



The Great Wagon Road: From Philadelphia to the South ([American trails series])

Parke, Jr. Rouse

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The Great Wagon Road from Philadelphia to the South was first published by McGraw Hill as part of its "Great American Trails" series, edited by A. B. Guthrie, Jr. It was instantly recognized for its insight into the birth of the American South from the early 1700's until the Civil War. Historian Carl Bridenbaugh wrote that "In the last sixteen years of the colonial era, southbound traffic along the Great Philadelphia Wagon Road was numbered in tens of thousands; it was the most heavily travelled road in all America..." and Joshua Fry and Peter Jefferson marked its route on their map of Virginia in 1754 as "the great Wagon Road from the Yadkin River through Virginia to Philadelphia distant 435 miles."

Over the years the Road led countless Scotch-Irish, Germanic, and English settlers southward from Philadelphia to settle the Appalachian uplands from Pennsylvania to Georgia. Over the Road went the progenitors of John Sevier of Tennessee, John Caldwell Calhoun of South Carolina, Sam Houston of Texas, Cyrus McCormick of Virginia, and other Americans.

Countless cities and towns from Philadelphia to Augusta, Georgia, owe their beginning to early camp sites along the Road that grew into tavern locations, then into county seats, and then into centers of agriculture and industry. Today such Wagon Road towns as Lancaster, York, and Gettysburg, Pennsylvania; Harper's Ferry, West Virginia; Winchester, Newmarket, Harrisonburg, Staunton, Lexington, and Rocky Mount, Virginia; Winston-Salem, Salisbury, and Charlotte, North Carolina; and Newberry and Camden, South Carolina have grown along the onetime settler's trail.

The Great Wagon Road also tells of Daniel Boone's pioneering from Big Lick, Virginia-now Roanoke-into the territory of Kentucky. Boone Expedited western settlement by cutting a trail across Cumberland Gap on Virginia's frontier to lead settlers in Revolutionary years into dangerous Indian country.

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