

National No. 3 (Bob Ciminel ©2012)

Continuing eastward past Cowden Siding, we come to Muse Junction and the Muse Spur, built in 1921 to serve the National Mining Company's National No. 3 Mine (National Mining was a subsidiary of the United States Steel Company). National Mining owned and operated National No. 3 until December 29, 1942 when the deed was transferred to the H. C. Frick Coke Company, which operated the mine until at least 1947. When the mine closed in 1955 it was owned by U.S. Steel, but when it was transferred from Frick to USS is not known.

National No. 3 was a large deep mine with two shafts, one for hoisting coal and the other for supplies and waste removal. The shafts were about 230 feet deep.

The miners' village at National No. 3 was called Muse and was quite large in comparison to the other mines in the area. The company sold the homes at Muse to the miners in 1947.

This table shows the production records for National No. 3 between 1931 and 1944:

Year	Tons	Days Worked	Employees
1931	1,029,533	264	688
1932	627,128	177	594
1934	866,805	246	866
1936	1,131,700	278	960
1944	1,294,108	304	904

In 1949, National No. 3 went on a three-day work week in response to orders from UMW president John L. Lewis since they were working without a contract. The miners were making about \$50 a week with most of the money going to the company store.

National No. 3 was closed in July 1954, putting over 600 men out of work. As the tipple and tracks were being scrapped, the United Mine Workers Union insisted there were 5 million tons of coal remaining to be mined. Later reports say there were only 1.5 million tons of coal left. Because of public uproar and meddling by various government officials, U. S. Steel stopped dismantling the tipple in December 1954, but the mine was eventually sealed and abandoned in 1955. At the time, National No. 3 was the only industry in Cecil Township and paid about \$9,000 a year in property taxes. The economic impact of the mine's closing was huge.

A former resident of Muse has a web site containing photos and a description of what it was like to live and work at National No. 3 in the 1930s. The site is called *Muse Slate Dump* and can be viewed at: <http://museslatedump.org/>. (A tip of the hat to Rich Giecek for providing the link.)

Here is an excerpt from the web site:

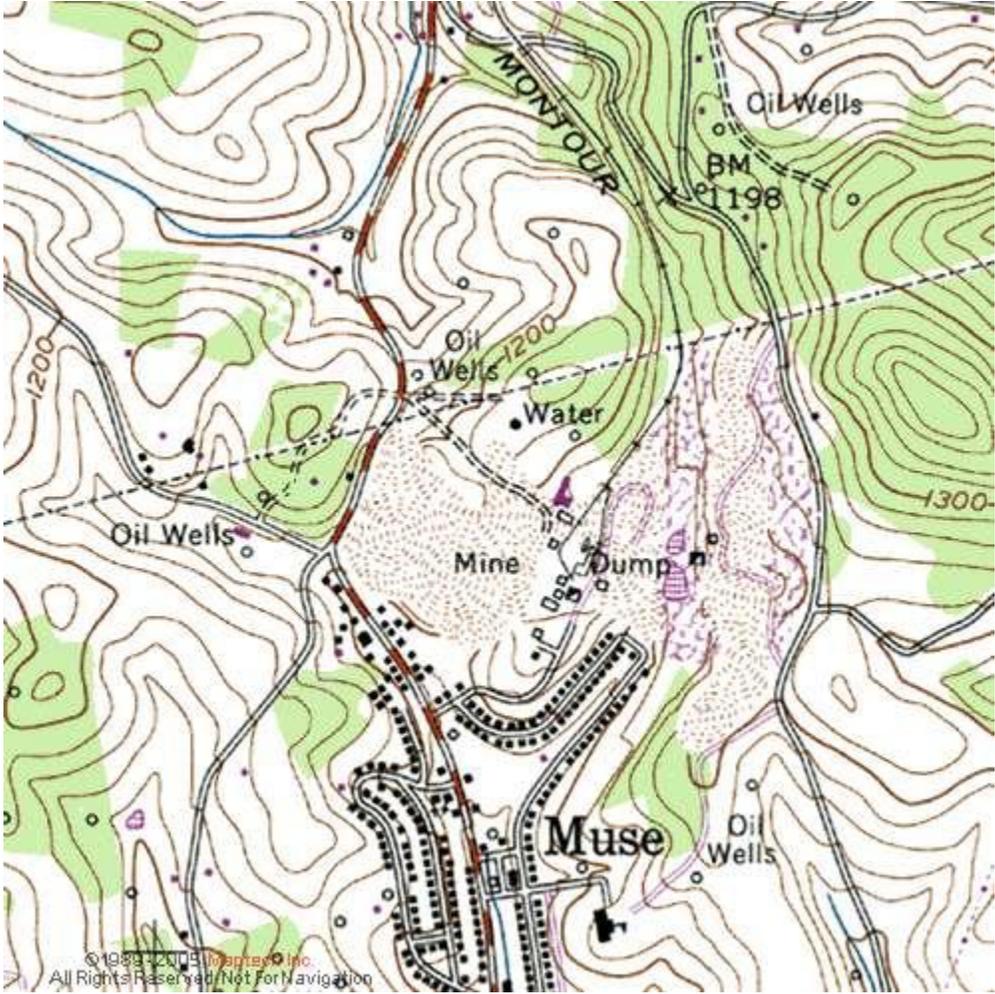
**Two large mine tipples (structures that held the elevators) stood out on top of the hills. One tippie was situated near the bath house so the miners could change into work clothes and go down the "cage" which the elevators were called, and get to the bottom of the mine to go to work. A string of empty coal cars, called a mantrip, were waiting on the bottom of the mine to take them to their workplace further into the mine. The second tippie was used to load coal into coal cars