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SPHEX CLUB PAPERS

of

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Subject: The Roadways of Virginia

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THE ROADWAYS OF VIRGINIA

The roadways of Virginia, considering them from the standpoint of their financing and administration, fall into three groups: First that system of roadways officially known as the Virginia State Highway System, which is financed from the State treasury with so-called federal aid, and which is administered by a State Highway Commission appointed by the Governor; Second the county highway systems, which are financed partly by the State and partly by local taxation, and which are administered by county authorities; and, third, the district road systems, receiving no State aid and administered by the district road boards of the magisterial districts in which located.

It is with the first class of roads that this paper has to deal.

Strangely enough the body which administers our State Highway System came into existence twelve years before the system itself was created. A State Highway Commission was created by an Act of Assembly approved March 6, 1906 and consisted of a State Highway Commissioner appointed by the Governor and the professors of civil engineering at the University of Virginia, the Virginia Military Institute and the Virginia Polytechnic Institute. This commission, though there was no State road system, administered the State aid to highways. Any county desirous of improving "a main travelled highway" could apply to the commission for aid, and if that body approved the road and the type of construction to be employed, it was empowered to assist in the financing to the extent of one half the cost, if State funds were available. Also it could give aid in the shape of convict labor.

The State Highway System as we now know it was created by an Act of Assembly approved January 31, 1918. It designated 28 routes which were to be taken over by the State for both financing and administration, and those 28 routes included many of the roadways which during the prior twelve years had received State assistance in the shape of money or convict labor or both. In 1918 automobile traffic had not assumed the proportions it has today and ideas of routes were different. Certainly here in Lynchburg there seems to have been no one who foresaw the possibilities of through tourist traffic, or the fact that it would be principally a north and south traffic. The result was that the legislators representing this section did not see to it that one of the 28 routes was a north and south route from Washington southward to North Carolina through Charlottesville, Lynchburg and Danville, without which route all three of those cities are seriously handicapped in the matter of receiving benefits from tourist traffic. If other sections fared better, as they undoubtedly did, it was probably the result of local conditions and good luck rather than of better foresight than possessed in this section.

Long, long before there was automobile traffic the Valley Turnpike, from Staunton to Winchester, was a well known improved road, financed by the toll gate method. With the advent of automobiles, Lynchburgers desiring to tour north found the easiest, or perhaps one should say least difficult route, to be to get to Staunton. That doubtless explains why, when the State Highway System was formed, this section demanded a route from here to Staunton.

It was secured, and, together with the roadway southward from here through Rustburg, Brookneal and South Boston, a principal local trade road, was called Route 18.

Second only to the desire for an outlet to Staunton was the desire of Lynchburg automobilists for a route to Natural Bridge, the nearest point of great interest and a favorite summering place at that time with many Lynchburgers. Years before a club of Lynchburg automobilist had raised funds, aided by the management of the Natural Bridge hotel, to put in passable shape an old road which ran on the Amherst side of the river, going through Elon, across Pedlar river and down to the old Jordan Furnace on the James river, then over the Blue Ridge via Snowden to Glasgow. It was and still is but an apology for a road in many places, but many automobilists negotiated it in those days. This probably explains why this section wanted that stretch of roadway in the State Highway System, and so the Danville-Lynchburg road was connected to the Lynchburg-Natural Bridge road, as far as Snowden, and then extended on by way of Lexington to Clifton Forge and Covington under the designation Route 14. Few realized its importance as a through roadway, but each portion of it was of intense local interest to some city or town through which it passed as well as to the county in which located.

In designating the 28 routes which originally constituted the State Highway System the legislature did not specify roadways by name. It did not say "Ward's Road" or the "Salem Turnpike," but mentioned the principal points through which the route must pass. Between those points it was left to the State Highway Commission to locate the route. Later on when the commission went to locate Route 18

between Amherst and Lovington they determined to straighten the route. This involved obtaining private property, the owners of which saw an opportunity to sell at a fancy price. The commission refused to pay. During the delay incident to this, Senator Woodson, of Nelson County, introduced and secured the passage of a bill requiring the Commission to locate the route so as to go from a point near Lovington to a point near Colleen. This made a big bend in the road, instead of the shorter route desired by the commission, and on account of that the federal authorities have declined ever since to recognize the route as a federal aid road, a fact which has seriously hampered the local Chamber of Commerce and other highway enthusiasts in efforts to obtain a north and south highway through Lynchburg which would get a fair share of the tourist trade. In passing it may be said that the location secured by Senator Woodson brought the road nearer his home, he denies that he was influenced by that fact and assents he was activated solely by the desire to get a farm-to-market road for the numerous apple growers in that section of Nelson County.

