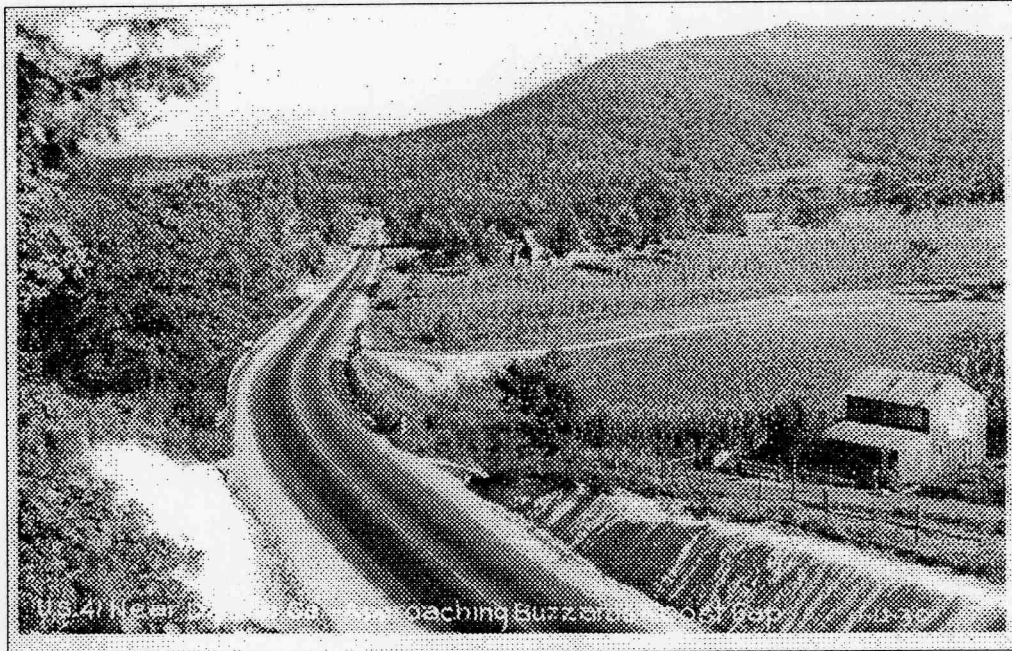


## SECTION B: THE DIXIE HIGHWAY IN GEORGIA

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## SECTION B: THE DIXIE HIGHWAY IN GEORGIA

One of eight states that the Dixie Highway ran through, Georgia had approximately 1,300 miles of the highway's total 5,786 miles in 1924. However, due to the Dixie's shifting alignments through the state, at one time or another Georgia had a whopping total of some 1,500 miles, an amount greater than the mileage of any other single state (*Dixie Highway* May 1924:10-11; Georgia Highway Map 1998-99). An examination of a map published in the May 1924 issue of the magazine *Dixie Highway* reveals the bewildering complexity of the highway's path through Georgia (Figure B-1).

That the Peach State had so much of the highway's overall route was due to a number of reasons. Most obvious was the bitter fight that *Atlanta Constitution* editor and Dixie Highway Association board of director Clark Howell waged with fellow board member Carl Fisher of Indiana over the establishment of the highway's route in May 1915. Where the Hoosier businessman wanted to set the route of the Dixie quickly to maintain the organization's momentum, Howell wished to postpone a commitment as to where the road would run so that counties along the route would make these improvements. Following closed-door talks with the highway association's route selection committee at the Hamilton County Courthouse in Chattanooga, the southern newspaperman emerged announcing the creation of two north-south routes rather than a single alignment for the Dixie. The immediate result of this power struggle and its settlement was a chaotic tangle of roads that became the route of the highway through Georgia. As the 1924 map shows, the Dixie Highway was less a highway than a network of roads funneling northern automobile tourists into numerous parts of the sunny South (Preston 1991:56-58; *Dixie Highway* May 1924:10-11).

Geography also had much to do with why the state would have such a large amount of the highway's mileage. In terms of its total area, Georgia is the largest state east of the Mississippi River.<sup>1</sup> Moreover, by 1924, only four other states along the Dixie Highway (Michigan, Kentucky, Tennessee, and Florida) had both of the two major routes of the highway crossing them. Michigan and Florida, like Georgia, are oriented north-south, hence each have longer north-south than east-west boundaries. But at the time that the May 1924 issue of *Dixie Highway* was published, Michigan accounted for approximately 1,000 miles, while the course of the Dixie Highway's routes through the Sunshine State totaled somewhere around

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<sup>1</sup>With 58,060 square miles, Georgia ranks 21<sup>st</sup> out of the 50 states in land area.



Figure B-1: This map shows the complex network of roads that became the Dixie Highway by the early 1920s. As the map indicates, Georgia had a large proportion of the highway's numerous routes (From: May 1924 issue of *Dixie Highway*, on file at Historic Preservation Division, Georgia Department of Natural Resources).

1,000 miles. In the case of Kentucky and Tennessee, because of the east-west orientation of the area contained in each, the sections of highways passing through these two states were relatively short in comparison to the total mileage of the Dixie Highway<sup>2</sup> (*Dixie Highway* May 1924:10-11; *Georgia Highway Map* 1998-99).

Both of the two principle routes of the Dixie--the Western and Eastern Divisions--through Georgia began in the northwest corner of the state, and continued southward on parallel routes before crossing the Florida state line at various locations in the southern part of the state. From where the two divisions split in downtown Chattanooga, the Western Division of the Dixie Highway entered Georgia on what is now U.S. 27<sup>3</sup> near Rossville. (*Dixie Minutes* 1915:10; *Dixie Highway* May 1924:10-11; *Georgia Highway Map* 1998-99).

From Rossville, the highway passed through the army post of Fort Oglethorpe and the Chickamauga battlefield, which became the first National Military Park in 1890.<sup>4</sup> That the Western Division of the highway would be routed on the LaFayette Road through the Civil War battlefield was quite intentional: a system of improved roads had existed in the park since its establishment, and compared to the dirt roads that existed outside of the park, the main gravel road that traveled due south would have been an excellent travel corridor for its time. Following the establishment of the numbered U.S. routes in 1925, the alignment continued to play an important role in the national highway network and the Chickamauga and Chattanooga National Military Park appears to have been an important tourist destination (**Figure B-2**) (*Dixie Minutes* 1915:10; *Dixie Highway* May 1924:10-11; *Georgia Highway Map* 1998-99; Ogden 1997).

After leaving the Chickamauga battlefield, automobile enthusiasts driving the Western Division of the Dixie Highway passed through cities and towns along the

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<sup>2</sup>Even with the mileage of the North Carolina Division included with the two main divisions, Tennessee's total Dixie Highway mileage amounted to approximately 550 miles, while the routes of Kentucky's two branches totaled about 460 miles (*Dixie Highway* May 1924:10-11).

<sup>3</sup>Between Lima, Ohio and Rome, Georgia, the Western Division of the Dixie Highway also shared the alignment of present-day U.S. 27 with another named route, the William Howard Taft Highway, which ran from the Michigan state line north of Wauseon, Ohio to Fort Myers, Florida

<sup>4</sup>Chickamauga-Chattanooga National Military Park is one of three units of the National Park Service associated with the Civil War that lie along the former routes of the Dixie Highway; the other two are Stones River National Battlefield in Murfreesboro, Tennessee and Kennesaw Mountain Battlefield Park near Marietta, Georgia.

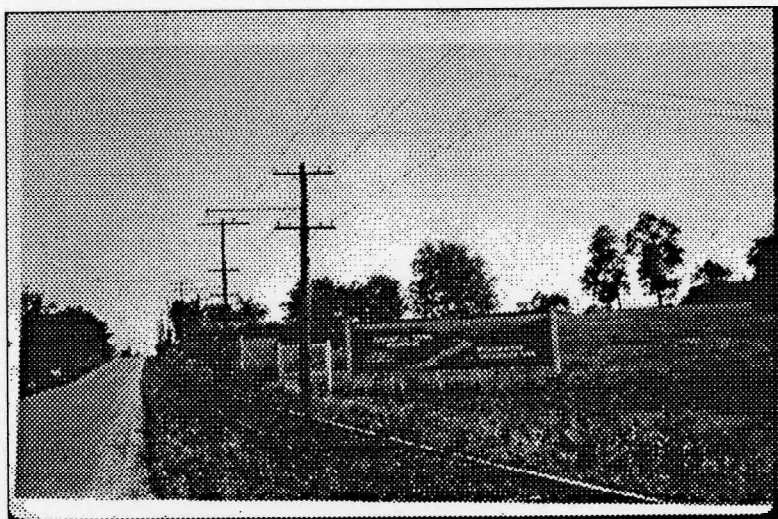


Figure B-2: Taken ca. 1930, this photograph shows a billboard advertising U.S. 27, Lookout Mountain, and the Chickamauga National Military Park (From: Chattanooga Automobile Club Collection, courtesy of Bicentennial Public Library, Chattanooga, Tennessee).

route including Rock Spring, Noble, LaFayette, Trion, Summerville, Crystal Springs, Armuchee, and Rome, all of which lie along or near the route of present-day U.S. 27. Apart from several bypassed sections of the Dixie, U.S. 27 largely follows the route of the older highway. But such segments may be found in Walker County north and south of Rock Spring (**Figure B-3**) as well as south of LaFayette; in northern Chattooga County; in northern Floyd County; in cities such as Fort Oglethorpe and Rome; and in smaller towns like Trion and Armuchee (Dixie Minutes 1915:10; *Dixie Highway* May 1924:10-11; Georgia Highway Map 1998-99; Fort Oglethorpe USGS Quadrangle 1942; Estelle USGS Quadrangle 1947).

At Rome the Western Division turned eastward and automobile tourists would then follow what is now State Route 293 to Kingston and Cass Station, which is near the junction of the branch with the Eastern Division. After leaving Cass Station, travelers on both of the two main branches of the Dixie Highway followed the same alignment along what is present-day State Route 293 southward into Cartersville. Following the creation of the U.S. route system in 1925, this unified alignment of the two divisions would be designated U.S. 41. However, from 1937 to 1953 the Georgia Department of Highways constructed the state's first dualized or divided four-lane highway north of Atlanta (**Figure B-4**), and the path of U.S. 41 between Cass Station and Atlanta was moved from its original alignment to the new highway, which is its present route (Dixie Minutes 1915:10; *Dixie Highway* May 1924:10-11; Georgia Highway Map 1998-99; State Bridge Survey 1997:NP; Reynolds 22 June 1998).

From Cartersville, travelers using both the Western and Eastern Divisions drove on a single alignment now designated as State Route 293 through Emerson, Allatoona, Acworth, Kennesaw, the northern end of the Kennesaw Mountain National Battlefield Park (which was established in 1917), and Marietta, Georgia. Near where State Route 293 intersects with the current route of U.S. 41, the Dixie Highway entered Marietta on what is now called Kennesaw Avenue. South of the city, the Dixie Highway continued on the present-day Atlanta Road to where the road intersected with Paces Ferry Road, and on that road crossed the Chattahoochee River at the village of Vinings over a steel truss bridge (Dixie Minutes 1915:10; Dixie Minutes 1918:60).

