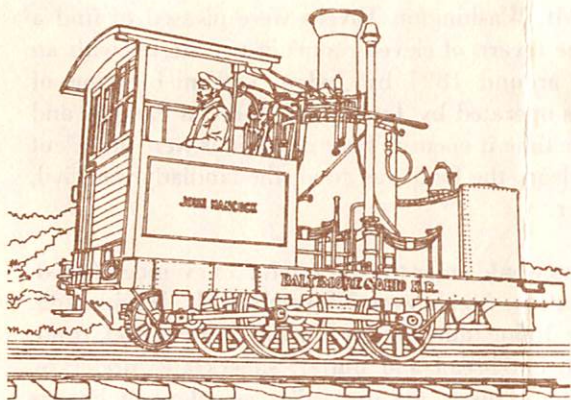


the men and boys in rooms for males, two or three to a bed. When bedspace was taken, bedrolls were used on the floor.

As dawn approached, the guests would arise, feast on a breakfast of ham, bacon, sausage, buckwheat cakes and maple syrup, eggs, cheese, potatoes and coffee. Then it was time to board the coach for another long day of travel along the National Road.

The prosperity along the National Road lasted for a number of years. However by the 1850's, the railroad had begun to take its toll and business declined along its way. In October of 1855, the executors of the James Sampey estate sold the Mt. Washington properties to Godfrey Fazenbaker, who engaged in extensive farming and stockraising. The Fazenbakers', continuing as owners of the property for some 75 years, kept the building in good condition without major structural changes. In March of 1932, the Tavern was sold to the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania and opened as a museum exhibiting a variety of historical artifacts until 1962 when it was donated to the United States Government.

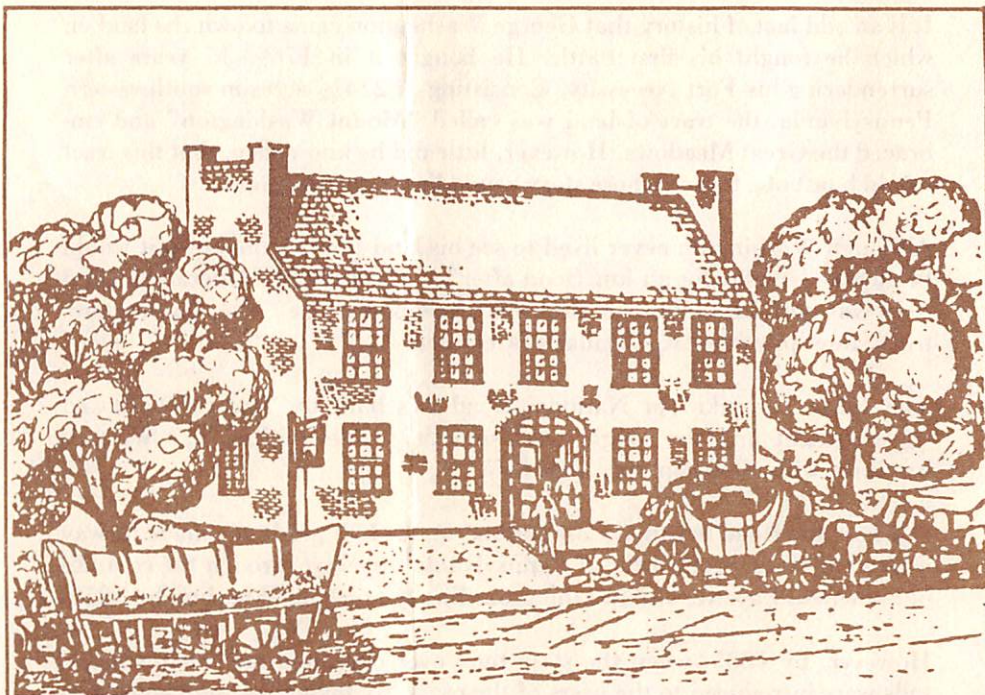
Administered now by the National Park Service, the Tavern has been partially restored to insure its preservation and more effective presentation to the public as a significant historical landmark of the National Road. The visitor will find here furnishings symbolic of Tavern use and attractive exhibits telling the story of the National Road.



