

Photo of the Month

Roadwork



Road Building Crew Near Electric Springs Hotel
(Neg. # N003301, Vera Key Estate)

During the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries in Benton County most roads were primitive affairs. There were, of course, roads that the government had built for mail and stagecoach routes and these received some kind of regular maintenance.

One of the obstacles to road maintenance was the opposition to a state road tax for property owners along the routes to be improved. This opposition can be illustrated by an item in the April 17, 1919 Rogers Democrat noting that:

“At New Hope Church, one mile south of Rogers, on the night of April 12, 1919, a road meeting of magnitude was held...My dear friend all of this came about or this meeting was born because waking up one morning like a meadow-lark in the morning as happy as we could be we found later in the day that a sly fox in the night had enacted a law bonding our farmers, our homes without our consent or without our knowledge for the purpose of what? For the purpose of building roads, perhaps.”

With inadequate funding, much road maintenance is done by volunteers. Many of the roads were not only built by, but also maintained by the people who used them day to day.