After travelers crossed the Chattahoochee River, Paces Ferry Road became West Paces Ferry Road, and the Dixie followed the route of that road to where it intersects with Peachtree Road in Buckhead. From there, automobile tourists entered Atlanta on Peachtree Road, which becomes Peachtree Street, and followed it in to downtown Atlanta (Dixie Minutes 1915:10; Dixie Minutes 1918:60; *Dixie*



Figure B-3: A large part of the Dixie Highway's Western Division through North Georgia is found on present-day U.S. 27. However, in several places, the numbered route lies on a new alignment that has bypassed the old road. This photograph shows a section of the former alignment in rural Walker County, Georgia (photograph by author).

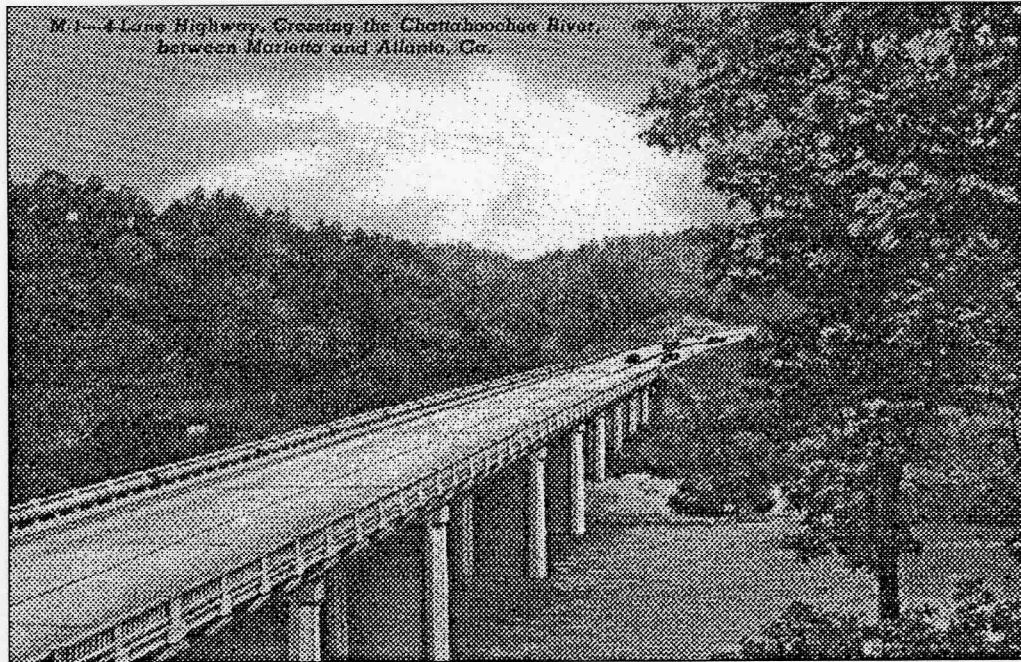


Figure B-4: This 1944 postcard illustrates Georgia's first section of dualized highway, which was built for U.S. 41 between Atlanta and Marietta during the years 1937 and 1942 to bypass the original alignment of the Dixie Highway's Eastern Division. Few changes have occurred to the highway, and people living near it still refer to it as the "four-lane" (author's postcard collection).



*Highway May 1924:10-11; Georgia Highway Map 1998-99*). Today, U.S. 41 enters the city on a different alignment west of downtown, which was likely constructed about the same time as the dualized stretch north of the city (*Georgia Highway Map 1998-99; State Bridge Survey 1997:NP*).

In Atlanta the Western and Eastern Divisions of the Dixie Highway would split in two to form separate branches. The Western Division continued due south on present-day U.S. 19/41 through the town of Jonesboro (*Dixie Minutes 1915:10; Dixie Highway May 1924:10-11; Georgia Highway Map 1998-99*). However, south of Jonesboro in Henry County, the original alignment of U.S. 41 and the Western Division of the Dixie Highway followed what is now county road that runs parallel to and east of U.S. 41. This former alignment of the Dixie continued into Spalding County and travelers using it would go through the railroad towns of Sunny Side, Pomona, and Experiment before entering the county seat of Griffin (*Dixie Minutes 1915:10; Dixie Highway May 1924:10-11; Georgia Highway Map 1998-99*).

Although it has been bypassed by the present alignment of U.S. 41, the old alignment of the highway outside of Griffin is very significant (**Figure B-5**). In 1920, Spalding County became the first county on the Dixie Highway between Chicago and Miami to have improved the Dixie with a continuous hard-surfaced road all the way through the county when it paved an 18-foot wide road over a 14-mile long section of the route. This accomplishment cost \$700,000 and involved the county, which provided half of the total amount in order to match the Federal share of the project. To mark this important development, the Spalding County Commissioners staged a motorcade over the entire route and a luncheon (*Dixie Highway 1921:7*). Today, a Georgia Historical Marker stands along a section of the highway north of Orchard Hill in Griffin to commemorate Spalding County's contribution to improving the Dixie Highway. The text of the marker reads as follows:

#### First Paving

Spalding was the First County between Chicago and Miami on the old Dixie Highway with a concrete highway running from county line to county line. A demonstration strip, completed Jan. 30, 1919, from the city limits of Griffin to and along the front of the Georgia Experiment Station, was the first paving outside a city on the route. That same year the people of Spalding County voted a bond issue of \$350,000 to complete the paved highway to the county line in both directions. Dedication for the completed highway was held in September, 1920. County Commissioners were J. E. Wallace, chairman, C. L. Elder W. A. Jester (*Georgia Historical Commission Marker 1956*).

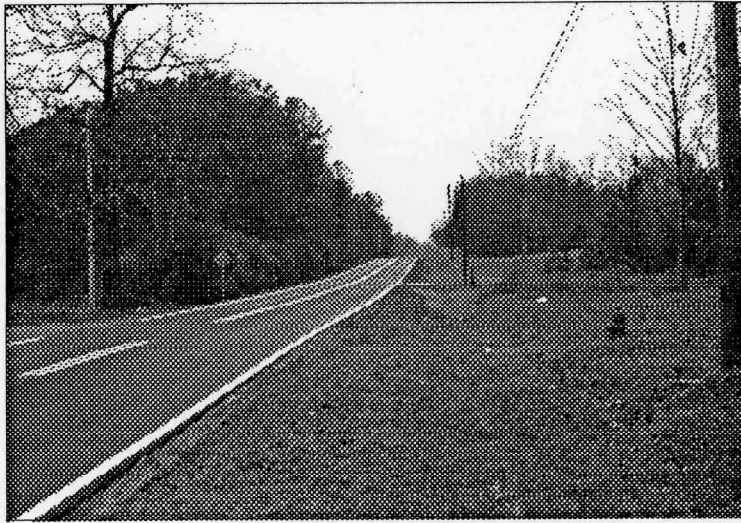


Figure B-5: This section of road outside Griffin, Georgia in rural Spalding County was the alignment of U.S. 41 before the present highway bypassed the old corridor. It is also a portion of the Dixie Highway's Western Division through Spalding County, which in 1920 became the first county on the route between Chicago and Miami to have its entire segment of the highway hard-surfaced. A Georgia Historical Commission marker stands near the road recognizing the county's accomplishment (photograph by author).

South of Griffin, automobile tourists traveling on the Western Division drove on what is now a county road to Orchard Hill, Milner, and Barnesville. From that town, the Western Division turned eastward to Forsyth on present-day U.S. 41. South of Forsyth, the Dixie then followed a southerly course to Macon on what is now U.S. 41. At Macon, the alignment of the Western Division again joined with the path of the Eastern Division (*Dixie Minutes* 1915:10; *Dixie Highway* May 1924:10-11; Georgia Highway Map 1998-99). South of Macon, the two Divisions again split apart, and the Western Division took travelers to the Middle Georgia towns of Fort Valley, Montezuma, Oglethorpe, Andersonville (site of the infamous Civil War prison camp), and Americus on present-day State Route 49. From Americus, tourists driving the Western Division followed the path of what is now U.S. 19 to Albany, Camilla, and Pelham. South of the Mitchell-Thomas County line at the town of Meigs, the route of the Western Division follows present-day State Route 3 to Ochlocknee and Thomasville. Travelers continuing southward left Thomasville on what is now U.S. 319, and just after leaving the Grady County town of Moncrief crossed the Florida state line approximately twenty miles from the state capital at Tallahassee<sup>5</sup> (*Dixie Minutes* 1915:10; *Dixie Highway* May 1924:10-11; Georgia Highway Map 1998-99).

Based upon early highway association maps, the Eastern Division appears to have originally entered Georgia on the same alignment as the Western Division before splitting from the branch and heading eastward toward Ringgold, where it turned southward toward Tunnel Hill (*Dixie Highway* May 1924:10-11; Rand McNally Auto Road Atlas 1926:26-27; Georgia Highway Map 1998-99). However, sometime after 1926, perhaps following the completion of Chattanooga's Bachman Tubes in 1929 (**on Tour #1, Figure D-2**), the route of the Eastern Division was moved to the alignment of present-day U.S. 41 and entered Georgia north of Ringgold (1946 East Ridge USGS Quadrangle Map). Between Chattanooga and Atlanta, the Eastern Branch of the Dixie also parallels the route of another significant travel corridor--the Western and Atlantic Railroad.

Chartered by the Georgia legislature as a state-owned railway in 1836, the Western and Atlantic was to run from a point south of the Chattahoochee River near the village of White Hall to Chattanooga. The southern terminus of the route was marked with a zero milepost marker and eponymously named "Terminus." The fledgling village that grew up at the end of the railroad was later called Marthasville just before its citizens settled upon its current name of Atlanta. Though its entire

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<sup>5</sup>The total mileage of the Dixie Highway's Western Division through Georgia was approximately 412 miles.

route had been surveyed by 1837 and its bed graded by 1841, the depression following the Panic of 1837 halted further construction of the Western and Atlantic Railroad. With the restoration of prosperity in 1844, progress on the railroad resumed with the tracks reaching Marietta the following year, Dalton two years later, and the Western and Atlantic's northern terminus of Chattanooga in 1850 (Coleman 1977:157-158; Hoobler 1986:115).

In addition to the tracks of this important southern transportation link, which still is an active rail line, are the 19<sup>th</sup>-century towns that sprung up along the busy route, and five extant depots built by the W & A in North Georgia. The depots in Ringgold, Tunnel Hill, Dalton, and Calhoun are all intact antebellum buildings, while the depot in Adairsville, was extensively remodeled in 1891.

Occasionally the route of the Dixie Highway's Eastern Branch through Georgia is referred to as the "Battlefield Route" or the "Johnston-Sherman Link" of the Dixie Highway, and was named to memorialize Confederate General Joseph E. Johnston and Union General William T. Sherman whose armies waged a series of battles in North Georgia during the Spring and Summer of 1864 (**Figure B-6**). In fact, the alignment of the Eastern Division closely followed the invasion path that Sherman took from Chattanooga toward Atlanta, and portions of the highway between Atlanta and Savannah parallel the route of his infamous "March to the Sea" (*WPA Guide* 1940:300; Miles 1989:10; Georgia Bridge Survey 1997:64; *Travaho Trails* 1946:9; Atlanta Scrapbook ND:108).

Not surprisingly, the names of the towns and natural features along the route of the Dixie's Eastern Division are familiar to Civil War historians as the places where several important engagements occurred leading up to or during the Atlanta Campaign including major battles at Rocky Face Ridge, Resaca, and Kennesaw Mountain. Moreover, Union and Confederate forces fought numerous other skirmishes and occupied several towns that lie along the route of the Eastern Division such as Ringgold, Tunnel Hill, Dalton, Adairsville, and Cassville.

