



**The Lincoln Highway
National Museum & Archives
102 Old Lincoln Way West
Galion, Ohio 44833**



(202) 536-5329

1913--Lincoln Highway Signs--1928
"Blazing the Big Trail"

The "Spirit of the Lincoln Way" was infectious.

Once the Official Route was Announced on September 14, 1913
Patriots all across the country set out to mark the Glorious Way.

The enthusiasum was so great that within a few months
most of the Highway was marked.

At first there were a variety of methods used.

Metal Signs, Painted Fence Posts & Telephone poles,
and everything else in between.

You name it they used it.

While initially this was considered progress,
very soon it began to look like a "Barber Pole".

This concerned Lincoln Highway Officials and soon thereafter
they devised a plan to standardize signage on the Highway.

It was both an expensive proposition and a logistical nightmare.
Right Arrows, Left Arrows, 30 miles to Omaha, 200 Miles to Salt Lake,
not to mention vandals, thieves, and target shooters.

Each year they put up literally thousand and thousands of signs
only to come back the next year and find 30 to 50 percent missing or damaged.

I think you get the picture...

Then in 1928 as the days of the named Highways came to an end,
The Lincoln Highway Association working with Boy Scouts
came up with a daring plan.

To place 3400 Concrete Markers across the country
and secure The Lincoln Highway
as a Living and Perputual Memorial
to the Great Abraham Lincoln-All in one Day.

The following is the most complete pictoral
history of Lincoln highway signs anywhere in the World.

If you have any corrections or additions
please contact me at you convience.

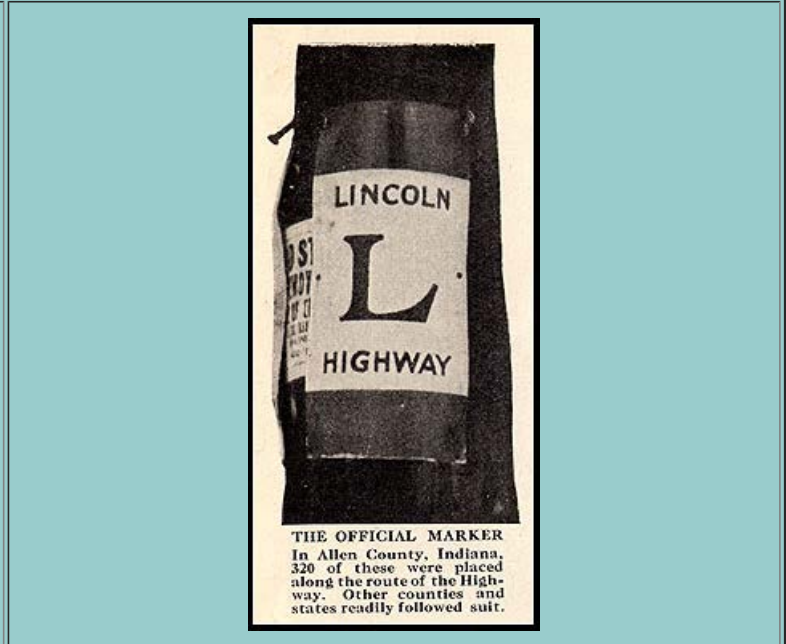
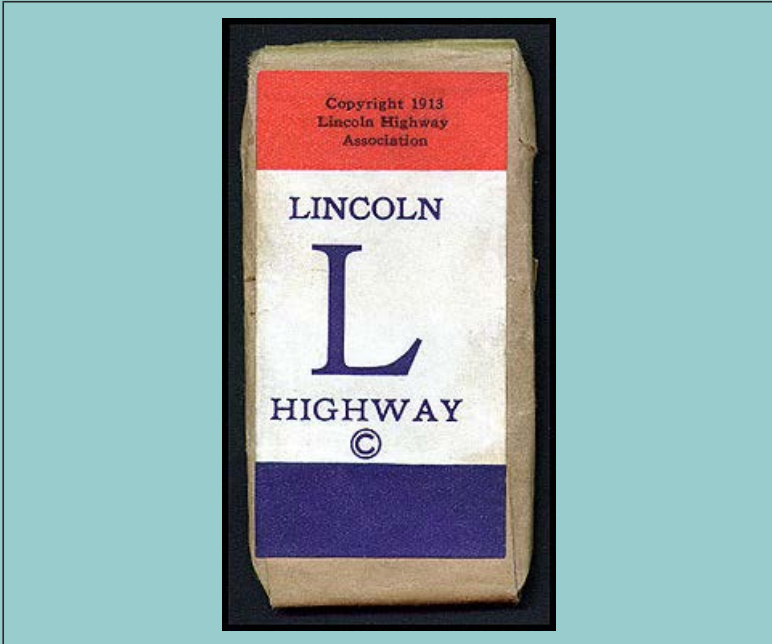
**Proclamation of Route
September 14, 1913**

