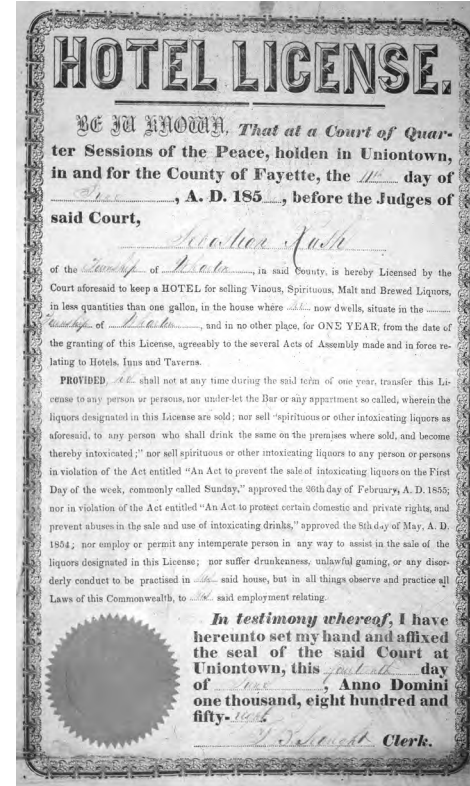
Stagecoach Tavern Keeper

In addition to the tavern keeper's family, other people were often hired to work. The tavern keeper made sure the workers did their jobs and got paid. Lots of stagecoach passengers and horses depended on them.

Most of the time men operated taverns. However, women whose husbands had died managed some taverns. Many of these women were excellent tavern keepers.

The stagecoach tavern keeper made money by charging guests for food, drinks, or a place to sleep. The stage company also paid him or her for taking care of the stagecoach horses.

Many men tavern keepers were also local **politicians**. They were usually well-liked and enjoyed meeting people. The tavern might be the only local place with a large meeting room. People could gather at the tavern to read newspapers, exchange ideas, and even pick up their mail. Many tavern keepers were **postmasters** and private bankers.



A license that lets tavern keepers operate.

Politician: Someone who runs for or holds a government office.

Postmaster: The head of the post office.

Stable: A building where horses or cows are kept.



Stagecoach Tavern Keeper's Wife



The tavern keeper's wife greets travelers.

It was hard work taking care of all the stagecoach passengers who stopped at stagecoach taverns. Most tavern keepers were lucky. Their wives did half the work.

The stagecoach tavern keeper's wife was in charge of the meals. She needed to get the food, have it cooked, and serve it to the passengers. Food might be grown on the tavern keeper's farm or come from a neighbor's farm.

Breakfast was one of the main meals for stagecoach passengers. A stagecoach might leave before sunrise. Two hours later it would stop at a tavern for breakfast. The tavern keeper's wife might serve buckwheat cakes, apple pie, veal cutlets, ham, cheese, toast, and eggs.

The other large meal was dinner, which was served in the middle of the day. Boiled ham, roast beef, fried fish, or fried chicken might be served. There might be fried potatoes, mashed pumpkin, sauerkraut, and pickles. For dessert the tavern keeper's wife might serve cake or pie, cheese, and coffee. The evening meal was supper and it was usually leftovers.



Stagecoach Tavern Keeper's Wife

Meals were served family style. It saved time to bring all the food to the table at once. Guests served themselves from large bowls. Breakfast and dinner were served at fixed times. If the stagecoach was late, the meal was held until the stagecoach arrived. If a guest was late, he or she went hungry and still had to pay for the meal!



The tavern keeper's wife was also in charge of the staff who kept the bedrooms neat and laundry done. The bedrooms were not private. Most of the rooms had a couple of big beds and two travelers were expected to share a bed. The bedrooms also had a **pitcher** of water, a large bowl, soap, and a towel. Travelers could use the soap and water to wash.

There were no bathrooms. During the day, travelers used the **outhouse**. At night they could use a pot called a chamber pot. Each morning the tavern keeper's wife made sure the chamber pots were emptied.

Foreign travelers were used to ordering workers to do things. They were surprised that in America they could not give orders to a tavern keeper and his wife. The tavern keeper and his wife had a lot of work to do and usually did not do special favors for travelers—foreign or American.

