

Whole Schools Initiative

Interactive, Interdisciplinary Thematic Unit

“Footprints in the Dust~ The Natchez Trace”



*“Walk down the trail, leave your footprints in the dust;
not for others to see, but for the road to remember.”*

Footprints in the Dust ~The Natchez Trace unit was planned and developed by:

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Instructional Planning Template for Interactive/Interdisciplinary Thematic Units

Note: Instruction that includes place/time/event content is best approached by using interactive/interdisciplinary learning strategies. The template is designed to assist planning and instruction that integrates the arts while incorporating benchmarks of subject area frameworks. This type of instruction promotes active student learning and incorporates multiple intelligences in the process.

I. Setting the stage—an introductory overview of the unit/theme

- Establish unit/theme and instructional validity (philosophical rationale)
- Introduce necessary background information (obtain through research)
- Specify cross-curricular learning objectives; correlate with standards
- Identify connections between four arts disciplines and unit/theme

II. Telling the story—exploring the unit/theme through various methods and materials

- Teacher-led discussions and assignments; cooperative learning activities
- Resource personnel—guest speakers, arts teachers, artists and performers, community members, unit/theme and/or subject area experts
- Books, poetry, articles, plays, oral histories, song texts, artworks, videos, newspaper editorials, editorial cartoons, commentaries, illustrations
- Artifacts; still photos, maps, graphs, videos, sound recordings, products
- Student research (library/media, technology, museum visits, field trips)
- Student products: portfolios, interviews, timelines, journal entries, speeches, letters, skits, poems, advertisements, songs, artworks, models, replicas, etc.

III. Culminating event/performance/experience—interactive/interdisciplinary

- Dramatization (characters, movement, music, props, costumes, scenery)
- Re-enactment or simulation of key issues/events related to the unit/theme
- Student-produced performance, demonstration or exhibition
- Publication and/or dissemination of collected student-created products (Booklet, Video, Power-point presentation, Web site, CD, DVD, etc.)

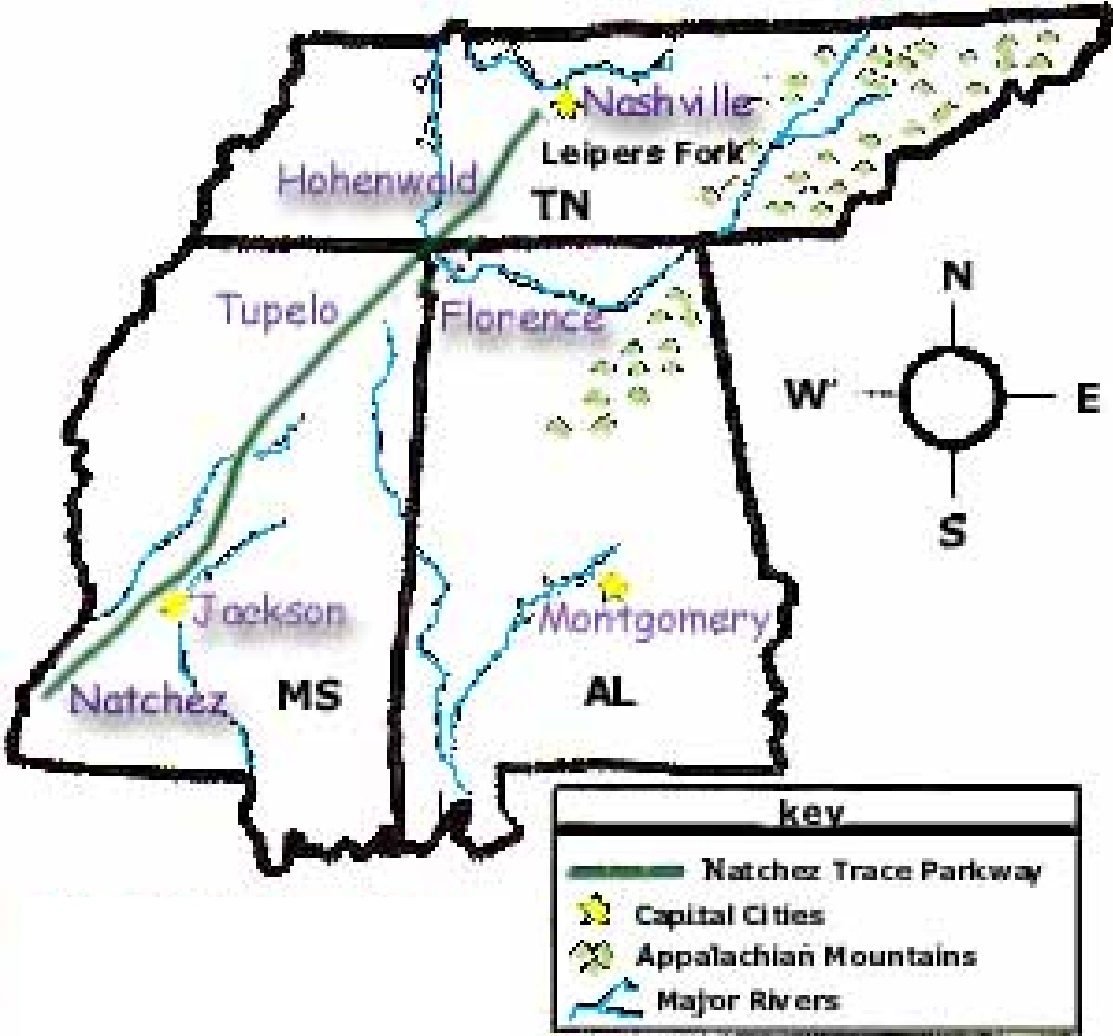
IV. Evaluating the experience—assessment of student learning and unit goals

- Teacher observation, reflection, and journaling
- Teacher assessment of student work (multiple means— group, individual, formative, summative, authentic, written, oral, outside evaluators, etc.)
- Student self-evaluation and/or peer-evaluation
- Audience/parent surveys or other documented feedback
- Verbal and non-verbal feedback from participants and audience

Natchez Trace Framework Correlation

Note: The following framework correlations are drawn from benchmark charts of the Mississippi Department of Education Curriculum Frameworks. While the stated correlations apply to the study of the Natchez Trace, they are neither exclusive nor exhaustive. In other words, at each grade level, and for each subject discipline, there are additional competencies that relate to this thematic unit.

Subject	Grades K-3	Grades 4-8	Grades 9-12
Language Arts	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Gather and organize information using a variety of resources and present it through writing, speaking, and various art forms. (2) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Read, listen to, and view multimedia sources to select and use information for a variety of purposes. (4) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Read, evaluate, and use print, non-print and technological sources to research issues and problems, to present information, and to complete projects. (2)
Social Studies	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Understand how people, places, circumstances, and environments of the past are connected to the present and future. (2) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Understand the interdependence among individuals, groups, and nations in both human and physical terms. (3) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Understand the impact of science and technology on the economic, political, geographic, and historical development of the global community. (2)
Science	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Understand how science relates to their own daily life and potential career. (1) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Understand the structure and function in living systems, reproduction and heredity, diversity and adaptations of organisms, populations and ecosystems. (2) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Understand how to investigate scientifically the form and function of organisms, systems, and reactions. (4)
Theatre	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Demonstrate ability to create improvisations and scripted scenes based on personal experience, heritage, imagination, literature, and history. (1) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Recognize that theatre can communicate the artistic and social values and accomplishments of cultures, times and places. (7) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Develop and communicate characters in improvisations and informal productions (1)
Visual Art	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Develop perceptual skills and use visual arts vocabulary while creating and studying works of art. (2) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Understand that factors of culture, time, and place affect the characteristics of works of art and design. (3) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Understand how factors of culture, time, and place affect the characteristics of works of art and design. (3)
Music	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Recognize that music reflects the culture, time, and place of its origin. (3) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Demonstrate awareness of the role and function of music and musicians in cultures, times and places. (3) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Analyze forms and subject matter in music that recur across cultures, times and places. (3)
Dance	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Observe and identify the styles of dance in various cultures and traditions throughout history (3) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Recognize and understand diversity of dance in relation to cultural styles and traditions. (3) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Know and understand human movement, the elements of dance and how these communicate ideas, thoughts, and feelings. (2)

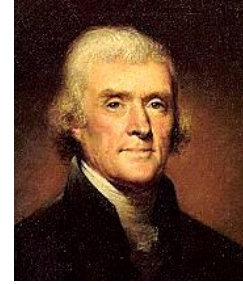


Historic Natchez Trace Timeline

8000 B.C. - 1000 A.D.	1050-1600	1682	1698	1699
Indian farmers began growing products around MS River area	Indian burial mounds built	French claimed MS River Valley for France	English traders trade with Chickasaw Indians	1st MS settlement founded by French at Old Biloxi
1733	1736	1750's	1763	1779
1st map of the old Trace was drawn by the French	Chickasaws, helped by the British defeated the French at the Battle of Ackia	Long Hunters thought to be first white settlers to use the Trace around this time	British defeated French and rule Mississippi	Spaniards take over rule of Mississippi
1798	1801	1801	1811	1817
Congress makes Natchez the capital of the newly formed Mississippi Territory	The Choctaw and Chickasaw Indians give the U.S. permission to build the Natchez Trace through their land.	Natchez Trace was designated as a U.S. mail route	<i>New Orleans</i> is the first steamboat on the Mississippi River	Congress divides the MS Territory, and the western part is admitted to the Union as the state of Mississippi.
1818	1830	1832	1835	1937
There were 50 stands at this time along the Natchez Trace	Choctaws sign a treaty agreeing to trade their Mississippi River lands for land in little known Oklahoma	Chickasaws give up their Mississippi lands for land in Oklahoma	Great Days of the old Natchez Trace had come to an end	Pres. Franklin D. Roosevelt provided money for the construction of the Natchez Trace Parkway

Written by Patti Carr Black (from *The Natchez Trace, Photographs* by Harold Young, University Press, Jackson, 1985)

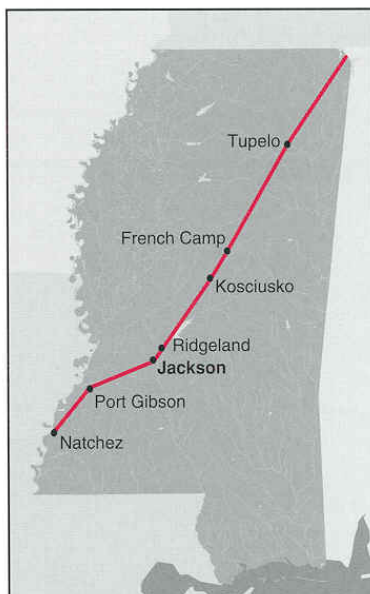
By the time President Thomas Jefferson in 1806 ordered the Natchez Road to be “12 feet in width and made passable for a wagon,” the trail had already played a dramatic role on America’s turbulent frontier. Along river ridges, through canebrakes, swamps, and forests, the trail carried many of the gallant *dramatis personae* of the westward movement.