**"Blazing the Big Trail"
The Evolution of
Lincoln Highway Road Markers**

**Perpetual Memorial
September 1, 1928**



1913-The Evolution of Lincoln Highway Road Signs-1928



Lincoln Highway Sticker
Date Used: 1913
Size: 1 x 2 1/2"
Material: Printed with glue back
Manufacturer: Unknown
Quantity Made: Unknown
Quantity Known: Unknown
Sponsor: Lincoln Highway Association
Original Location: Copyright application
Source: Studebaker Museum, South Bend, IN

Comments: This packet of stickers is in the Copyright File

Official Lincoln Highway Marker
Used 1913-
Size: 11 x 21
Material: Metal with Enamel
Manufacturer: Unknown
Quantity Made: Unknown
Quantity Known: 0
Sponsor: Lincoln Highway Association
Original Location: Allen County, Indian
Source: Leslie's Weekly-December 25, 1913, Page 614

Comments: To my knowledge, this is the earliest dated photo

submitted to the US Patent Office by The Lincoln Highway Assoc. and was prepared by the Packard Legal Department. These stickers were also used in the 1913 Membership Packet, **The Lincoln Highway-its Ideals, Plans and Purposes.**

of a Lincoln Highway Sign. It appears to be metal with enamel. While it says Allen Co., Indiana I suspect it was Allen Co., Ohio. W. F. Coan, Pres. of the Clinton National Bank & LH State Cousul set the first official sign near Clinton, IA on September 15, 1913.



Lincoln Highway Sign

Date Used: 1914-1915

Size: ***

Material: Painted on Galvanized Metal

Manufacturer: Unknown

Quantity Made: Unknown

Quantity Known: 1

Sponsor: California State Auto Association

Original Location: Lincoln Highway-West Coast

Source: Private Collection-California

Comments: Originally I thought this sign was not an original, but a more modern copy since it wasn't Metal and Enamel.

It is quite crude with stencils or stencil like letters used.

The photo on the right shows this style in use on August 25, 1915.

Further research reveals these signs were provided by the

California State Auto Assoc. and used as early as March 1914

by The Oakland Commercial Club on a signing trip to Lake Tahoe.

This is the only known example of this style.

Lincoln Highway Sign

Date Used: 1914-1915

Size: ***

Material: Painted on Galvanized Metal

Manufacturer: Unknown

Quantity Made: Unknown

Quantity Known: 1

Sponsor: California State Auto Association

Original Location: End of the Lincoln Highway

Source: Edward Holden Album-LHA

Comments: This photo has been cropped from a much larger image and shows the claiming of Lincoln Park as the End of the

Lincoln Highway on August 26, 1915, one day after arriving at

The Panama Pacific International Exposition and ending a 4 month

trip from NYC to SF across the Lincoln Highway taking moving

pictures of all the towns for a film called "See America First".

The sign is the same as the one on the left,

down to the small stencil lettering on the bottom.



Lincoln Highway Sign

Date Used: 1915

Size: ***

Material: Painted on Stamped Copper

Manufacturer: Unknown

Quantity Made: Unknown

Quantity Known: 1

Sponsor: Lincoln Highway Association

Original Location: Unknown

Source: California State Automobile Association

Comments: This sign came to the CSAA in a large collection of vintage road signs. It is the only known sample of this style and its date was unknown until I remembered the photo at the right. This clearly dates it as August 1915 and quite possibly is the sign on the right. What makes it unique is the stamped copper and painted overlay.

Lincoln Highway Sign

Date Used: 1915

Size: ***

Material: Painted on Stamped Copper

Manufacturer: Unknown

Quantity Made: Unknown

Quantity Known: 1

Sponsor: Lincoln Highway Association

Original Location: 1915 PPIE

Source: San Francisco Examiner-August 26, 1915, Page 5

Comments: This is the sign H.C. Osterman and E. J. Philips show upon arriving at the PPIE August 25, 1915. It was declared Lincoln Highway Day and a grand and glorious celebration followed

with the special presentation of a Gold PPIE Medal. Never thought much about it being embossed until I saw the one on the left. Clearly they are the same style if not the same sign.



