History didn’t happen along the Interstate: the Good Roads Movement, Named Highways, and State Historic Sites

Robin Cole-Jett, Educator
Eisenhower Birthplace State Historic Site, Denison, TX

TEXAS HISTORICAL COMMISSION
real places telling real stories
The Bicycle Revolution
Equality & the Bicycle
League of American Wheelmen
The idea which is expressed in the petition is a good one, and if carried through would be the means of bringing about good results. In providing a Road Department, and placing it on a par with the Agricultural Departments, experiments could be made under the charge of skilful men and thus the whole country would be placed within reach of all information extant on the subject. A great many experiments have been tried in the making of roads: some have been successful and others have not. Unsuccessful experiments of this nature are decidedly costly. In addition to the great loss of money, the failure proves a damper upon the ardor of property owners and it is hard to get them started on the line of improvement again. All this would be done away with if we had a Road Department. All the latest and most improved methods and machinery could be easily learned of, and before a thing was done, it could be known whether the road was to be a success or not. . . .
Private & Civic road improvements
Named highways – Bankhead, Jefferson...
Transcontinental Motor Convoy, 1919
Texas State Highway Department, 1923
Federal Highway Act, 1926
Road building

Shell, macadamized, plank, asphalt/tar, brick

Donate one week’s of labor or voluntary tax
New on top of the old
Wise County near Chico, Hwy 24 supplants Butterfield Stagecoach route
Private v. Public controversies
Traversing the highways
Traversing the highways – The Green Book
Traversing the highways – The Green Book
"The old convoy had started me thinking about good, two-lane highways, but Germany had made me see the wisdom of broader ribbons across the land." – Dwight Eisenhower

The interstate system
Named highways intersect state historic sites
Jefferson Highway: US 69 (US 2, 1917)
Jefferson Highway: Eisenhower State Park, Eisenhower Birthplace, Sam Rayburn, Cooper Lake SP, Lake Bob Sandlin SP, Daingerfield SP, Caddo Lake SP, Starr Family Home
Jefferson Highway: A local sample tour

**Old Jefferson Highway (US 2, now US 69) through Denison**

1. Munson Park
2. Go south on Houston Street
3. Veer southeast onto Crawford Street, turns into Owings
4. Follow south onto Crockett
5. Turn left onto Texas Street
6. Follow Texas Street to FM 1753, then turn right.
7. Follow FM 1753 to Ambrose
8. Go south on FM 1897 (Old Ambrose Road) to Bells
9. Follow US 69 to Whitewright

**Eisenhower Birthplace State Historic Site**
Jefferson Highway: A sample tour (early alignment)
Jefferson Highway: A sample tour
(1924 alignment)
North Texas Road: Texas Political History Tour

- Eisenhower
- Sam Rayburn
- Sam Bell Maxey
- John Nance Garner

houses
North Texas Road: A regional tour sample
King of Trails: US 75 (SH 2 & US 8, 1917)
King of Trails: Eisenhower SP, Eisenhower BP SHS, Confederate Reunion Grounds SHS, Fort Parker SP, Washington on the Brazos SHS, Fanthorp Inn SHS, San Felipe SHS, San Jacinto
Sources

Abilene Public Library
Amazon.com
Archives.org
Army Corps of Engineers
Boyce Ditto Library
Carol Scrivner Richards collection
Dallas Historical Society
David Rumsey Map Collection
Eisenhower Presidential Library
Federal Highway Administration
Good Roads Magazine, 1892 and 1907
Library of Congress
Lincoln Highway Association

Oklahoma Historical Society
Perry Castaneda Library
Portal to Texas History
Red River Historian
Texas State Library
Texas Department of Transportation
Texas General Land Office
Texas Historical Commission
Texas & Pacific Archive
Texas Parks and Wildlife
Texoma Connect
University of Alabama Archives
Wang Xueying CGTN news
Bring the family!

Eisenhower Birthplace State Historic Site
609 Lamar Street, Denison, Texas
Tuesday – Saturday: 9am to 5 pm
Sunday: 1 pm to 5 pm
Route 778—Waco to Austin, Tex.—116.8 m.
Reverse Route 812.

Via Lorena, Bruceville, Eddy, Troy, Temple, Bartlett, Granger, Georgetown and Round Rock. 14 miles macadam; balance mixed gravel and dirt, with a few miles of macadam into Austin. Most of the road has been gravelled but heavy rains have washed the lowlands leaving several dirt stretches which become mires in wet weather. This route traverses a farming country, devoted to the raising of wheat, oats, corn and cotton.

