

# National Road Journal of Elizabeth Miller

[this is a fictional story - Merle C Rummel]

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[inside front cover] Mother, Elizabeth Miller Petry, Died Nov 1861 – This Is CLOSED – till 1962

Mother was buried in the Wehrly-Petry Cemetery, in the opposite corner from Daddy. She did say that since there was no room beside him, to bury her clear away from him -that maybe she wouldn't pester him so much for eternity. Daddy was buried there, then my sister Nancy, who died when she was 19, was buried in the lot beside him. Mother was laughing every time she said it! Sometimes I did wonder how daddy could take her so calmly all the time. Mother would get excited, and yell – every so often.

Maggy Petry Stump

(found in an old trunk of the Stump family – 1982 – Preble Co OH)

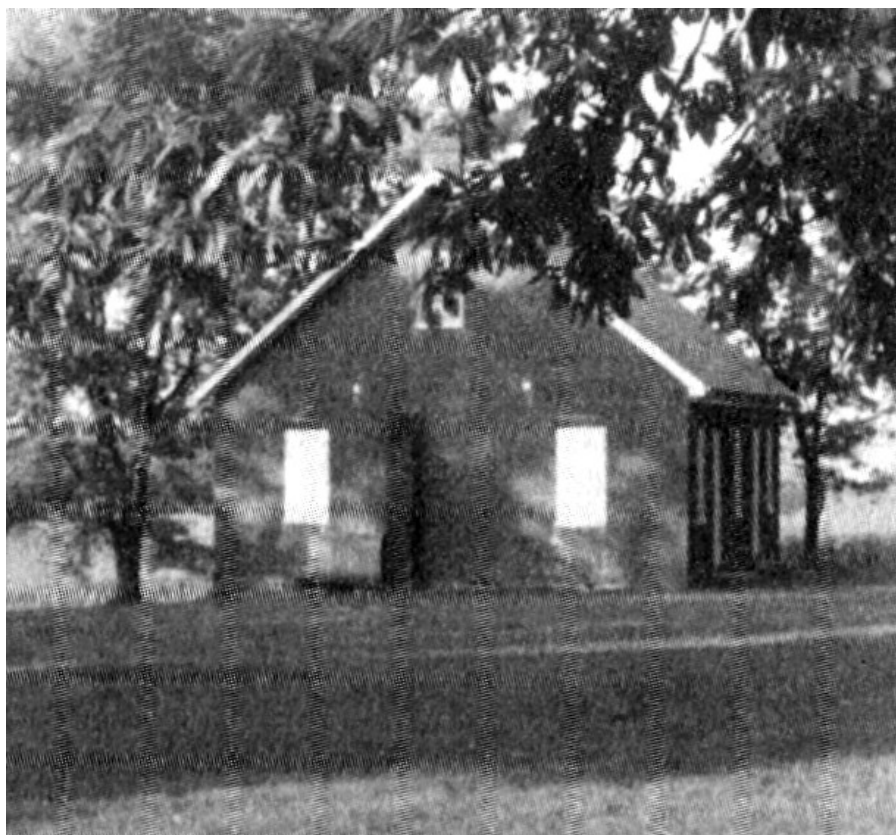
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NOT TO BE READ – till I'm 100 years DEAD - (added - top of page)

I'm Angry! – I'm Scared! – I Don't Know What to Do! I'm Angry at Mother, I'm Angry at Stephen. I don't Want to go to Ohio! And – Mother says that I have Got to go!

Grandpa gave me this journal book, and told me to keep a record of our trip west. Grandpa is George Petry and he said I was the only one who could do it so good. I think grandpa did it just to distract me, that maybe this would help, I am in love with Stephen, we're going to get married – or – we WERE going to get married!. But now, I've got to go west, to Ohio, and he's not coming west, and I'm really sick about it. I told mother that I was not going west. After all, I am 17 years old, and many girls are married by then. But she said that I WAS going. And then, Stephen said that he wasn't able to get married, yet, that he didn't have a farm, and couldn't provide for me. I told mother that Stephen should have our farm, and that he and I could live there, but she said that she had already signed the deed, that she had to sell it to pay the bills we owed when dad died, and that it was not ours any more. Mother told me that I WAS going to Ohio with them, that I was needed. Oh, this is awful. Stephen said that he would come west and get me as soon as he could. Mother asked me if I didn't trust Stephen, if I didn't think he would do what he said, and come and get me. I didn't know what to say. So many things could happen! I know part of what is wrong. Stephen and I are first cousins. He is son of mother's uncle, Jacob Petry. Mother has talked with me about how cousins should not marry because of what it may do to the babies, but I love him, we love each other. We always have, ever since I can remember, we would be together. OK, he's 9 years older than me, but he would play with me even when I was little. I love him! This is terrible!