The dirt roads connecting these communities and the corridor of the Western and Atlantic Railroad were of great strategic importance, were the focus of the operations of the Union and Confederate units, and therefore were the scene of much bloodshed. However, nearby settlements experienced the horror of the Civil War in other ways. Towns along the railroad were the location of supply depots vital to the Confederate Army in the days before the Union invasion, large public buildings such as churches and schools were used as hospitals to care for the sick and wounded of the North and the South, and all but the smallest villages would

## Motorcade to Follow Historic Route

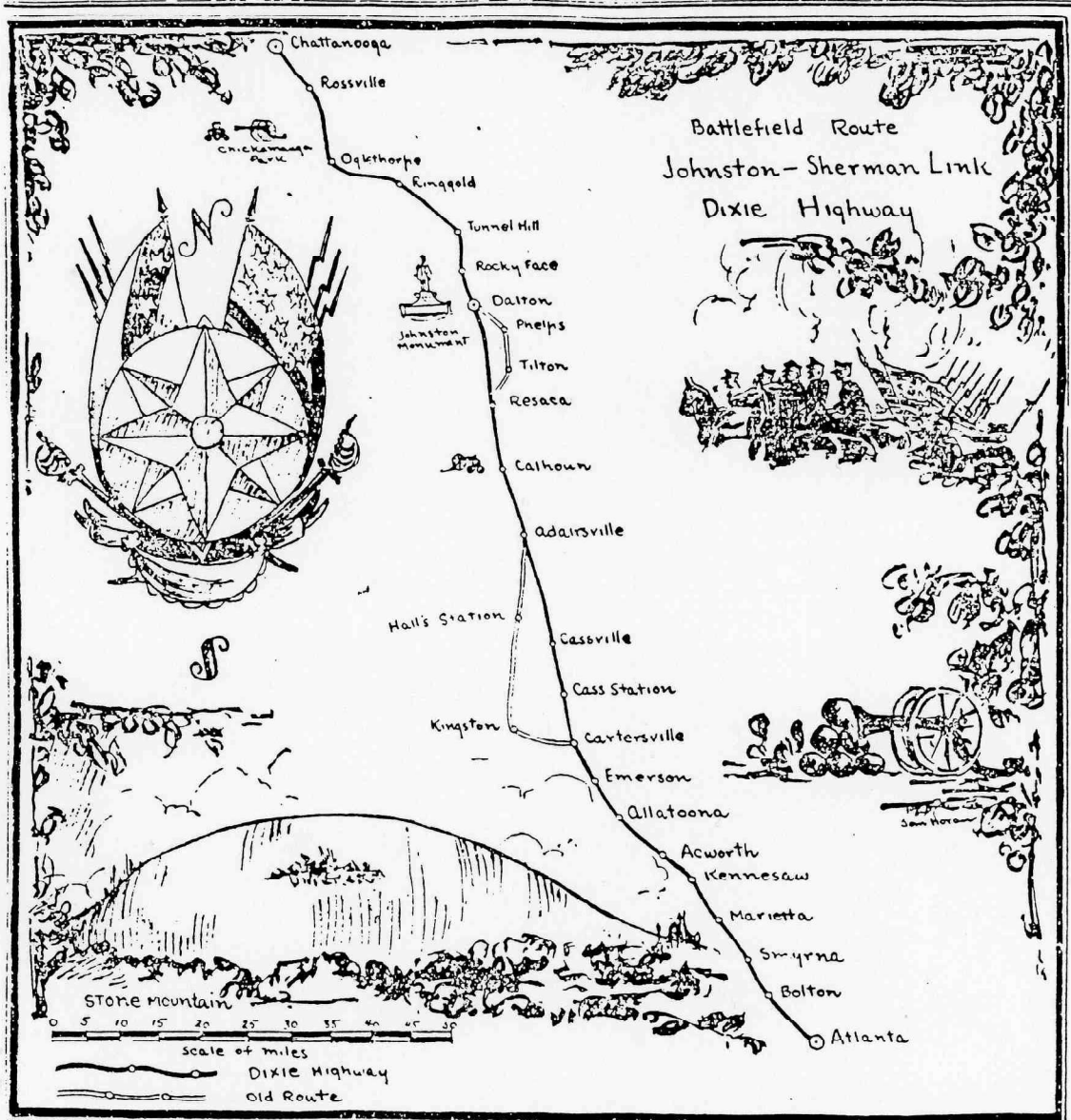


Figure B-6: This map is from the 1929 motorcade tour of the "Johnston-Sherman Link" of the Dixie Highway's Eastern Division (present-day U.S. 41) between Chattanooga and Atlanta (From: Atlanta Scrapbook, on file at Historic Preservation Division, Georgia Department of Natural Resources).

experience occupations by the soldiers of one or both of the two armies. Finally, in towns like Ringgold, Kingston, and Cassville, Union troops destroyed some or most of the buildings that stood in these places.

Although the Dixie Highway would eventually become a very different transportation route from the simple dirt road that the combatants used during the war, the commemorative value of the route played a useful role in promoting improved highways and automobile tourism in Georgia during the new century. On November 4, 1929 a Dixie Highway motorcade arrived in Dalton and included 200 cars, some of which came from as far away as St. Louis, Detroit, and New York. In celebrating this important event, the Dalton Junior Chamber of Commerce published a special "Motorcade Edition" of its newsletter, *The Jaw Cracker*. The Jaycees noted that:

in the height of the season 800 tourist cars a day will drive over [the Johnston-Sherman Highway]. . . . Every foot of this highway was a battle field from Chickamauga to Peachtree Creek. In the near future, by government appropriation, monuments commemorating famous Civil War battles will be erected on this road (*Jaw Cracker* 1929:1).

To further recognize the historic significance as well as economic importance of the highway, the newsletter went on to state that:

aside from the commercial interests which Georgians naturally feel in the completion of the newly paved Dixie highway, it also is mete [sic] that we pause to consider the wealth of historic associations which cling to this celebrated old route: this roadway which during the 'sixties saw the good, rich blood of Americans spilled for what they thought was right. The followers of Johnston and Sherman--Americans all--made these North Georgia hills and valleys sacred to the memory of a later generation; and it is but fitting that this motorcade of progress should retrace the steps of these valliant [sic] American soldiers (*Jaw Cracker* 1929:3).

These sentiments were echoed in the article "Big Motorcade Will Go Through Historic Ground," which appeared in an October 1929 *Atlanta Journal* article:

When the Atlanta-Dalton-Chattanooga good roads motorcade, sponsored by the *Atlanta Journal* and the Atlanta Motor Club, winds over the newly paved link of the Dixie Highway on Monday morning, November 4, the motorist will traverse historic ground, every foot of which was stubbornly fought over in the [eighteen] sixties. Howsoever jubilant over the completion of the

highway, the celebrants cannot but be impressed by the knowledge that on these hills and in these valleys the good, rich blood of Americans was freely spilled for what they thought was right. And it is only fitting that on this memorable morning the motorcade will retrace the steps of Generals Johnston and Sherman (Atlanta Scrapbook ND:108).

The historical connection between the route of the Dixie Highway's Eastern Division and the Civil War later bore fruit during the New Deal Era when the National Park Service began a series of five pavilions interpreting the Atlanta Campaign. All but one of the waysides were sited along U.S. 41, and all five were built between 1938 and 1947. Each pavilion were planned to feature a low stone wall encircling a relief map that depicted the events that occurred in the area around the station, but would eventually include other historical markers, including those later put there by the National Park Service and the Georgia Historical Commission, and a picnic table for travelers who wished to stop and eat.

The pavilions were designed by two National Park Service landscape architects named Ewald and Frost.<sup>6</sup> The sculptor of the bronze tablets placed at the stations was John Steinichen. Construction of the five pavilions was begun by the Works Progress Administration, but due to delays and World War II, work at each of the five pavilions was put on hold indefinitely. Following the war, construction of the waysides resumed when the National Park Service hired three stone masons and seven other workers to finish the work. In 1947, the first of the five pavilions (the one at Ringgold Gap) was completed (Mielnik Draft NRHP Nomination, 1998).

From Ringgold, the Eastern Division largely follows the route of present-day U.S. 41 and passes through the towns of Tunnel Hill, Rocky Face, Dalton, Resaca, Calhoun, and Adairsville as it winds through the hilly North Georgia countryside (**Figure B-7**). Like the Western Branch, there are a few places in North Georgia where U.S. 41 has bypassed the route of the Dixie's Eastern Branch. For example, such segments may be found in Whitfield County south of Dalton, in Gordon County south of Calhoun, and in Bartow County north and south of Adairsville as well as north and south of Cartersville. The present alignment of U.S. 41 also bypasses the downtown areas of cities such as Dalton and Cartersville, and smaller towns like Tunnel Hill, and Adairsville (*Dixie Highway May 1924:10-11; Georgia Highway Map 1998-99*).

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<sup>6</sup>It is uncertain what the first names of these two landscape architects were, but it is likely that they were Walter A. J. Ewald (1900-1976) and Paul Rubens Frost (1883-1957), both of whom did work for the National Park Service in the Southeast (Blythe 1998).

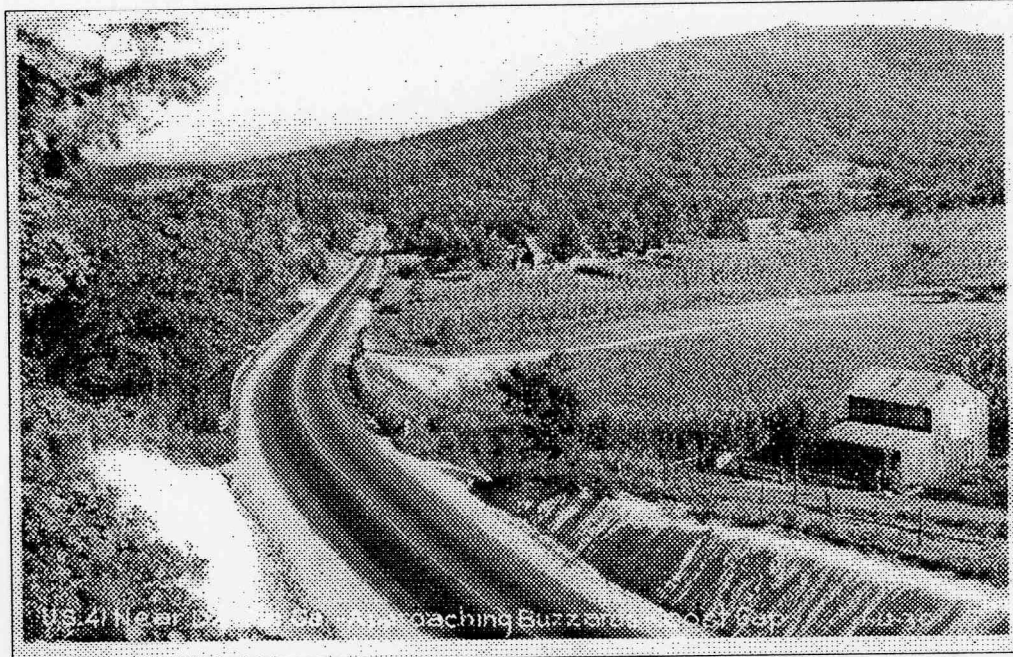


Figure B-7: This ca. 1940 real photo postcard shows the route of U.S. 41 at Buzzard's Roost Gap near Dalton in Whitfield County, Georgia. This section of road would have been the alignment of the Dixie Highway's Eastern Division (author's postcard collection).