Note (a) offers a good dry weather option between Granger and Austin via Taylor.

For this and other exits see City Map, page 650.

0.0 0.0 WACO, 5th & Washington Sts. Go southeast with trolley on 5th St. Cross RRs 0.2-0.3. Pass park on left 1.0.

Dallas Section

Route 778

1.1 1.1 Speight St., Baylor university of right; meeting cross-trolley turn right. Avoid left-hand diagonal road 2.2. Thru Lorena 13.9. Bear right at end of macadam 14.8, keeping ahead with high tension line.

18.9 17.8 End of road; turn right.

19.0 0.1 Bruceville 4-corners just beyond RR, bank on left. Turn left.

21.5 2.5 Eddy, 4-corners, flagpole in center. Turn right along RR. Avoid left-hand diagonal road 22.6.

28.8 7.3 End of road; turn left.

29.1 0.3 Troy, right-hand road, flagpole in center. Turn right.

29.6 0.5 Left-hand road; turn left. Avoid right-hand road 36.1.

36.4 7.8 Right-hand road; turn right. Jog right and left thru irregular 4-corners 37.1.

37.4 1.0 Temple, at far side of court house. Straight thru.

37.5 0.1 End of road; turn left one block.

37.6 0.1 4-corners; turn right across RR.

37.9 0.3 4-corners, wooden church on far left; meeting cross-trolley turn left.

38.2 0.3 4-corners; turn right away from trolley. Cross RR 38.8.

40.0 1.8 Right-hand road; turn right.

45.5 4.5 Little Rivers, 4-corners. Turn left.

47.0 1.5 4-corners at sign; turn right. Cross iron suspension bridge over Little river 47.9. Pass Sparks Sta. on right 50.6. Thru edge of Holland 55.3.

55.5 8.5 End of road; turn left.

61.7 6.2 4-corners; turn right one block.

61.8 0.1 Bartlett, 4-corners at banks. Turn left.

62.4 0.6 End of road at sign; turn right.

63.6 1.2 End of road; turn right across RR and immediately left along same. Cross RR 66.6.

67.1 3.5 4-corners; turn left.

67.2 0.1 4-corners; turn right.

67.3 0.1 Granger, 4-corners. Turn right. Cross RR 67.4.

67.6 0.3 4-corners, brick church on right; turn left. Cross RR 68.7. Avoid right-hand diagonal road 69.3.
73.5 5.9 End of road at large sign; turn right.
     Left is Note (a) to Austin via Taylor.

80.0 6.5 Left-hand road, sign on right; turn left thru Jonah 80.1.
     Pass Georgetown university on right, crossing RR just
     beyond 87.9.

88.4 8.4 Georgetown. * 4-corners.
     GARAGES—Henderson’s Garage.
     Turn left. Cross RR 89.0. Avoid right-hand road 96.6.
     Right at 96.6 is Route 815 to Mason.


98.4 0.6 End of road; turn left. Avoid right-hand road 100.0.

102.2 3.8 Left-hand road; turn left.

102.8 0.6 End of road; turn right. Cross RR 111.4. Pass large con-
     crete reservoir on right 112.2. Pass state insane asylum on
     right 113.5. Bear right onto Guadalupe St. 114.9. Pass
     Texas university campus on left 115.3.
     Austin City Map and Points of Interest, page 654.

115.7 12.9 End of street; turn left onto 19th St. with trolley two blocks.

*Georgetown, Tex. (pop. 4,200, alt. 442 ft.), is
a live stock and educational center, being the seat of Southwestern university. Absolute
prohibition has been in force here for nearly thirty years. The Georgetown mineral wells are
a point of local interest.

Route 778                         Page 654                        Ft. Worth-

115.8 0.1 Lavaca St., concrete block store on right; bear right with trolley.

116.4 0.6 11th St., at far side of capitol; turn left with trolley two blocks.

116.5 0.1 Congress Ave.; turn right with branch trolley.

116.8 0.3 AUSTIN, Congress Ave. & 6th St.
     SERVICE STA.—United States Tire Sales & Service Depots located here.
Austin, Texas

Points of Interest, Austin, Tex.

Austin (pop. 30,000, alt. 650 ft.), the capital of Texas, was named for the founder of the state, Stephen F. Austin. The city occupies a picturesque bluff on each side of the Colorado river. About two miles distant are mountains and table lands from 700 to 1,500 feet high. The granite capitol building located here is one of the largest and finest in the world. Among the city's foremost educational institutions is the university of Texas. The great Austin dam, located about two miles above the city, is a quarter of a mile long and forms a lake 65 feet deep and 29 miles long.