Lincoln Highway Sign

Date Used: 1915

Size: ***

Material: Enamel on Metal

Manufacturer: Unknown

Quantity Made: Unknown

Quantity Known: 0

Sponsor: Lincoln Highway Association

Original Location: 1915 End of Lincoln Highway

Source: San Francisco Chronicle-September 15, 1915, Page 9

Comments: On August 26, 1915 Lincoln Highway Officials planted the American Flag and claimed Lincoln Park as the End of the Lincoln Highway. Soon there after on September 14, 1915 a more permanent sign was erected during an elaborate dedication ceremony in conjunction with the CSAA that featured, Miss Helen Hughson as the California Lincoln Highway Girl. Speeches were made, roses were thrown and the sign was erected. The ceremony was at 2 pm with speeches one minute or 250 words. A short film of the ceremony is available on the web.

[Click Here to View](#)

The Diamond on the top is the CSAA Symbol.

The marker was to be temporary until a more suitable granite marker could be designed.



Lincoln Highway Sign

Date Used: 1916

Size: ***

Material: Enamel on Metal

Manufacturer: Unknown

Quantity Made: Unknown

Quantity Known: 0

Sponsor: Lincoln Highway Association

Original Location: 1916 End of Lincoln Highway

Source: San Francisco Examiner-June 16, 1916, Page 6

Comments: This picture shows Miss Grace Jarbou linking The Exposition Trail and the Lincoln Highway.

Notice the sign is different than the one erected less than a year earlier. The ceremony welded together San Francisco and San Diego as Exposition Cities.

While several attempts have been made over the years to erect a Lincoln Statue or other suitable granite marker at the end of the Lincoln Highway the only one to ever make it past the talking stage or drawing board was the 3400 Concrete Markers erected all across the country in 1928 by the Boy Scouts.



The Sparton Sign-Posting Car Which Recently Completed the Task of Marking the Lincoln Highway.

Lincoln Highway Sign

Date Used: 1915-

Size: ***

Material: Enamel on Steel

Manufacturer: Unknown

Quantity Made: Unknown

Quantity Known: 3

Sponsor: Lincoln Highway Association

Original Location: Utah

Source: Lincoln Highway Museum-Jefferson, Iowa

Utah Historical Society-Salt Lake City, Utah

Comments: This original Lincoln Highway Sign was one of several found in the Barn by David Bush in the mid to late 1990's.

Mr. Bush has since passed away but, lived all his live on Bush's Ranch in Utah just East of Fisher Pass. His father was involved in

Lincoln Highway Sign

Used 1915-

Size: ***

Material: Enamel on Steel

Manufacturer: Unknown

Quantity Made: Unknown

Quantity Known: 0

Sponsor: Sparton

Original Location: Lincoln Highway

Source: The Horseless Age-September 1, 1915, Page 241

Comments: This photo from shows a Sparton Sign Posting Car marking the Lincoln Highway. Note the small LH sign below the "Safety First" sign. It appears from the cutline they marked the entire Lincoln Highway. The Sparton horn signs were the precursor to today's modern day road signs.

county government and worked on The Lincoln Highway.



Lincoln Highway Signs

Date Used: 1915

Size: 15 x 25

Material: Enamel on Metal

Manufacturer: Unknown

Quantity Made: Unknown

Quantity Known: 1

Sponsor: Lincoln Highway Association

Original Location: Western States

Source: Private Collection-Oakland, CA

Comments: This Lincoln Highway Control Station is the only one known. Looks like it might date to 1915 although there are several few differences between it and the 1915 Western Terminus Marker. There was a Control Station in every town so a driver could reset the odometer and check the distance to the next town.

Lincoln Highway Signs

Date Used: 1916

Size: ***

Material: Enamel on Metal

Manufacturer: Unknown

Quantity Made: Unknown

Quantity Known: 14

Sponsor: Lincoln Highway Association

Original Location: Pioneer Trail-Nevada

Source: Private Collection-Carson City, Nevada

Comments: These Lincoln Highway Signs are the same style, but one has several mounting holes and the other does not. The Pioneer Trail Signs were discovered near Dayton, Nevada in the mid-1990's. There were 14 in all...all neatly wrapped in the original box. It is by far the largest cache of original Lincoln Highway Signs ever found. They were made in Los Angeles.