Due to one of these U.S. 41 bypasses, the route of the Eastern Division North of Cassville originally followed what is presently a county road into the town. Cassville was once the county seat of Cass County, which was later renamed Bartow County in honor of Francis S. Bartow, a Georgian who graduated from Yale University and was killed in action at the Civil War Battle of First Manassas. Despite its good fortunes before the war, the town was burned by Union soldiers in 1864 and never recovered (Miles 1989:63). South of Cassville and near Cass Station, the Eastern and Western Divisions join together and follow a unified alignment all the way to Atlanta as described above (*Dixie Highway* May 1924:10-11; Georgia Highway Map 1998-99).

After Atlanta, automobile tourists traveling on the Eastern Division of the Dixie Highway in 1915 would have gone south through McDonough and Jackson primarily on present-day U.S. 23 before heading toward Indian Springs and Forsyth on what is now State Route 42. From Forsyth the Eastern Branch was to take travelers to Macon (*Dixie Minutes* 1915:10; Georgia Highway Map 1998-99). However, it is unclear on what road the division followed between Forsyth and Macon. Moreover, not until February 1916 did the Association's Board of Directors decide on what route the highway would head beyond Macon when it adopted a resolution made by Clark Howell. According to the resolution, from Macon the Eastern Division would continue northeastward to Milledgeville, the former capitol city of Georgia and then to Sandersville, Louisville--an even earlier location for the state's wandering capitol, Waynesboro, Sylvania, Springfield, Savannah, Darien, Brunswick, Woodbine, and Camden before the highway crossed into Florida north of Yulee and headed into Jacksonville (*Dixie Minutes* 1916:31-32).

Unfortunately, no Dixie Highway Association map from 1916 has been found and the 1917 map does not provide sufficient detail to determine the precise route of the Eastern Branch between Macon and Milledgeville. However, artifactual evidence for the 1916 route exists that may provide a clue. On the lawn of the Jones County Courthouse in Gray is a cross-shaped concrete marker with the inscription "Dixie Highway." Assuming that this spot is the original location of the marker, it then appears that the original alignment of the Eastern Division would have likely been on the same alignment as what is now U.S. 129 between Macon and Gray (*Dixie Highway* April 1917:13; *Dixie Minutes* 1916:31-32; Georgia Highway Map 1998-99).

From Gray the highway appears to have followed present-day State Route 22 to Milledgeville. From that city, the Eastern Branch largely followed either what is now a Washington County road that goes through Deepstep or present-day State Route 24 to Sandersville. From that town, the highway continued on State Route 24

toward Sandersville, Louisville, and Waynesboro, but seven miles north of Sylvania, the highway continued southward on present-day U.S. 301 to the town. From Sylvania, the division followed along what is now State Route 21 to Springfield and Savannah, the city that Georgia founder James Edward Oglethorpe began in 1733 (*Dixie Highway* April 1917:13; *Dixie Minutes* 1916:31-32; Georgia Highway Map 1998-99).

South of Savannah, travelers on the original alignment of the Dixie Highway's Eastern Branch used the route of present-day U.S. 17. On this segment of road, automobile tourists found many historic sites important to Georgia's early years as a British colony, and travelers drove through the towns of Midway, Darien, and Brunswick. From Brunswick, cars headed southward to the railroad towns Woodbine and Kingsland before leaving the state at its border with Florida at the St. Marys River. Prior to 1927 when the present steel truss bridge over the river was constructed, travelers crossed the St. Mary's River on a ferry owned by Read Readdick (**Figure B-8**) (*Dixie Highway* May 1924:10-11; Georgia Highway Map 1998-99; Gibson 1994:5; Chance and Smith 1993:12-13).

It is important to note that the segment of the Dixie Highway that paralleled Georgia's coast also shared its roadway with another important interstate route, the Atlantic Coastal Highway, which ran from Calais, Maine to Miami, Florida. Part of U.S. 17 was also the alignment of the Ocean Highway,<sup>7</sup> which ran from New Jersey to Florida, as well as the route of the Quebec to Miami Highway. Though the name of the highway is not used much anymore, several of the markers that the Atlantic Coastal Highway Commission erected to recognize Georgia's Colonial and Revolutionary War past still stand along the route of U.S. 17 including three at the 1792 Congregational Church at Midway in Liberty County (**Figure B-9**) (National Touring Bureau 1949:1; Leach 1996:30; Doster 1991:210; Gibson 1994:5).

To make matters more confusing, less than four months after it determined the route of the Eastern Division south of Macon, the Dixie Highway Association amazingly changed the road's original alignment south of *Atlanta*. Because the counties just south of the city that the 1915 route of the Eastern Branch passed through were doing little to maintain "a well surfaced and drained all year round road," in July of 1916 the Highway Association's Board of Directors "abrogated" the original route of the branch (*Dixie Minutes* 1916:36-37).

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<sup>7</sup>For a discussion of the Ocean Highway, see SCA Board member Sara Amy Leach's article "Pines to Palms: A Drive Along the Ocean Highway," which appeared in the Spring 1996 issue of the *SCA Journal*.

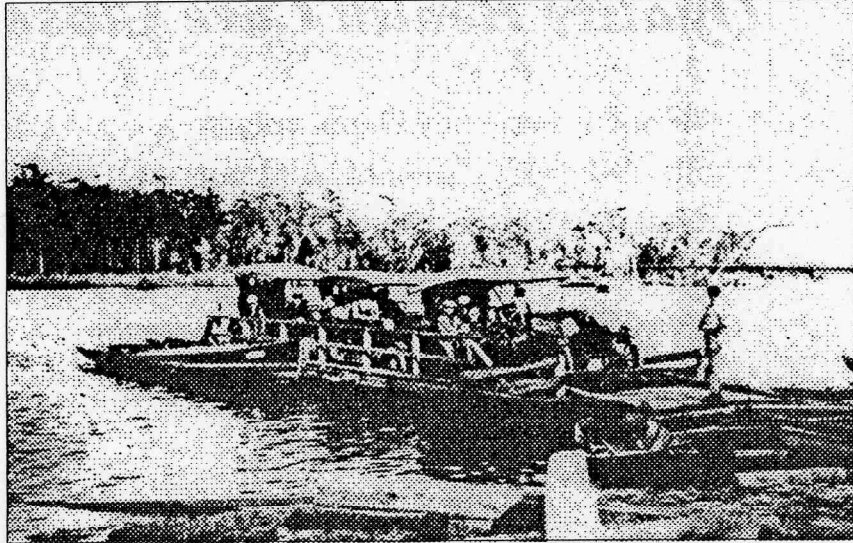


Figure B-8: Prior to the 1927 completion of the U.S. 17 Bridge over the St. Marys River, automobile tourists entered Florida riding Read Readdick's Camden County, Georgia Ferry (From: Gibson, U.S. 17 Became Backbone of Camden County. *The Southeast Georgian* 28 December 1994).



Figure B-9: This ca. 1940 real photo postcard shows the 1792 Congregational Church, Coastal Highway, Midway, Georgia, which lies along the Dixie Highway/U.S. 17. In the foreground of the photograph are three historical markers associated with early Georgia history that were put up by the Coastal Highway Commission, another named highway that shared this alignment of the Dixie (author's postcard collection).

In its place, the directors plotted an a new route for the Eastern Branch that took drivers east of Atlanta to Waynesboro, where the new route of the Eastern Division would join with the alignment of the division that the board had approved earlier that year. Rather than head in a southerly direction, the new alignment of the Eastern Division went due east of Atlanta through the towns of Decatur, Stone Mountain, Covington, and Madison on present-day U.S. 278, but from Madison the route followed along what is now U.S. 441 to Eatonton and Milledgeville. From Milledgeville, the revised route followed the route of the Eastern Division that the board had adopted earlier that year, and continued on to Sandersville, Louisville, Waynesboro, Sylvania, Springfield, Savannah, Darien, Brunswick, Woodbine, and Camden (*Dixie Minutes* 1916:36-37; *Dixie Highway* May 1924:10-11; Georgia Highway Map 1998-99).

Evidently, the problems with the routing of the Eastern Division were not completely solved because the route was shifted yet a third time. By the time a map of the Dixie Highway appeared in the May 1924 issue of the association's magazine *The Dixie Highway*, the official routing of the Eastern Branch, as it was described in the text to the right of the map, indicates that the Eastern Division followed the same route as the Western Division as far south as Macon. From there, the 1924 route of the Eastern Division essentially followed what is now U.S. 41 to Perry. However, south of Perry, the route of the branch turned down present-day U.S. 129 taking travelers to Hawkinsville before heading them to the South Georgia towns of Abbeville, Fitzgerald, and Ocilla (*Dixie Highway* May 1924:10-11; Georgia Highway Map 1998-99).

From the last town, tourists driving the 1924 alignment of the Dixie's Eastern Division followed what is now State Route 32 and wound up in Douglas. It is not readily apparent, but it appears that the route of the branch followed present-day State Route 158 through the village of Talmo before the Eastern Division joined with what is now U.S. 82. Just west of Waresboro travelers following the route took the old bypassed section of U.S. 82 east to Waycross, which is near the Okefenokee Swamp. From there, the alignment of the Eastern Division is synonymous with present-day U.S. 1 and U.S. 23. At some point, a portion of U.S. 1 had been referred to the Wilson Highway because a ca. 1940 postcard of Hardy's Super Service located along the highway at the corner of State and Plant Streets in Waycross shows a concrete arch over the highway with the words "THE WILSON HIGHWAY TO WASHINGTON, D.C." inscribed on it. Unfortunately, no other information was available about this named highway. Just north of Folkston, these two U.S. highways join with U.S. 301. After passing through Folkston, travelers crossed the Florida State line at the St. Marys River and would continue on to

Jacksonville along what is now U.S. 301/23/1<sup>8</sup> (*Dixie Highway May 1924:10-11*; Georgia Highway Map 1998-99; author's postcard collection).

In addition to the two main branches of the Dixie Highway, that were by no means constant, Georgia also had several other alignments of the highway route. The most important of these was the North Carolina Division. Although this Division's route and southern terminus would change during the existence of the Dixie Highway Association, the northern terminus of the Carolina Division appears to have remained constant. The highway entered Georgia on present-day U.S. 25 where it crossed the Savannah River at Augusta. South of Augusta, the route of the division continued on what is now U.S. 25 to Waynesboro and Millen, but after leaving Millen, the path of the highway took automobile tourists to Sylvania where it joined the original 1916 alignment of the Eastern Division and headed on to Springfield and Savannah before turning south on the route paralleling Georgia's coast line<sup>9</sup> (*Dixie Highway May 1924:10-11*; Georgia Highway Map 1998-99).

A "Central Division" running between the Western and Eastern Divisions south of Macon also existed in 1916, but by 1924 the route for the Central Division had become the new alignment of the Eastern Division south of Macon (following the route discussed above) when the original alignment for the 1916 Eastern Branch south of Waynesboro became subsumed under the North Carolina Division (*Dixie Minutes 1915:32*; *Dixie Highway May 1924:10-11*). A fourth alignment of the Dixie that originated in Perry and continued due south through Unadilla, Vienna, Cordele, Ashburn, Tifton, Sparks, and Valdosta before it crossed the Florida state line north of Jasper was adopted by the Highway Association at its May 1922 meeting in Jacksonville, Florida despite the opposition of several directors and Chairman Judge Michael M. Allison. While no name appears to have ever been given to this alignment, the route eventually became present-day U.S. 41, and parallels the modern super highway Interstate 75 through South Georgia (*Dixie Minutes 1922:106*; Georgia Highway Map 1998-99).