Oh, I am Elizabeth Miller. I am the eldest child of George Miller and Catherine Petry. Dad was one of the ministers at the Chestnut Grove Baptist Brethren Church, here at the Petry homestead near Hanover Pennsylvania, but he fell off his horse dead, about 3 years ago. I was just 14 then. Ever since, it has been all we can do, to hold things together. Mother and I both have had to do men's work in the fields. Mother says that we can get started again out there in Ohio, but I don't see how, since it will all be the same hard work, and even more, and just mother, Levi, and us two



**Chestnut Grove Church near Hanover PA**

girls to do it. Except for Levi, the boys are still too young to do much. Well, OK, George Jr is 12, and when he settles down a little, he can do things. Grandpa and grandma say they will be helping us, and of course my uncles and aunts will too, but they have their own places to get started as well. Out there in Ohio, it is frontier, it is new country. Its mostly just covered with trees, its still Forest, there. We will have to build our own cabin to live in, and cut the trees and dig out the stumps, to have crops. It is going to be terribly hard work.



**Petry Farms Codorus York Co PA**

The day finally came. We are started. We left Codorus together, it is the middle of May, 1828. We are going to Ohio on the new National Road. There are 5 wagons of us, cousins, although others of the cousins had talked about coming along, we are all that are going. Mother and our whole family are going. Dad was always talking about going west, he even bought us land there. So we are going, even though he did die. Grandpa and Grandma are coming with us. They have their own wagon, they asked me to ride with them, to help. Levi and Lydia will help mother drive our wagon, they are both 15. Mother drives the teams of horses from the seat on the wagon, grandpa drives the teams walking beside the wheel horse on the near side. George Jr, and usually Levi, are mostly riding the buggy horses, helping drive the herd of cows for all of us. Aunt Sarah and Uncle George Wehrley are coming with us, with their children. Lewis is old enough to help Levi and George Jr, he is 10 years old. Susan is only 7, but she can be a good helper too. Aunt Barbara and Uncle John Wehrley are with us. Both of their children are still small. Grandpa's brother, Jacob Petry is not coming, that's why Stephen isn't coming - and I'm leaving him BEHIND! Grandpa's other brother, Henry Petry, his daughter, Catherine and her husband, Nicholas Bucher, and their little daughter, Elizabeth, are coming too



**Rummel Farm   Battlefield – off Hanover Rd - Gettysburg**

Our first day was going to Gettysburg. It is an old road going from Hanover to Gettysburg. Codorus is just a couple miles east of Hanover. It was about 20 miles all together. It was just like traveling near home, with all the farms: houses and barns and horses and cows and hogs. A person would not know, that we will be traveling for about a month. We took all day, although we did stop to eat dinner. Here we get on the Great Wagon Road. It runs from Philadelphia all the way down the Valley of Virginia to the Carolinas and Tennessee. It is a good road. It will take us through the Blue Ridge Mountains. Gettysburg is a bigger town than Hanover, it has been here a long time. The Brethren have gone down this road, all the way to the Carolinas, as long as 80 years ago.

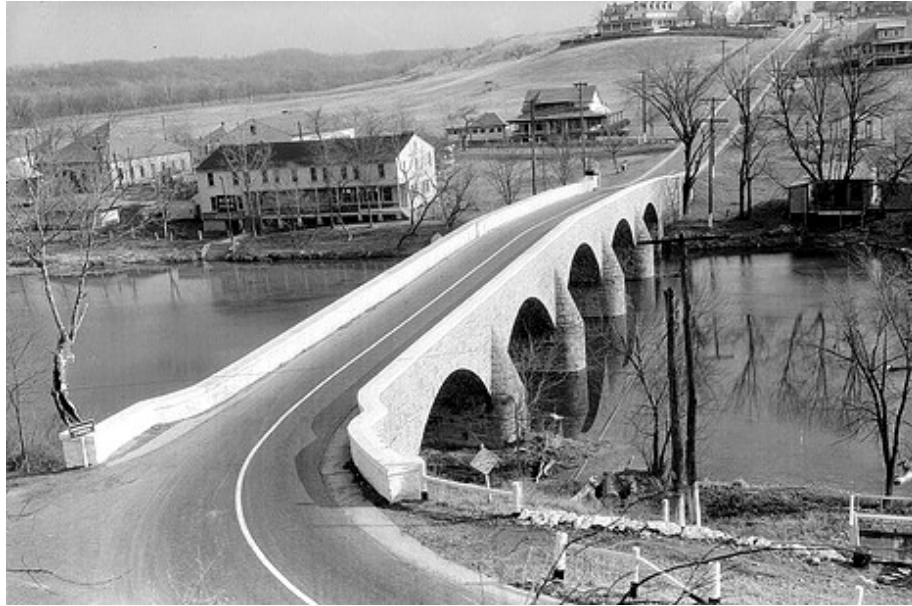


**Antietam Creek**

We left early for our second day. We had to go down southwest out of Gettysburg, to a branch of the Antietam Creek that cuts a partial gap through the Blue Ridge. We got down there about noon, then it was about 6 miles going through the mountain, then on the other side about 2 miles farther to Waynesboro. We had to climb some into the mountains to reach the gap, then it was all down hill along the Antietam. Then we had to climb a little to the ridge where Waynesboro is. It made a total of 22 miles. Being an old road, it was all good driving. Grandpa let me drive the horses today, as he rode the Morgan horse beside us. He said he wanted me to learn how, so I could do driving later. But I already know how to drive horses. This is just a big wagon with two teams of horses hitched to it. They still drive the same as one horse on the buggy or a team on a wagon – Gee – Haw – and pull some on the reins. I've done both, at different times, although Mother usually did the driving. Grandma just sat there on the wagon seat with me, she didn't say much. When we camp for night, mother usually is parked next to us, but the other cousin wagons are right around us.