Thomas Jefferson

French explorers tramping through the Deep South in the eighteenth century had found a network of paths, perhaps first beaten down by herds of buffalo, used by Indians as trails linking villages and tribes. (The old French word for such trails was *trace*, which meant a line of footprints or animal tracks.) These paths, when jointed together, led northeasterly from the Natchez Indian settlements on the Mississippi River through Choctaw, Chickasaw, and probably Cherokee lands, to present-day Nashville, Tennessee.

The French, who first settled on the Gulf Coast, moved up the Mississippi River and set up a post at Natchez in 1716, primarily for trading with the Indians. French trappers, traders, and missionaries began using “the path through the Choctaw Nation,” and “the Chickasaw trace” to travel to and from the interior of Indian country. As successive groups of white settlers moved in and used the trails for commercial and military activities, they became increasingly important. France ceded the Natchez area to Great Britain in 1763 and there followed a great influx of English-speaking settlers, who came part way over the old Indian paths, and who were to give Natchez and Mississippi their dominant culture for centuries to come. Then the Spanish came, taking over the Natchez territory during the American Revolution and annexing it to the Colony of Louisiana. As Spain encouraged immigration, American settlers continued to push inland from the older settlements on the Atlantic seaboard. Many settled at the northern end of the Trace at Nashville, while some pushed further southwest to the Natchez area. In 1798, the United States gained control of the area and created the Mississippi Territory with Natchez as its capital.



Because Natchez had strategic military, diplomatic, and economic significance to the country, an adequate means of communication with Washington was needed. Congress established a postal route on the Trace in 1800 even though the postmaster general described it as “no other than an Indian footpath very devious and narrow.” In 1801 the Chickasaw and Choctaw nations granted permission to the United States government to open the route across their tribal lands. Under the Secretary of War, desultory attempts were made to clear out the path and bridge some of the creeks and swamps for travelers already using the Trace. It was the new lands of the Louisiana Purchase that brought more and more traffic to the trail and prompted Congress to appropriate funds for improvements in 1806. In the meantime, up and down the Trace, the great movement of frontier people continued: settlers, traders, circuit-riding preachers, soldiers, government officials, politicians, post

riders, backwoodsmen, and boatmen. A few traveled on horseback, most on foot in groups with packhorses. Pushmataha and Tecumseh, famous Indian chiefs; Louis LeFleur, French trader; the Marquis de LaFayette, Henry Clay, the boy Jefferson Davis, Jim Bowie, and other legendary figures had business up and down the Trace. Captain Meriwether Lewis of Lewis and Clark fame lost his life on the Trace when he was mysteriously shot at Grinder's Inn in 18-9, and Aaron Burr traveled over part of the trace for his treason hearing at Washington, Mississippi. Naturalists John James Audubon and Alexander Wilson sketched bird life in the wilderness of the trace, and itinerant evangelists like Lorenzo Dow, "the crazy preacher," followed their human flocks westward.



Andrew Jackson

One of the most famous travelers on the Trace was Andrew Jackson, who began making trips up and down the Trace after the Revolutionary War, negotiating with the Spanish, trading in slaves, dealing with Indian problems. As a young lawyer, he traveled the road to court Rachel Donelson Robards, whom he married a half mile off the Trace at the plantation "Springfield" near Fayette. When the United States declared war on England in 1812, Andrew Jackson moved his Tennessee militia of more than two thousand men down river toward New Orleans, stopping to camp in Adams County, at Washington. It was on the march home up the Trace in early 1813 that Jackson earned his nickname "Old Hickory." At the end of that war, after a brilliant victory over the British at the Battle of New Orleans, Andrew Jackson with his wife and small son and their entourage took the Trace home to fame and ultimately the presidency.

Perhaps the most colorful of the Trace travelers were the fabled boatmen called "Kaintucks," who achieved legendary fame in the tales of Mike Fink, "half alligator and half horse." When a treaty with Spain opened the Mississippi River to Navigation in 1795, the boatmen who were initially farmers, floated the farm products of the Ohio Valley downstream to Natchez and New Orleans to be shipped to Europe or the eastern United States. After the boatmen reached Natchez or New Orleans and delivered their cargoes, they returned home through the countryside because the steamboat had not yet been invented and poling up river against the current was tedious and long. These men came from many different states, as did their cargoes, but down south they were all called "Kaintucks," a name synonymous with rough-and-rowdy. Andrew Jackson is quoted as saying, "I never met a Kaintuck who did not have a rifle, a pack of cards, and a bottle of whiskey."



From mid-February to July of each year, the Ohio and Mississippi rivers were filled with barges, flatboats, and keel boats loaded down with flour, pork, tobacco, hemp, and iron, floating south. As these products of the Ohio Valley, Illinois country, and the Natchez district were shipped down the Mississippi River, gold and silver from New Orleans flowed up the Natchez Trace as payment. It has been determined that by 1810, ten thousand men made their way down river in



this trade each season. They usually began their journey home by knocking apart their great rafts, selling them for lumber, and heading for Natchez-Under-the-Hill, where gambling, dockside musicians, fistfights, and Indians selling ponies provided a lively time, and perhaps memories for the rough trip ahead.

Another famous group on the Trace were the outlaws. The movement of settlers coming down the Trace and the boatmen going up the Trace with pouches of silver from the ports of New Orleans drew robbers like a magnet. The Mason gang, led by Revolutionary War veteran Samuel Mason, was the most notorious. The gang, which included Mason's son John and Wiley "Little" Harp operated out of a canebrake near Vicksburg. They terrorized the Trace until Governor Claiborne put up a \$2000 reward for the capture of Mason. His head was delivered to authorities in old Greenville by "little" Harp in disguise, who in turn was recognized, tried, and hanged for his crime.

There were other dangers and discomforts along the Trace: steamy swamps, mosquitoes, accidents, illness, hunger, and the weather. From January to March the rains made the creeks and swamps along the road hazardous and almost impassable. One British journalist wrote of travelers having to swim through swamps and of plunging "up to the saddle-skirts in mire at every step. The bottom," he continued, "is stiff dry clay and horses sometimes stick so fast that they cannot be extricated, but are left to die."



The journey from Natchez to Nashville was a distance of some five hundred miles and required fifteen to twenty days to make the trip. Before setting off on the Trace in either direction travelers packed provisions for the trip. Along with corn whiskey and apple brandy, they took flour, bacon, dried beef, rice, coffee, sugar, and a small supply of roasted Indian corn ground to a powder for emergency ration. Experienced hunters could supplement provisions with turkey, deer, rabbit, and wild honey in the forest. Much attention was also given to clothing. Thick walking shoes were essential and travelers usually wore the protective hunter's costume of coarse brown overalls and shirts. Accommodations along the Trace were as primitive as the road itself. The Chickasaw and Choctaw Nations had agreed that a wagon road could be cut through their land, but fearful of the white's incursions into their territory, they would not consent to the establishment of "stands" or inns in Indian country until 18-5. Even after that, these stands or inns were slow to materialize.

For the first seventy miles from Natchez north, the going was fairly easy. The Trace ran roughly parallel to the Mississippi River through flat country that was at least sparsely populated by white settlers and where a person might find shelter at a farm or an inn. One traveler in 1798 wrote of stopping at Grindstone Ford, near Port Gibson, where for twenty-five cents he had a meal of mush and milk and the privilege of sleeping on the floor in a room filled



Mt. Locust Stand

with saddles, baggage, lumber, and other travelers. Other inns along the settled section of the Trace were at Washington, Selerstown, Uniontown (now Mt. Locust), old Greenville, Port Gibson, and gradually all the way to the boundary of the Natchez District.

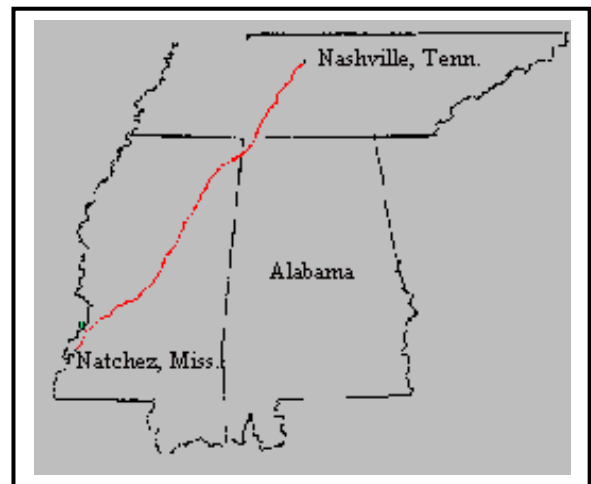
To the east stretched Indian country. The early Nashville-bound travelers passing through Choctaw country had only abandoned Indian campsites for accommodations. After about 1810, there were Brashear's Stand, Doak's Stand, French Camp (named for the nationality of Louis LeFleur, its founder and proprietor, and Pigeon Roost (run by David Folsom, part English and part Choctaw and the first Choctaw chief elected by ballot). When the early traveler reached the Chickasaw lands, he could stop near the "big town" of the Chickasaw, where their wood huts, corn and tobacco fields, and orchards of peaches and apples afforded the well-known Chickasaw hospitality. After 1808, in the Chickasaw nation, there were the stands of James, Levi, and



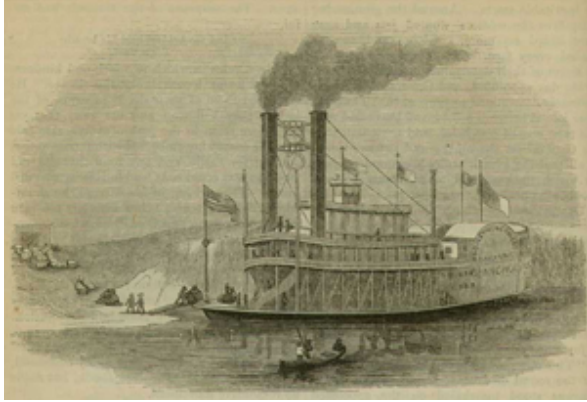
George Colbert, all chieftains and sons of William Colbert, a Scotsman, and his Chickasaw wife, and the stand of James Allen, who also married a Chickasaw, reported to be the daughter of William Colbert. There was also "Tockshish," a settlement started by John McIntosh, who had been sent to the Chickasaw Nation by the British government before the American Revolution and who stayed to live among the Indians. The use of the word "stand" can better be understood with an 1816 description by a circuit rider on the Trace: "The Indian hotels are made of small poles, just high enough for you to stand straight in, with a dirt floor, no bedding of any kind, except a bearskin, and not that in some huts."