In 1923, a delegation sent its representative, a Mr. Price of Swainsboro, Georgia, to the Highway Association's meeting at the Hotel Patten in Chattanooga to seek the designation of a fifth Dixie Highway alignment, which would have entered

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<sup>8</sup>The total mileage of the Dixie Highway's Eastern Division through Georgia in 1924 was approximately 418 miles.

<sup>9</sup>The 1924 mileage of the Dixie Highway's North Carolina Division through Georgia was approximately 268 miles.

Northeast Georgia north of Hartwell and continued southward through Elberton, Washington, Thomson, Wrens, Louisville, Swainsboro, Graymount, Metter, Reidsville, Baxley, Lyons, and Alma before the route joined with the Eastern Division at Waycross. According to the minutes of the Highway Association, Mr. Price was asked to file his petition with the Board, same to be acted upon by the Executive Committee (Dixie Meeting Minutes 1923:110). Apparently the measure was never acted upon because the matter was not mentioned again in the Association Board's minutes. However, the proposal may have had some influential supporters with the Joint Board of State Highway Officials when it designated the route of U.S. 1 to pass through the Georgia towns of Wrens, Swainsboro, Baxley, Lyons, Alma and Waycross (Georgia Highway Map 1998-99).

Aside from having multiple corridors running through the state, the routes of the different alignments through Georgia would change during the existence of the Dixie Highway Association, but also after the organization disbanded in 1927<sup>10</sup>. Similar to the situation in other states, some of these shifts appear to have been due to the failure of counties along the routes to maintain their share of the road. As discussed above, the 1915 alignment of the Eastern Division between Atlanta and Macon was shifted after just one year from its original routing through Clayton, Henry, Butts, and Monroe Counties to another routing that took automobile tourists through DeKalb, Newton, and Monroe, and Putnam Counties because the former group of counties had done little to keep up their portion of the road (Dixie Minutes 1916:36-37).

The Dixie Highway Association also threatened in at least one instance to re-route the Western Division in North Georgia. Apparently, the Bartow County Commission had failed to live up to its pledge to maintain its section of the Western Division to the point that at the July 1, 1916 meeting of the Highway Association's Executive Committee, it resolved that:

Bartow county be given until January first, Nineteen Hundred and Seventeen, to construct a well surfaced and drained all year road from the Floyd county line to Cass Station, and . . . in the event Bartow county fails to provide the above described section of the western division of the Dixie Highway within the time mentioned, [the Georgia directors] abrogate this

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<sup>10</sup>For example, a ca. 1950 strip map of the Dixie Highway shows the highway largely following a single alignment on the route of the Eastern Division in Ohio, Kentucky, and Tennessee, but entering Georgia north of Chatsworth on U.S. 411, which was never a town on the route adopted by the Dixie Highway Association during its 12-year existence (Strip Map in Carver Collection).

designation and designate from Rome through Aragon in Polk county and Dallas in Paulding county, into Atlanta, on condition acceptable guarantee can be secured for its building and maintenance (Dixie Minutes 1916:36).

Because the issue never came up again, Bartow County appears to have made good on fulfilling its obligation to maintain its segment of the Western Division route, and the alignment never was changed.

With so much of the highway's total mileage, the Peach State was the beneficiary of having 53 of its 161 counties at one point or another along the various routes of the Dixie Highway during the 12 brief years that the Dixie Highway Association was active.<sup>11</sup> Georgia, perhaps more than any other state, characterized Drake Hokanson's description of the Dixie Highway as a "wandering peavine" (Hokanson, 21). The changing multiple routes of the Dixie Highway through the state also illustrated how confusing travel on named highways could be for early automobile tourists. Having so many alignments of the Dixie going through Georgia gave the highway the appearance of being more like an octopus and less like an automobile highway, and likely had much to do with the Federal government's adoption in 1925 of a system of numbering rather than naming its highways.

While the new system might have been less confusing, the process of determining the route of each numbered highway was no less divisive than the rancorous debate that had occurred in the preceding decade on where the alignments of the named highways would pass. In the case of the Dixie Highway, the solution favored by Clark Howell to have more than one branch only temporarily quelled the discontent that locating the route of an important highway caused. With the creation of the numbered highway system, influential citizens along both divisions actively campaigned to get the designation of the important north-south highway U.S. 41 through their towns (*Vanishing Georgia* 1982:170). Initially, the contest between the communities along the two branches appears to have been stalemated. According to a 1929 Rand McNally map of Georgia, the Eastern Division *did* win the highly prized designation of U.S. 41. However, the Western Division had also been numbered U.S. 41W. Eventually the stalemate was broken because a 1943 highway map indicates that sometime prior to that year the route of the Dixie's Western Branch had received its current designation as U.S. 27 (Rand McNally Georgia Map 1929; Federal Works Agency Highway Map of North Georgia 1943).

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<sup>11</sup>From 1920 to 1932, Georgia had 161 counties, but since 1932, it has had 159 counties following the disbandment of Campbell and Milton Counties.



Whatever the branch, promotion of the Dixie Highway in Georgia began soon after the formation of the highway association, and much of this promotion was due to Association Board of Director member Clark Howell and his newspaper the *Atlanta Constitution* (Figure B-10). During a motorcade sponsored by the Dixie Highway Association running from Chicago to Miami, a front-page article in the October 15, 1915 edition of the newspaper invited

every auto owner . . . to meet at the Majestic hotel for the purpose of motoring to Bolton, Ga., on the Chattahoochee river, to give the tourists the greatest road reception they have received anywhere along their route (*Atlanta Constitution* 15 October 1915).

The city also hosted an oyster dinner where several dignitaries spoke, including Georgia governor Nathaniel Edwin Harris, who postponed a trip he had planned to Florida "in order to welcome the tourists to Georgia and Atlanta" (*Atlanta Constitution* 15 October 1915).

Aside from his service to the Dixie Highway Association's Board of Directors, editor Howell used the *Atlanta Constitution* in his highly vocal support of the Good Roads movement in general and of the Dixie Highway specifically. On May 4, 1924, following the unveiling of a monument that the Dixie Highway Association placed on Walden's Ridge (**on Tour #2**), Howell eulogized the efforts of Association President Judge Michael M. Allison's leadership of the organization in an editorial to the newspaper:

No man in the south has contributed more to the development of the south--indeed the whole country for it is a national project--than Judge Allison as his faithful and untiring work in this one outstanding interstate highway project. The marker to Judge Allison is abundantly deserved, and this great highway that means so much to the material interest of the country, and especially the south, will stand like the old roads of Rome as a monument to his foresight and his enterprise that will live through the ages (*Dixie Highway* May 1924:4).

Other Georgia newspapers were active in promoting the Dixie Highway. For example, the Rome *Tribune-Herald* published a special 54-page Good Roads edition on May 31, 1916. Aside from boasting "that all roads lead to Rome is to be made fact indeed," the editors of the newspaper also claimed:

*Dixie Highway Tourists Will Arrive in Atlanta Late This Afternoon;  
Old Fashioned Southern Welcome Will Be Given Visitors to Georgia*

**GOVERNOR HARRIS  
WILL LEAD PARTY  
TO WELCOME TOUR**

Executive Postpones Trip to Florida in Order to Motor to River to Extend Georgia's Greetings to the Good Roads Enthusiasts.

**OYSTER DINNER TONIGHT AT TAYLOR HALL WILL BE MOST ENJOYABLE EVENT**

Automobile Parties, Representing Many Local Organizations, Will Meet the Tourists at River Today and Escort the Visitors to Atlanta.

Everything is in readiness for an elaborate "good roads" and "oyster" welcome to Atlanta for the Dixie Highway tourists who will reach the city from Chicago, where they have just left, and whose departure is expected to be a "big" one for the Dixie Highway.

The officials in charge of today's

Figure B-10: This front-page article promoting a motorcade sponsored by the Dixie Highway Association ran in the 15 October 1915 issue of the *Atlanta Constitution*. Georgia board member Clark Howell addresses a crowd in the upper left-hand photograph, while Indiana board member Carl G. Fisher stands on the left in the lower left-hand photograph (copy on file, Historic Preservation Division, Georgia Department of Natural Resources, Atlanta).

Georgia has outstripped any other state traversed by the Dixie Highway. From Macon to the Florida line it is now possible to travel over a good road. The eastern division via Savannah and Brunswick has only to build two bridges to solve the problem of [a] Florida crossing and provide tourists with a wonderfully fine drive to Jacksonville (Aycock 1982:300-301).

A substantial amount of support for the Dixie Highway also came from civic groups in Georgia. For example, in 1924, the Rome Rotary Club passed a resolution to "enlist the support of other Rotary Clubs and civic organizations, especially along the route, to make the Dixie Highway a paved way from the Great Lakes to the Gulf of Mexico" (*Dixie Highway* May 1924:19). Moreover, by 1924 Rome boosters had raised enough money to erect a pair of arches over the route at the boundary lines of Floyd County to greet automobile tourists passing through the county on the Dixie (*Dixie Highway* February 1924:15).

Another way that Georgians would promote the Dixie Highway was through the various businesses they built along the road which catered to the tourists driving through the state. Even in 1916, the *Rome Tribune Herald* noted that "a passable highway between Rome and Atlanta . . . would place Rome in an ideal position to profit from the growing tide of Northern tourist traffic flowing to and from Florida" (Aycock 1981:301). Apparently, the readers of the newspaper took these words seriously, and the city soon had several filling stations. By 1925, Rome had established a municipal camp for overnight automobile tourists at the American Legion Memorial Park and fairground on Shorter Avenue. In August of that year, cars with license plates from 16 states were found in downtown Rome. The following month, a total of 913 automobiles carrying over 2,100 tourists had stopped to stay at the camp (Aycock 1981:303, 305-306, 384).

That the communities along the Eastern and Western Divisions of the Dixie in North Georgia competed for a share of the automobile tourist trade on the highway is certain. One indicator of the competition for traffic was the staging of motorcades that brought the visitors to towns along the Dixie Highway. As discussed above, in the fall of 1915--just six months after the original formation of the Dixie Highway Association--Carl Fisher and the other Directors staged a motorcade between Chicago and Miami, which came to Georgia (**Figure B-11**). According to the headline of a front-page article in the October 15, 1915 edition of the *Atlanta Constitution*, "Dixie Highway Tourists Will Arrive in Atlanta Late This Afternoon; Old Fashioned Southern Welcome Will Be Given Visitors to Georgia" (*Atlanta Constitution* 15 October 1915). The article went on to state:



Figure B-11: This photograph is believed to have been taken during the Dixie Highway Association's first motorcade in October 1915. Carl G. Fisher appears to be the second man from the left (From: Chattanooga Automobile Club Collection, courtesy of Bicentennial Public Library, Chattanooga, Tennessee).

Automobile parties, representing many local organizations, will meet the tourists at Rome today and escort the visitors to Atlanta. Everything is in readiness for an elaborate entertainment and hearty welcome to Atlanta for the Dixie Highway Tourists, who arrive tonight at 8 o'clock on the last lap of their auto tour from Chicago to Miami. . . . On Thursday, a number of Atlanta automobilists, carrying official streamers bearing the names of Atlanta civic and business organizations, all of whom are co-operating in the entertainment of the tourists, went to Rome, where they will join the Dixie tour today, and escort the tourists to Atlanta (*Atlanta Constitution* 15 October 1915).