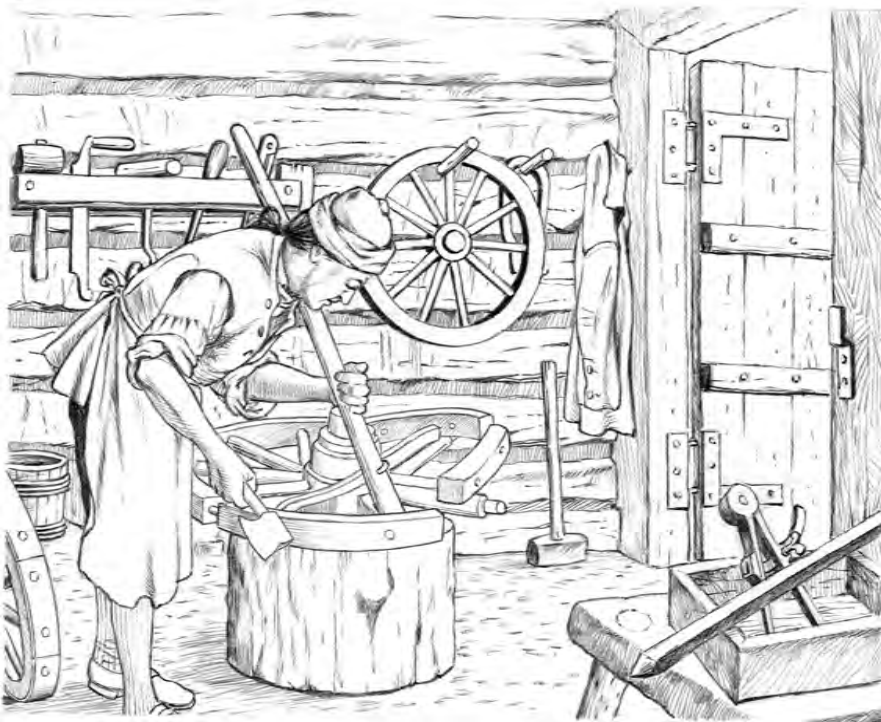
The tavern keeper's wife shows travelers to their rooms.

Outhouse: A small building with a seat over a pit used as an outdoor toilet.

Pitcher: A container with an open top for pouring liquids.



Stagecoach Yard Worker



A worker makes a wagon wheel.

Hear the clang of metal on metal. Hear the hiss of hot iron held in a barrel of cold water. Smell the smoke of the **blacksmith's** fire. Smell the fresh wood used to build stagecoaches and the leather used for **harness** and wagon straps. See the bright paint—red, green, gold, and blue—used to decorate the stagecoaches.

These were the sounds, smells, and sights in the old stagecoach yards along the National Road. Some of the people who worked in the stagecoach yards were blacksmiths, harness makers, carpenters, painters, and artists.

A typical stagecoach yard had sheds where stagecoaches were worked on. It had a blacksmith shop with a **forge**. The blacksmith kept busy making iron horseshoes, iron wheel tires, or other parts for stagecoaches.

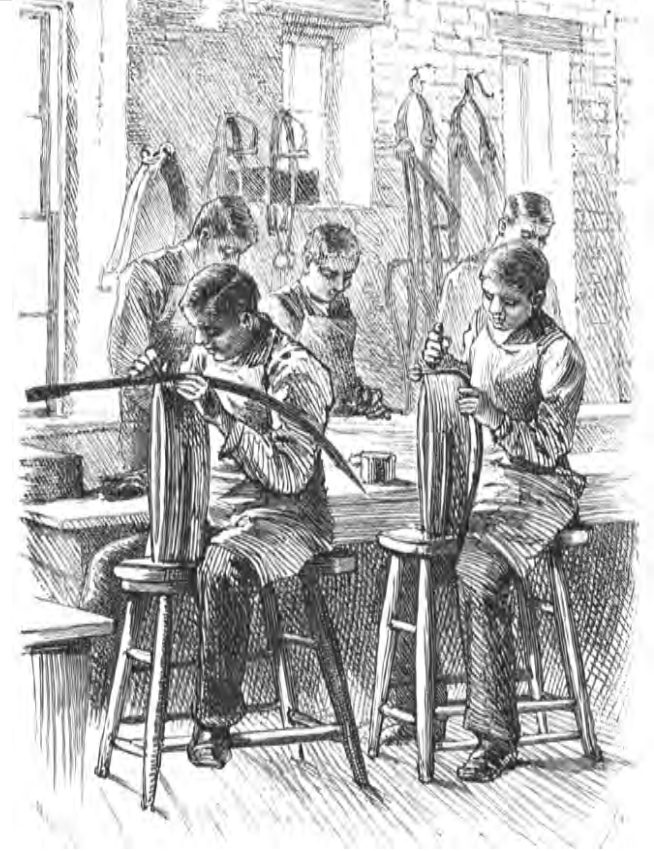
A stagecoach yard also had a wheelmaker. The wheelmaker made wooden wheels. Then the blacksmith made iron “tires” for the wheels. The iron tire kept the wheel from wearing out too fast. The iron tire was heated so it would **expand** enough to go over the wooden wheel. Then the wheelmaker cooled the iron so the tire would **shrink** to fit tightly.