Forty miles beyond the Chickasaw villages, the Trace crossed the Tennessee River where the ferryboat concession was operated by George Colbert, a powerful and influential leader in the Chickasaw Nation. Colbert is said to have grown quite wealthy operating the ferry, especially in 1815 when Andrew Jackson brought his army across at a reputed cost of \$75,000. The seventy-five miles of road between the Tennessee River and the Duck River ridge, which was the Indian boundary line, were the most arduous part of the journey. Between the rivers was Grinder's Inn, where Meriwether Lewis died and is buried. Across Duck River the ferry and stand were operated by a close friend of Andrew Jackson's the famous Indian scout, John Gordon, who was awarded the land for his deeds against the Creek Indians. Once over the Duck River the traveler was in Tennessee and hiking the last fifty miles through the mountains, where he again encountered white settlers. Finally arriving in Nashville, travelers could set out on well-defined roads in almost any direction.

For over two decades, this link between the two important and lively frontier towns was an essential national highway, providing the capital of the young nation with access to its new lands in the Old Southwest. Gradually, however, the great movement up and down the Trace subsided. Ironically, those who had first trampled it into a



path were one of the last groups of immigrants to use the Trace. The Indians, exiled from their land, started their move to Oklahoma by going down the Trace to Walnut Hills (now Vicksburg), where they left the state of Mississippi forever.



The factors in the decline of the Trace were as important a part in the drama of American history as its origin and use had been. The catalytic factor was the invention of the steamboat in 1811. It took a few years to convince skeptics that the new way was a better way to ship merchandise, but no one could argue that the new boat was superior in ascending the river. By 1821 there were sixty-one steamboats operating on the Mississippi and Ohio rivers, and they offered a cheap escape from the vagaries and hardships of a journey on

the Natchez Trace. The postal business was also captured by the steamboat, making the Trace less and less important in the nation's business. The steamboat dealt the final death knell to the Trace by making the water route from Mobile to New Orleans feasible and offering a new, shorter "southern route" from Washington to New Orleans through the south Atlantic states.

By the 1830s the great days of the Natchez Trace had come to an end, and eventually portions of its route became lost in grasslands and encroaching woods. For one hundred years the Trace went back to what it had been, a series of disjointed trails, used chiefly for local travel.

The comeback of the road is a modern and altogether different drama of politics. The Depression of the 1930s provided the impetus to put the pieces of the Trace back together. Franklin Delano Roosevelt's New Deal searched for projects that would create jobs and be useful to local governments. The Daughters of the American Revolution had been calling attention to the historic significance of the Trace since 1909 by erecting markers along the route. By 1934 their efforts had persuaded Mississippi Congressman Jeff Busby to introduce a resolution asking the Interior Department to make "a survey of the old Indian trail known as the Natchez trace with a view to constructing a national road on the route to be known as the Natchez Trace Parkway." When Senator Hubert D. Stephens of Mississippi introduced an identical bill in the Senate, the Interior Department urged a presidential veto of the \$50,000 survey. Had Roosevelt not needed the support of the chairman of the Senate Finance Committee, Pat Harrison of Mississippi, the resolution might never have passed. The survey was made, and in 1937 funds were allotted from the president's "emergency funds" for the construction of the parkway, which was to be a unit of the National Park Service.

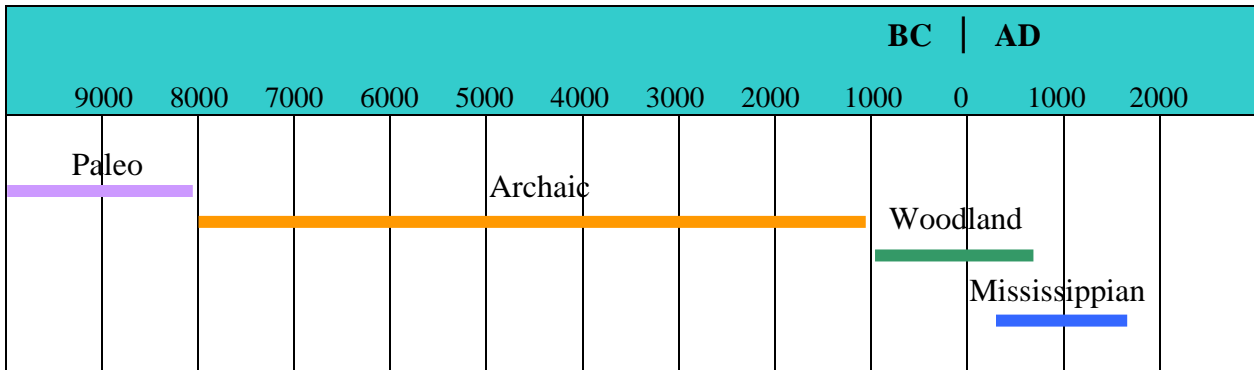


DAR monument at Tupelo

Today the Natchez Trace Parkway roughly follows the old Natchez Trace, crossing and recrossing it through a protected area of deep woods, rolling hills, meadows, high ridges, and bottomlands. Although the parkway is still not completed, the projected length is 449 miles, with 313 stretching diagonally across Mississippi, 33 miles dog-earring the corner of Alabama, and the last 1034 stretching into Tennessee. Approximately 19million travel the Natchez Trace Parkway each year. Commercial vehicles are not allowed, and a fifty-miles-per-hour speed zone discourages the strictly-business motorist. Along the way, the Park Service provides campgrounds, picnic tables, nature trails, historic markers, and exhibits that introduce the traveler to virtually all of the area's history. The traveler can explore archaeological sites, an early inn, Indian sites, and Civil War battlefields and even walk on short sections of the original trace. For those interested only in its spectacular scenery, the Trace can be the glorious experience of a single day, showing us the beauty and the enchantment of a trail that reveals an exciting moment of America's history at almost every turn.



Natchez Trace Parkway near Washington, MS



The Prehistoric population of the southeastern United States fell into four major groups:

Paleo: This culture existed several thousand years. The main activity was hunting. Archaeologists have found fluted spear points in Tennessee, Alabama and Mississippi.

Archaic: The people practiced a crude form of agriculture and lived in villages rather than constantly wandering like their predecessors.

Woodland: Village life became more common during this time more than 3000 years ago. Pottery was introduced in this period and the bow and arrow became the primary weapon. The people are sometimes referred to as Mound Builders because of their custom of burying the dead in mounds.

Mississippian: This culture became dominant around 700 A.D. Large temple mounds, stockades, and watchtowers became popular, and the once-small villages of past years grew into large towns many acres in size. Handicrafts reached a new level of beauty.

The **Mississippian and Historic** periods merged around 1600 A.D., and by the time post-De Soto contact was made, the area was in the process of being taken over by several Historic Indian tribes, among them the Natchez, Choctaw, Chickasaw, Cherokee, and Shawnee.

Indian Mounds



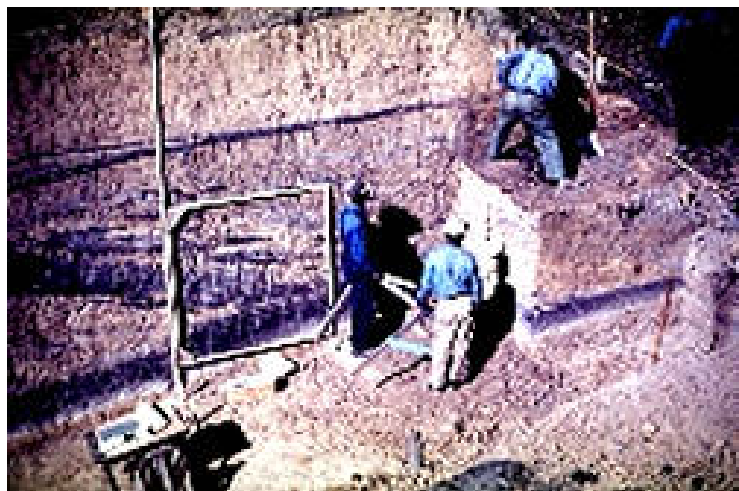
Aerial View of Emerald Mound Site, the second largest ceremonial mound in the United States

Photo credit: Natchez Trace Parkway National Park Service

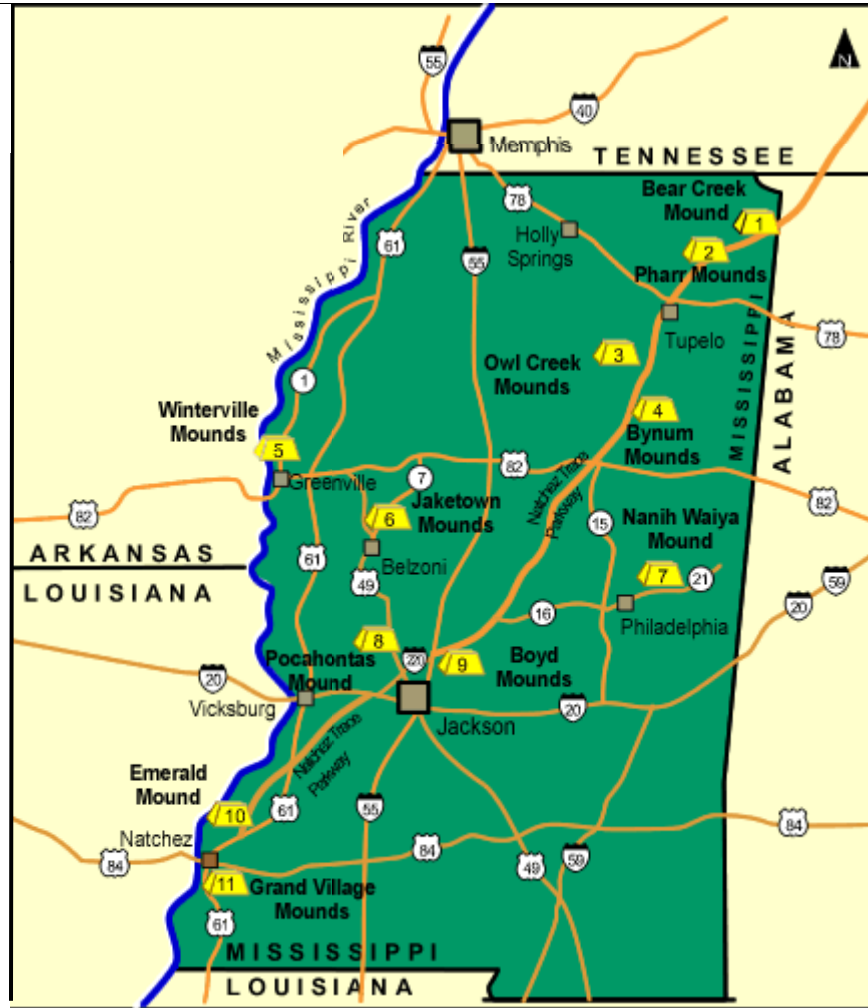
Designated a National Historic Landmark, Emerald Mound is one of the largest mounds in North America. Covering eight acres, Emerald Mound measures 770 by 435 feet at the base and is 35 feet high. The mound was built by depositing earth along the sides of a natural hill, thus reshaping it and creating an enormous artificial plateau. Two smaller mounds sit atop the expansive summit platform of the primary mound.