In addition to the 1915 motorcade, special motorcades were held at various times on both branches of the highway during the 1920s, including several trips on the Eastern Division between Chattanooga and Atlanta that passed through Dalton and Calhoun toward the end of the decade (*Vanishing Georgia* 1982:170, 195-196; *Atlanta Scrapbook* ND:108; *Jaw Cracker* 1929:3). Apparently, these events were as much to advance the Dixie Highway as they were to promote the commerce that would occur in the towns along its routes following much-needed improvements to the highway.

In terms of the contest between the North Georgia towns along the two divisions of the Dixie Highway, the winner of the competition appears to have emerged prior to World War II. Valuable to an understanding of this development are a series of 1940 highway maps for Catoosa, Walker, Floyd, and Whitfield Counties showing the location of rural, and in some cases urban, gasoline stations and tourist camps along the two branches of the highway. A review of these maps clearly indicates that the Eastern Division had many more of these roadside businesses. In Catoosa and Whitfield Counties, 39 gas stations and 11 tourist camps stood along the rural stretches of U.S. 41. On the portion of U.S. 27 running through Walker and Floyd Counties, just 6 gas stations and 4 tourist camps lined the highway in rural areas, and no such businesses stood along U.S. 27 in Catoosa County (Georgia State Highway Board Maps for Catoosa, Floyd, Walker, and Whitfield Counties 1940).

Also revealing is a comparison of just two counties. Whitfield and Floyd Counties are largely similar by virtue of each having a large town within its borders--Whitfield where Dalton is located, and Floyd where Rome is found. In the case of the first county, 27 gas stations and 6 tourist camps along U.S. 41 appear on the 1940 map; conversely, the map produced the same year for Floyd County shows that only 3 gas stations and just 1 tourist camp near the corridor of U.S. 27 existed. Because the number of these businesses must have had something to do with the number

of tourists who used the routes, it is likely then that more travelers preferred U.S. 41 to U.S. 27. Hence, the large concentration of roadside buildings standing next to U.S. 41 and the sparse collection of similar resources on U.S. 27 as shown by these maps are compelling evidence that the Eastern Division had—at least by 1940—eclipsed the Western Division in terms of the number of travelers who drove the highway in North Georgia (Georgia State Highway Board Maps for Floyd and Whitfield Counties 1940).

Apparently, the preference that the motoring public had for the Eastern Branch may have something to do with the fact that when compared with the Western Division, the highway is a shorter and more direct route between Chattanooga and Atlanta: 126 miles versus 139 miles (*Dixie Highway* May 1924:10-11; Georgia Map 1998-1999). Another reason may have been that following the infusion of federal dollars into highway projects after 1921, the state directed its efforts at improving the Eastern Division sooner than it had the Western Division. Of the two explanations, the first (its shorter distance) seems to be the more likely reason. Through looking at a current highway map of Georgia, this factor becomes readily apparent in the selection of the route of the modern access-controlled highway between Chattanooga and Atlanta; Interstate 75 closely parallels U.S. 41 for much of its nearly 115-mile distance between the two cities, but U.S. 27 is largely distant from the new road (Georgia Map 1998-1999).

As for the other counties that the two routes of the Dixie Highway passed through, it is difficult to gauge which of the two branches had greater importance. Aside from the North Georgia county maps, no maps were located showing the location of roadside businesses in the remainder of the state. However, it probably was only a short time until ambitious residents all over Georgia were putting up gas stations, tourist camps, restaurants, and other examples of roadside architecture near the routes of the Dixie Highway. At what rate commercial strip development occurred and where it was most evident is not well understood. Apart from the dwindling number of relict roadside businesses that stand as a physical record of the types of buildings found along these routes, a documented history of the Dixie's impact on the state has never been produced. Reconstructing these patterns may also prove difficult.

While several insightful examinations have been published on roadside architecture in the South (most notably Keith Sculle's essay on Frank Radford's Wigwam Villages in the 1990 SCA book *Roadside America: The Automobile in Design and Culture*, which features papers from the organization's 1988 conference; Linda Bayer's article "Roadside Architecture" in the Fall 1982/Winter 1983 issue of

*Huntsville Quarterly of Architecture and Preservation*; and Howard L. Preston's book *Dirt Roads to Dixie: Accessibility and Modernization in the South, 1885-1935*<sup>12</sup>), no such work exists on the subject in Georgia. One possible reason for the absence of any systematic study of the state's automobile landscape is the apparent dearth of primary source material.

Unfortunately, original written accounts describing the types of buildings serving the first travelers who journeyed down the Dixie Highway are scarce if not virtually nonexistent. Except for the 1940 highway maps described above, and city directories and Sanborn fire insurance maps showing where roadside businesses were concentrated in urbanized areas, little can be found in the historical record about the gas stations, restaurants, and lodging facilities that were built along rural stretches of the highway in Georgia. But much photographic documentation exists in the form of picture postcards advertising the many examples of roadside commercial establishments built during the 1920s, 1930s, and 1940s. From these images, it is possible to gain a glimpse of the typical gas stations, tourist houses, cabin camps, barbecue stands, cafes, chenille bedspread and souvenir stores found along the Dixie Highway (**Figures B-12, B-13, B-14, and B-15**).

Although a few of these buildings were grand architectural statements, many of them were sturdily built of brick, stone, or of Georgia's seemingly inexhaustible supply of timber. Many were modest interpretations of what may have been constructed in other parts of the country, but a few were built in large numbers throughout Georgia and in neighboring southern states according to nationally accepted standardized building designs, such as the Picturesque English Cottage gas station that Carl Petersen developed for Pure Oil, or the Art Moderne designs that Louisville, Kentucky architect William Arrasmith created for the depots of Greyhound Bus Lines (Durbin 1997; Sculle 1979:56-74; Preston 1991:138-140; *SCA NewsJournal* 1987:10).

One business begun in Georgia to take advantage of the flood of automobile tourists heading south would eventually extend to neighboring states and to the north itself later becoming a virtual roadside empire. Begun in the 1930s as a humble lean-to roadside pecan stand in Eastman on U.S. 341, its owner soon

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<sup>12</sup>In particular, see page 136-153 of Preston's book for a thorough discussion of roadside buildings in the South (Knoxville:University of Tennessee Press, 1991). For an examination of the gas stations in a single southern community, see Jeffrey L. Durbin's Master's Thesis *Survey Techniques for Roadside Architecture: The Gas Station, Murfreesboro, Tennessee, As a Case Study* (Middle Tennessee State University, 1989).

SEQUOIA COURTS and TINY HOTELS  
U.S. Highway 17



Seventeen miles South of  
Savannah, Ga.

Figure B-12: This ca. 1945 postcard shows the Sequoia Courts and Tiny Hotels, which were located on the Dixie Highway/U.S. 17 in the town of Richmond Hill, Georgia. According to the postcard's reverse, the business was also along the Golden Isles Short Route, and had "thirty rooms and cabins all modern with private baths - steam heat. Pecan products and gift shop in connection. Owned and operated by Mr. and Mrs. E. A. Kicklighter" (author's postcard collection).



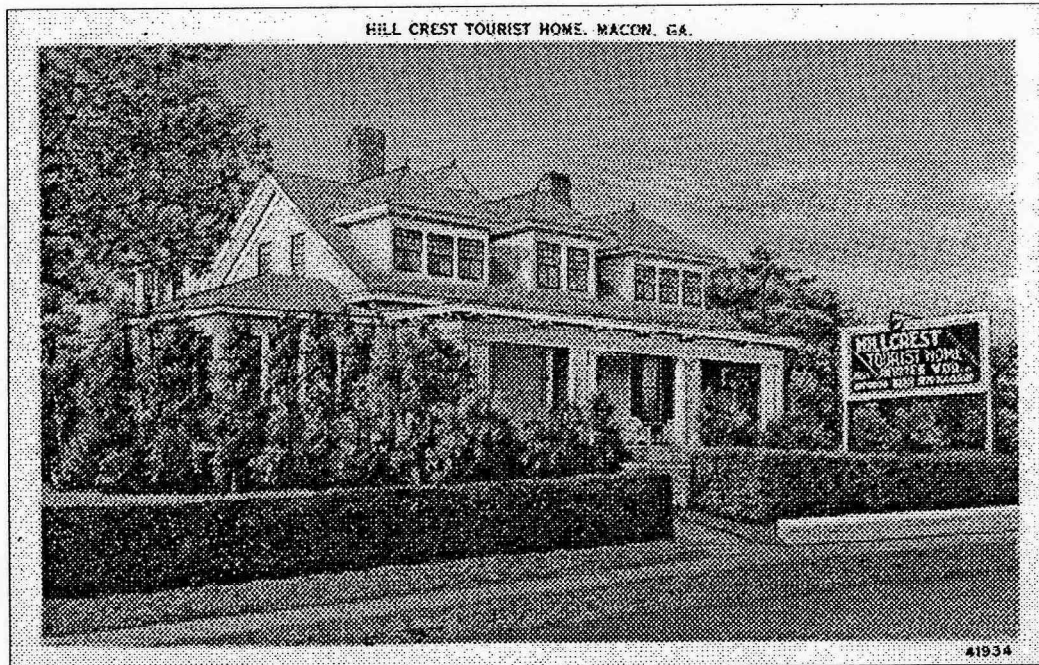


Figure B-13: Typical of many southern towns, Macon had several tourist homes including the Hill Crest Tourist Home seen here in this ca. 1935 postcard. Such businesses were located in large residences whose owners often needed a source of additional income to help pay for their property. The sign in front of the Hill Crest advertises the business as having "heat, hot water, radio, and free garage[s]" (author's postcard collection).

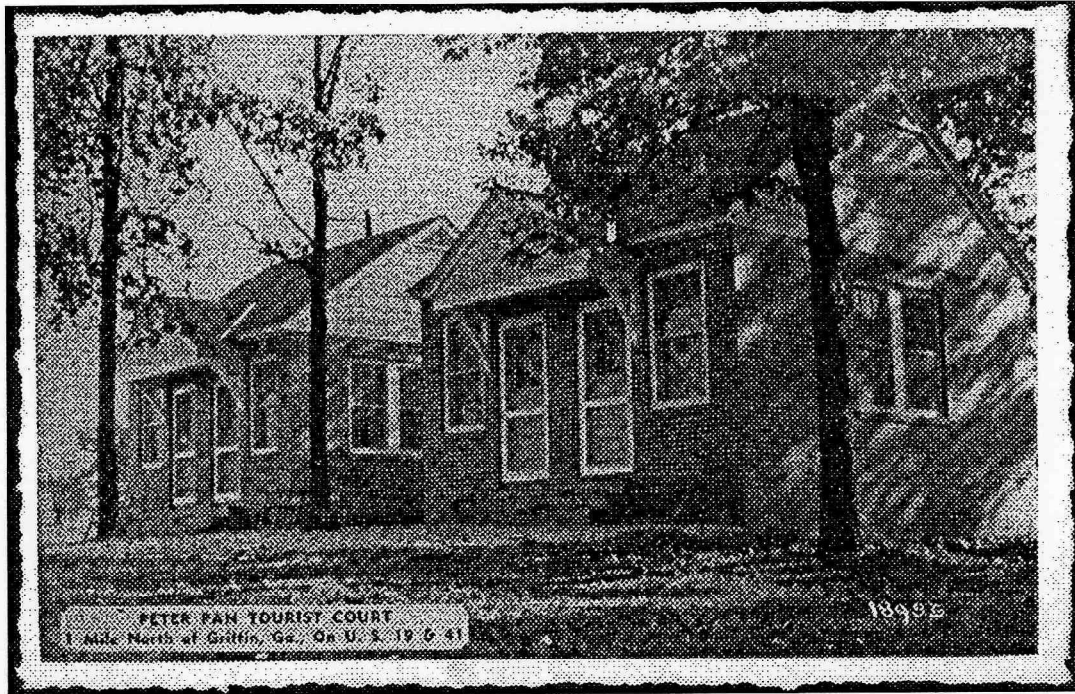


Figure B-14: This ca. 1930 postcard illustrates the sturdy tourist cottages that Georgians built along the routes of the Dixie Highway. This business, the Peter Pan Court, stood on U.S. 19/U.S. 41 one mile north of Griffin, Georgia. The postcard advertised the tourist court as having “DeLux [sic] Brick, Fireproof Cabins Each with Private Built In Baths. Beautiful Elevated Location. Quiet, Clean, Comfortable. Mr. and Mrs. John Langerveld, Prop” (author’s postcard collection).