Stagecoach Yard Worker

Carpenters built new stagecoaches in the stagecoach yard. They also repaired old ones. Painters worked on stagecoaches too. Beautiful scenes and neatly written names were painted on the sides. Artists were hired to paint new scenes or carefully re-paint faded scenes. The covering of the seats inside the stagecoach had to be mended or replaced. The leather straps that went under the body of the stagecoach and supported it got lots of wear and tear. They often had to be replaced.

A lot of hard work went on in the stagecoach yard.



Workers sew harnesses in a harness shop.

Blacksmith: Someone who makes and fixes things made of iron.

Expand: To increase in size.

Forge: A special fireplace where metals are heated.

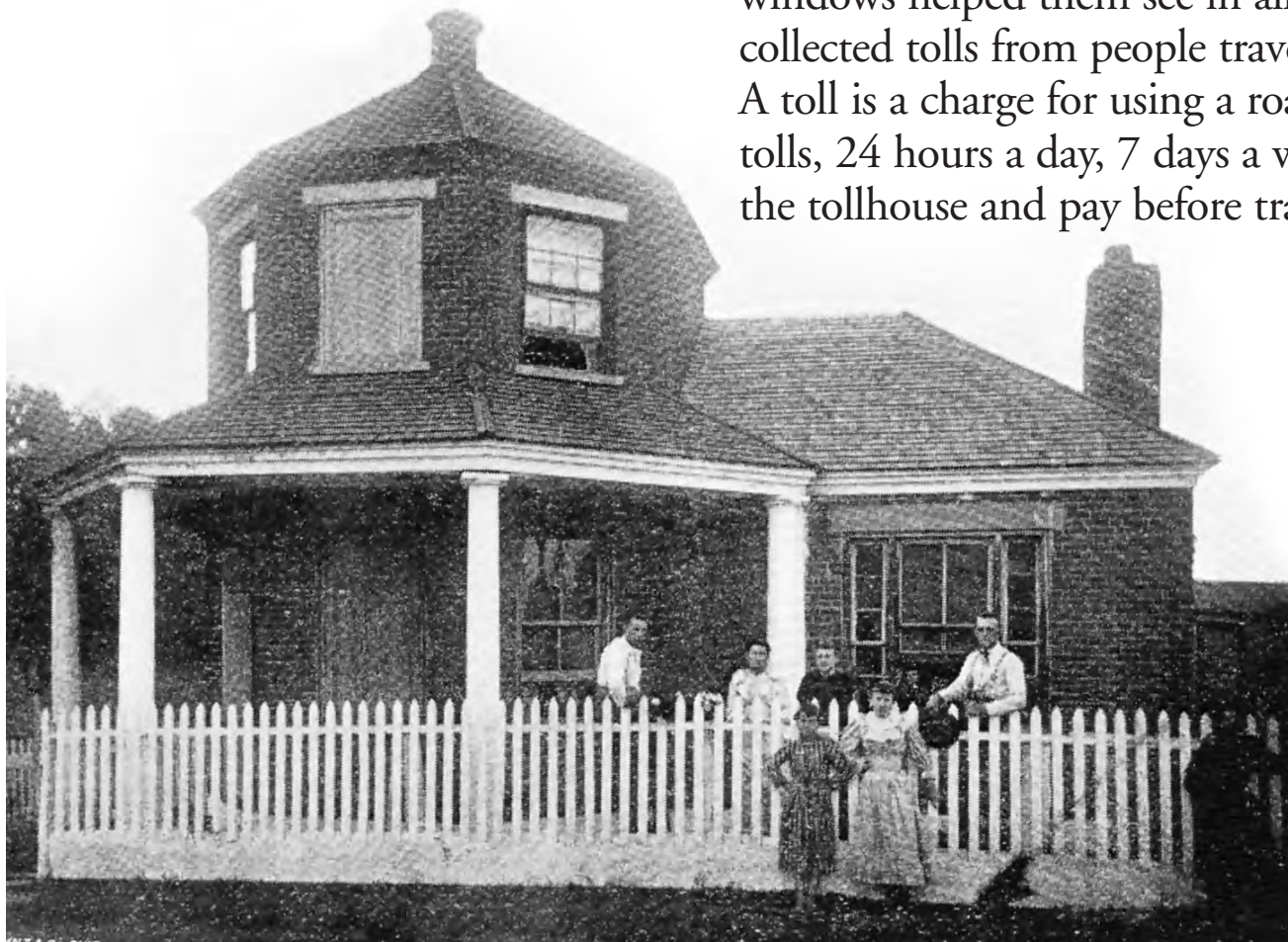
Harness: A set of leather straps and metal parts that connects a horse to a stagecoach, wagon, or other vehicle.

