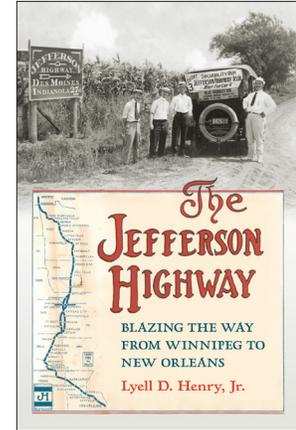


## ***The Jefferson Highway: Blazing the Way from Winnipeg to New Orleans***

Iowa City, IA—Today American motorists can count on being able to drive to virtually any town or city in the continental United States on a hard surface. That was far from being true in the early twentieth century, when the automobile was new and railroads still dominated long-distance travel. Then, the roads confronting would-be motorists were not merely bad, they were abysmal, generally accounted to be the worst of those of all the industrialized nations.

The plight of the rapidly rising numbers of early motorists soon spawned a “good roads” movement. Full of a can-do optimism, these early partisans of motoring sought to link together existing roads and then make them fit for automobile driving—blazing, marking, grading, draining, bridging, and paving them. The most famous of these named highways was the Lincoln Highway between New York City and San Francisco. By early 1916, a proposed counterpart coursing north and south from Winnipeg to New Orleans had also been laid out.

Called the Jefferson Highway, it eventually followed several routes through Minnesota, Iowa, Missouri, Kansas, Oklahoma, Texas, Arkansas, and Louisiana. *The Jefferson Highway*, the first book on this pioneering road, covers its origin, history, and significance, as well as its eventual fading from most memories following the replacement of names by numbers on long-distance highways after 1926. Saluting one of the most important of the early named highways on the occasion of its 100th anniversary, historian Lyell D. Henry Jr. contributes to the growing literature on the earliest days of road-building and long-distance motoring in the United States. For readers who might also want to drive the original route of the Jefferson Highway, three chapters trace that route through Iowa, pointing out many vintage features of the roadside along the way.



*The Jefferson Highway: Blazing the Way from Winnipeg to New Orleans*  
by Lyell D. Henry, Jr.

Iowa and the Midwest Experience

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3 maps • 1 illustration  
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### **Praise**

“Travelers wise enough to shun the monotonous, crowded turnpikes and interstates must read this well-researched book. They will discover that the Jefferson Highway—the first international highway traversing the United States from north to south through the Mississippi Valley—is alive and well, especially in Iowa, where a century ago the brainchild of a Des Moines publisher became a reality.”—Michael Wallis, author, *Route 66: The Mother Road*

“Despite their importance, the old named auto ‘trails’ are largely forgotten. Historian Lyell Henry has turned his formidable talents to one of the most influential, the Pine to Palm road from Winnipeg to New Orleans. Anyone embarking upon his *Jefferson Highway* is in for a splendid ride!”—Max J. Skidmore, author, *Moose Crossing: Portland to Portland on the Theodore Roosevelt International Highway*

**Lyell D. Henry Jr.** is emeritus professor of political science at Mount Mercy University, where he taught from 1982 until retiring in 1999. He is the author of two earlier books: *Zig-Zag-and-Swirl: Alfred W. Lawson’s Quest for Greatness* (Iowa, 1991) and *Was This Heaven? A Self-Portrait of Iowa on Early Postcards* (Iowa, 1995). He has also written numerous articles on American popular culture, early highways, and roadside commercial architecture. An active member of the Lincoln Highway Association, the Jefferson Highway Association, and the Society for Commercial Archeology, he was the historian for interpretive projects at four Lincoln Highway sites in Iowa and edits the newsletter of the Jefferson Highway Association. He lives in Iowa City, Iowa.

*The Jefferson Highway* is available for sale at bookstores or directly from the University of Iowa Press at 800-621-2736 or uiowapress.org. Customers in the United Kingdom, Europe, the Middle East, or Africa may order from the Eurospan Group at eurospanbookstore.com.