Our third day gets us onto the National Road. It comes into Hagarstown. It was about 12 miles down along the Antietam Creek from Waynesboro in Pennsylvania to Hagarstown in Maryland. Lydia brought Nancy up and climbed into the wagon with us for a while. Mother was driving our wagon. We got to Hagarstown soon after high noon, so we pulled on out west of town, to the Conococheague Creek where they have built a five arched stone bridge. We don't have to ford the creek or anything. This is the National Road. This section of it is called the Cumberland Road, because it goes from Frederick to Cumberland, then on to the Ohio River at Wheeling. Cumberland is up on the edge of a mountain west of here. Grandpa said that it would take at least a week, just to get there. We will be following close to the Potomac River all the way.





**Conococheague Creek Bridge**

This National Road is something else. It is like no other road I've seen, it is so smooth to travel on. It is better than most city streets. It is laid out 66 feet wide. The center 20 feet is gravel, and it is graded smooth 30 feet wide, so wagons can easily pass on it. The outside 20 feet on each side is almost a ditch, so the water will drain off the road and not get rutted so easy. They say that it is "metal surfaced", meaning they grade it with a metal blade, at least once a year. This will be a wonderful road to travel to Ohio on. I just wish Stephen was with us.

We aren't the only ones on this National Road. There are lots of people using the Road. We are 5 wagons together, with our cattle, but there are other groups of wagons ahead of us and more behind us. There are coaches pulled by 6 horses and even some freight wagons, that speed around us. And there are herds of cattle and droves of hogs being driven down the road, about like we are doing, but much larger numbers than we have.



**Fort Frederick**

The fourth day, we went below the ends of several big ridges, staying above the banks of the Potomac River. During the morning, we passed old Fort Frederick. It was built maybe 70 years ago, to hold against the French and Indian raids. It has high stone walls, built entirely of stone, very unusual for an Indian Fort they say. It does not have cannon in it any more, but the four corners are set out and filled with dirt up to almost the top of the stone walls, so cannon could shoot over top of the wall. It has a huge wooden door on the east side that is about to fall off. There were two huge buildings inside, but by now, they are really ruins. The fort is south of the Road, above the banks of the Potomac River. There is a place called Millstone Point where the Road is clinging to the side of a spur of the ridge that reaches out to the Potomac River.. The edge of the Road drops down nearly 40 feet to rocks near the river. There is nothing to stop a wagon from getting too close the edge and falling over. And some of the stage coaches even run at night.

We went through the village of Hancock and are in the Mountains. The Potomac River swung south and the road is going to cross the mountain ridges. The first one at Hancock wasn't so bad, but from there we could see across the valley to Sideling Hill. We came to Sideling Hill in mid afternoon, and stopped. We need the time to catch up with ourselves. The men are going over the wagons, greasing the wheels and checking all the spokes and the iron tires. Sideling Hill is what they call "the Allegheny Front". It is the biggest Mountain that we will cross. Sideling Hill is a long high steep mountain ridge, it runs for many miles each way, so the Road goes over it. It will be quite a pull for the horses. From the clearing down here by the stream, we can look way up to the left, and see where the trees are cut for the road, going almost to the top of the ridge. It sure is a long way up there.



**Sideling Hill**

It took us all day, just to go up to the top of the mountain, then to come down the other side. We had to let the horses rest a couple times going up the mountain, and it was almost as bad coming

down the other side. The wagons were pushing the horses, coming down. The men were working hard, just holding the brakes against the wheels. We stopped for a while at the top, to let the horses blow, and then the men watered them. They told us up there at the tavern that it was 2 miles coming up and 2 miles more going back down. Ahead there is a wide valley, then another ridge. You can see the strait line cut in the valley forest where the Road goes. When we got down, I checked to see how mother was. She worked as hard as Levi as they came down the mountain.

It was only a couple hours for us to cross the valley, then we were at Green Hill. The Road here twists and turns up the mountain. It was almost a duplicate of yesterday, except the hill, mountain, is not as high. It was almost as steep coming down the other side. I hope the wagon brakes last for the trip, we sure use them going downhill. The men say this is very wearing on the horses, I can see it in how wet they get. I can also see how wearing this is on Grandpa, he's not young like I am. I've been helping on the brakes. There's another valley, and another hill ahead.

This ridge they've named as Polish Hill. It is different than what we've been going through. Coming down the west side, we were following a stream valley that has become a river. They say this river goes clear to the Potomac River at Cumberland. It will be 10 miles to Cumberland.