The larger of the two, at the west end, measures 190 by 160 feet and is 30 feet high. Several additional smaller mounds were once located along the edges of the primary mound summit, but were destroyed in the 19th century by plowing and erosion. Emerald Mound, built and used during the Mississippian period between 1250 and 1600 A.D., was a ceremonial center for the local population, which resided in outlying villages and hamlets. Its builders were ancestors of the Natchez Indians. By the late 1600s, the Natchez had abandoned Emerald Mound and established their capital at the Grand Village some 12 miles to the southwest.

Emerald Mound Site, near the Natchez Trace Parkway, is about 10 miles northeast of Natchez, Mississippi (milepost 10.3). Exit parkway at Route 553 intersection; follow signs to mound, about 1 mile. Open to the public daily, free of charge.



National Park Service excavation at Emerald Mound, c1948
Photo Credit: Natchez Trace Parkway, National Park Service



Other mound sites in Mississippi:

- Bear Creek Mound and Village Site
- Pharr Mounds
- Owl Creek Site
- Bynum Mound and Village Site
- Winterville Site
- Jaketown Site
- Nanih Waiya Mound and Village
- Pocahontas Mound A
- Boyd Mounds Site
- Emerald Mound Site
- Grand Village of the Natchez Indians



(Figure 1) Le Page Du Pratz drawings courtesy of the Mississippi Department of Archives and History.

The Natchez Indians were among the last native American groups to inhabit the area now known as southwestern Mississippi. Archaeological evidence indicates that the Natchez Indian culture began around A.D. 700 and lasted until the 1730s when the tribe was dispersed in a war with the French. Their language, related to the Muskogean language family, indicates that the Natchez Indians probably developed from earlier cultures in the Lower Mississippi River Valley. The Natchez Indians were successful farmers, growing corn, beans, and squash. They also hunted, fished, and gathered wild plant foods. (Figure 1)

Their society, organized into what anthropologists call a chiefdom, was divided into two ranks: nobility and commoners. Membership in one rank or the other was determined by heredity through the female line. This system is called matrilineal descent and was also common among other Native American groups. The Natchez chief, called Great Sun, inherited his position of leadership from his mother's family. (Figure 2)

Mound building

Mound building was an expression of the complex tribal religion with the mounds serving as bases for sacred buildings. The people of the tribe worked together to construct and maintain the mounds. The type of mounds built by the Natchez, flat-topped ceremonial mounds, shows the influence of mound building cultures to the north in the Middle Mississippi River Valley.

Only a few high-ranking tribal officials lived at the mound centers on a permanent basis. The people of the tribe, living dispersed over a wide area on family farms, gathered at the mound centers periodically for social and religious activities.

The Grand Village of the Natchez Indians in Natchez, Mississippi, was the site of the Natchez tribe's main ceremonial mound center during the early period of French colonization in the Lower Mississippi River Valley. Construction of the mounds at the Grand Village was done in stages, probably beginning in the 13th century. (Figure 3)



(Figure 2) Le Page Du Pratz drawings courtesy of the Mississippi Department of Archives and History.



(Figure 3) Archaeologists at work near the Great Sun's Mound, Grand Village of the Natchez Indians, in 1972. The Mississippi Department of Archives and History conducted excavations at the Grand Village in 1930, 1962, and 1972. Photograph courtesy of the Mississippi Department of Archives and History.



(Figure 4) Prior to European contact with the Natchez Indians, Emerald Mound in Adams County served as one of the tribe's main ceremonial mound centers. Photograph courtesy of the National Park Service.

The Natchez Indians also constructed Emerald Mound, near Natchez on the Natchez Trace Parkway. Archaeological evidence indicates that Emerald Mound may have been the main ceremonial mound center for the tribe before that status was shifted to the Grand Village sometime prior to the arrival of French explorers in the late 1600s. (Figure 4)

Arrival of the Europeans

The first documented historical contact with the Natchez Indians occurred in March 1682 when the Rene Robert Cavelier, Sieur de La Salle Expedition descended the Mississippi River. Following La Salle's meeting of the Natchez Indians, French and English explorers, priests, and military personnel made frequent visits to the Natchez area. The French established Fort Rosalie at Natchez in 1716 as the nucleus of a colony. Over the next thirteen years, the French colony at Natchez grew. However, disputes and misunderstandings between the French and the Natchez resulted in a series of conflicts.

The situation worsened as the Natchez became caught up in the 18th century struggle between England and France for control of North America. By the 1720s, English agents were successful in turning a significant portion of the Natchez tribe against the French.

In November 1729, the Natchez Indians rebelled against the French colony, resulting in a war between the Natchez and the French. The Natchez Indians ultimately lost the war and were forced to abandon their homeland. Following their defeat at the hands of the French, many Natchez refugees joined other tribes, including the Chickasaws, Creeks, and Cherokees. Today, Natchez Indian descendants live in the southern Appalachian Mountains area and in Oklahoma. (Figure 5)

Archaeological Studies

Archaeological investigations at the Grand Village were conducted in 1930, 1962, and 1972 by the Mississippi Department of Archives and History. These studies represent a classic example of historical archaeology, where archaeological findings are compared to written documentation from the French colonization of the Natchez area.



(Figure 5) Archie Sam, a Natchez Indian descendant, shown here during a visit to the Grand Village of the Natchez Indians in 1983. Sam was active in preserving the history of the Natchez tribe. Before his death in 1986, Sam spent many years searching for surviving speakers of the Natchez language. Photograph courtesy of the Mississippi Department of Archives and History.

During the last quarter of the 20th century, the Mississippi Department of Archives and History, the National Park Service, the University of Alabama, and Harvard University's Lower Mississippi Survey continued archaeological investigations in the Natchez area. (Figure 3)

National Historic Landmark

Today, the Grand Village of the Natchez Indians is a National Historic Landmark administered by the Mississippi Department of Archives and History, with a museum accredited by the American Association of Museums, partially restored mound area, a reconstructed Natchez Indian house, nature trails, and a picnic pavilion. The site is open seven days a week and offers educational programs for school and adult groups. Admission is free. Annual events include the Natchez Powwow, Summer Film Series, Discovery Week, Student Days, and the 11th Moon Storytelling.

Jim Barnett is director, division of historic properties, Grand Village of the Natchez Indians, Mississippi Department of Archives and History.

Destinations

The Grand Village of the Natchez Indians, Natchez, Adams County, Mississippi

The Grand Village of the Natchez Indians is located within the city limits of Natchez. Turn east off U.S. Highway 61 South, known as Sergeant S. Prentiss Drive, on to Jefferson Davis Boulevard. Proceed on Jefferson Davis Boulevard one-half mile to the entrance gate.

<http://www.mdah.state.ms.us/hprop/gvni.html>

Emerald Mound, Adams County, Mississippi

Emerald Mound is administered by the National Park Service as part of the Natchez Trace Parkway. To reach Emerald Mound from Natchez, follow U.S. Highway 61 North 8 miles to the entrance of the Natchez Trace Parkway. Follow the Natchez Trace Parkway for about 2 miles and look for signs with directions to Emerald Mound.

The Grand Village of the Natchez Indians

Indians inhabited what is now southwest Mississippi ca. AD 700-1730, with the culture at its zenith in the mid-1500s. Between 1682 and 1729 the Grand Village was their main ceremonial center, according to historical and archaeological evidence. French explorers, priests, and journalists described the ceremonial mounds built by the Natchez on the banks of St. Catherine Creek, and archaeological investigations produced additional evidence that the site was the place that the French called "the Grand Village of the Natchez Indians." During the period that the Natchez occupied the Grand Village, the French explored the region and began to make settlements.



Ceremonial mound (one of three) at the Grand Village of the Natchez Indians

Relations between the French and the Natchez were cordial at first, but deteriorated as various disagreements and episodes of violence arose in 1716 and again in 1723. In



1729, a pro-English element within the tribe led the Natchez to attack the French colonial plantations and military garrison at Fort Rosalie. The French retaliated in such force that the Natchez were forced to abandon their homeland.

History and Highlights of the Natchez Trace

The word **Trace** comes from the old French *tracier*: to follow a course or trail; to make one's way. Wild animal herds migrating to great salt licks around Nashville were the earliest travelers on the trace.

Near the Mississippi River bluffs on the Natchez Trace are the **Loess Hills**, a section of loose soil that runs the entire length of Mississippi from Louisiana to Tennessee. This soil was blown in by dust storms from the western plains thousands of years ago during the Ice Age, and in places it measures 90 feet thick. Loess Bluff, just outside Natchez is a classic example of an exceptionally thick deposit of loess and graphically illustrates its proneness to erosion.



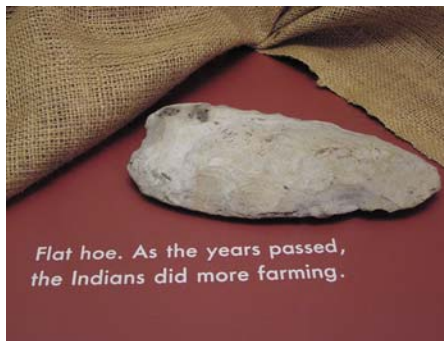
Other **historical names** for the Natchez Trace are “Path to the Choctaw Nation”, “Chickasaw Trace” and the “Road from Nashville in the State of Tennessee to the Grindstone Ford of the Bayou Pierre in the Mississippi Territory.” The current name became popular during the 1820s.

The **philosophy** of the National Park Service is to offer history, natural history, and recreation.

Wildlife along the Natchez Trace Parkway and its right of way includes at least 100 species of trees, 215 species of birdlife, 57 species of mammals and 89 species of reptiles and amphibians.