Shrink: To become smaller.



Tollkeeper

How would you like to live in a house with a room that has windows all around? That's what tollkeepers got to do. The windows helped them see in all directions. The tollkeepers collected tolls from people traveling on the National Road. A toll is a charge for using a road. Tollkeepers collected the tolls, 24 hours a day, 7 days a week. Travelers had to stop at the tollhouse and pay before traveling on.



A photograph from the 1800s of a tollhouse.



Tollkeeper

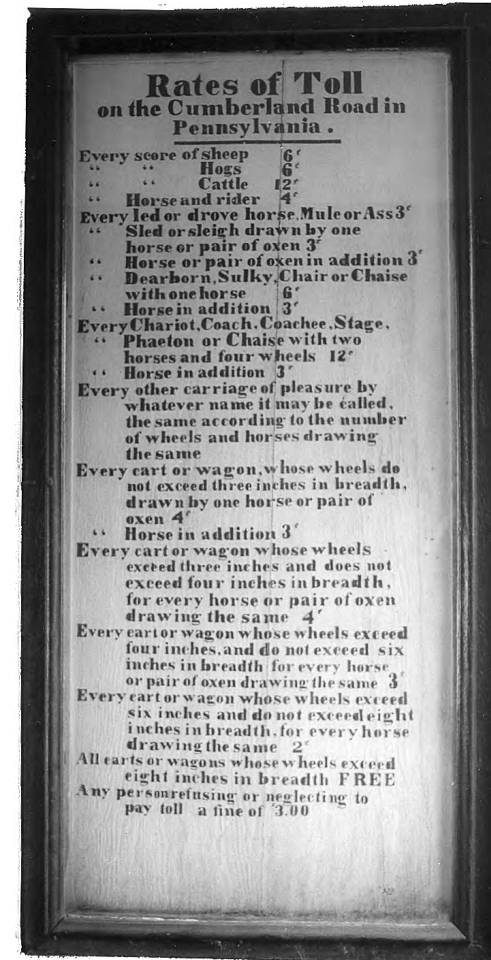
A tollkeeper was paid \$200 a year. He or she lived in the tollhouse with other family members. In addition to collecting tolls, tollkeepers had to keep careful records. Each year they took in large amounts of money.

Tollkeepers posted big signs showing who had to pay and how much. The amount of money a person paid was based upon how much their vehicle or animals damaged the road. Some tolls on the National Road were as follows:

- For every 20 pigs or sheep:** 6 cents
- For every 20 cattle:** 12 cents
- For a horse and rider:** 4 cents
- For a stagecoach with 4 horses:** 18 cents

Sometimes travelers did not have to pay a toll. Travelers who were going to or coming from a church, a **funeral**, or school got through for free. In addition, any vehicle carrying the U.S. mail did not have to pay a toll.

Travelers rarely refused to pay the toll. Once a women tollkeeper could not collect the toll from a bossy traveler. Her neighbor, Mr. Oster, helped her out. He followed the traveler all day. Finally Mr. Oster found the traveler hiding in the woods. The traveler offered to pay the toll. That was not good enough for Mr. Oster. He took the traveler to the nearest town where he was locked in jail.