Since the creation of the State Highway System it has been extensively added to. A few special bills have added a mile or so here and there; each year the Commission has authority to add new roadways of a mileage equalling two and one half percent of the mileage in the original system, and in 1928 the General Assembly, when it increased the gasoline tax to five cents, provided for the addition of 1587 miles of County roads to the State system.

With the creation of the State Highway System it became necessary to alter the State Highway Commission. An act approved Sept. 15, 1918, created a commission of five members, the chairman

on salary and to be an engineer with road building experience. He was also required to be a citizen of Virginia. This commission was appointed by the Governor and the law required that the members be so appointed "as to give representation as nearly as possible to each of the five grand divisions of the State." Later, when it was found wise not to require that the chairman be a citizen at the time of appointment, the law was amended but used practically the same wording, except that it referred to the "five grand geographical divisions of the State," and provided that the chairman, if not a citizen when appointed, should be located at Richmond and represent that grand geographical division in which Richmond is situated.

It should here be noted that the law did not name the five grand geographical divisions of Virginia or specify which counties and cities compose each. And therein lies a lot of trouble. We hear of Tidewater and Southside Virginia, of Central and Northern Virginia, of Piedmont and Southwest Virginia, of the Valley of Virginia. There are seven general sections. Which of the seven is a grand geographical division, which two are mere minor divisions? And who knows exactly where the boundaries of any one lies except when State boundary lines are encountered? I asked a friend in Roanoke whether his city was in Southwest Virginia or in the Valley of Virginia. "It is in the Southwest when we are talking to the highway commissioner from that section, and in the Valley when we are talking with the commissioner from that section," was in effect his reply. Lynchburg, however, appears to be in no section, so far as representation upon the commission is concerned.

In order to correct this condition efforts were made by the local Chamber of Commerce and press to get the basis of representation changed, but so far without success.

For the actual work of building the roads the State Highway System is divided into eight road construction districts, each taking its name from the city in which is located the office of the district engineer. Those districts are Bristol, Salem, Lynchburg, Staunton, Culpeper, Fredericksburg, Richmond and Suffolk. This kind of administration was required by law and it is important to note that after providing for these road construction districts the law required that "Work in each district shall be started as simultaneously as practical and continued in each district." This clearly shows that the legislature recognized that time is an important element, and intended that as far as practical the commission should not only deal fairly between the several districts in the matter of distribution of funds, but that it also should not profit one district at the expense of another by building its roads first.

In passing let me say that it is the view of a great many interested in highways that the highway commission should be composed of a representative from each of the road construction districts with the chairman representing the State at large. A commission of nine, it is felt, would not be too large and certainly it would give a much fairer representation.

In earlier days the funds for road building came from taxes upon real and personal property, bonds and other evidences of debt, stocks etc. They were meagre and road construction proceeded in snail-like manner. Good roads advocates loudly demanded better financing, some

favoring a bond issue, others a pay-as-you-go plan with a gasoline tax. In March, 1923, the General Assembly provided for a referendum upon the matter, and immediately politics came into play. Knowing that fear of bond issues was strongest in the counties, the bond issue advocates proposed that of good roads bonds issued, if any, twenty per cent of the proceeds should be divided among the counties for their county road systems. That was in the expectation of creating sentiment for bonds in the counties. But the pay-as-you-go advocates countered by passing a law placing a tax of three cents a gallon upon gasoline, two thirds to go to the State Highway System and one third to the counties. County grabbing of State funds for local roads was thus started, has continued ever since, and like the poor will always be with us. It has retarded and will continue to retard completion of the State Highway System.

Having decided to adopt the pay-as-you-go system Virginia soon found that a three cent tax did not provide enough money. It was raised to four and a half cents, three for the State highways, one and a half for the counties. Then when it appeared that the gasoline sellers added the half cent to the retail price anyway, Governor Byrd recommended making the tax five cents. Question: shall the additional half cent go to the State highways or to the counties? The Governor and all others with more than a local mind wanted it to go to the State Highways, but the General Assembly is controlled by representatives of counties, many of them purely local minded, so that in order to obtain the half cent for the State highways it was necessary to take into that system the additional 1500 miles referred to earlier in this paper. The counties get the same as before, but have fewer roads

to spread it over. I am inclined to think that Governor Byrd and other statewide minded road enthusiasts did not win a victory except over the gasoline sellers.