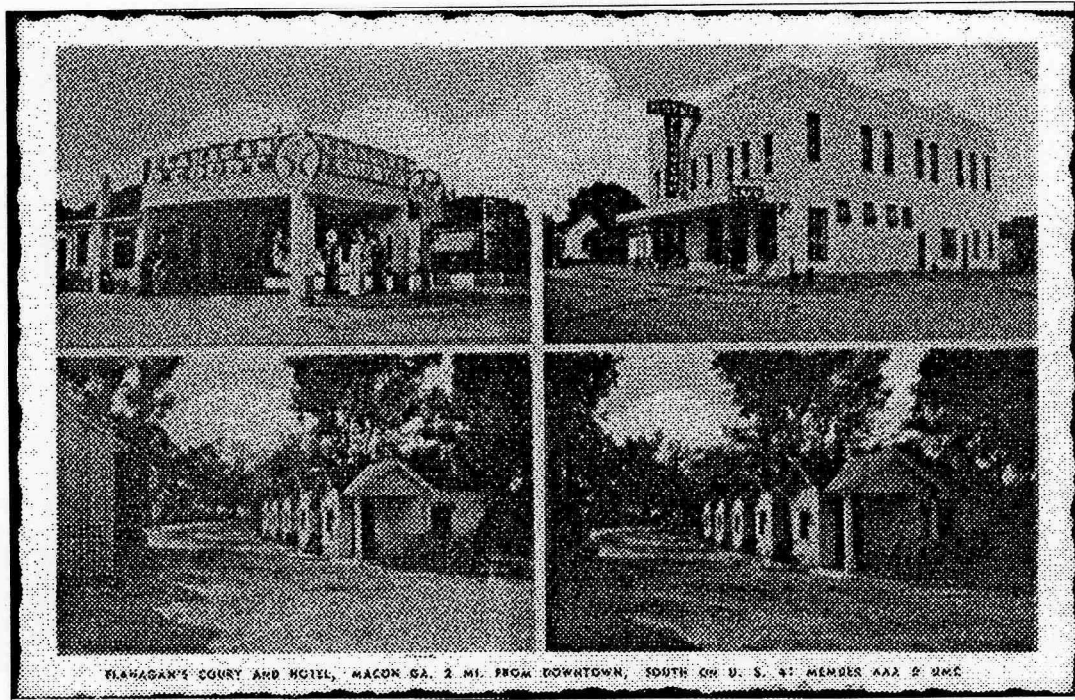


Figure B-15: This ca. 1940 postcard illustrates the gas station, hotel, and tourist cabin buildings at Leona Combs Flanagan's Court and Hotel, which was located two miles south of downtown Macon on the Dixie Highway/U.S. 41. The cafe in the hotel building was advertised as being "open all year" (author's postcard collection).

replaced the building and expanded his business when he opened two more “pecan stations” along the Dixie Highway: a second location next to U.S. 41 in Unadilla (**Figure B-16**) and a third store on U.S. 23 in Folkston. Less than forty years later, the three stores had grown to 336 “Pecan Shoppes” in 31 states, each featuring a teal blue roof and a sign out front along the highway with the name “Stuckey’s” to beckon travelers inside the building<sup>13</sup> (Raflo and Durbin 1995).

Whatever the success of these businesses, important to an understanding of the South’s roadside architecture is the realization that many of these businesses were connected to southern themes or archetypes, particularly those that dated from the Colonial or Antebellum periods. For example, the region’s restaurants, tourist camps, motor courts, and motels often featured names tied to southern culture: the Rebel Court on U.S. 41 south of Nashville, Tennessee; the Old South Motel south of Atlanta along U.S. 41; Mammy’s Kitchen and the Plantation Inn on U.S. 17 south of Savannah; and Geiger’s Mount Vernon Inn also along U.S. 17 in Richmond Hill, Georgia (Durbin 1997).

At the same time that the region’s budding automobile landscape symbolized its insular character<sup>14</sup>, the Dixie Highway would also be a conduit for outside influences.<sup>15</sup> Eventually, just as they were built in cities outside of the region, the latest interpretations of modernistic architecture developed before and after World War II could be found in Georgia towns along the Dixie Highway: Dalton’s Wink Theater (**on Tour #1, Figure D-8**); Roy’s Grill in Rossville (**on Tour #1, Figure D-18**); Milledgeville’s Southern Stages Bus Station and Soda Grill; the White House Restaurant in Savannah; Albany’s Lee Drug Store; and the Waycross Restaurant

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<sup>13</sup>For a discussion of Stuckey’s, see the article “Teal Roofs and Pecan Logs: A History of Stuckey’s Pecan Shoppes” by Lisa Raflo and Jeffrey Durbin, which appeared in the Fall 1995 issue of the *SCA Journal*, and Elizabeth McCants Drinnon’s *Stuckey: The Biography of Williamson Sylvester Stuckey* (Macon, GA: Mercer University Press, 1997).

<sup>14</sup>Racial segregation on buses in the South is a well-known fact, but less widespread is the knowledge that many southern tourist camps, guest houses, and motels were for whites only. Aside from the places listed in a special directory of lodging establishments that accepted African American guests, such facilities were often nonexistent for people of color. Even more startling is the realization that the repressive nature of Jim Crow laws extended to even the rest rooms in the region’s gas stations. For example, architectural plans attached to the 1950s lease agreement for a Murfreesboro, Tennessee Esso filling station indicated that in addition to men’s and ladies restrooms, the building was to have a third rest room, which was labeled “colored.”

<sup>15</sup>For a discussion of the cultural and social changes that resulted from the Good Roads movement in the South, see Chapters six and seven of Preston’s *Dirt Roads to Dixie* (1991).

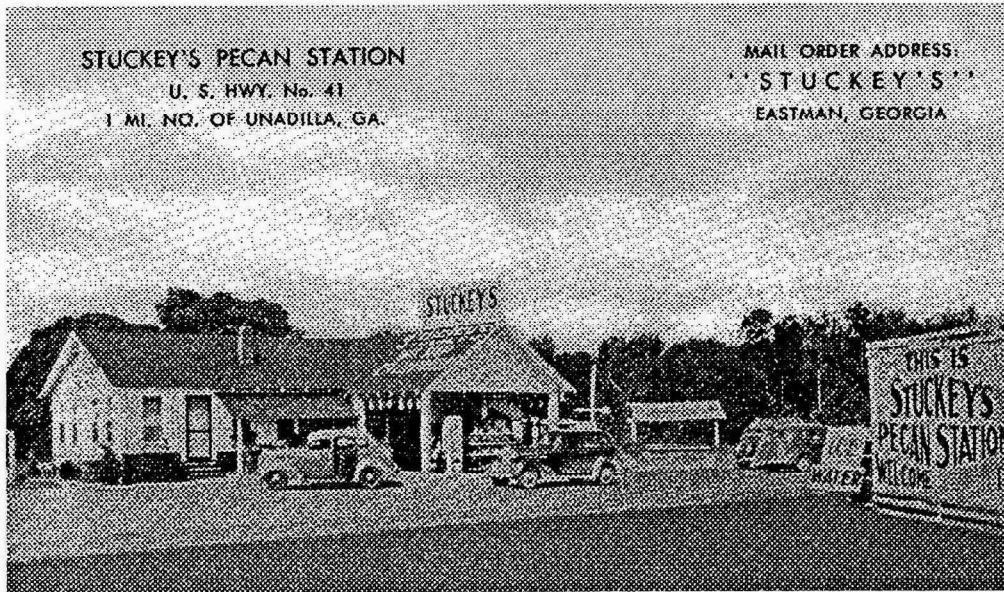


Figure B-16: Ca. 1940 postcard view of Stuckey's Pecan Station. The second of the company's stores, this building once stood on U.S. 41 in Unadilla, Georgia (author's postcard collection).

in Waycross (author's postcard collection). It may even be argued that the lavish Art Deco designs of Miami Beach's famous Architectural Historic District are a direct result of the connections that the Dixie forged between the North and South.

Savvy entrepreneurs along the various routes of the Dixie Highway made the connection between the road and their businesses even more apparent by adopting the name "Dixie" in the names of their enterprises. For instance, C. S. Little of Waycross called his business along the highway south of town "Dixie Camp" (**Figure B-17**). While their numbers are diminishing, the names of other roadside establishments further serve as reminders of the Dixie Highway's significance to Georgia through the names of their businesses include: the Dixie Motel north of Ringgold (**on Tour #1, Figure D-3**); Donald C. Brock's Camp Dixie (a combination restaurant, gas station, and cabin camp) near Tunnel Hill; Dixie Car Wash and Dixie Auto Sales in Dalton (**on Tour #1**); Dixie Cab in the Atlanta suburb of Forest Park; Augusta's Dixie Court; Vernon Smith's Dixie Motel in Adel; Valdosta's Dixie Court; the Dixie Pine Motor Court in Bainbridge; and the chain of Dixie gas stations still found in Georgia towns such as Calhoun and Baxley (author's postcard collection; Kinnard 1998; United Motor Courts 1942:28).

Apart from the community boosterism and commercialism that came with advocating Good Roads, Georgians would play other significant roles in the Dixie Highway Association. For example, the Peach State hosted the organization during several of its meetings. The Board of Directors met in Georgia on four separate occasions: at the Hotel Dempsey in Macon on March 25, 1916, at the Hotel DeSoto on May 25 and 26, 1924, and at the Hotel Forrest on November 14 and 15, 1924, and again on November 15, 1925 (Dixie Minutes 1916:30; Dixie Minutes 1924:121, 149, 175).

The role of women in the Dixie Highway Association's Women's Division or Auxiliary would also make Georgia an influential state in the organization. Despite the passage of the 19<sup>th</sup> Amendment to the U.S. Constitution giving them the vote, women could not belong to the larger highway association, but could be members of local chapters (Dixie Minutes 1925:175). The auxiliaries were formed to help beautify the corridor of the Dixie Highway, and by 1922 efforts were underway to beautify the highway as a "Road of Remembrance" to World War I veterans.<sup>16</sup> An

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<sup>16</sup>For more information about the Road of Remembrance Program, see pages 111-113 of SCA Board Member Brian Butko's *Pennsylvania Traveler's Guide: The Lincoln Highway* (Mechanicsburg, PA:Stackpole Books, 1996). In addition, see pages 72-74 of Thomas Shlereth's *U.S. 40 A Roadscape of the American Experience* for a discussion of the importance of monuments along highway routes (Indianapolis: Indiana Historical Society, 1985).

