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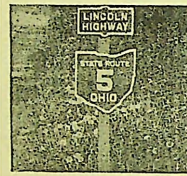
**Ohio Method of Marking Highways Offers the Best Suggestion**

Both Number and Name on Sign the Ideal Way

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THE widely heralded plan for signing  
highways is not all 'beer and skittles.' A  
formidable opposition which has been  
dormant, but extant, nevertheless, raised  
its head out of oblivion at the Chicago  
road show and emitted a powerful and  
attention-compelling squawk," says the  
editor of Western Highways Builder.  
"Highway engineers and public officials  
from the Atlantic seaboard divested them-  
selves of pungent exhortations of the entire  
plan in general and its individually  
repulsive aspects in particular.  
"This was to be expected. Of all the  
idealistic proposals yet advanced for the  
administration of highways, none can  
equal this for pure imbecility. The  
standardization of warning signs is the  
only feature that has prevented the  
project from being laughed out of court  
ere this, but I fear even this passably  
mentorious ramification will not be suf-  
cient to save it from complete dissolu-  
tion or radical modification," he continues.  
"To ask a motorist to travel from  
Keosauqua, Iowa, to Keokuk, Iowa, with  
one eye on a signboard and the other  
on a key map, is to invite him to a case  
of acute myopia and a chronic migraine."  
Recent surveys, conducted by such  
representative bodies as the National  
Automobile Chamber of Commerce and  
the Bureau of Public Roads in conjunction  
with the State Highway Departments of  
the various states, indicate that about  
15% of motor traffic on the highways is  
trucks and buses and about 85% is  
passenger carrying automobiles. Any  
signing system is naturally of very little  
value to the driver of commercial  
vehicles and common carriers as ordinarily  
they travel well-defined, short routes. It  
is the 85% passenger traffic which is  
interested in the information that properly  
designed signboards will convey. On  
country roads, particularly in the western  
half of the United States, a large propor-  
tion of this passenger traffic is composed  
of vacationists and tourists seeking  
pleasure, health and education. While  
primarily pleasure-bound, they usually  
absorb a vast amount of history and  
geography. The romance attached to  
such trips is what leaves the lasting  
impression and gives to the participant a  
definite, fixed and permanent element of  
education, is the verdict of G. S. Hoag,  
Secretary of the Lincoln Highway Assn.  
There will always be a greater patriotic  
glow in the thought of having made a trip  
over a considerable portion of the Lincoln  
Highway, the Yellowstone Trail, the  
Dixie Highway or the Santa Fe Trail than  
could ever attach to the retrospection of a  
similar trek on U. S. Highway Number  
11 or Number 60.  
More and more each year Americans  
are touring their own country, and by so  
doing are at home where they would  
otherwise annually spend in search of  
pleasure in foreign lands. This is as it  
should be, and every effort should be made  
to encourage it, says Hoag.  
The editor of the Portland, Ore., Journal  
comments as follows on the historic  
feature of such tours and the importance  
of adhering to the old established and  
historic names.  
"There is no Columbia River highway  
on the official maps at Washington. It is  
merely 'No. 20'.  
"There is no Lincoln Highway. Its  
official designation is number 11.  
"The Old Oregon Trail, as a designa-  
tion, is officially dead, and in its place is  
a couple of meaningless numerals. The  
Washington bureaucrats have blotted out  
from the road maps and records the  
mighty meaning conveyed in those sym-  
bolic words, 'The Old Oregon Trail'.  
"The vast trek in which the caravan of  
covered wagons wore down the earth until

the wheels sank to the huts in two long  
furrows from the Mississippi to the  
Willamette valley is officially designated  
by two numerals.  
"Only a meaningless number, a hard,  
cold, metallic number, like the figures in a  
cash register or on a bank ledger, is used  
to designate the greatest migration in all  
history. The barren numerals of an  
arithmetic have officially become the  
symbol for the great route over which the  
covered wagons and their heroic com-  
pany came for the summing of the ages."  
"One of the glories of a great highway  
system is the romance reflected in its  
nomenclature. One of its ills, that will  
grow stronger and stronger with time, is  
its local name, which in a single word tells  
of an epoch and fires the imagination at  
the picture of a great historic background."