Lincoln Highway Sign

Date Used: 1915-1916

Size: 13 x 20

Material: Enamel on Metal

Manufacturer: Calif. Metal Enameling Co.-Los Angeles, CA

Quantity Made: Unknown

Quantity Known: Unknown

Sponsor: California State Auto Association

Original Location: Western States

Source: Private Collection-SF Bay Area, CA

Comments: This is the best known example of this style sign. It was no doubt posted close to or within the city limits since there are no bullet holes. The owner traded a US-466 porcelain road shield circa 1949. US-466 is where actor James Dean was killed.

Lincoln Highway Sign

Date Used: 1916-1917

Size: 24 x 9

Material: Enamel on Metal

Manufacturer: Calif. Metal Enameling Co.-Los Angeles, CA

Quantity Made: Unknown

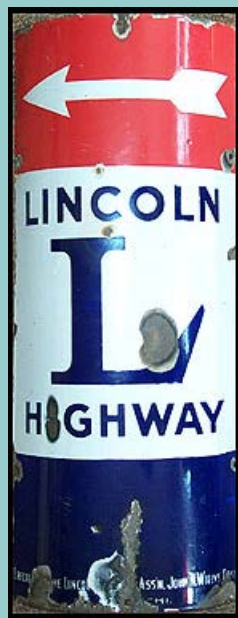
Quantity Known: 1

Sponsor: Automobile Club of Southern California

Original Location: Utah

Source: Private Collection-SF Bay Area, CA

Comments: This is the only know example of this style and no doubt came from the Utah desert. It was bought years ago from an old car collector in Reno.



Curved Lincoln Highway Sign

Date Used: 1916

Size: ***

Material: Enamel on Metal

Manufacturer: Burdick Enamel Sign Company-Chicago, IL

Quantity Made: Unknown

Quantity Known: Unknown

Sponsor: Lincoln Highway Association

Original Location: Somewhere on The Lincoln Highway

Source: Lincoln Highway Museum, Jefferson, Iowa

Comments: This is one of the curved Lincoln Highway Signs put up around 1916. Not sure how long they were in use, but there were similar ones used in Crestline, Ohio in the mid 1920's.

Lincoln Highway Sign

Date Used: 1916-

Size: ***

Material: Enamel on Metal

Manufacturer: Unknown

Quantity Made: Unknown

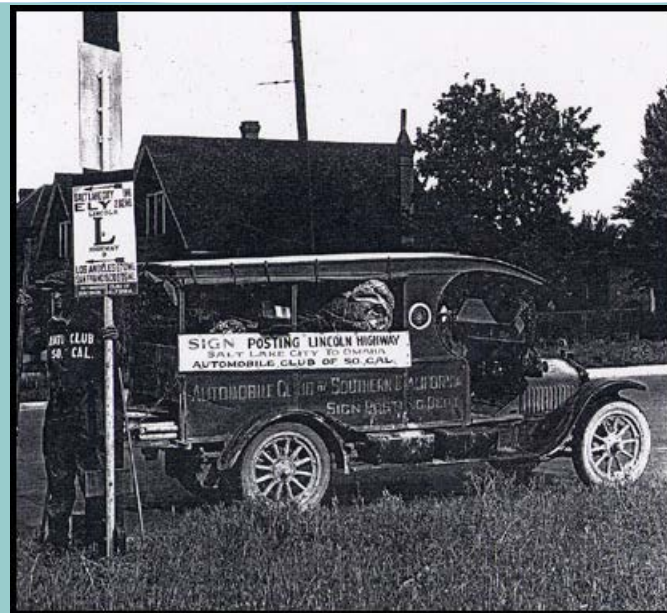
Quantity Known: Unknown

Sponsor: Lincoln Highway Association

Original Location: 1916 End of Lincoln Highway

Source: Lincoln Highway Road Guide

Comments: This is an Ad for the curved style Lincoln Highway Signs made by the Burdick Company in Chicago, Illinois.



ACSC-Lincoln Highway Signs

Date Used: 1917-

Size: ***

Material: Enamel on Metal

Manufacturer: Unknown

Quantity Made: Unknown

Quantity Known: Unknown

Sponsor: Automobile Club of Southern California

Original Location: Western States

Source: Carbon County Museum-Rawlins, WY

Comments: These Lincoln Highway Signs were donated and put up by the Automobile Club of Southern California.