The Road went past a mountain valley lake and along the river through a very narrow gap in the ridge. They call it "Rocky Gap". It is a good name, it is almost like lots of rocks stacked on top of each other and others tumbled down around it. We got to Cumberland by early afternoon. We decided to stop here for the rest of the day. Fort Cumberland was here during the French and Indian War. President George Washington had a Virginia Troop here. There is nothing left of the fort. It was not a stone fort, like Fort Frederic, it was made of logs. The family that lives here at the tavern, pointed out where it stood. This is a pretty place, I wish Stephen were here, too. There is a large mountain just west of here, the Potomac River comes north here, then swings back south. We are in



**Mile Post – National Road Museum, Zanesville**

the Potomac River Valley, with mountains around it. There was a white cement marker set beside the road here. They call it a "Mile Post". It said it was 128 miles to Wheeling, to the Ohio River. We left Cumberland, and very soon were going through a gap in the mountain. There is a stream that goes clear through, and the Road goes along side of it. That's all the wider it is. Then the mountain sides go up sharply for nearly a thousand feet. You can see the layers of stone up the



**Cumberland Narrows**

sides. It did not take us long to go clear through the mountain. I'm sure glad we are traveling on this "Cumberland Road". Today we then went across the valley. The town is called Frostburg, the Stockton Stagecoach Company has a tavern here. They call it Highland Hall. We stopped for the night, because from here, the Road goes right up the mountain. They call it Savage Mountain. They said that General Braddock lost three wagons just crossing this mountain, when he took the British Army to the French Fort Duquesne, where Pittsburg is now. The French and Indians killed him there and defeated the British Redcoats.

We spent much of the day crossing Savage Mountain, the Road winds and twists its way up the mountain, and then winds and twists going down. The Mountain is steep, but the road winds and twists so much that it was not hard for the horses to pull. It was just a long pull. We stopped for the night at Tomlinson's Tavern at Little Meadows at the bottom of the ridge. Grandpa said that we have come 8 miles. The little children get tired riding, and I and others of the girls play with them. We even take them out of the wagons, when the travel is slow. The horses have to stop and blow frequently when we are climbing a mountain, and the children can run and play while they rest.





**Savage Mountain**

They told us that we are following the Delaware Indian road called, Nernacolin's Path, from Cumberland, going clear out to the Monongahela River. General George Washington had come this way first, when he was sent out to talk to the French. The Indians, and General Washington's army, walked and climbed, so the path went up these ridges much steeper than the Road goes. General Braddock was led by General Washington, and being an army, they used the steeper route. It was a much worse climb for them than for us. No wonder they lost three wagons. The Cumberland Road takes easier ways to go up, and winds and twists where Braddock's Road went mostly strait up the mountain side. I pity the horses, and men, who had to climb so strait up, and they had cannon, as well as wagons. They said that the frontier scout, Daniel Boone, was one of the waggoners for General Braddock. None of these mountains are as high as Sideling Hill, but they are still high and steep. They are long mountain ridges that angle southwest, the Road goes almost strait west through the valleys in between. We crossed the valley between Savage Mountain and the next mountain. This valley has the Savage River in it. There is a stone bridge over it, so we don't



**Casselman Bridge**

have to ford this stone bottomed, rugged river. Its not so big, it is just a rapidly running mountain river. But then, the Road has stone bridges over all the streams and rivers.

We crossed another ridge. Just north of us, when we were on the top of the ridge, was a peak of the mountain going on higher up. They called it Meadow Mountain. The only reason I can think of, for that name, was that there were large treeless clearings or meadows on the mountain. We came down the ridge to the Casselman River.



The Road crosses it on the Casselman Bridge. The Bridge is a huge single arch, almost a hundred feet across. George Washington called this, “the Little Crossings”, where Braddock’s Army forded the river just below the bridge. This is just east of a little town called Grantsville. The inn and stagecoach stop is the Drover’s Inn. There is a large Brethren settlement here, with some of them knowing grandpa. We stopped with a Nicewander family. Grandpa bought supplies from the Brethren, food for us and mother’s wagon, enough fresh food to get to Wheeling at least.





Leaving Grantsville, we soon came to the first of two ridges. We are high enough that they do not rise steeply in front of us, but these are high ridges, and colder here than at lower levels. The Road winds in and out of the creeks and waterfalls, up to the summit, then winds and twists back down. We stopped for the horses to blow at the stone tavern on the summit of Negro Mountain. They called it Hablitzell's. We got to the valley at the foot of the mountain, and it seemed that we were already to be starting up the next ridge.

The next day the Road went up Keyser's Ridge, and another tavern was at the summit, the Stoddard House. We do not go into the taverns, first because we are women, but our men do not go in either, second because they serve whiskey and so many of the men who come out of there are tipsy or drunk and aggressive, argumentative and insulting, third because we don't want to have anything to do with it. We pulled off across the road in a clearing. The littler children got out and played. We looked across this valley to the next ridge. Thank goodness, it doesn't seem to be as high.



