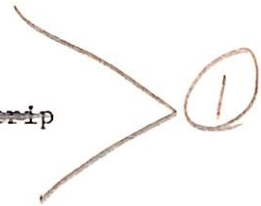


Development  
of  
TRANSPORTATION film strip  
in Loudoun County  
Roads



The early settlers who came to Loudoun traveled through the woodlands on foot or on horseback following Indian trails, many of which followed old buffalo trails. Today some of our roads still follow these ancient tracts.

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The Carolina Road, now Route 15, was once such a trail. By the eighteenth century it had become so well traveled that cattle and horse thieves patrolled it looking for victims. Anyone driving cattle to market along this road had to keep a sharp lookout. Many people called it Rogue's Road.

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Travel by land was slow. When it rained, dirt roads turned into mud; in the winter they froze into slippery ruts. In dry weather they were blanketed by choking dust. Few travelers regardless of whether they went by wagon, horseback, or foot rarely went more than ten or twenty miles a day. For this reason taverns were found every few miles along the most traveled roads. They offered the tired travelers food and a place to sleep. These taverns were called "ordinaries" because they served ordinary or regular meals.

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The food was plain, often eggs, bacon and hoe cakes, and the sleeping accommodations were uncomfortable and frequently crowded.

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In the late colonial period, trade increased between Loudoun towns and between Loudoun and the Shenandoah Valley. The roads grew steadily worse, not only from use but also from lack of repair and maintenance.

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In 1748, all roads by State law became the responsibility of the community. Each householder was required to maintain the portion of the road that passed his land. Householders were even expected to

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maintain the major roads, or pikes, within two or three miles of their homes, and, at this, they balked. People who took care of their own local roads, used by themselves and their neighbors, were not about to repair damages to the "pikes" caused by wagoners from far away.

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The major roads grew so bad that legislation was passed which turned the pikes over to private companies chartered by the state.

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These companies were to improve and maintain the roads and they were empowered to charge all travelers a toll. The roads were called

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turnpikes or toll roads. Toll houses were built at regular intervals to house the managers of the toll gate who opened the gates for

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travelers and collected the fees. The men lived in these with their families and were on duty day and night. Travelers shouted to alert them as they approached the gate.

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Because turnpikes were kept in repair, stage <sup>coach</sup> travel increased.

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The Leesburg and Snicker's Gap Turnpike, also called the Winchester and Leesburg Turnpike, saw its first stagecoach in 1841. It was the modern way to travel. It took fourteen hours to travel from Washington to Winchester. (Today we make the same trip by car in about 2 hours.)

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The fare was \$4.00 one way.

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Stages carried mail to the Leesburg post office three times a week from Washington and twice a week from Winchester.

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The development of the railroads in the early 1800's reduced the travel on the turnpikes. Even so, toll roads lingered on in Loudoun until the early 1900's. Loudoun's two major turnpikes were the Little River now Route 50 and Leesburg now Route 7.

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TITLE: Ferries 28

In the late colonial period, several ferries served Loudoun.

Six crossed the Potomac and one crossed Goose Creek. Travelers simply shouted for the ferry if it was on the other side. A few

ferries had the refinement of a bell. In 1762 the Goose Creek Ferry charged 7½¢ to carry a man and a horse to the opposite shore. Wagons

were charged more. At the present date only one ferry, White's Ferry, crosses the Potomac.

### Canals

Freight and passengers can be transported by boats on Canals which are man-made waterways designed for navigation.

Although canals in the early 1800's were very useful in some parts of the nation, Loudoun's canal venture was a failure.

Construction was not begun until 1849, when the canal age was past. Railroads were the thing in 1850. It was 1854 before the Goose Creek canal was opened to the mouth of Little River and by that time money had run out.

Only one full sized canal boat ever traveled the length of the canal. It was a test boat dragged by oxen and pushed from behind by crowds of workers.

### Railroads

Long before the ill-fated Goose Creek canal was constructed, plans were being made to build railroads in the county. Companies were formed and chartered and grand schemes were presented.

Only one of all these companies succeeded in bringing a railroad to Loudoun. The Alexandria, Loudoun and Hampshire Railroad Company

laid track from Alexandria to Leesburg. On May 17, 1860, the town of Leesburg turned out to see the first passenger train arrive. It chugged in, decked with flags, to celebrate the occasion. The Leesburg paper rejoiced that Leesburg was no longer a "finished and out of the way place," and added, "we are now hitched to the rest of the world..."

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The Civil War put a stop to any further expansion of Loudoun's railroad which was to have run from Alexandria to coal fields located west of the Blue Ridge Mountains.

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The track that had been laid suffered greatly from the war. Rails were destroyed and bridges were burned. Not until three years after the end of the war was the railroad in any condition to operate again.

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In 1868, tracks were laid through Clark's Gap to Hamilton. By 1873 the railroad had reached Purcellville. In 1874 Round Hill was reached. Not until 1900 did it reach Snickersville (Bluemont). In the meantime, the Alexandria, Loudoun and Hampshire changed names and hands several times. Finally in 1911, it became the Washington and Old Dominion Railway.