They were used from Salt Lake City to Omaha and placed by special Sign Crews outfitted by the ACSC.

This is the most I've ever seen in one place.

ACSC-Lincoln Highway Signs

Date Used: 1917-

Size: ***

Material: Enamel on Metal

Manufacturer: Unknown

Quantity Made: Unknown

Quantity Known: Unknown

Sponsor: Automobile Club of Southern California

Original Location: Salt Lake City, Utah

Source: Utah Historical Society Salt Lake City, Utah

Comments: Here's one of the ACSC Sign Crews hard at work near Salt Lake City. This image was taken on July 10, 1918 and is from the Shipler Photo Collection. The Utah Historical Society is located in the old Rio Grande Railroad Station.



1928 Lincoln Highway Marker



Charles Blum eagle scout at the completion of the Lincoln Highway at the log

1928 Lincoln Highway Marker

Date Used: 1928-

Size: 7 feet

Material: Concrete Post

Manufacturer: Unknown

Quantity Made: 3400+

Quantity Known: Unknown

Sponsor: Lincoln Highway Association

Original Location: Bucyrus, Ohio

Source: Public Square-Bucyrus, Ohio

Comments: This 1928 Lincoln Highway Marker was originally set somewhere in Bucyrus and moved to the Square at a later date. 3400 markers were placed across the Continent by the Boy Scouts on September 1, 1928 as a Memorial to Abraham Lincoln. The copper penny was made by Whitehead & Hoag of Newark, NJ.

Date Used: 1928-

Size: 7 feet

Material: Concrete Post

Manufacturer: Unknown

Quantity Made: 3400+

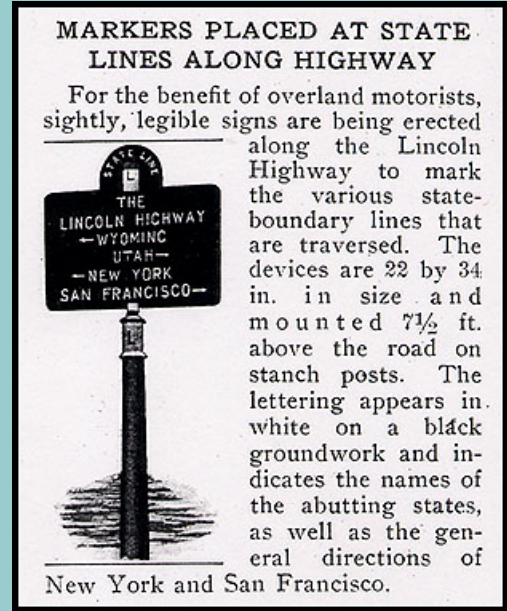
Quantity Known: Unknown

Sponsor: Lincoln Highway Association

Original Location: Lincoln Park-San Francisco, CA

Source: Private Collection-San Francisco, CA

Comments: This photo shows Eagle Scout Charles Blum placing the Western Terminus Marker in Lincoln Park at the End of the Lincoln Highway. While most of the 3400 markers were placed on September 1, 1928 there is no evidence to indicate when this one was set.



MARKERS PLACED AT STATE LINES ALONG HIGHWAY

For the benefit of overland motorists, sightly, legible signs are being erected along the Lincoln Highway to mark the various state-boundary lines that are traversed. The devices are 22 by 34 in. in size and mounted 7½ ft. above the road on stanch posts. The lettering appears in white on a black groundwork and indicates the names of the abutting states, as well as the general directions of New York and San Francisco.

State Line Marker

Date Used: 1917-Present

Size: 22 x 34

Material: Painted Cast Iron

Manufacturer: Lebanon Machine Works-Lebanon, NH

Quantity Made: 11

Quantity Known: 0

Sponsor: Lincoln Highway Association

Original Location: State Line-Utah/Nevada

Source: Utah Historical Society-Salt Lake City, Utah

Comments: This original Lincoln Highway Sign was used on the Utah/Nevada Border. It is one of many made for this purpose by the Lebanon Machine Works in Lebanon, New Hampshire. To my knowledge there are only three left. One in its original location in Trenton on the border between New Jersey & Pennsylvania, this one on display at The Utah Historical Society and one in Cheyenne at the Wyoming Department of Transportation.