The **purpose** of the Natchez Trace Parkway is to “ensure a continuously unfolding inspirational interpretation of an important transportation route and its related regional resources which opened the way to expansion of the United States into the Old Southwest.

One **objective** of the Natchez Trace Parkway Statement for Management is “To foster public understanding and appreciation of the parkway’s cultural values by memorializing and interpreting the historic trace and the cultural events and people associated with it...”



Sometime around 700 A.D. the **Mississippian culture** became prominent across the entire southeastern United States. During this period Native Americans built massive earthen temple mounds. Beautiful pottery, statues and ceremonial objects were created. Agriculture was practiced on a large-scale basis, and a sophisticated network of trade, linking villages separated by hundreds of miles of wilderness was established.

Choctaw Creation Myth: Out of the mound ages ago came first the Creeks, Cherokees and Chickasaws, who sunned themselves on the ramparts of the mound and moved eastward. Emerging from Nanih Waiya last were the Choctaws who sunned themselves until dry and then settled around the mound—their “great mother”—who told them that if ever they left her side, they would die. Note: Nanih Waiya is located in Winston County, north of Philadelphia, MS near the Natchez Trace.

The **Natchez, Chickasaw, and Choctaw** tribes were related because of their use of the Muskogean language, the predominant tongue among the Indians of the southeastern United States.

In the 1540s **Hernando De Soto** traveled through the southeastern United States. He was the first documented white man to ever come into contact with several Indian tribes, including the Choctaw and the Chickasaw.



Grand Village of the Natchez Indians

Today the **Natchez** tribe is extinct. In the 1600s the tribe may have numbered around 4000. The Natchez society was among the most advanced in the region and included four distinct classes—suns, nobles, honored people, and commoners. Their chief, or Great Sun, held absolute power over his subjects. The **Grand Village of the Natchez Indians** is located in the city of Natchez and is maintained by the Mississippi Department of Archives and History. The site contains a museum as well as three ancient mounds.

In 1682 **La Salle** claimed the Mississippi Valley region for France. Shortly thereafter, land disputes were common among Britain, Spain, France and Native American people. The land ultimately became part of the United States when Congress organized the Mississippi Territory in 1798. By this time, it was quite common for boats to bring goods down the Mississippi River. Documents indicate that by 1790, 64 boatloads of goods traversed the river, making the city of Natchez a center of commerce.

Flatboats were used by Tennessee and Kentucky backwoodsmen to float items down river for sale. Once unloaded, the boats were broken apart and sold for scrap lumber. At this time, the “Kaintucks” planned for a return to their homes on the footpaths of the Natchez Trace.

Kaintucks: “I never saw one that didn’t have a deck of cards or a bottle of whiskey.”

—Andrew Jackson

A Traveler’s Diary entry in 1805:

“The journey was made in companies of fifteen or twenty men, carrying their provisions, tents, etc. along with them. The horses selected for this service were generally a small breed of mixed Spanish and Indian, called “Qpelousas horses,” very hardy and accustomed to subsist on grass and the bark of trees. To every three or four persons there was one or more spare horses to carry the baggage....”

A short history of a National Road

- 1789: the Spanish government invited Americans to settle in the Natchez area.
- Mid-1790s: White settlement progresses.
- 1798: establishment of Mississippi Territory.
- 1798: mail service initiated between Nashville and Natchez.
- 1800: American security again threatened by France and Great Britain.
- 1801: President Thomas Jefferson decided national security required a road between Nashville and Natchez.

Around 1800 Congress began to recognize the importance of the Natchez Trace as a transportation route, and established **mail service** between Nashville and Natchez. Clearing the road and negotiating with the Native American residents took time. By 1803 only 264 miles were improved. Congress suspended funding until 1806, when the U.S. Army was given the task to improve the road. The post rider took ten days and four hours to make the trip on horseback from Nashville to Natchez. The return trip required three weeks.

In **1811** the *Steamboat New Orleans* sailed down the Ohio River to the Mississippi River from Pittsburg to New Orleans. This new invention precipitated a long decline in the Natchez Trace. Its last significant use as a military road was when Andrew Jackson's troops returned from the Battle of New Orleans in 1815.



In the early 1900s the **Daughters of the American Revolution** began

erecting monuments in nearly every county through which the Trace ran in Mississippi. By the 1930s, Roosevelt's New Deal and its search for public projects gave southerners an opportunity to create a fitting memorial to the Natchez Trace. **U.S. Representative Jeff Busby** of Mississippi set the wheels in motion for the area to become a part of the National Park system.

Acres of Diamonds

[Here was a resource] which, if properly utilized might help make the parkway not just another highway but a window; a window opening on a view of the swirling life of not merely the old southwestern frontier but of what it became.

—Dawson Phelps, former Natchez Trace Parkway historian

Today's **Natchez Trace Parkway** is nearly complete along its 450-mile distance. Construction that was originally funded in 1938 has continued to the present. It is one of about 365 units in the National Park Service and contains 51,984 acres (2003). Historian Dawson Phelps says, "The Parkway is not a highway, but a long, narrow park commemorating the Natchez Trace."

2003 Visitors—5,576,412; **FY 2004 budget**—\$ 9,757,000 (Source: National Park Service)

Natchez Trace Artifacts



Carved Marble Statues from a Mississippian Mound
Courtesy of the Southeast Archeological Center



Articles from the "touch" exhibit at the museum of the Grand Village of the Natchez Indians, Natchez, MS.



A grind stone for preparing corn and grain for storage or cooking.



These projectile points were excavated from the Grand Village by the Mississippi Department of Archives and History in 1930.



A compass was used to guide travelers when the road was not clearly evident.



Turtle Shell shakers were worn by dancers in Native American ceremonies.

Chronology of the Natchez Trace

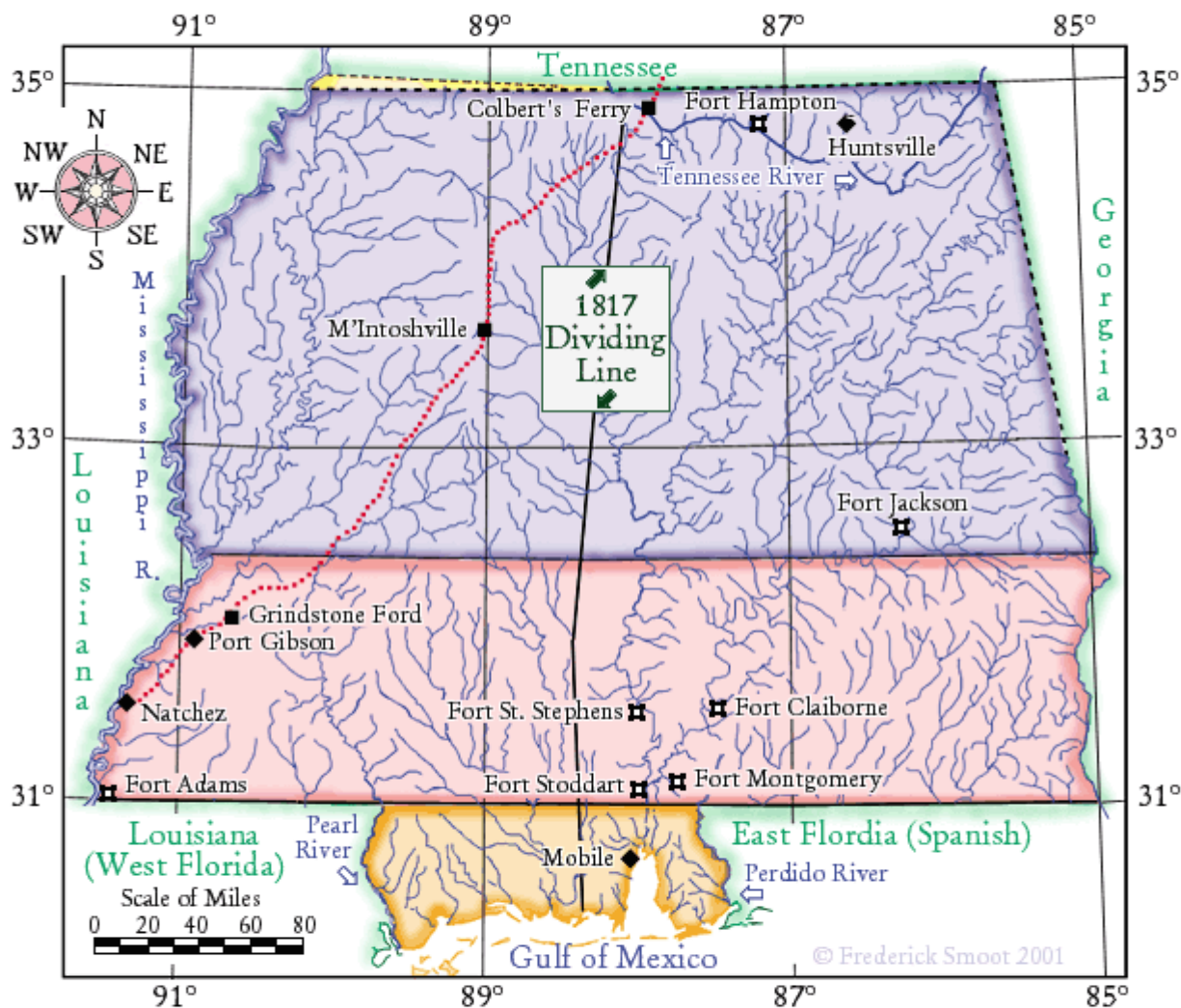
Compiled by the National Park Service

- 1541—De Soto spends part of winter (1540-41 in Chickasaw villages).
- 1682—LaSalle visits village of the Natchez tribe.
- 1699—South Carolinians begin trade with the Chickasaw.
- 1700—D'Iberville, Governor of Louisiana, visits the Natchez people.
- 1710—Unknown French trader sets up business at French Lick, site of Nashville.
- 1713—French trading post at Natchez established by LaLoire brothers.
- 1716—Fort Rosalie built at Natchez by Bienville.
- 1718—St. Catherine Concession organized, and French begin to develop several plantations near Natchez.
- 1729—Natchez Massacre; French colony defeated.
- 1730—Natchez tribe defeated and scattered. Choctaw go to help the French at Natchez; first recorded trip over any part of Natchez Trace.
- 1736—Great French effort to destroy Chickasaw. D'Artaguette defeated at Ogoula Tchetoka and Bienville at Ackia.
- 1739-40—French expedition against the Chickasaw; 100 French Canadians with Native American allies travel from Montreal to Tupelo.
- 1748-52—Choctaw Civil War. South Carolina attempts to bring Choctaw under British control.
- 1763—France cedes North American possessions east of the Mississippi River, except New Orleans, but including the Natchez District, to Great Britain. Spain cedes Florida to Great Britain.
- 1764—Natchez becomes a part of the British Colony of West Florida.
- 1765-79—English-speaking people colonize the Natchez District—veterans of French and Indian War, and exiled Tories from the 13 Colonies.
- 1770—Tockshish, or McIntoshville; established when John McIntosh, British agent to Chickasaw and Choctaw, established his agency 10 miles south of Pontotoc.
- 1775-83—American Revolution.
- 1779—Spanish Colonial forces occupy Natchez.
- 1780—Nashville established by Richard Henderson, John Donelson, James Robertson and North Carolina settlers.
- 1781—English-speaking settlers in Natchez revolt against Spain.
- 1782—Alliance between Americans of Cumberland settlement and the Chickasaw.
- 1783—Treaty of Paris ends American Revolution. The Mississippi River becomes the western boundary of the United States. East and West Florida ceded to Spain. Beginning of Spanish-American boundary quarrel.
- 1783-85—Mount Locust built on Spanish land grant near Natchez.
- 1785—Chachare, a French officer in Spanish service, makes the trip from Natchez to Nashville; the first written report of a journey over the Trace.