outside the mine. Railroad tracks were laid to the mine tippie. A coal burning steam engine pulled coal cars to and from the mine. Waste products such as slate poor coal and other waste products were dumped all around the mine creating what was called a slate dump.**

The following maps and images illustrate the National No. 3 Mine.

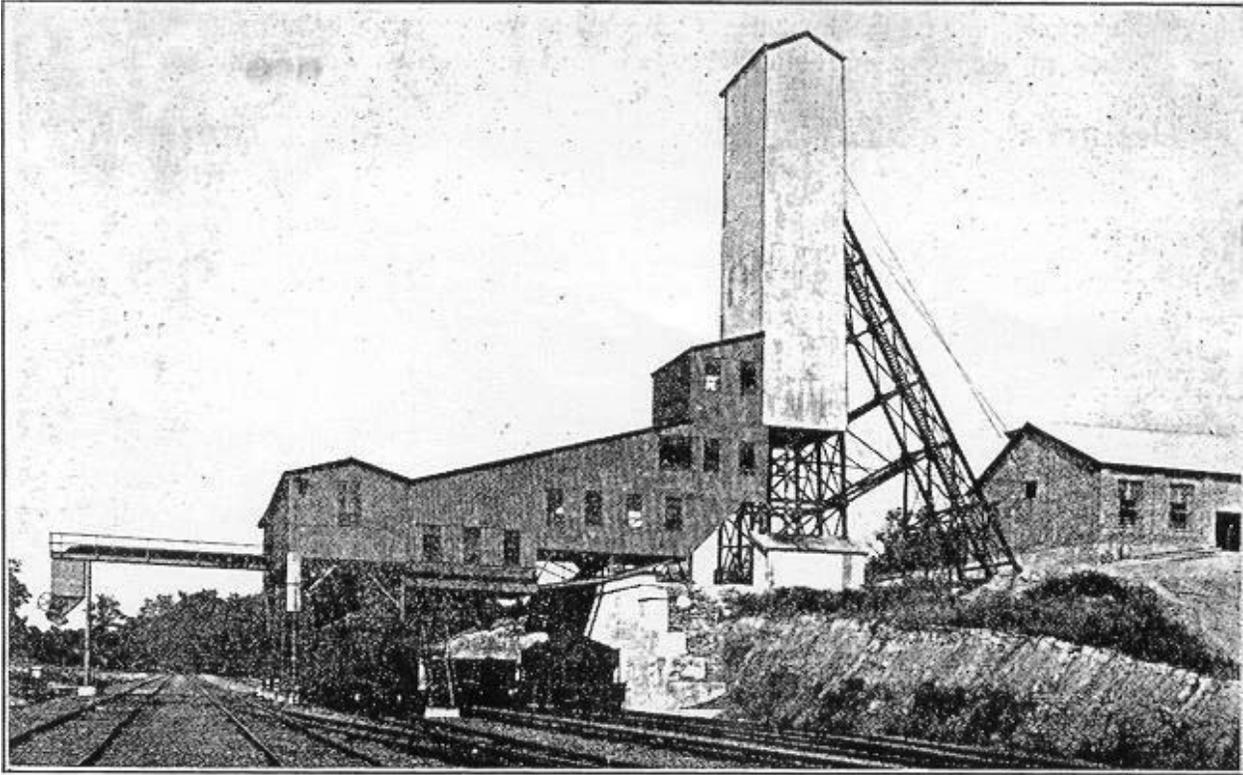
The site of National No. 3 in 2010 with the community of Muse at the lower left. One of the mine's waste dumps is visible at bottom center.