TYPICAL of the signs placed and maintained  
by the State of Ohio for the purpose of  
marking its highways. This sign well illus-  
trates the real value of the suggestion made by  
the American Road Congress.

For purposes of records and accounting  
on highways built jointly by the Federal  
Government and the states, the proposed  
system of numbering U. S. Highways  
uniformly is undoubtedly ideal. The  
uniform system of warning and direction  
signs to be used in all parts of the nation  
is also a forward step and no word other  
than of commendation can be said about  
this part of the marking plan, but it takes  
more than a number to fix association of  
any thoroughfare in the minds of travelers.  
Probably the most constructive sug-  
gestion that has yet been made for mark-  
ing the interstate highways, so that the  
designations would be of value to the  
motorist as well as to the road official, is  
contained in a resolution adopted by the  
American Road Congress in session at  
Chicago last January. It reads: "Do it  
resolved that the Joint Board, now formu-  
lating a uniform marking system for  
interstate roads in the United States, be  
requested as far as practicable to designate  
the various routes not only by a numeral,  
but with the local distinctive names."  
This plan would seem to answer all  
the system for many years in vogue in Ohio.  
It was the activities of various route  
associations which fostered and encour-  
aged the idea of motoring and seeing one's  
own country, thus was developed the  
demand for better highways and that  
demand brought about the creation of  
state and Federal units which have built  
and are building the highways.  
Motor touring is still a healthy activity,  
and always will be. It is good for the  
individual life and it is good for the  
national life. It should be fostered and  
encouraged by all the reputable associa-  
tions in any way associated with highway  
construction or the automotive industry.  
It is well to keep alive the popular interest  
on the part of the nation, for it will other-  
wise lag without leadership.

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PRESERVING THE OLD SPANISH TRAIL NAME

The following news item from the Santa Barbara, California, News of April 14, 1926 was mailed to us:-

CHANGE NAME OF ROAD

The name, "Old Spanish Trail," will no longer be used in designating the famous highway extending from St. Augustine, Florida, to San Diego, California, according to recent information received from the Touring Department of the National Automobile Club. Hereafter it will be designated as "United States Highway Nos. 80 and 90."

The national Joint Board appointed by the U. S. Secretary of Agriculture, head of the Federal Road Bureau, designated the Old Spanish Trail as United States Highway No. 90 in the East; No. 80 in the West. It is right this trunkline should be rated one of the national highways and numbered as such but the name should also be officially fixed and preserved. Some, not all, of the Joint Board are trying to designate numbers only as a way to establish these national routes and rid the country of the irresponsible road promoters that have become a nuisance.

The OST also suffers from these "road runners." While you and we have worked to weave this project together across eight states these promoters have sought advantage without giving service, money or value. From 30 to 40 names have been placed along this highway and many thousands of dollars collected. Most of the alleged organizations collected the money and faded away while the Old Spanish Trail Association has spent over \$150,000 and eleven years time helping solve problems and pushing construction gathering, compiling, printing and distributing travel literature and maps and doing many things to build this highway and popularize it.

These highway officials are very properly trying to stop these confusing and worthless promotions but out of the effort the Old Spanish Trail must emerge with its name and integrity forever established and protected.

The intelligence with which this trunkline has been developed across the continent is once more evident in its selection in its entirety as the southern United States Highway. The highway departments of the eight OST States have performed great service in the construction work; they have solved financial and engineering difficulties that have cost years of effort and the highest order of skill. The ultimate achievement however will come when the marking from Florida to California shows both the United States Highway number and the name that is so firmly rooted in the hearts of the people.

Highway officials we have consulted are ready to help plan and put in force the most useful system of marking that can be devised. Many problems are evident. Eight state departments must be consulted. The experience and observation of practical highway leaders must be gathered. Methods of financing must be considered and, finally, practical plans must be agreed upon which will give the traveler the same style of marking and signing along the Old Spanish Trail in all the eight states.