State Line Marker

Date Used: 1917-Present

Size: 22 x 34

Material: Painted Cast Iron

Manufacturer: Lebanon Machine Works-Lebanon, NH

Quantity Made: 11

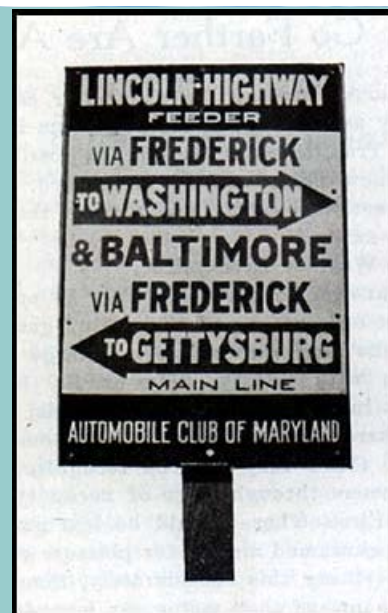
Quantity Known: 3

Sponsor: Lincoln Highway Association

Original Location: State Lines

Source: Popular Mechanics-September 1917, Page 418

Comments: This is the only published image of the Lebanon Machine Works-Lincoln Highway State Line Markers I've ever run across. If I've done my math right there were only 11 made. While only three are known to have survived, it is thought the others may have fallen victim to vandals, thieves or scrap yards over the years.



Lincoln Highway Feeder Sign

Date Used: 1915

Size: ***

Material: Enamel on Metal

Manufacturer: Unknown

Quantity Made: Unknown

Quantity Known: 0

Sponsor: Lincoln Highway Association

Original Location: All Feeder Routes

Source: Popular Mechanics-June, 1915, Page 915

Comments: These Lincoln Highway Feeder Signs were designed by The Lincoln Highway Association for use on all feeder routes.

One such route was Washington DC to Gettysburg.

This is the only illustration I've ever seen and to my knowledge there are no surviving examples.

Lincoln Highway Feeder Sign

Date Used: 1915-

Size: ***

Material: Enamel on Metal

Manufacturer: Unknown

Quantity Made: Unknown

Quantity Known: 0

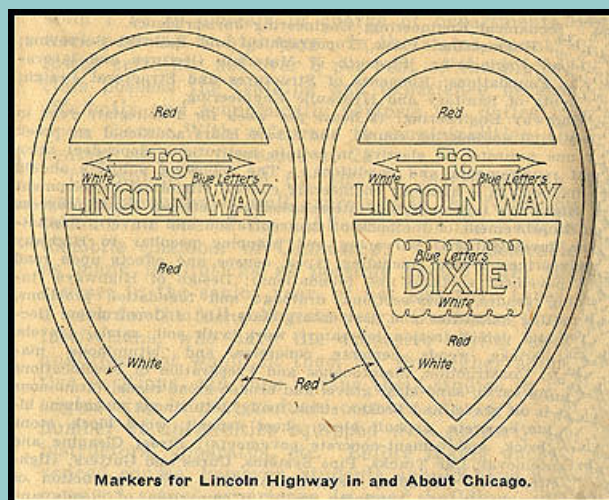
Sponsor: Automobile Club of Maryland

Original Location: Washington Feeder

Source: ???-???, 1917, Page ???

Comments: These Lincoln Highway Feeder Signs were designed by Elmer C. Jenson, Chairman of the Lincoln Highway Committee of the American Institute of Architects.

These are the first signs to deviate from the standard rectangle, to my knowledge there is no evidence they were ever used.