In addition to the gasoline tax receipts the State Highway Commission has an amount from the general treasury equal to what the old ten cent tax was before the Byrd tax segregation law went into effect, Virginia's share of the so-called federal aid funds, and certain other small amounts. Also there is convict labor. For the fiscal year July 1, 1929 - June 30, 1930 the funds were:

Gasoline tax	\$4,514,560.00
Federal aid	1,450,000.00
From general taxes plus value of convict labor.	4,386,195.00
Appropriation for engineering and supervision	312,645.00
Total	\$10,663,400.00

In the division of the funds available for highway construction, (the automobile license tax funds are not available for construction but for maintenance only), the law required that the commission divide them equitably as between the several road construction districts. The commission adopted and has since followed the plan under which the federal government divides its funds between the States, i.e., one third of available funds is divided in proportion to population, a second third in proportion to area, and the other third in proportion to post road mileage. I can not think of a fairer plan, and the fact that no objection has ever been raised to this plan would indicate that it is generally considered to be as equitable as could be devised.

After allocating the funds to the several districts, the commission also designates the particular sections of highways within the districts to be constructed during the next fiscal year and the amount to be spent on each. These tentative allocations are made public and the commission sits at convenient places to hear any protests or suggestions, following which it makes and publishes its final decisions.

The actual work is done under the direction of the eight district engineers, supervised by the chairman of the commission, and here it should be said that slight if any criticism has been heard of the actual work of road building. I think it may safely be assumed that Virginia is getting a dollar's worth of highway for every dollar spent upon construction.

If the highway funds were in their entirety divided among the several road construction districts upon the basis outlined above there would never have been any serious complaints from any section. Unfortunately two different acts of the legislature have complicated the situation.

Giving way to pressure from good roads enthusiasts in many sections of the State, the General Assembly enacted what was known as the Robertson Act. It is brief and reads as follows:

"Be it enacted by the General Assembly of Virginia, that if any county, or district, or private person, or corporation desires the immediate improvement of any section of the State Highway System within any county, which has been designated as a part of the State Highway System, the State Highway Commission may enter into an agreement with said county officials, or other parties, to finance the construction

or reconstruction of said highways, or sections thereof; provided, however, that the funds so advanced shall be without interest. Provided further, that the commission shall be authorized to make repayment to said counties, or other parties, annually as funds are available and apportioned for such construction or reconstruction, until the amount so advanced has been repaid."

It is clear from this wording that any section which desired to be advantaged over any other section in the matter of having its roads constructed earlier had to agree to finance the proposition, paying all interest charges and receiving repayment of the principal only in such annual installments as would have been apportioned to the roads thus earlier constructed had they not been so earlier constructed. It was a bargain between the State on the one side and the communities taking advantage of the law on the other, and had the law never been amended or repealed would perhaps have done no harm.

No sooner, however, had some sections availed themselves of this law than they wanted it altered. They had gotten the State's part of the bargain fulfilled. The roads had been built and could not be torn up. They sought a way to avoid fulfilling their share of the bargain. By an Act approved March 21, 1924, it was provided that communities which had had their road construction anticipated were to pay only four years interest on the money advanced, and that after 1925 they were to be repaid the principal at the rate of a million dollars a year instead of only at the rate of what their fair share of construction funds available might be. Two years later they got the whole act repealed and secured the issuance of certificates of indebtedness from the proceeds of which they were repaid the entire amount they had advanced. In short they made the burden for roads

built in certain sections of the State come out of funds that should in fairness have been equitably divided among all sections of the State.

Another trouble arose in 1924 when the so-called gap fund was created. This law provided that before equitably dividing the funds among the several road construction districts, the commission might take out one million dollars and apply it "to such construction projects as the commission may deem for the best interests of the State." I call attention to the fact that the law uses the plural, projects, thus indicating that it was not the intention that this special fund should be given to any one favored highway. Indeed the discussions preceeding the enactment of the law, as well as the fact that it became known as the Gap Fund, clearly showed that the intention was to fill gaps in Routes which could not be completely built out of the funds allocated to the districts, in short to give some elasticity to an otherwise rigid system.