- 1790—Tennessee, with tentative name, “Territory South West of the Ohio River,” organized as a Territory of the United States.
- 1792—Stephen Minor’s trip on Natchez Trace; left detailed diary.
- 1795—First cotton gin in Natchez.
- 1796—Tennessee admitted to the Union.
- 1798—Spain withdraws troops, and Natchez district occupied by United States forces.
- 1798—Mississippi Territory organized, with Natchez as capital.
- 1800—Congress establishes post route between Nashville and Natchez.
- 1801—Treaty of Fort Adams officially opens Old Natchez District to settlement.
- 1801—Choctaw and Chickasaw agree that the United States may open a road, the Natchez Trace, through their lands.
- 1801-02—United States troops open the Natchez Trace from Davidson-Williamson County line in Tennessee to Grindstone Ford in Mississippi.
- 1802—Capital of Mississippi Territory moved from Natchez to Washington, Mississippi.
- 1802—Ferry across Tennessee River established by George Colbert.
- 1802—That part of Old Trace in Tennessee between Nashville and Duck River Bridge abandoned as a post road.
- 1802—Red Bluff Stand established by William Smith in Mississippi.
- 1802—Gordon’s Ferry established on Tennessee’s Duck River by John Gordon.
- 1803—Port Gibson, Mississippi, established.
- 1803—Regiment of Tennessee Militia marches on Trace to and from Natchez.
- 1804—Mississippi Territory boundary extended north to Tennessee line.
- 1804—Wiley “Little” Harp, notorious outlaw, executed.
- 1805—Treaty of Mt. Dexter. Choctaw cede their lands south of old Three-Chopped Way to the United States.
- 1805—Chickasaw cede Tennessee lands between Duck River Ridge and Buffalo-Duck River watershed to the United States. The Old Trace, from Duck River Ridge to Meriwether Lewis, becomes boundary between the United States and Chickasaw lands.
- 1806—First congressional appropriation for the improvement of the Natchez Trace.
- 1807—Aaron Burr arrested near Natchez.
- 1807—Choctaw agency moved to site on the Natchez Trace by Silas Dinsmore.
- 1808—Old Trace between Duck River Ridge and Buffalo River abandoned as a post route.
- 1809—Meriwether Lewis died and was buried near Grinder’s Stand in Tennessee.
- 1810—Settlers in West Florida revolt against Spanish rule.
- 1811—First Mississippi River steamboat reached Natchez from Pittsburgh.
- 1812—West Florida added to the Mississippi Territory.
- c. 1812—French Camp, Mississippi, or LeFleur’s Stand, established by Louis LeFleur.
- c. 1812—McLish Stand established in Tennessee by John McLish, a mixed-blood Chickasaw.
- 1812—Doaks Stand established in Mississippi by William Doak.

- 1813—General John Coffee marched a brigade of cavalry over the Trace from Nashville to Natchez.
- 1813—Andrew Jackson marched from Natchez to Nashville.
- c.1815—Steele’s Iron Works began to produce iron at a site near the trace in Tennessee.
- 1814-1815—The Natchez Trace was a vital link between Washington, D.C., and New Orleans when the latter was threatened by a British army and fleet.
- 1815—Jackson’s army returned to Tennessee via the Trace after the Battle of New Orleans.
- 1816—Chickasaw ceded all lands north of the Tennessee River to the United States.
- 1817—Mississippi became the 20th state.
- 1817—Alabama Territory organized.
- 1818—Choctaw Mission established by American Board of Commissioners for Foreign Missions.
- 1819—Alabama became the 22nd state.
- 1819—Gordon House built by John Gordon in Tennessee.
- 1820—Treaty of Doak’s Stand. Choctaw cede 5.5 million acres of land to the United States.
- 1820—Old Trace, between Buffalo River and Buzzard Roost Stand, abandoned as a post route.
- 1820—Monroe Station of the Chickasaw Mission established, Pontotoc County, Mississippi.
- 1820-30—Steamboat becomes usual method of travel from Natchez to Northeast.
- 1821—Bethel, a station of the Choctaw Mission, established.
- 1822—Old Trace between Brashears Stand and Red Bluff Stand abandoned as a post road.
- 1830—Treaty of Dancing Rabbit Creek. Choctaw ceded all lands east of the Mississippi River to the United States and agreed to move to Oklahoma.
- 1861-65—Civil War.
- 1863—Gen. Ulysses S. Grant’s Union army marched over Natchez Trace, Port Gibson to Raymond.
- 1864—Battles of Brices Cross Roads and Tupelo.
- 1864—Parts of Gen. John Hood’s Confederate army marched over Natchez Trace from the Tennessee-Alabama line to Nashville. After the battles of Nashville and Franklin, the battered remnants of Hood’s army retreated more than 200 miles along the Trace to Tupelo, Mississippi.
- 1909-1930—Route of Natchez Trace marked by Daughters of the American Revolution and other patriotic organizations.
- 1938—Natchez Trace Parkway created as a unit of the National Park System by Congress.

Territory of Mississippi 1798~1817



- | | |
|--|--|
| <p>Territory of Mississippi</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Established 7 May 1798 Enlarged 27 March 1804 Enlarged 14 May 1812 Survey Error Reduced 15 August 1817 Statehood 10 December 1817 | <p>Alabama Territory</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Established 15 August 1817 Statehood 14 December 1819 <p> Chickasaw Trail
(Federal Road, Natchez Trace)</p> |
|--|--|

Native American Tribes and European Explorers and Settlers

Mississippi was first inhabited by three major Indian tribes—the Chickasaws in the north, the Choctaws in the central and south, and the Natchez Indians in the southwest along the Mississippi River. Other smaller Indian tribes include the Biloxi, the Pascagoulas, the Tunicas, Chocchumas, and the Yazooos.

1540-1541: Spanish explorer Hernando De Soto is the first European to discover Mississippi and the Mississippi River.

1682: Robert Cavalier de La Salle navigates the Mississippi River and claims all lands drained by the river for France.

1699: Frenchman Pierre LeMoyne, Sieur D'Iberville, and his brother Jean Baptiste, Sieur D'Iberville, establish Fort Maurepas (present day Ocean Springs) as the first European settlement in Mississippi.

1716: Fort Rosalie is founded, the initial settlement for what becomes Natchez.

1763: Mississippi and other French territory are given to Great Britain after France is defeated in the French and Indian War.

1781 - 1783: After the American Revolution, in which Spain declared war against the British, the Treaty of Paris gives control of the southern half of Mississippi to Spain and the United States gains possession of the northern half.

1798: Spain withdraws from Mississippi. Mississippi is organized as an American territory with Winthrop Sargent, appointed by President Thomas Jefferson, as the first territorial governor.

1817: On December 10, Mississippi is admitted to the Union as the twentieth state by an Act of Congress. Washington, Mississippi, near Natchez, is the first capital. David Holmes is the first Governor.

1822: The state capital is moved to Lefleur's Bluff in the central part of the state and the City of Jackson is founded. The "Old Capitol" (now a museum) and the Governor's Mansion are built in the 1840's.

1830: The Treaty of Dancing Rabbit Creek is signed between the Choctaws and the federal government giving almost ten million acres to Mississippi.

1832: The Treaty of Pontotoc Creek cedes north Mississippi Chickasaw land to the federal government.

Stands Along the Natchez Trace Road



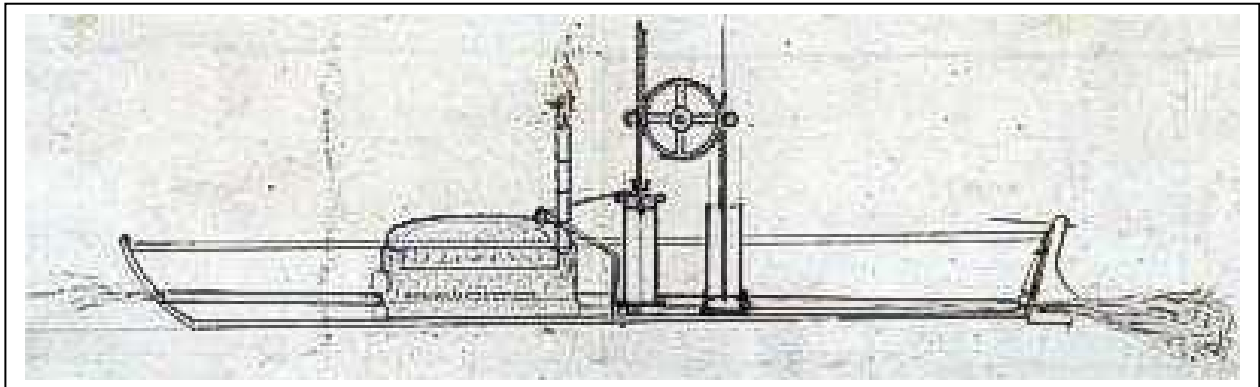
The History of Steamboats

By Mary Bellis

John Fitch and Robert Fulton. In 1769, the Scotsman James Watt patented an improved version of the steam engine that ushered in the Industrial Revolution. The idea of using steam power to propel boats occurred to inventors soon after the potential of Watt's new engine became known.

The era of the steamboat began in America in 1787 when John Fitch (1743-1798) made the first successful trial of a forty-five-foot steamboat on the Delaware River on August 22, 1787, in the presence of members of the Constitutional Convention. Fitch later built a larger vessel that carried passengers and freight between Philadelphia and Burlington, New Jersey.