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As the canal boats gave way to the railroads, the railroads gave way to the automobile. As highways, automobiles and trucks improved, the railroad declined. The year 1951 saw the end of all passenger service in Loudoun. Today, the once bustling railroad stations sit quietly beside roads. The tracks that once served them have vanished.

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Present Day 40 49

Today 86% of the county's residents depend on private automobiles for daily transportation. Loudoun's two-lane roads are giving way to four-lane super highways, making way for still more trucks and passenger cars. But quiet country roads still meander through much of the

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county. More than half of our roads are still unpaved.

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Greyhound Bus lines offer daily service between Loudoun, Washington and other points. Loudouners can drive to Brunswick, Maryland or Harper's Ferry, West Virginia to catch a commuter train.

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Godfrey Airport, 1½ miles east of Leesburg, serves many of the private planes owned by Loudoun citizens and it offers charter service.

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A number of farms and estates have small private airstrips.

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The grandest entry into Loudoun's story of transportation is Dulles International Airport, which boasts one of the world's most beautiful airport terminals designed by Eero Saarinen.

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The Concorde flies over the countryside where horseback was once the only mode of transportation. With the supersonic jet London England is only 3 hours from Loudoun, closer in time than Washington once was by stagecoach.

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## Pictures

1. Dirt roads, paved primary and secondary roads shown in rapid sequence.
2. Route 15 (historical marker if possible)
3. Ordinary (more than one if possible)
4. White's Ferry
5. Toll houses
6. Present day Railroad stations
7. Heavy traffic on road
8. Road building
9. Quiet country road
10. Middleburg Bus station
11. Commuters boarding train
12. Godfrey Airport
13. Dirt airstrip on farm
14. Dulles
15. Concorde, Stagecoach

## Transportation In Loudoun County

### Objectives:

1. Place various methods of transportation in Loudoun on a time line.
2. Explain how changes in transportation have influenced the development of Loudoun and its way of life.

### Activities:

1. Review the filmstrip vocabulary list before the students view the filmstrip.
2. Have the students name types of transportation available in Loudoun.
3. Have the students rank the various types of transportation by their importance to Loudoun citizens.
4. View filmstrip.
5. Have students answer filmstrip questions.
6. Consider doing some of the extension activities.
7. Use learning center "State Historical Markers in Loudoun."



## Transportation Filmstrip

### Vocabulary:

transportation - act or means of carrying objects from one place to another or of travel from one place to another.

rogue - a dishonest unprincipled person

ordinaries - colonial inns

toll road - road for which a fee was charged for use

commuter train - one that regularly travels between two places

supersonic jet - one that is capable of speeds from one to five times the speed of sound

## Transportation Filmstrip

### Questions:

1. Why was the old Carolina Road (route 15) often called Rogues' Road?
2. What were "ordinaries"?
3. Why were many roads turned over to private companies during the colonial era?
4. Why was Loudoun's canal venture a failure?
5. What effects did the Civil War have on Loudoun's railroads?
6. What percentage of Loudoun residents depend on private automobiles for daily transportation?
7. What percentage of Loudoun roads are still unpaved?
8. Name five methods of transportation discussed in this film.

## Transportation Filmstrip

### Answers to questions:

1. The old Carolina Road was often called Rogues' Road because it was infested with thieves.
2. "Ordinaries" were colonial inns.
3. Many roads were turned over to private companies during the colonial era because the landowners refused to repair or maintain them.
4. Loudoun's canal venture was a failure because:
  - 1) it was late getting started
  - 2) construction was slow
  - 3) money ran out
5. The Civil War caused construction of the railroads to be halted, rails were torn up and bridges were destroyed.
6. Eighty-six percent of Loudoun residents now depend on the automobile for daily transportation.
7. More than  $\frac{1}{2}$  of Loudoun roads are still unpaved.
8. Five methods of transportation discussed in the film are: horse, stage coach, canal boat, train route, ferry, cars, airplanes.

TRANSPORTATION FILMSTRIP EXTENSION ACTIVITIES

I. Projects-

A. Construction-

1. Relief map of Loudoun showing mountain ranges, gaps, and early turnpikes. (Maps Fig. 1, Fig. 15, From Frontier to Suburbia, Chas. P. Poland Jr., Walsworth, 1976)
2. Model of a canal lock
3. Model of a canal boat
4. Model of a stagecoach
5. Model of a ferry
6. Model of a early locomotive
7. Model of a Purcellville or Round Hill train station
8. Model of a toll gate

B. Presentation-

1. An explanation with diagrams of how a canal lock works.
2. Illustrations of varieties of stagecoaches, canal boats, or locomotives.

C. Creative Writing-

1. Produce a newspaper featuring the arrival of the first stagecoach or passenger train in Leesburg. Include other news of the day.
2. Write an imaginary diary kept by a traveler in Loudoun in the colonial period.

D. Research Paper-

1. Transportation in Loudoun in 2080.
2. History of The Washington and Old Dominion R.R.
3. Ferry boats in Loudoun
4. Loudoun ordinaries