That the commission itself so regarded this fund seems to me amply testified to by its use of the fund during the first two years it was in existence. The first year it was so used that portions of it were spent in seven of the eight construction districts. The second year every district received a portion of the fund. But in 1926 the commission made a radical change in its policy, and divided the fund between the Culpeper and Fredericksburg districts so as to complete Route 1 from Washington to Richmond. The next year it gave the entire fund to Richmond district so as to carry Route 1 all the way to the North Carolina border. This giving of the entire fund the second time to one project caused considerable criticism, especially since south of Petersburg there already existed a hard surfaced road to

the North Carolina line.

Here in Lynchburg the Chamber of Commerce and press in 1926 were inclined to the view that by making no protest against giving the whole fund to Route 1 this city and section would be in position to make a strong bid for it in 1927, having it applied to roads that eventually would be parts of a north and south highway through this city. When, however, 1927 saw the entire fund again given to Route 1, those of us in Lynchburg who had interested ourselves in highway construction realized that our pet project was not concerning the commission very much. In February of that year there was published in the Lynchburg News an article going into highway expenditures in detail and showing how, by saddling some districts with payments for roads built in other districts under the Robertson Act, and by inequitable allocations of the Gap Fund, this section of the State was being left far behind in highway construction. The article, not a single statement of which was ever challenged by any responsible person because not a single statement made in it could be successfully challenged, showed:

1. That the State had spent up to and including allocations for 1927 \$34,287,201.97.
2. That the Lynchburg district's fair share of that amount, using the State Highway Commission's own basis for allotments, would be approximately \$4,285,812.25.
3. That the Lynchburg district actually had received only \$3,316,680.00, and was therefore nearly a million dollars behind what it should fairly have had.

The purpose of this article was to quicken interest in this section of the State in highway matters and to create pressure upon

the Highway Commission to give us a fair share in the Gap Fund. Particularly it was the purpose to get the Gap Fund in 1928 applied to those roads in Lynchburg construction district which would eventually be a part of a north and South highway connecting us with North Carolina and the District of Columbia. The commission could not possibly be blind to the facts presented. That it did not desire to comply with our wishes was afterward demonstrated. It sought therefore to allay criticism by offering a substitute.

Early in April there was a meeting arranged at the Virginian hotel in this city by Mr. Shirley. It was rather a hand-picked meeting. Mr. Robert D. Ramsey, who had been the spokesman for this city in road matters, was not invited until I made a point of it, and although prominent citizens from both Danville and Altavista were asked to be present, the gentlemen in both those places most familiar with highway matters and who had been the spokesmen for the communities in such matters did not know of the meeting until informed by me that it was to be held.

At the meeting Mr. Shirley offered to construct between Lynchburg and Danville an oiled-surfaced road, and practically said that if the interested communities did not accept that they would get nothing. Lynchburg spokesmen were utterly opposed to accepting any such thing, realizing that if such a temporary highway were constructed it would be years and years before a first class highway such as was deserved could be secured. Altavista spokesmen were inclined to the same view, but were tempted to compromise because of their desire for a new bridge across the Staunton river. The Danville representatives were inclined to compromise too. One whispered to me that we see if the Commission would not build a first class road if we would agree not to

ask for the new bridge at Altavista.

Fortunately when Mr. Ramsey presented the matter to the directors of the Lynchburg Chamber of Commerce they very quickly realized the situation and gave their unqualified endorsement to the proposition that there should be a first class highway from this city to Danville including a new bridge at Altavista, and that the commission owed it to this construction district to make that possible by allocating the Gap Fund for 1928 to us. Unfortunately, however, not every one saw the thing so clearly. For instance one prominent and influential Lynchburger erroneously conceived that the Chamber of Commerce and press were trying to have all of Lynchburg district's funds placed on the Lynchburg-Danville road, and, since that would deprive other roads in the district of funds, he was opposed. A similiar view was taken by Mr. A. B. Carrington, prominent tobacconist of Danville, and he persuaded the Danville Chamber of Commerce to reconsider its agreement to co-operate with Lynchburg. Despite this, however, spokesmen for this city continued to press its claims, and the result was that the commission met our desires to the extent of allocating a portion of the Gap Fund to this district, applying it to Route 18 south of Lynchburg, so that we now enjoy a first class highway as far as Altavista, with a splendid new bridge across the Staunton river at that point. I am convinced that had Danville been as vigorous as Lynchburg in pressing its claims Route 18 would be in first class condition all the way from this city to Danville.