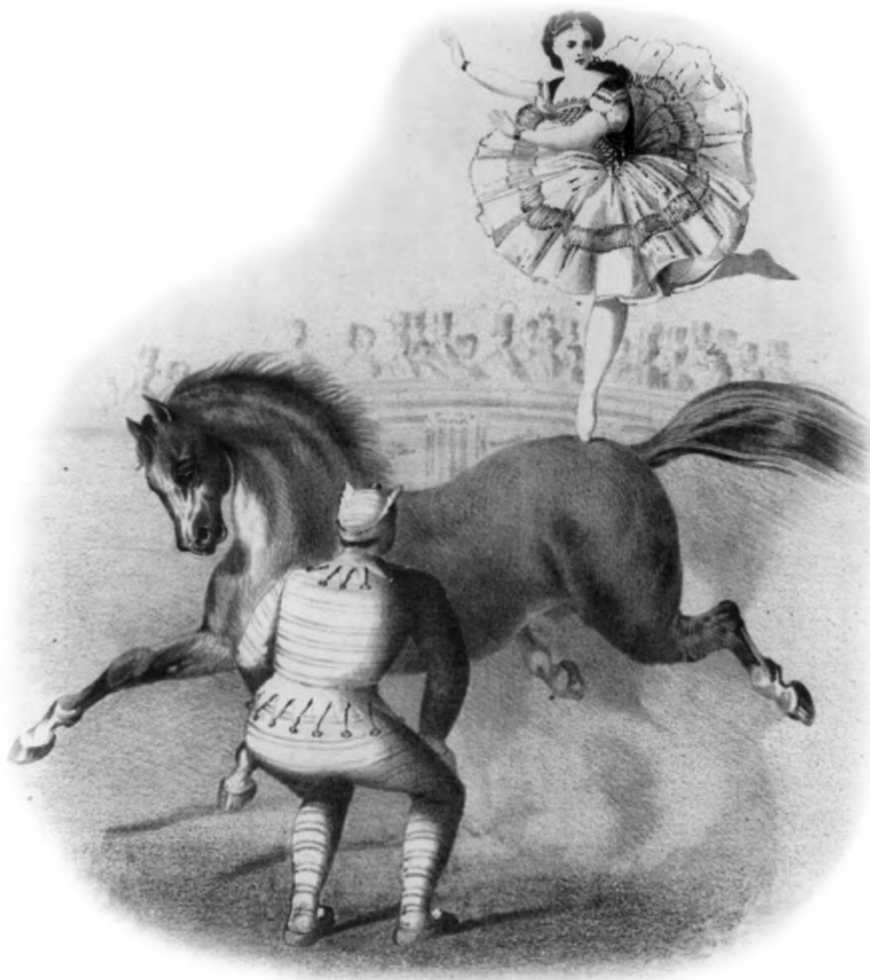


The rates of toll sign was hung on the side of the tollhouse.

Funeral: The ceremony held after someone has died when the body is buried.



Traveling Entertainment



A circus act.

People who lived in villages and towns all along the National Road called it a “highway of entertainment.” This was especially true in summer when all kinds of entertainers traveled in search of customers and **audiences**. Sometimes a “store on wheels” might roll into town. There, shoppers could buy things such as wooden clocks, tin pots, buttons, or pins. Other travelers along the National Road included jugglers, wild animal acts, medicine salesmen, and singers. People also gave talks on serious subjects, like ending slavery, religion, and which person was best to elect to office.

Jenny Lind was a famous singer. Her voice was so beautiful it was compared to the lovely song of a bird named a nightingale. She came from a country called Sweden to sing in America. That is how she got the nickname the “Swedish nightingale.” She traveled along the National Road in the 1850s. She stayed at Rush’s Tavern, 12 miles east of Uniontown, Pennsylvania. People gathered just to get a **glimpse** of Jenny Lind.



Traveling Entertainment

Taverns along the National Road were gathering places for communities. Stagecoaches carried news of “coming attractions.” At that time there were no televisions or movie theaters. People looked forward to seeing the acts that came to town.

Circuses might have been the most popular of all. By 1829 several good-sized circuses with living animals, **acrobats** and skilled performers were on the road. It cost 12 1/2 cents to see two lions “both in one cage,” two panthers, a bear, a cougar from Brazil, and a pony that could do tricks.

In the 1840s family singing groups were a hit. The singers were not always related but said they were. Admission was usually 25 cents. Many of the songs praised the United States.