Lincoln Highway Feeder Sign

Date Used: 1917-

Size: ***

Material: Enamel on Metal

Manufacturer: Unknown

Quantity Made: Unknown

Quantity Known: 0

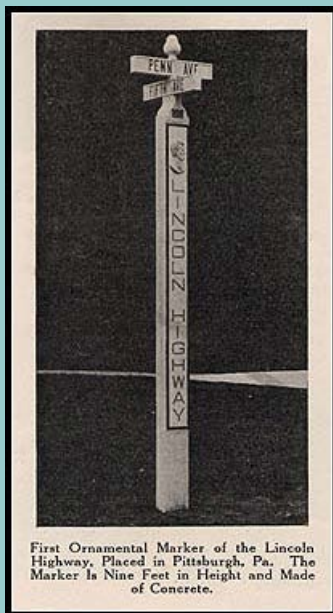
Sponsor: Lincoln Highway Association

Original Location: South Side of Chicago

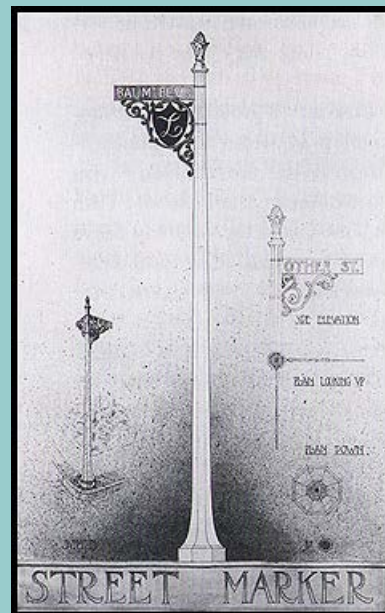
Source: Engineering & Contracting-June 6, 1917, Page 148

Comments: These Lincoln Highway Feeder Signs were designed by Elmer C. Jenson, Chairman of the Lincoln Highway Committee of the American Institute of Architects.

These are the first signs to deviate from the standard rectangle, to my knowledge there is no evidence they were ever used.



First Ornamental Marker of the Lincoln Highway, Placed in Pittsburgh, Pa. The Marker Is Nine Feet in Height and Made of Concrete.



Ornamental Lincoln Highway Marker

Date Used: 1915-

Size: 9 feet

Material: Concrete & Granite Chips

Manufacturer: Unknown

Quantity Made: Unknown

Quantity Known: 0

Sponsor: Lincoln Highway Association

Original Location: Pittsburgh, PA

Source: The Horseless Age-July 21, 1915, Page 77

Comments: This photo shows the first ornamental marker to be placed on the Lincoln Highway in Pittsburgh, PA. According to Brian Butko's book, The Lincoln Highway-Pennsylvania Travelers Guide the City's Art Commission protested. The Good Roads Committee countered the design was approved by the LHA and considered the most attractive in the country. I'm not aware of any other photos of this marker.

Ornamental Lincoln Highway Marker

Date Used: 1915-

Size: ***

Material: Cast Iron

Manufacturer: Unknown

Quantity Made: Unknown

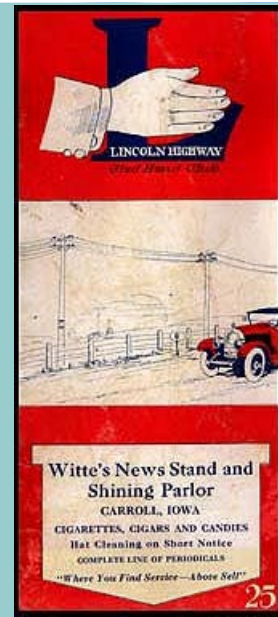
Quantity Known: 0

Sponsor: Lincoln Highway Association

Original Location: Pittsburgh, PA

Source: The LH-Pennsylvania Travelers Guide, Page 296-8

Comments: According to Mr. Butko, a contest ensued with nine entries being submitted including one by renown architect Frederick Scheiber. This marker was the winner but apparently was never used. His source, The Carnegie-Mellon Univeristy Architecture Archives in Pittsburgh.



Lincoln Highway Glad Hand Club

Date Used: 1920's-

Size: ***

Material: Silk Screened Metal

Manufacturer: Unknown

Quantity Made: Unknown

Quantity Known: 1

Sponsor: Lincoln Highway Association

Original Location: Iowa

Source: Tama County Historical Society-Toledo, Iowa

Comments: The Glad Hand Club was formed in Belle Plaine, Iowa in the mid 20's to serve the Lincoln Highway Tourist.

The signs were secured to a members place of business and guaranteed travelers satisfaction with every transaction.

This is the only known sign.

Lincoln Highway Glad Hand Club

Date Used: 1920's-

Size: ***

Material: Printed Tri-fold

Publisher: Unknown

Quantity Made: Unknown

Quantity Known: 1

Sponsor: Lincoln Highway Association

Original Location: Iowa

Source: Lyle Henry Collection, Iowa City, Iowa

Comments: This Glad Hand Club brochure was produced in 1926. It includes a mission statement as well as membership list, map and a short tour guide of Iowa.

[Click Here to View the Full Brochure-1.9 Mb](#)

Headquarters was in Belle Plain at the Herring Hotel.

[BACK HOME FORWARD](#)



Designed By: The Starman

You are Visitor #



Since May 2, 2003