



Workers Along the National Road

The National Road contributed to many changes in the areas through which it passed. It also helped in the growth of the young United States. Along the road communities and towns arose and grew, both to make use of the National Road and to cater to the traffic.

Wagoners, drovers, and stagecoach drivers worked on the National Road moving merchandise and people. The tollkeeper and road repair crew worked to keep the road in good condition.

The road created hundreds of other jobs. Tavern keepers employed grooms and stable boys in their barns. Inside the taverns cooks, waitresses, bartenders, and maids were needed. Some of this work was done by family members, but staff was also hired. Farmers were employed providing food for the tavern and hay and grain for the animals.

Blacksmiths were common along the National Road. They shod horses and fixed wagon wheels. In Uniontown, Pennsylvania, the National Road Stage Company had a stagecoach yard. Stagecoaches were built and repaired in the stagecoach yard. The company employed blacksmiths, harness makers, carpenters, and painters.

Many people used the road in conducting their business. Merchants generally traveled to Baltimore twice a year to buy supplies for their stores. Politicians and even presidents traveled the National Road in connection with their duties as elected officials. Farmers brought their surplus farm products to market. Lawyers and bankers frequently needed to travel as part of their jobs.

Traveling entertainment acts and traveling salesmen were common. Many people attended lectures. This prompted many speakers to embark on cross-country speaking tours

Emigrants used the National Road to move west to seek new employment. They fueled the growth of the frontier. Runaway slaves also used the road to escape bondage and start a new life.

Thousands of people and animals traveling the National Road created many jobs. The National Road also provided efficient transportation opportunities for local businessmen to reach their clients and markets. It is no wonder that local politicians opposed the development of the railroads and wanted to protect the commerce centered around the National Road. However, by 1853 both the Pennsylvania and the Baltimore and Ohio Railroads had made it across the Allegheny Mountains (the mountains in Pennsylvania that are part of the Appalachian Mountains) and the National Road began to decline.



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Additional Information

All the **Biography Cards** and **Occupation Cards** provide additional information.

Supplemental Activities

1. Invite students to make a timeline depicting major events relating to the National Road from 1806 through 1853. Have various students illustrate each of the dates included.



Student Reading: Workers Along the National Road

Materials

- Copies of the reproducible pages **Workers Along the National Road**.

Objectives

After reading the student reading and answering the thought question, students will be able to

- List four jobs created by the National Road.

Standards

Pennsylvania Standards for History

- 8.1.3 A
- 8.2.3 C

Pennsylvania Standards for Economics

- 6.5.3 B



Procedures

1. Make a copy of the reproducible pages for each student.
2. Have the students read and answer the thought questions.
3. Discuss the thought questions.

Thought Question Answers

- **No longer common jobs:** wagoner, stagecoach driver, stable worker, blacksmith.
- **Still common jobs:** toll collector (tollkeeper), cook, waitress/waiter, maid, farmer, store owner.



Workers Along the National Road

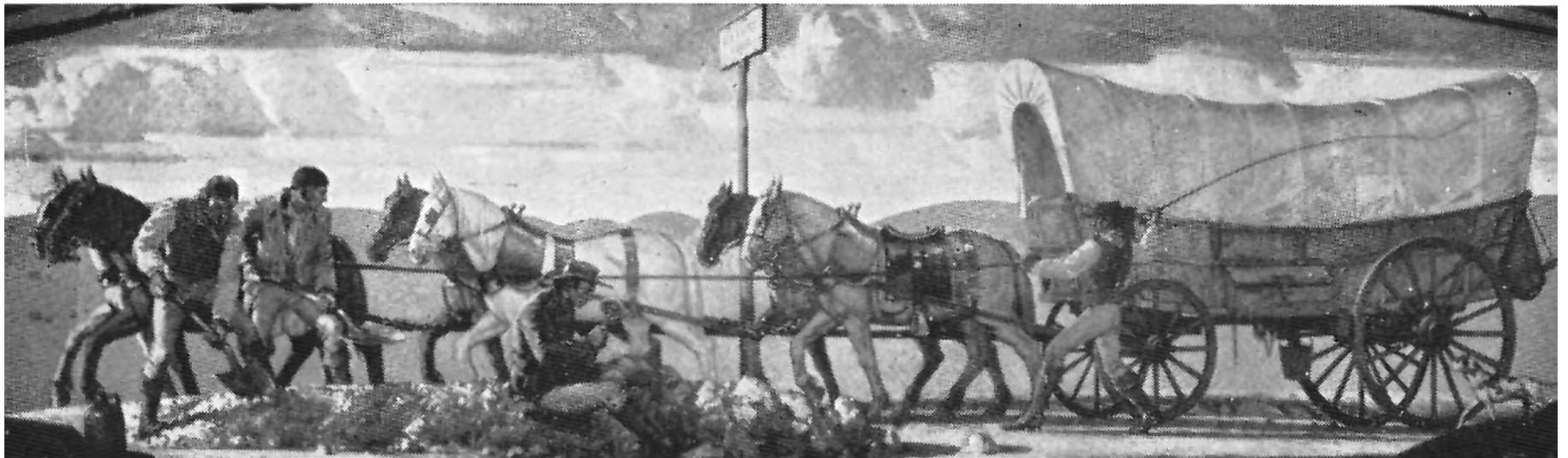
Thousands of people and animals traveled the National Road. All this traffic created a lot of jobs.