Securing a few miles of concrete highway and a new bridge was not, however, the only thing accomplished by presenting the facts and vigorously pressing the claims of this construction district. It will be recalled that some two years ago the late Hon. Hugh Sproul, who

represented the Valley of Virginia on the highway commission, spoke before this club in defense of the commission, and that he pointed out that the inequalities resulting from the Robertson Act were in no way the fault of the commission. He did, however, concede the injustice of taking equally from the allocations of each district for the purpose of paying interest on those loans and for repayment of principal when the certificates of indebtedness became due. And Mr. Sproul stated that it was his personal view that each district should be charged with interest and principal payments in proportion as it had benefitted from the Robertson Act loans. I am glad to say that the whole commission took that view, and in a recent talk to the local Kiwanis club Mr. Shirley very generously attributed the policy adopted by the commission to the facts and arguments presented by the local press. Under the old policy the interest was paid out of the highway funds before they were divided. Thus if this district were entitled to $12\frac{1}{2}\%$ of the funds it would pay an equal percent of the interest even though it had received a much smaller percentage of the highways built with the borrowed money. There was taken from our allocations annually about \$40,000 for interest charges, but with the changed policy this was reduced in 1928-29 to about \$13,000. The same thing applies as to repayment of the principal. Under the old method we would have had to pay about an eighth, or \$125,000, annually; under the present fair policy we pay \$40,800.00. Eventually this will wipe out the financial inequalities occasioned by the Robertson Act, and the changed policy which the agitation here produced will have secured several hundred thousand dollars more for this district than otherwise it would have received.

In the matter of the Gap Fund members of this club will recall

that Mr. Sproul defended the action of the commission in handling it, particularly as to the preference given Route 1. However he stated that the commission had decided upon a new policy, i.e. it had decided that in future it would allocate the fund to those districts which had received less than a fair share, as determined by the commission's population-area-road mileage basis, until all districts were on an approximate par. Unfortunately Mr. Sproul must have misunderstood his fellow commissioner's intentions, for that policy has not been followed.

Just a few days before the tentative allocations for 1929-30 were announced, Mr. Sproul called me on long distance telephone to explain that, on the face of things, the allocations of the Gap Fund would not square with his statements to this club. He explained, however, that the share which would otherwise have gone to this district was given to his own district in order to complete the gap in Route 14 between Snowden and Lexington, a highway in which this city was and is intensely interested. He felt that though the commission was not following the letter of his statement to this club it was following the spirit, and so it seemed to me. The Chamber of Commerce took a similiar view and consequently no protest was made, it being confidently expected that the Lynchburg district would share in the 1930-31 allocation of the fund.

Personally I am convinced that such would have proved the case had Mr. Sproul lived, for I think he was not only a man of the highest integrity and whose promises could be relied upon, but that he was the best friend this city and section have ever had upon the commission. However, he died, and when the last allocations were made this district received not one cent, the share that should have come to us and would

have come to us had the policy outlined by Mr. Sproul been followed, went to Culpeper district, which, without this recent share of the fund, had already received more than it was fairly entitled to. Nor was there any opportunity of explaining this by saying it had been allocated to a highway in Culpeper district which benefitted Lynchburg district. On the contrary it was given to the Lee Highway, which provides an outlet to Washington for that section of the State west of the Blue Ridge, which section incidentally already has an outlet to the north via Winchester to Martinsburg, W. Va., and Hagerstown, Md.

In a recent talk in this city Mr. Shirley justified this allocation upon the ground that it was given to a highway which honors the South's most beloved hero, and he expressed surprise that any Virginian should object to that. Personally I am unconvinced, and I can not be blind to the fact that the money is to be spent around the home village of Highway Commissioner Wade Massie, and will directly benefit the districts represented by Highway Commissioners Gilmer and East. Neither can I be blind to the fact that this allocation makes it almost an impossibility for the commission to allocate more of the Gap Fund to the Culpeper district for some years to come, and consequently the hope of getting some of that fund put upon Route 28 north of Charlottesville is dimmed if not extinguished. Yet the improvement of that route from Charlottesville to Warrenton is a sine qua non of a satisfactory north and south highway such as is desired and deserved by this city and section.