United States
Department of the Interior



National
Park Service



The Story of MOUNT WASHINGTON TAVERN

FORT NECESSITY NATIONAL BATTLEFIELD
FARMINGTON, PENNSYLVANIA

It is an odd fact of history that George Washington came to own the land on which he fought his first battle. He bought it in 1769, 15 years after surrendering his Fort Necessity. Consisting of 234½ acres in southwestern Pennsylvania, the tract of land was called "Mount Washington" and embraced the Great Meadows. However, little did he know then, that this tract would boast of a tavern whose story would live for generations.

Although Washington never lived to see his land flourish, he knew it would be an excellent site for an inn. Soon after his death the first federally funded road was laid down through this country, crossing the "Mt. Washington" tract, thus proving his speculations correct.

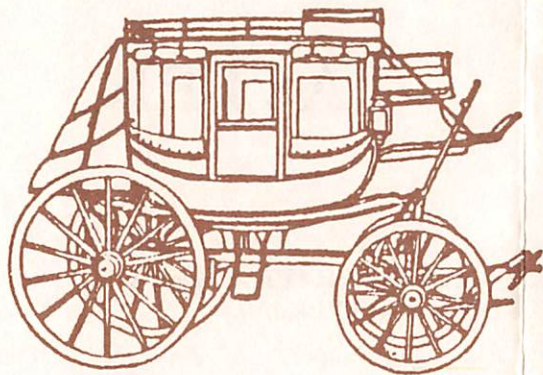
The "great turnpike" or National Road was built to "make the crooked ways straight and the rough ways smooth" while uniting "our Western brethren with those on the Atlantic".

Work on the Road began at Cumberland in 1811. It gradually made its way across the southwest corner of Pennsylvania traveling through the counties of Somerset, Fayette, and Washington, finally reaching Wheeling by 1818.

However, by 1835, when the state took over operation and maintenance, tolls were introduced to the users of the road. Six tollhouses were erected in Pennsylvania, averaging 15 miles apart with tolls posted at each. A horse and rider paid 4c to travel the stretch to the next tollhouse. Every score of hogs and sheep cost 6c; a score of cattle cost 12c because their hooves tore up the road.

Nevertheless, the National Road was successful beyond the most optimistic expectations. It became the most important route for travelers, freight and mail between the eastern seaboard and the Middle West.

Travel by stagecoach along the National Road was slow compared to today, but stagelines boasted of "new and extraordinary travelling accommodations." The coaches, usually pulled by four horses, carried nine passengers on three cross seats facing forward, plus a tenth passenger beside the driver in the box. The seats had thin cushions and no backs, except the



back one in the rear, which was generally given to the ladies. Entry was from the rear, and since there was no aisle, six of the passengers had to climb over one or two seats every time they entered and departed.



Arrival at a tavern for an overnight stop was always an occasion of excitement and great activity. The coach's approach was announced

by the driver blowing on his "coachman's horn"; the innkeeper read from it who the driver was and how many coaches were following him.

Travelers stopping at the Mt. Washington Tavern were pleased to find a commodious brick and stone tavern of eleven rooms in two stories, with an attic and basement. Built around 1827 by Judge Nathaniel Ewing of Uniontown, the Tavern was operated by James and Rebecca Sampey and did a lively business from the time it opened. Four conditions were prevalent at this inn; the place was clean, the food was good, the landlady was civil, and her husband was sober.

Tired, sore and stiff, travelers would enter the Tavern for an evening of food, drink, warmth and conversation. Meals were informal at Mt. Washington. Served family-style, the long dining table displayed ham, mutton, beef, trout, potatoes, mashed pumpkin, hot bread and butter, sauerkraut, preserves, pies, cake, cheese and coffee. Guests ate hurriedly, as relays of hungry travelers waited in anticipation of a hot hearty meal.

After dinner the children would run out to the stables on the west side of the Tavern to see the horses and talk to the drivers. The ladies would sit for a while in the parlor and talk, each curious to learn about the passengers in the other coaches. From the barroom came the sound of men discussing a presidential campaign and tales of past travels, in between sips of rye whiskey and puffs on a long clay pipe.

However, by 10 o'clock, a silence would come over the Tavern only to be broken by the crackling of the fireplaces. The seven bedrooms on the second floor served as sleeping quarters for an unlimited number of travelers. They slept as in a dormitory; the women and small children in rooms for females,