John Fitch was granted his first United States patent for a steamboat on August 26, 1791. However, he was granted his patent only after a battle with James Rumsey over claims to the same invention. Both men had similar designs. (It should be noted that on February 1, 1788 the very first United States patent for a steamboat was issued to Briggs & Longstreet.)



John Fitch Design Sketch, ca. 1787

John Fitch constructed four different steamboats between 1785 and 1796 that successfully plied rivers and lakes and demonstrated, in part, the feasibility of using steam for water locomotion. His models utilized various combinations of propulsive force, including ranked paddles (patterned after Indian war canoes), paddle wheels, and screw propellers. While his boats were mechanically successful, Fitch failed to pay sufficient attention to construction and operating costs and was unable to justify the economic benefits of steam navigation. Robert Fulton (1765-1815) built his first boat after Fitch's death, and it was Fulton who became known as the "father of steam navigation."

Robert Fulton, who successfully built and operated a submarine (in France) in 1801, before turning his talents to the steamboat. Robert Fulton was accredited with turning the steamboat into a commercial success. On August 7, 1807, Robert Fulton's Clermont went from New York City to Albany making history with a 150-mile trip taking 32 hours at an average speed of about 5 miles-per-hour.



Steamship at Landing, between 1852 and 1860

In 1811, the "New Orleans" was built at Pittsburgh, designed by Robert Fulton and Robert Livingston. The New Orleans had a passenger and freight route on the lower Mississippi River. By 1814, Robert Fulton together with Edward Livingston (the brother of Robert Livingston), were offering regular steamboat and freight service between New Orleans, Louisiana and Natchez, Mississippi. Their boats traveled at the rates of eight miles per hour downstream and three miles per hour upstream.

In 1816, Henry Miller Shreve launched his steamboat *Washington*, which completed the voyage from New Orleans to Louisville, Kentucky in twenty-five days. Vessel design continued to improve, so that by 1853, the trip to Louisville took only four and one-half days.

Between 1814 and 1834, New Orleans steamboat arrivals increased from 20 to 1200 a year. The boats transported cargoes of cotton, sugar, and passengers. Throughout the east, steamboats contributed greatly to the economy by transporting agricultural and industrial supplies.



Mardi Gras Scenery, New Orleans, La. 1907

Source—Library of Congress panoramic photograph, reproduction number: LC-USZ62-583

Steam propulsion and railroads developed separately, but it was not until railroads adopted the technology of steam that they began to flourish. By the 1870s, railroads had begun to supplant steamboats as the major transporter of both goods and passengers.

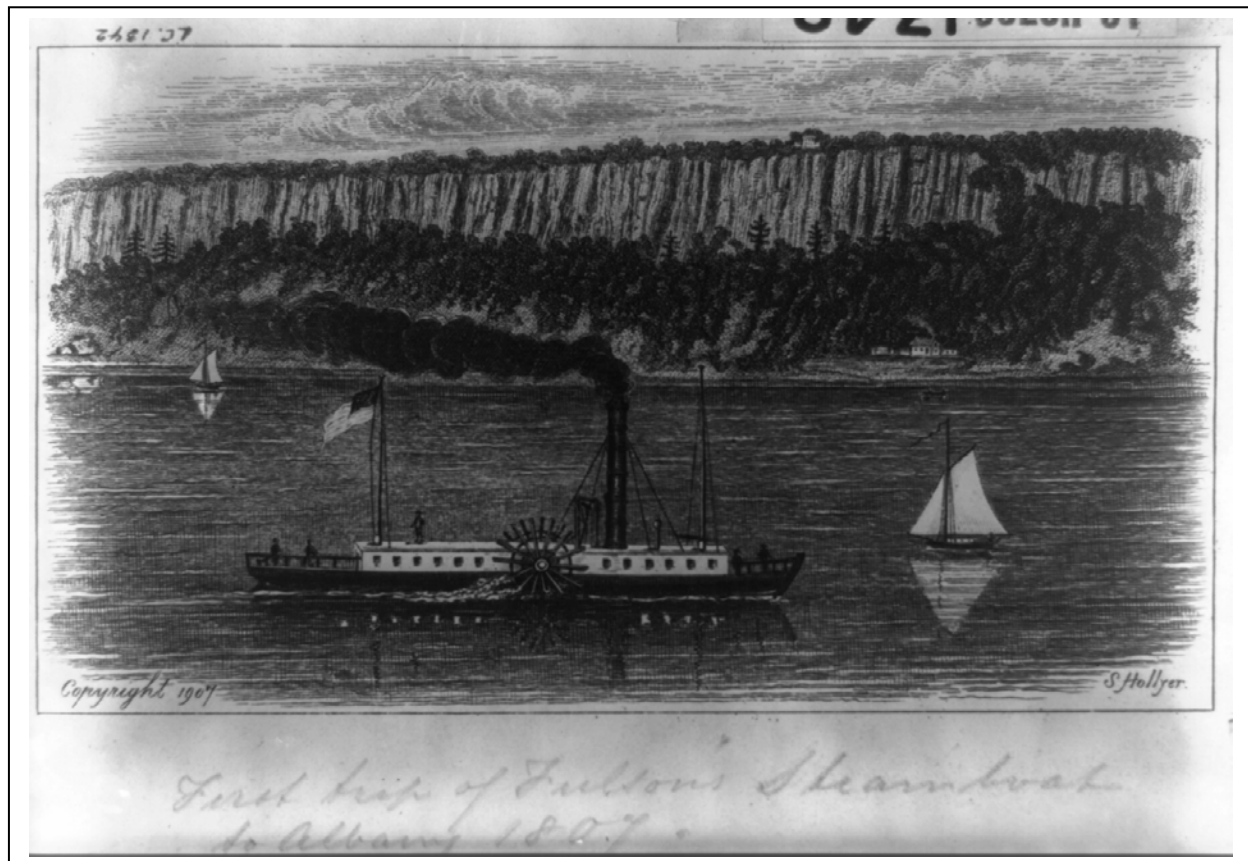


Inventor Robert Fulton

Robert Fulton was born in Lancaster County, Pennsylvania, on November 14, 1765. His early education was limited, but he displayed considerable artistic talent and inventiveness. At the age of 17, he moved to Philadelphia, where he established himself as a painter. Advised to go abroad because of ill health, he moved to London in 1786. His lifelong interest in scientific and engineering developments, especially in the application of steam engines, supplanted art as a career. Fulton secured English patents for machines with a wide variety of functions. He was also interested in canal systems. In 1797, European conflicts led Fulton to begin work on weapons against piracy, including submarines, mines, and torpedoes.

He soon moved to France, where he worked on canal systems. In 1800, he built a successful "diving boat," which he named the Nautilus. Neither the French nor the English were sufficiently interested to induce Fulton to continue his submarine design. His interest in building a steamboat continued. In 1802, Robert Fulton contracted with Robert Livingston to construct a steamboat for use on the Hudson River; over the next four years, he built prototypes in Europe.

He returned to New York in 1806. On August 17, 1807, the *Clermont*, Robert Fulton's first American steamboat, left New York for Albany, inaugurating the first commercial steamboat service in the world. Robert Fulton died on February 24, 1815, and lies buried in Old Trinity Churchyard, New York City.



First trip of Fulton's steamboat *Clermont*, to Albany, 1807. Samuel Hollyer (etching)
Reproduction Number: LC-USZ62-1342 (b&w film copy neg.)
Source: Library of Congress Prints and Photographs Division Washington, D.C.

The Natchez Trace Parkway in Mississippi



Natchez to Tupelo - 276 Miles

The Natchez Trace Parkway stretches diagonally through Mississippi, cuts a corner through Alabama, then winds to an end in Tennessee, following an unspoiled route through lush forests, past sparkling streams and into the heart of America's frontier past.

More than 400 miles long and 8,000 years old, this scenic path was originally "traced out" by buffalo, then trekked by Indians and finally trampled into a rough road by traders, missionaries and early settlers. By the late 1820s, the speed of steamboats made travel along the Trace impractical, and the once busy road dissolved into the brush. In 1909, the Daughters of the American Revolution launched a campaign to mark the Old Trace. Their work culminated in the modern Natchez Trace Parkway, a national scenic highway maintained by the National Park Service.

The southern penchant for sharing good tales preserved the colorful legends surrounding the Trace, and historic markers along the way recap the route's adventurous history. Lively cities, picturesque town squares and peaceful nature trails beckon from just off the paved road. Modern Trace travelers encounter wildlife, enjoy natural beauty free of commercial traffic and add their own adventures to the Natchez Trace's storied history.

The journey begins in Natchez, best known for its palatial antebellum mansions and bed and breakfast inns. The Parkway winds north past the ghost town of Rocky Springs to Jackson, Mississippi's capital city, and Ridgeland, home of the Mississippi Crafts Center. Follow the Trace as it hugs the scenic shoreline of the Ross Barnett Reservoir for some eight miles, then take a break from the road on the trails of the tranquil Cypress Swamp.

The frontier-flavored towns of Kosciusko and French Camp have welcomed Trace travelers since pioneer days. Here you can see the church where Oprah Winfrey gave her first public performance, shop for souvenirs made by a local folk artist, watch a working sorghum mill and sample homemade molasses.

At the Natchez Trace Visitors Center in Tupelo, tour a museum of artifacts and view an audiovisual program on the history of the Old Trace, and the development of the modern Parkway. Tupelo is best known as the birthplace of Elvis Presley. The humble two-room house where the King of Rock and Roll was born attracts fans from around the world. Throughout your Natchez Trace adventure, bear in mind the words found on a historical marker near Rocky Springs, which urge, "Walk down the shaded trail and leave your prints in the dust, not for others to see, but for the road to remember."



Natchez Trace Parkway Bridge Nashville, Tennessee

The Natchez Trace Parkway Bridge near Nashville is the nation's first segmentally constructed concrete arch bridge. Spanning 502 m (1,648 feet), the double arch structure offers motorists a view from 47m (155 feet) above the valley floor and is one of the final links in the Natchez Trace Parkway project. The bridge's arches are designed to support the deck without evenly spaced spandrel columns, resulting in a picturesque, unencumbered appearance.



Designer: FIGG Engineering Group
Contractor: PCL Civil Constructors, Inc.