Some people made their living providing transportation. Wagoners moved goods in their wagons, and stagecoach drivers carried people from one town to the next. Other men built stagecoaches.

Tollkeepers collected money from the travelers. The money was used to hire men to fix the road and keep it in good shape.

In the taverns workers were needed to cook and serve the meals. Other people cleaned the rooms. Lots of men and boys worked in the stables feeding and caring for the horses.

Blacksmiths were common along the National Road. They repaired wagon wheels and put horseshoes on horses.





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Farmers sold food to the taverns for the travelers. They also sold the taverns hay and grain to feed the horses and animals.

The National Road was such a good road that many people used it when they needed to get from one place to another to do their job. Store owners used the road to go to the city and buy supplies for their store. Even the president of the United States traveled the National Road.

Lots of jobs along the National Road meant lots of workers. The workers built houses. New towns were started and small towns grew larger. The National Road played an important role in helping America grow.



Thought Questions:

1. What are two jobs that were common on the National Road that are no longer common?

2. What are two jobs that were common on the National Road that are still common?



Student Activity: Traffic on the National Road

Materials

- Copies of the reproducible pages **Traffic on the National Road**.

Objectives

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

- List three kinds of jobs along the National Road.

Standards

Pennsylvania Standards for History

- 8.1.3 B
- 8.2.3 C

Pennsylvania Standards for Economics

- 6.1.3 C
- 6.4.3 G
- 6.5.3 B



Procedures

1. Copy reproducible pages for each student.
2. Have the students complete.

Activity Answers

- **#2.** Drover, stagecoach driver, stable/barn hands, wagoner, tavern keeper, road builders.



Traffic on the National Road



Directions: Complete the activities.

1. Look at this picture and find some of the things seen along the National Road. Circle the following on the picture::

stagecoach
tavern

drover and cattle
stone mile marker

Conestoga wagon
men crushing rock for the road



Traffic on the National Road

2. List three kinds of jobs along the National Road that are shown in this picture.



Student Activity: Jobs Along the National Road

Materials

- Copies of the reproducible pages **Jobs Along the National Road**.

Objectives

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

- List one duty for each of the four occupations.

Standards

Pennsylvania Standards for History

- 8.1.3 B
- 8.2.3 C

Pennsylvania Standards for Economics

- 6.1.3 C
- 6.4.3 G
- 6.5.3 B



Procedures

1. Copy reproducible pages for each student.
2. Have the students complete.

Activity Answers

- **#2. Farmer:** take care of animals, plow fields, plant crops, harvest crops, milk cows, take produce to market.
Tollhouse keeper: collect tolls, keep people from passing without paying, be available 24 hours a day.
Blacksmith: make horse shoes, shoe horses, make other metal fixtures (for example, for wagons or stagecoaches and cooking utensils).
Tavern keeper and his wife: cook and provide food to guests, change sheets and keep the beds ready, provide feed for horses, keep extra teams ready for stagecoaches (most of these duties were also done by paid help and family members).
- **#3. Farmer:** provide produce and grains used by taverns and stables.
Tollhouse keeper: gather tolls for National Road upkeep so people can travel; employ people to repair the road.
Blacksmith: shoe horses, help prepare wagons for travel.
Tavern keeper and his wife: supply accommodations and horse teams to allow people to travel both east and west.



Jobs Along the National Road

There were many jobs to do along the National Road. Look at the pictures below of people working along the National Road.





Jobs Along the National Road

Directions: Complete #1. Answer questions #2–#4.

1. Write the correct job under each picture:

tavern keeper

farmer

tollhouse keeper

blacksmith

2. What do think the duties are for each job?

3. List one duty that helped make travel easier on the National Road?

4. What job or jobs along the National Road would you have done? Why?