Another day climbing another ridge. This one is called "Winding Ridge", probably because of the winding of the Road, to just climb it. There is another stone tavern on its summit. They are there because the horses have to have time to blow after the steep climb, and the men go in to get a drink. Crossing this ridge, we crossed back into Pennsylvania. We went on to Petersburg to camp.

We crossed a bridge at "Big Crossings" over the Youghiogheny river. The tavern here is called Camel and the place has the name of Somerfield after the settler, name of Somer. This bridge is said to be the longest bridge on the Road. It is a three arch span over the river. Big Crossings is what George Washington called it, when marching with General Braddock in the French and Indian War. We are still crossing ridges. It was pretty steep going down into the Big Crossings and then steep again coming back out of it. We stopped to camp before we started up Mt Augusta.

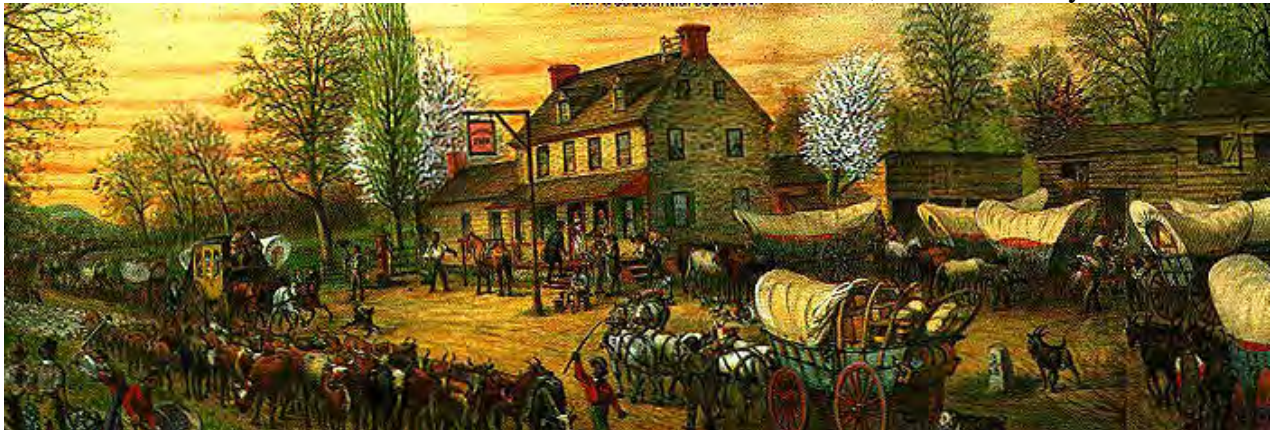




**Youghiogeny River**

Mt Augusta is part of the Laurel Hill Ridge, and the last of the main mountain ridges we had to cross. As usual, it had another tavern at the summit, interestingly named: Summit House. It was just a big two story house. I must say, I now know what they meant when they said they had “crossed the mountains”. I’ve “crossed the mountains”! Yes, there are ridges and more ridges ahead. I am surprised how well grandpa has taken it, and he has very seldom ridden the wagon with grandma and I. I’ve walked along with him, beside the horses, but he keeps going, when I get tired and climb back into the wagon. Grandma just sits in the wagon. Sometimes she dozes, when it is not too rough. Grandpa is driving the horses, and grandma just watches him.

We have come to Great Meadows. The Milepost says 79 Miles to Wheeling. They said that George Washington built a fort here, Fort Necessity, to hold against the French and Indians, but that he surrendered it and went back east. Near here, under the old road, was where they buried General



**Mount Washington Tavern – Great Meadows**



Braddock, after he got killed up at Fort Pitt (well, Fort Duquesne, then, since it was a French fort). They buried it so the Indians would not find it, then they drove the wagons over it. A few years ago, while working on the Road, the skeleton was found and moved over to the side. It was marked. We then crossed Chalk Hill, where there is another tavern called “Mount Washington Tavern” and camped.

Uniontown is where Braddock’s road went north to Ft Duquesne. The National Road goes somewhat west here, to Brownsville, Washington and Wheeling. The Milepost says 63 miles to Wheeling. Here is where Christopher Gist had his home. Grandpa says that he had heard that Christopher Gist was a Brethren deacon. He was a scout out into Ohio territory. He guided General Braddock on towards Ft Duquesne, but General Braddock was not about to listen to a colonial, and got killed for it. George Washington helped most of the army escape back to Fort Necessity. They say that Daniel Boone escaped from the battle, by cutting loose one of his wagon horses, and riding away fast. He had to kill an Indian to escape. He said that that was the first of only three Indians he ever killed. Christopher Gist then moved to South Carolina, about the time many Brethren were moving there, and died down there. His grandson, another Christopher Gist, is a Brethren preacher.