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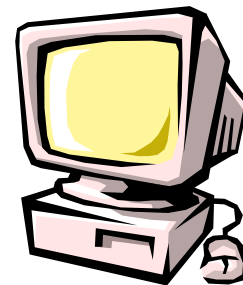
Ancient Architects of the Mississippi:
<http://www.cr.nps.gov/aad/feature/feature.htm>

Natchez Trace—a student-friendly site with clickable maps:
<http://www.natcheztrace.com/parkway>

Scenic photos and highlights of Natchez Trace and nearby communities in Mississippi:
<http://www.scenictrace.com/>

Natchez Trace Parkway milepost list:
http://freespace.virgin.net/john.cletheroe/usa_can/scenroad/ntp2.htm

Natchez Trace Parkway facts and information:
http://www.nationalparks.com/natchez_trace_parkway.htm



The Natchez Road—a list of stands and towns before the 1830s:

<http://www.tngenweb.org/maps/tnttrace.htm>

Natchez Trace Parkway Mileposts 0-100:

<http://www.searchus.com/parkway/portgibson.html>

Mississippi Indian Tribes and Almanac, Mississippi Library Commission:

<http://www.mlc.lib.ms.us/trivia/almanac.htm>

Mississippi Band of Choctaw Indians; history timeline, treaties, legends and crafts:

<http://www.choctaw.org/>

Grand Village of the Natchez Indians, Mississippi Department of Archives and History:

<http://www.mdah.state.ms.us/hprop/gvni.html>

Natchez Indians--Lesson Plan:

<http://mshistory.k12.ms.us/features/feature1/natchezindians.html>

National Park Service National Register of Historic Places, Indian Mounds of Mississippi:

<http://www.cr.nps.gov/NR/travel/mounds/>

Origins of the Natchez Trace, a historical summary with links to more detailed information:

http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Natchez_Trace

People of the 1800s Natchez Trace—short biographies

<http://www.roark-family.org/History/NatchezTrace.asp>

Public Acts of the Seventy-third Congress, second session, 1934. Congressional authorization of the Natchez Trace as a part of the National Park Service.

http://digital.library.okstate.edu/kappler/Vol5/html_files/v5p0368.html



Video Resources:

America's Historic Trails: *The River Road & The Natchez Trace* with Tom Bodett. Questar, Inc., Chicago Illinois, ISBN: 1-56855-249-1

Natchez Trace—A Trace of History

Spirit—A Journey in Dance, Drums and Song, Back Row Productions, Polygram Video, 1998

Music Resources:

Trail of Tears, A World Symphony; Lee Johnson. Intersound Records #3722, 1998

The Old Natchez Trace, Pinewood Music, Nashville, TN, 1995

Front Porch Favorites, Native Ground Music, Asheville, NC, 1995



Long Journey

How would you like to travel along one of the oldest roads in the world?

It's a long journey – a journey that reaches back in geologic time where you'll see hundreds of thousands of years of activity during the ice age as loess, the wind-blown soil carried from far in the west, is deposited along the eastern banks of the Mississippi River, and you'll see the beauty of nature springing from its richness.

It's a long journey – a journey that spans tens of thousands of years, following the beasts of the wilderness, and well over 10,000 years of human activity. You'll see Indian temple mounds, and Indian village sites that existed as long ago as 8,000 years BC, and used not just for days or weeks or years. Their use spanned far beyond the decades or the centuries; some of these sites were occupied by human beings long before the building of the ancient pyramids of Egypt and used over thousands of years.

It's a long journey – a journey that will take you through the struggle of a colony to pull itself out of the wilderness, to become a great nation built upon the ruins of great nations – a journey with ties to Indian tribes, and the French, and the Spanish, and the British – along a national road that flourished before the time of steamboats and carried settlers and preachers, post riders and travelers, warriors and armies – a road that linked a new nation with its outpost beyond the vast and treacherous wilderness.

It's a long journey – a journey of pioneers through the woodlands and of pioneers on flatboats and keelboats and pioneers onboard the steamboats that ushered in the era of “King Cotton.” You'll see this vital road wither and die in the era of riverboat travel.

I'm inviting you to take a virtual trip, to travel one of America's most amazing and historical roadways stretching 450 miles between Natchez, Mississippi, and Nashville, Tennessee. It's known today as the Natchez Trace Parkway and is commemorated as part of our National Park System. And as you take this journey with us you'll begin to see our place in the ever-changing world of nature and its peaceful, sometimes violent struggle between the water and the land, between the land and trees and plants and animals – and man.

Note: This passage may be read aloud while music is playing so that students may begin to establish a context for the land, the animals and the people who occupied it over time.
Source: <http://members.aol.com/RoadMusic/thomfilm.nthistor.htm>

Long Journey Speech Chorus

Directions: This speech chorus may include a different soloist for each quatrain. Separate individuals may be designated to read parts 1, 2 or 3. Speakers should be able to see each other so that they can stay together as they say their lines. Practice several times for best results.

Speakers	Text
Solo	It's a long journey
Solo	Natchez Trace Parkway
Solo + parts	450 miles through 1) Alabama, 2) Mississippi, 3) Tennessee
Solo	Natchez, Mississippi to Nashville, Tennessee
Solo	It's a long journey
All	10,000 years of human activity
Solo	Indian villages 8000 years before Christ
Solo	Long before the ancient pyramids of Egypt
Solo	It's a long journey
Solo	1) Native Americans, 2) French, 3) Spanish, 1) British
Solo	Settlers, preachers, travelers, armies
Solo, all repeat	Robbers (repeat), kidnappers (repeat), murderers (repeat)
Solo	It's a long journey
Parts	1) Flatboats, 2) keelboats, 3) steamboats
Solo	Struggle between land and water
Solo + parts	Struggle between (1) land...2) water... 3) animals...
Solo, all repeat	Man...(solo, then all repeat and fade) man...man...man
All	It's a long journey (pause between last 4 lines)
All	Natchez Trace
All	450 miles
All	A journey in time
All	It's a long journey (repeat 2 times)



Why we dance:


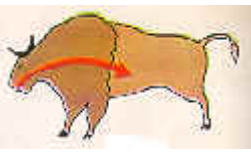




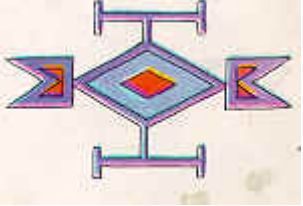




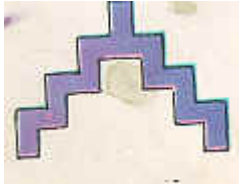







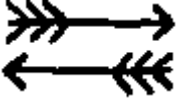

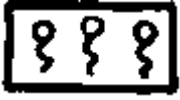







to dance is to pray,

to pray is to heal,

to heal is to give,

to give is to live,

to live is to dance.

					
horse	buffalo	lightning	deer	design	design
					
design	design	man	woman	bear tracks	mountains
					
rain	sun	tipi	warrior	clear weather	rain
					
happy	war	summer	winter	sun	star
					
camp	Great Spirit	eagle	fish	turtle	

Native American Symbols

Source: <http://www.runningdeerslonghouse.com/webdoc124.htm>

I saw the long narrow loaf of bread fall out of his bedroll. I watched the young white man eat, and when he walked his horse into the woods to hide him—I ran for the bread. I was so hungry I ate a piece and clutched the rest of the loaf to my chest. As I turned to run, I saw him standing in front of me with the pistol. I threw the bread at his feet—even took the bread out of my mouth to offer it back and I pleaded, “Please don’t shoot me—I won’t eat any more.”

Would he believe that I was Hannah McAllister, my mother a Choctaw and my father a white man, a doctor? Would he believe that a gang on the Natchez Road kidnapped me, cut my beautiful braid, put this dress on me and used me for bait to make travelers stop? When the travelers stopped to help me...my kidnappers would rob them and sometimes kill them.

“Please mister, can I come with you? If that gang of outlaws finds me, they will kill me. Are you an outlaw?” (I would find out—his name is Zeb, his horse’s name is Christmas, and he was traveling down the Road to Natchez to try and find his grandfather.)

The gang that kidnapped me is looking for me, and the men who stole Zeb’s grandfather’s horses and sold them are looking for Zeb.

The first river crossing came at Duck River (mileage 408). Zeb said, “We’ll float across on Christmas, just like we were swimming.”

“BUT I CAN’T SWIM!!!!!!”—I screamed. The water floated up my legs and I struggled to hold on to the horse’s mane. I lost hold—my head was going under and I gasped for air. When I finally came up there was a tree trunk, and Zeb yelled for me to grab the trunk. I did, and he swam toward me and threw me up on the bank. I pulled myself up struggling against the mud—I cried and cried—I was so afraid.

This was only one event on the Natchez Road. Three days into the trip I would sing *Happy Birthday* to myself—I would turn eleven years old. For two weeks Zeb and I would ride together, eating stale bread and what little food we could find. We fought robbers who tried to steal Christmas. Finally, we would reach the Choctaw territory on the Southern Trace, but my parents have given up on my returning—they are no longer with the tribe.

Professional Development Experience Outline

I. Introduction and Credits

National Geographic and Mississippi Arts Commission

II. Interactive/Interdisciplinary Units

Interdisciplinary connections (frameworks)

Interactive teaching strategies modeled throughout the mini-track

Multiple intelligences

III. Footprints in the Dust (use music)

Long Journey—Narrative Story (Trace transparencies accompany story)

It's A Long Journey—Reader's Theatre

IV. Prehistory of Natchez Trace through 1797 (prehistoric timeline & photos)

Why We Dance—use Native American sign language with poem

- All stand in circle; practice mirroring as a warm-up
- Leader: remain in circle and sign poem
- Leader: sign and say poem
- Group: sign and say poem
- Divide group: center group in circle will speak poem; 5 small groups take one line each to create movement for the line
- Leader: describe concrete/abstract gestures for movement groups
- Groups create the movements and practice speaking *Why We Dance*
- Circle: re-group and teach/mirror movements
- Whole group performs poem with movements (use music)

V. Great Days of the Natchez Trace—1798-1820. (Show Map and Stands images)

Preparation: instructions for moving in a box

Creative Visualization Story (use music)

Pantomime Demonstration: Travel on the Natchez Trace (buffalo, horses, flatboat, walking, riding horses, motorcycle)

What are you doing on the Natchez Trace? (Improvisation and pantomime)

VI. The decline of the Natchez Trace (1820-1930s)

Describe political, economic, commercial uses; postal service, steamboat invention, ending with modern day uses.

VII. Footprints as metaphor (use music)

- Individual **quick-write**, “What aspect of your life represents a footprint?”
- **Share** footprint metaphors with a neighbor
- **Make** a footprint that represents your metaphor (provide art supplies)

VIII. Walk Down the Trail (use music)

Participants form a circle around a cloth “trail” and cloth “river”.

- Each participant places “footprint” on the cloth while saying, “I offer my footprint of (whatever they believe they contribute) to my community,” or something similar.
- All say, “Walk down the trail” quote in unison

IX. Debrief: discuss strategies, teacher guide, use of music, Q & A, closure