In this paper I have attempted to give not merely a general outline of the administration and financing of the State highway system, but to stress the difficulties which this city and section have encountered in attempting to secure a north and south highway suitable

for tourist travel and which would compare favorably with highways traversing other sections. I mentioned in the beginning that we did not foresee developments and did not secure as one of the original 28 routes a route connecting Washington with North Carolina and passing through Charlottesville, Lynchburg and Danville. When the local chamber of commerce or press have requested such a highway they have frequently been met with the assertion that "there ain't no sich animal." The commission has said that they could not, even if they wanted to, build a highway not included in the state system, and they have not, it seems to me, been impressed with the desirability of getting such a highway into the system. To meet this situation there was introduced in the legislature and passed a bill approved Feb. 16, 1928, which created the "Seminole Trail," that name being adopted because the highway desired follows the route taken by the Seminole Indians in their travels from North to South. That bill provides: "That that part of the Virginia State highways system, beginning at the North Carolina Line and leading through Danville, Chatham, Altavista, Lynchburg, Amherst, Lovingston, Charlottesville, Ruckersville, Madison and Culpeper to Warrenton be, and is hereby designated, and shall be, hereafter, known as the "Seminole Trail." From Warrenton there is already a hard surfaced highway into Washington, part of the Lee Highway.

There is one objection to the "Seminole Trail". It is composed of parts of three numbered routes, Route 14 from North Carolina to Lynchburg, Route 18 from here to Lovingston, Route 28 from there to Warrenton. This makes it difficult for motorists to follow. Also there is a gap of a few miles between Culpeper and Warrenton that has not yet been taken into the State highway system. Every effort should

be made to obtain federal recognition of the "Seminole Trail." It would in that event be given a federal number and tourists would have no difficulty following it by that number. Also pressure should be brought to bear upon the State highway commission to take into the system the gap mentioned, which it could do under its authority to add $2\frac{1}{2}$ per cent of mileage annually. But how to get the Seminole Trail hard surfaced north of Charlottesville is another matter.

At present, when allocations already made have been expended, the Seminole Trail from Carolina to Charlottesville will be a fairly good road. Portions of it are not the high type of construction that might be desired, but provision has been made or is being made to eliminate some of the bad curves and unnecessary mileage which have prevented federal recognition. It is going to take a lot of hard work, however, to obtain the funds for completion of that part of the Seminole Trail lying north of Charlottesville. However in that undertaking I have reason to believe that Lynchburg will have an ally in the Albamarle city, and perhaps it can be done. It may be necessary for us to advocate that the commission do that which we have in the past opposed it doing, i.e. give Gap Funds again to Culpeper district, applying them to Route 28.

In conclusion I want to say something about the value of tourist traffic. To most of us tourists are mere a nuisance, cluttering up the highways. We forget or are in ignorance of the amount of money which they leave in a State through which they pass. Recently I was among luncheon guest of Governor Byrd when a confidential talk was made by Chairman Carson of the conservation and development commission as to the work of that commission in developing the Shenandoah National Park and other projects. Incidentally it was stated by Mr. Carson

that his commission had made a careful estimate of the amount of money spent annually in Virginia by tourists and of the annual rate of increase in tourists traffic. From these he figured that within a very few years tourists will spend each year in Virginia a staggering sum. I forget exactly the amount, but my recollection is that it was in the neighborhood of \$150,000,000 annually.

If a new industry with an annual pay roll of \$150,000,000 were to locate in Virginia everyone would be enormously impressed. A tourist traffic bringing that much into the State is quite as beneficial financially and has the added advantage of advertising the State throughout the nation. This city and section should get a fair share of the trade and advertising. Lynchburg construction district is approximately one eighth of the entire State. If \$150,000,000 were spent in the entire State by tourists we should get some fifteen to twenty million of it, but we will not do so unless there are highways over which tourists can comfortably reach this section, highways that compare favorably with the highways of other sections. Furthermore since the bulk of tourist travel is north and south, we must have a north and south highway. The importance to this section of the early completion of the "Seminole Trail" as a first class highway is therefore apparent. But it is going to take a lot of hard work, and the effort will be greatly handicapped unless we pull together. The State Highway Commission is certainly none too sympathetic and if we are divided in our counsels there will be slight chance of getting anything accomplished. Not only should Lynchburg be unanimously behind the proposition, but every effort should be made to obtain the hearty co-operation of Danville and Charlottesville and of the small towns through which the "Seminole Trail" passes.