**Monongahela River**

Another day of traveling, I think this is the Nineteenth Day. We are across the Monongahela River at Brownsville. This used to be called Old Fort Redstone, because of the red rock around here. The Monongahela River is even bigger than the Youghiogeny. They come together up near Pittsburg and form the Ohio River. We had to ferry over the river here. There is a Brethren settlement south of town, but we didn’t take the time to go down to it. It is exciting to see all the new things, but I must admit, I am getting tired of just day after day of traveling. You walk beside the horses, or you ride in the wagon. You play with the little children whenever you stop. You set up a campfire and cook food for supper, and enough to pack away for tomorrow to eat on the way. You set up a shelter canvass and sleep on the ground (unless it is raining). Then come morning, you cook a batch of corn pone, with some bacon, and then pack things away to go on again.

We went through Beallsville to Egg Nogg Hill. It took us a day and a half to get to Washington PA, and another day and a half to get to Wheeling. We are traveling faster now, now that we are out of the mountains. These are large hills, but there aren't mountains. We crossed two large hills before we got to Claysville. We followed a stream down to the Ohio River from West Alexander in Pennsylvania. It was about 12 miles in Virginia going west from Pennsylvania to the Ohio River. We went south on the bank above the River, to go around the ridge that sticks out on the north of the city of Wheeling. Wheeling is in a point of Virginia sticking north.

The Ohio River! It is Huge! Wheeling is almost a city. It was originally Fort Henry. This is where Betty Zane became a Heroine. She was about my age when it happened. That was about 70 years ago. The Indians were attacking the fort, and they ran out of gunpowder inside the fort. There was plenty at a house outside the fort, where her brothers were holding out. Betty Zane ran out of the fort, to the house where her brothers were, took a sack of gunpowder over her shoulder and ran back into the fort, with the Indians shooting at her. That took Courage! If a bullet had hit the gunpowder it would have exploded and blown her up. There is nothing there now, except a rocky ridge, but the local folks show where it happened. This is where the Zane family lived and it was from here that Ebenezer Zane was asked to open a road across Ohio to the Ohio River down at Limestone. He named it the Zane Trace. The National Road follows the Zane Trace



**Martin's Ferry Ohio River**

to Zanesville, then continues west when the Trace goes southward

We crossed the Ohio River on Martin's Ferry. It crosses upstream of an island in the River. Martin's Ferry is a very stable craft. We crossed the River easily, even if it did take three trips to take the five wagons. We swam the horses and cows behind the ferry. The men had to work hard to pull through the main stream of the River. It pushed us downstream quite a ways, and we landed below a little town called Lansing. They then pull the craft upstream, loaded wagons that were traveling east on the Road, and crossed back to the dock at Wheeling.

The National Road goes up Wheeling Creek here, up to the hills going into Ohio.. At Blain we crossed a new bridge over the Wheeling Creek. It is a large three arch bridge. It has a curve at the entrance onto the bridge and another curve coming off the bridge. And the bridge even slopes upward, because this is where we really start up the long hill to get us out the River Valley. These bridges are something different. They are called “S Bridges”. The bridge crosses the stream the shortest way over it, perpendicular to it, but the road is seldom going directly over the stream, so the bridge has a curve onto it, and another curve off of it. Farther on in Ohio, many of these bridge are just one big arch over the creek.



**S Bridge**

When we got to the top of Big Hill, we were ready to stop for the night. There were lots of curves going up the hill. Someone said there were 20 turns. They have another thing different here in Ohio. They have regular “rest stop” places. They have planted three pine trees in a large triangle making a camping spot around them (the trees are just small now, of course). There is plenty of room around them for all of us to stop there. When we settled down for the night, we got to know the other people who were also stopping there for the night. Most of the people traveling the Road seem to be friendly, especially those of us who are going west. We shared stories and dreams. Some of those who are going east are going because they ran into big trouble and had to quit. Their stories are horrible, so scary. I hope we don’t have those things happen to us. Then is when I most wish that Stephen were with me.

Our second day in Ohio we went through the little place called Newelltown, or some called it St Clairsville, then Morristown and Old Washington, and got to beyond Fairview to spend the night. Before we got o Newelltown, we came to a downhill slope called Greasy Hill. It is pretty steep, and thank goodness it was not rainy. They said that when it rains, this hill turns slippery like grease, and there have been wagons that have simply slid off the road, often wrecking the spokes of a wheel. At Morristown, there was a tavern which was a stagecoach stop. I was surprised to see three stages there as we went past. The town of Old Washington is funny. Here on the brand new National Road is a town that calls itself “Old”. It was actually called “New Washington” on the

Zane Trace, but then they discovered that there was another town by that name, up north a ways, so, since this was an older town, they changed it to “Old Washington”. Just west of the town, the Road went through a deep cut in a hill. They cut the hill to make the Road more level to use. It is almost 40 feet deep. They are calling the hill there now, the “Deep Cut Hill”. We are still going over long hills and through valleys. They are not like the mountains in Pennsylvania, and are less than Big Hill back near the Ohio River, but they are hills that slow and tire the horses. It seems each of the hills has its own name. We spent the night in a rest stop on the edge of Fairview.