This topographic map shows the extent of the waste dumps at National No. 3. The original shaft is located to the right of the word "Dump" and the supply and waste shaft is located below the letter "D." The Montour Railroad spur from Muse Junction comes in from top center.



This photo from c.1923 shows the production tibble and hoist house at National No. 3 shortly following construction. The supply and waste shaft were to the right of the production tibble.



(Photo courtesy of [museslatedump.org](http://museslatedump.org) ©2012)

This 1939 aerial view shows the coal tippie on the right and the waste hoist to the right of the waste pile. Note how far the tracks for the empty yard extend beyond the tippie; an indication of the large amounts of coal that were shipped from the mine.



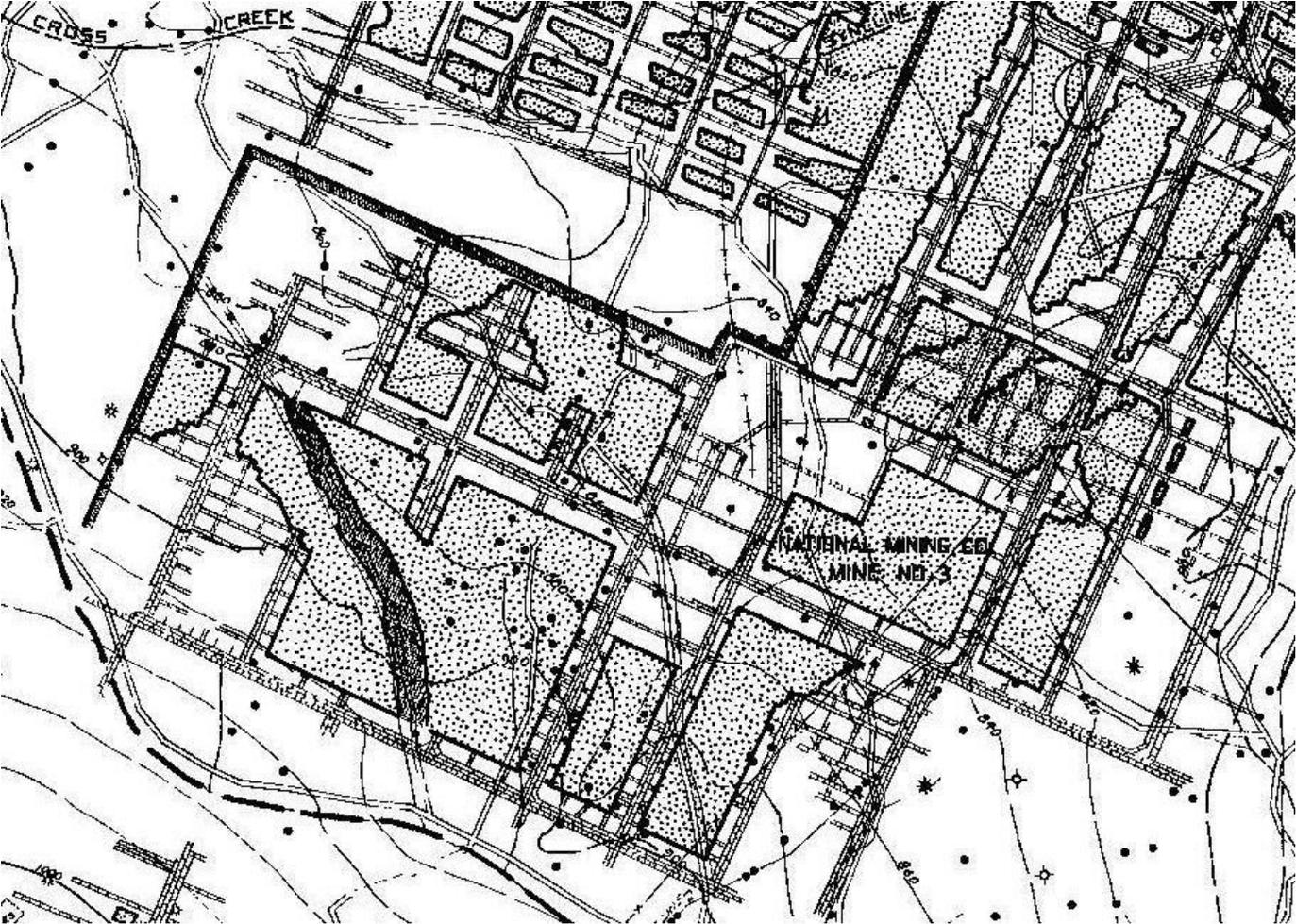
This 1958 view was taken after the tippie was dismantled. The buildings to the right of the waste pile indicate that the old mine site was still being used for light industry. Note that the Montour tracks appear to be still active in that area.



By 1967, the waste piles were being excavated for either red dog or fill.



This 1930s era WPA maps shows that the coal seam dipped upward from 810 feet to 900 feet as the National No. 3 workings extended to the west. The unmined area on the left parallels Route 980. Why that coal was left there is a mystery.



The following photographs are from the [www.coalcampusa](http://www.coalcampusa) web site created by Chris DellaMea who has done extensive research and photography in the Appalachian coal fields.

This is a photo of the ruins of Montour No. 3.



(Photograph by Chris DellaMea ©2012)

This is a photograph of the former company store at National No. 3. In the early 1970s, a railroad salvage company operated a grocery store in the building and the author and his wife would make bi-weekly trips out to Muse to purchase bulk quantities of non-perishable food.



(Photograph by Chris DellMea ©2012)

In September 1980, Gene Schaeffer photographed a Montour crew servicing the Chemicals & Solvents Company facility on the old National No. 3 site. The Montour had two tracks at this location, one for box cars shown here and another for tank cars behind the brick building.



Montour 75  
Box Car Track - Muse  
September 1980  
Gene P. Schaeffer Portrait

(Photograph by Gene Schaeffer ©2012)

Another photo by Gene Schaeffer taken in June 1980 shows a Montour crew departing the C&S spur on its way west to Muse Junction. Montour engineer R. J. Lane is standing on the caboose while P&LE engineer Jim Stanley exercises his seniority rights by in SW9 #73. Note the old oil well storage tank and pump jack on the right.