A portrait of Jenny Lind.

-
- Acrobat:** A person who performs exciting gymnastic acts that require skill.
Audience: People who watch or listen to a performance or speech.
Glimpse: To see something very briefly.



United States President

What does it mean to be president of the United States? The president is the leader of the American people. He is not just the leader of the people who voted for him. He is the leader of all Americans.

In the years when stagecoaches and wagons filled the National Road, many presidents traveled on it. Word of a president's travel would spread on ahead of him. So all along the road people could gather to wave, cheer, shake hands, and talk about what was on their minds. Traveling on the National Road helped presidents talk with the American people.

Presidents William Henry Harrison, James Tyler, James Polk, and Zachary Taylor rode along the National Road to their appointment as president in Washington, D.C. The president and his family traveled in style. Each had a beautiful new stagecoach named "The President." At least five other presidents traveled the National Road too.



A crowd in front of the White House, where the United States President lived.



United States President

When James Polk was the newly elected president he traveled on the National Road on his way to Washington, D.C. James Polk and his family arrived by stagecoach at a tavern on the National Road. The Polks were expected and a welcome was planned. But the stagecoach arrived early. The organizers of the welcome weren't quite ready. This must have upset them!

When the Polks got out of their stagecoach, important local people made speeches. After he listened, President Polk made a speech. He said he wanted to speak with as many people as he could during his stay at the tavern. The newspaper later reported that "many hundreds of our citizens" came by to speak to him that evening. In addition, many women visited with Mrs. Polk. Her "**intelligent** conversation" was admired by all.

James Polk and his family were on the road again by 9:00 the next morning. In a few weeks he officially became the 11th President of the United States. Perhaps what he heard from the citizens who came to the tavern helped him be a better president.



A portrait of James K. Polk.

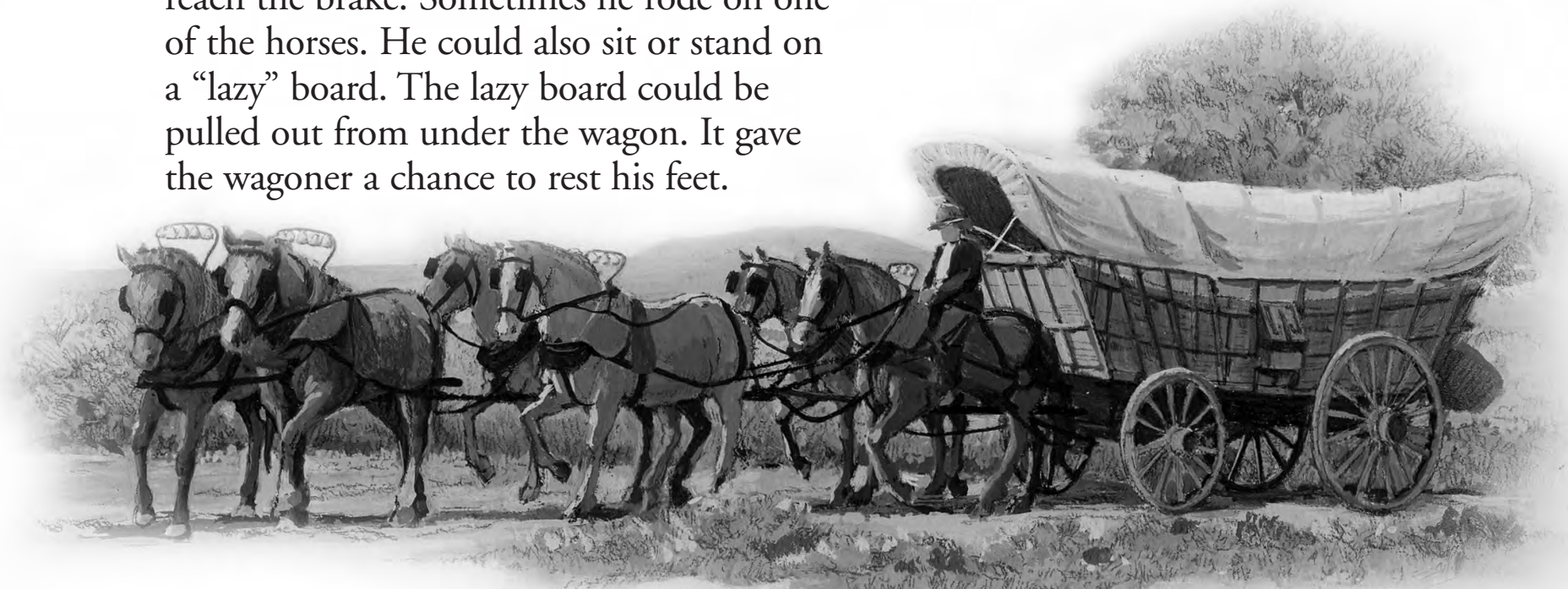
Intelligent: Smart, bright, quick to understand.