The National Road is not finished, it is still being worked on. The Road itself is done, but there is still work on the sides of the road and the ditches. At a little town called Craig, before we got to Cambridge, we climbed “Serpentine Hill”, named that because of the way the Road curved up the hill. They said that another name for the hill is “Four Mile Hill”, because it climbs for four miles. They made it that long so it won’t be as steep for the wagons. At Cambridge there was a covered bridge to cross Wills Creek. West of Cambridge the Road followed a creek valley around a high bluff, the end of the hill on the other side of Wills Creek. They call this “Crooked Creek”, because it winds and twists so much. We made it to a brand new “town” called New Concord, to spend the night. There really is only a house and tavern here now, but they have plotted a whole town. Just before we got here, we went down “Devil’s Dip”. The Road goes steeply down a hill, then right at the bottom makes a sharp turn and quickly crosses a bridge. The Road going through New Concord is traveling west through a valley between fairly high hills. I managed to see the hills because it was more open here in the valley. This has mostly been forest land since we left the Ohio River.

We have spent the night just beyond Zanesville. Zanesville was a payment right given to Ebenezer Zane, for opening the Zane Trace. It was his town.. We are now on only the National Road. The Zane Trace left us ON THE BRIDGE in Zanesville. And I mean it, the Zane Trace and the National Road separated in the middle of the bridge over the Muskingum River. The Licking River comes in from the northwest to the Muskingum River here. We are in the Licking River Valley for the night.



**Y Bridge Zanesville Ohio** (later double span bridge)

The covered bridge over the River is in the shape of a capitol Y. Both roads go together out to the center of the river, then the bridge divides, and the Zane Trace turns to the southwest, the National



Road goes to the right to the banks of the Licking River. The Muskingum River came in from the right (north) and flows to the left, and back to the southeast, to the Ohio River. Zanesville is an important town. It was actually the Capitol of the State of Ohio back several years ago. From here, the Zane Trace goes to Chillicothe, which was the Original State Capitol of Ohio, then it goes on down to the Ohio River at Limestone (I heard they are calling it Maysville now). That's a long way south of where we are. The National Road goes on to Columbus, which is Now the Capitol of Ohio. My, aren't there a lot of State Capitols in Ohio? Seems like sometime, they should make up their mind.

Grandpa said that there is a Brethren Church south of us on the Zane Trace, on Jonathan Creek. A group of Brethren came there about 10 years ago. They went down the Ohio River to Marietta, which is at the mouth of the Muskingum River, and came up it.. While it isn't too far away, Grandpa said that we weren't going to go down there. Actually, there is another pike here, that goes northwest along the Licking River, to Newark and Granville. It looks like it is almost as much used at the National Road. It is a stage route and is called Sullivant's Trace and goes on to Columbus also. Some people say that the National Road should have gone that way, but the rule for building the National Road said that it was to go directly west to the state capitols of Ohio, Indiana and Illinois (Columbus, Indianapolis and Vandalia).

We stopped today a little west of Jacktown, or Jacksontown as it really is named. It is a big tavern where several stages were stopped, and others: drovers and wagons. I'm thinking that first people put up a tavern on the road, then they build a house to live in, and plan for a town to grow around it. Near where we stopped, we saw an interesting sight. It looks like an old road running straight north and south. It is about 15 feet wide, with ridges of dirt piled about 6 feet deep on both sides. The National Road cut right through it. Huge old trees stand right in the "road" and on both of the ridges. It has been a long time since that road was ever used. Grandpa said that the Indians didn't even know who built it, or the whole city of mounds that is just north of us, that it goes to. It too is covered with this same forest of trees we've been going through. Grandpa said that near the "city" is a ridge of flint, that the Indians use it for the points on their arrows, spears and axes, and other tools. We have passed a couple large mounds near the road. Grandpa wondered if they were all built by the same people. He wondered if the mounds are as old as the time of Christ.

We've come through Columbus. I sure can't understand why they chose this place for their Ohio State Capitol. It is the worst place you could put a town, let alone a State Capitol. It is swampy, and so full of mosquitoes that the horses could hardly stand it. And it is the State Capitol. It is where the Olentangy River, the big Walnut Creek and the Alum Creek, all meet the Scioto River. I can see why it is full of swamps, but to choose it as the State Capitol? Well, they chose the exact center of the new State, for their Capitol, and this is what they got. I liked Zanesville better than this. We came into the town (yes, this side of the Scioto River is little more than a town, certainly not a city, maybe a hundred houses or so) on Friend Street, then had to go north a couple blocks on High Street (yes, it is a little higher above the swamps), and we went past the new capitol building on Broad Street. We had to use a ferry to cross the Scioto River, they haven't even started on a bridge here yet.



**Scioto River Columbus**

West of the River was the town of Franklinton. It has been here for a while and isn't near as bad as east of the River. General William Henry Harrison had his headquarters in a house here for the War of 1812. The house has a funny name, like Oberdoer. I don't know what that means. The National Road goes right past it. I would sure like to know why they put the Capitol on the East of the Scioto, in all that swampland? We went on farther out of town, before we stopped, just to get rid of all those mosquitoes.