Wagoner

Wagon drivers on the National Road were called wagoners. They usually drove six-horse wagons. Pairs of horses were **hitched** to the front of the wagon. There was no seat in the wagon. The wagoner usually walked beside the wagon, where he could reach the brake. Sometimes he rode on one of the horses. He could also sit or stand on a “lazy” board. The lazy board could be pulled out from under the wagon. It gave the wagoner a chance to rest his feet.

A typical wagon on the National Road carried a load of 6,000 pounds. Some loads weighed as much as 10,000 pounds, or about as much as an adult elephant weighs. Wagoners usually traveled about 15 miles per day along the National Road, depending on weather and road conditions. Wagons were too heavy for the horses to pull them quickly. They usually only went about 1 to 2 miles per hour.



The wagoner moves his wagon.



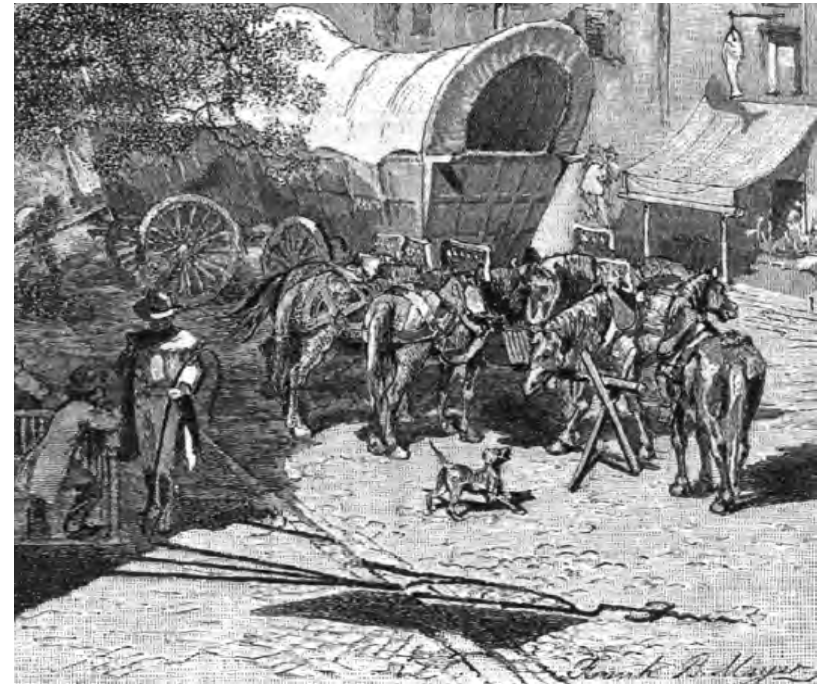
Wagoner

It usually took many days to deliver the goods in the wagon. Along the way, wagoners stopped for the night at taverns along the road. The wagoners un-harnessed their horses and tied them loosely to the wagon. Then they wiped down the sweaty, tired horses, and fed them. The horses stayed outside in the tavern yard, no matter what the weather. The wagoners went inside the tavern for a good meal and something to drink. They talked and played games before bed. When the time came, they slept on the floor of the tavern.

The wagoners worked all the time, in all types of weather. They even worked on Saturday and Sunday.

Once the wagoners arrived at their final stop and unloaded their wagons, they had to find someone else who wanted freight delivered. Then they loaded the wagons up again. Heading east on the National Road their load might include tobacco, flour, bacon, and wool. Heading west they might carry iron, salt, coffee, or **manufactured goods**.

John Deets, a wagoner in the 1820s, wrote that the wagoners “were generally very sociable and friendly with each other.”



Horses rest and feed tied to the wagon outside a tavern.

Hitch: To join something to a vehicle.

Manufactured goods: Items that a made, often with a machine.