The land now is almost level. There are small hills and even creeks, but mostly it is nearly flat. It is easy on the horses and we can go farther in a day, even if the Road is far from finished. There are none of the bridges done enough to use. Usually there is a good place to ford the creek, sometimes the banks are cut so the horses and wagons can go more easily down and back up. The road is mostly just bare dirt, there is no gravel on it, unless some has been spread near the center of the road. They have cut it to its full width. There are workmen everywhere. When we pass the workmen, we see how they are building the road. They are laying big stones across the center section, with smaller stones on top of the bigger ones. Then there is a thick layer of gravel to finish the road, to make a running surface. We have come to a little town called Springfield. If I am counting right (and Grandpa says I am right), this is our 29<sup>th</sup> day of travel. We have been almost a month traveling. Grandpa says that if it weren't for this National Road, we would still have a

couple weeks of travel, instead of a couple of days. We are **THAT CLOSE** to our New Home. I just compare this flat land around here to the Mountains that we've come through! Some of the people call Springfield, "the city at the End of the National Road", because west of here the road is not done.

Grandpa said that we were going on west on the real National Road, that our property is just north of it. Here there is another road that is used more by most of the stages and freight wagons than is the unfinished National Road. It goes down to the city of Dayton and west to the town of Eaton, before coming back to the National Road at Richmond Indiana. We aren't going as far as Indiana, anyway. But it seems funny, to speak of **INDIANA** – and know that it is not very far away.

The National Road is planned to go clear to the Mississippi River, but it is not built yet into Indiana. There is a gorge at Richmond IN, which they don't cross yet. That's what's stopping them. They tell of a way that does go down into the gorge and out the other side, it is used by freight wagons and the few people who are going on west. But we will live here in Ohio. We don't go to Richmond.



**Great Miami River**

We made it to north of Dayton for night. We had to cross the Great Miami River. It is in a deep valley, where we had a steep hillside to go down to the cross the river, then just as steep to get out the other side. When General Anthony Wayne had his treaty with the Indians about 30 years ago, the Great Miami River was the border. West of it he named "Indiana", meaning "Indian Territory". We went on till we saw ahead of us another river to cross, so we stopped for the night. The river ahead of us is called the Stillwater River. To cross the Mad River and the Great Miami, the men worked together, with different teams, to pull one wagon at a time through the water and up the bank. It took a while, and we women had time to get together and talk, and cooked up a good meal for the men, for everyone. The children enjoyed getting to run and play. And, you know, I almost forgot about Stephen!



**Stillwater River**

I can understand why they called it the Stillwater River. Most of the rivers we have had to cross had fairly steady running current. The Stillwater does not have much of a flow to it, nor was it very deep. We made a fairly easy ford over it, even though it is not a small river. Maybe it is because the land is so flat.

Tomorrow we should get to our home on the Price's Creek. Will I be glad! All of us are getting mighty tired of the long trip. The road is barely more than graded now. It has been surveyed, and is to be 30 feet and 66 feet wide, like it has been all along, but this is still all dirt. There is no gravel on it at all. We had rain earlier, but on this dirt section of the road, I am sure glad we have had dry weather. We can see that there has been rain here, because wagons have cut deep ruts. Some of these are so deep they do slow us down.

We're HERE! A couple of the men rode ahead, and came back to show us where we were to turn off the Road, to go to our lands. Mother's land, Daddy's land it was, is about a mile north of the National Road. It is all trees, big trees. We don't have any kind of road to our land. We followed the army path of General Anthony Wayne north, toward Fort Greenville, then cut over to get to our place. Even General Wayne's road is just a wide path through the forest. We don't have a house, we don't even have a cabin. Levi said that he was going to build us a house, but I just laughed at him. Inside, I was crying. Its going to be hard. It will be all work. I won't have time even to stop and think about Stephen. Oh, if only he were here, too, to build OUR House.

It has taken us 31 days, if I have counted right (yes, Grandpa says that is right) to come to Preble County, Ohio from Hanover, York County, Pennsylvania. I know Grandma got so tired of riding the wagon, even she is glad to be here. I don't think I could have stood any more traveling. I would have been screaming! And the poor little children! The little ones were crying almost every day,



they got so tired of the cramped up sitting space in the wagons. I guess really, I am glad we are here. But Stephen is Not Here!!!! And that is TERRIBLE!!



**Catherine (Petry) Miller home site Prices Creek Preble Co OH**  
(East side of OH726 - 3/4ths mile north of US40 – Old National Road)

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1832 - Four years later

Stephen came here, three weeks ago, and Uncle Jacob, Aunt Magdalena, Jacob Jr, and Henry were all with him. Stephen had money and bought a farm, but not back in Pennsylvania! OUT HERE! He didn't tell me – and he has already bought the farm! He's the "someone from out East" who bought that farm just south of us, on the other side of the National Road. That's "Our Farm"!

He just showed up, and asked if I were ready to marry him! – I stared - then yelled – "YES!" We are going to get married next Sunday, at Church, at Prices Creek Church. Do you realize Stephen is 30 — and I'm 21, I'm an Old Maid! Funny, I don't feel so old.