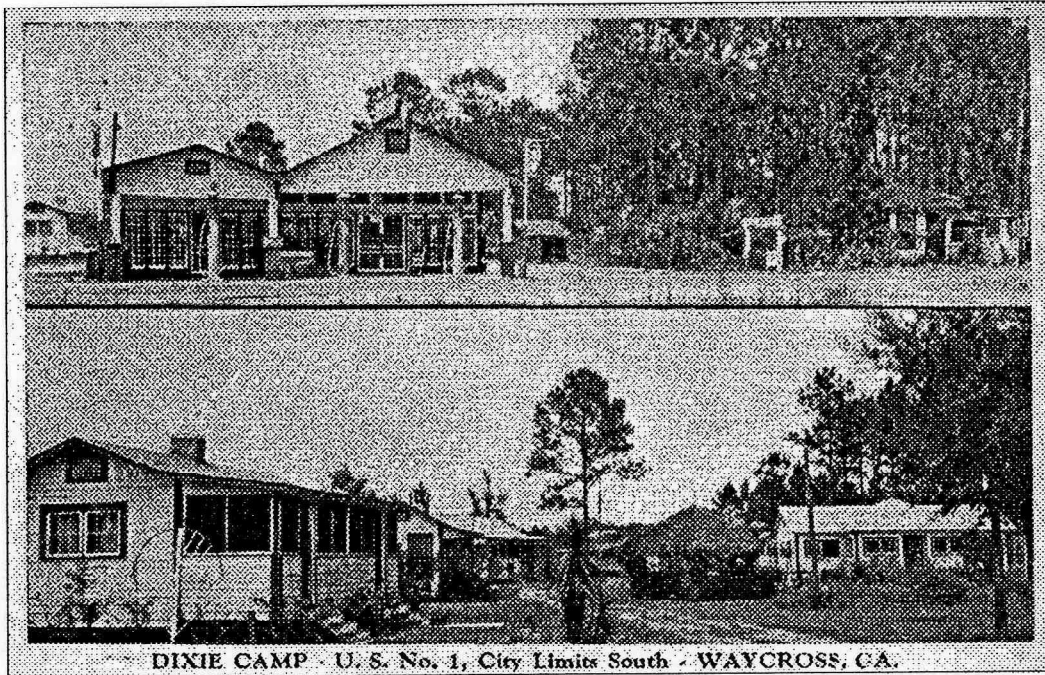


Figure B-17: In order to make their businesses more well-known and therefore profitable, some owners of roadside enterprises along the Dixie Highway borrowed the name "Dixie" to identify these establishments. This illustration is a ca. 1935 postcard of C. S. Little's Dixie Camp, which was located along the Dixie Highway's Eastern Division/U.S. 1 south of Waycross, Georgia (author's postcard collection).

example of a Road of Remembrance monument located near the Dixie Highway is the American Legion Gate on Rossville Boulevard/U.S. 27 south of Chattanooga, Tennessee (Georgia Bridge Survey 1997:63; Dixie Minutes 1923:118).

While it is unclear when the first local auxiliary of the highway association was formed, the earliest record of such a group is the March 1916 formation of the Bibb County Women's Dixie Highway Auxiliary (Dixie Minutes 1916:30-33). Moreover, several Macon women played a prominent role in the auxiliary in that they were its officers: Mrs. Orren W. Massey, President; Mrs. Orville A. Park, Vice President and National Organizer; Miss Susan Myrick, Secretary-Treasurer; Mrs. Jack Peavy, Publicity Chairman, and Mrs. E. Powell Frazer, Counselor. In addition to the five Macon women, two other Georgians had a role in the auxiliary: Mrs. Oscar T. Peebles of Cartersville and Mrs. George Palmer Smith of Brunswick (*Dixie Highway* May 1924:16-17). Perhaps due to the influence these women wielded in the organization, the first meeting of the National Women's Auxiliary was held May 26 and 27, 1924 in Savannah (Dixie Minutes 1924:176).

Finally, Georgia's participation in the Dixie Highway Association was significant for one other reason: it was the home of at least one chapter of the Highway Association. By November 1924, the organization had 19 chapters representing 803 members. It is uncertain how successful the chapters were, but part of their function was to help the larger organization through keeping the roads open, marking detours, ensuring that the routes had road signs in general, and securing advertising revenue for the association's magazine *Dixie Highway* (**Figure B-18**). One of these chapters was located in Dalton and had an executive committee of five members (Dixie Minutes 1924:149-151).

To what degree such local efforts to encourage the completion of road construction projects advantageous to the Dixie Highway were successful is unknown. In terms of how quickly improvements to each of the Dixie Highway's various branches occurred in Georgia, the historical record is spotty. Unfortunately, passages in the Dixie Highway Association's meeting minutes referring to the completion of road projects in the state benefitting the highway are sparse. However, one indicator of progress is the small collection of maps showing the condition of the road in the 1920s and the 1940s.

Both the private map maker Rand McNally and the Georgia Highway Department produced maps of the state in 1926 illustrating the status of the highway's two major divisions; in each case these maps showed that large sections of the road on both the Western and Eastern branches were slightly improved with gravel surfacing,



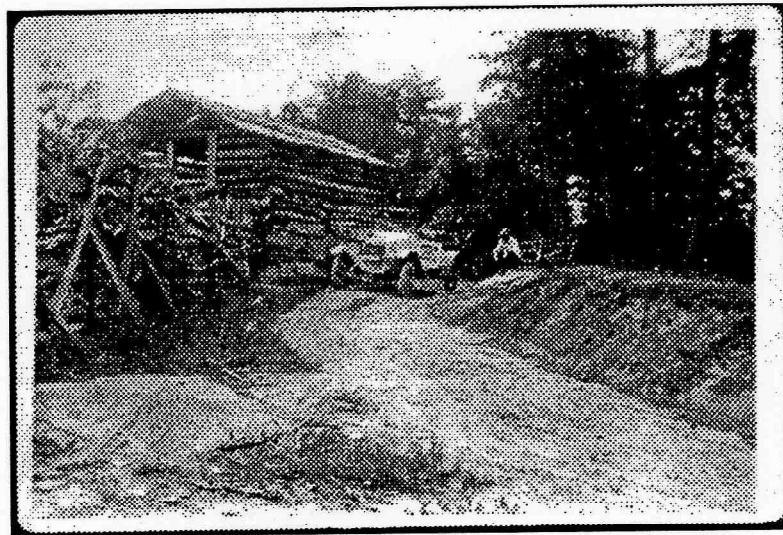


Figure B-18: The Dixie Highway Association's Scout Vehicle and a log building appear in this ca. 1920 photograph, location unknown. One of the ongoing responsibilities of Good Roads organizations such as the Dixie Highway Association was to monitor the condition of the roads that their highway routes used. Because these alignments could suddenly become impassable either because of weather conditions or due to much-needed construction projects, the Dixie Highway Association enlisted its chapters to help it in this task of keeping the highway route and its detours marked (From: Chattanooga Automobile Club Collection, courtesy of Bicentennial Public Library, Chattanooga, Tennessee).

and in some places were still unimproved and dirt-surfaced. Only in a few areas of the state--such as the section of the Dixie Highway between Marietta and Atlanta, the Spalding County segment, and the route of the Western Division running from east of Rome to south of Summerville--did the maps show that these alignments were "paved," which at that time could mean the surface material was concrete, brick, macadam, or asphalt. The Rand McNally map of Georgia three years later showed little if any progress on either branch of the Dixie in North Georgia, but a paved road ran all the way from Marietta down through Atlanta, Jonesboro, Griffin, Barnesville, Forsyth, and Macon, ending at Perry (Georgia Highway Map 1926; Rand McNally Georgia Map 1926; and Rand McNally Georgia Map 1929).

Apparently, work on the completion of a hard-surfaced roadway for the Dixie Highway continued during the 1930s despite the calamitous economic conditions of the Great Depression. A 1943 map compiled by the Public Roads Administration of the Federal Works Agency indicates that in terms of pavement much progress had occurred to the route of the Dixie Highway in North Georgia. Moreover, this map suggests that the Eastern Division had achieved supremacy over the Western Branch; the map indicates that only the Eastern Division had a continuous stretch of paved road between Atlanta and Chattanooga, but the entire segment of the Western Branch running through Chattooga County was shown merely as an improved highway without hard surfacing<sup>17</sup> (Federal Works Agency Highway Map of North Georgia 1943).

Early highway maps of Georgia also serve as a reminder that the Dixie Highway was not the only automobile route in the state. In addition to the Dixie Highway, Georgia also had several other named highways crossing its borders: the Bankhead Highway (what is now U.S. 29 east of Atlanta and U.S. 78 west of the city), a transcontinental highway which ran from Washington, DC to San Diego, California, and was named in honor of John Hollis Bankhead of Alabama, an important Good Roads advocate in the U.S. Senate; the Capital Highway (present-day U.S. 1 and U.S. 78), a tourist trail that was established in 1909 by Leonard Tufts, the owner of a Pinehurst, North Carolina resort hotel, and linked Washington, DC with Atlanta via the state capital cities of Virginia, North Carolina, and South Carolina; and the National Highway (what is now U.S. 29 and U.S. 78), a highway route that began as the route of a 1909 automobile reliability contest between New York and Atlanta

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<sup>17</sup>USGS Quadrangle Maps of North Georgia from the 1940s also indicate that the Eastern Branch had become the more important of the two divisions in that U.S. 41 is labeled as "Dixie Highway," but the route of the Western Branch along U.S. 27 show no such name (USGS Quadrangle Maps for East Ridge, Ringgold, Tunnel Hill, Fort Oglethorpe, and Estelle).

(Preston 1991:42-49, 61-63, 89; National Touring Bureau 1949:2; State Bridge Survey 1997:60-61, 63).

Other long-distance tourist trails in Georgia included the transcontinental Dixie Overland Trail (present-day U.S. 80), which ran from Savannah to the west coast cities of San Francisco, Los Angeles, and San Diego; the Appalachian Scenic Highway (what is now U.S. 23 north of Atlanta and U.S. 29 from Atlanta to West Point), which tied Montreal, Quebec to New Orleans, Louisiana; and the Jefferson Davis National Highway (present-day U.S. 278/SR 12 from Augusta to Atlanta and U.S. 29 from Atlanta to West Point, Georgia), which ran from Washington, DC to Mobile, Alabama (*Columbus Enquirer Sun* 16 July 1920; National Touring Bureau 1949:1, 4, 5; Preston 1991:61-63; State Bridge Survey 1997:64; *DeKalb Sun* 3 August 1988).

Shorter named highway routes that were either contained within the Peach State's boundaries or only extended to neighboring states include:

- the Nancy Hart Highway, which follows what is now U.S. 78 in northeast Georgia;
- the Thomas E. Watson Highway, a tortured, wandering route that began at the North Carolina/Georgia state line and took drivers on a journey that covered a large part of the state through towns such as Clayton, Georgia with Cornelia, Gainesville, Atlanta, Griffin, Barnesville, Forsyth, Macon, Sparta, Warrenton, Augusta, Waynesboro, Millen, Statesboro, Savannah, Georgia, and Tybee Island on highways that later became portions of U.S. 441, U.S. 23, U.S. 19, U.S. 41, State Route 49, State Route 22, State Route 16, U.S. 278, U.S. 78, U.S. 25, and U.S. 80;
- the Oliver S. Porter Memorial Road, a road that ran just four miles between Covington, Georgia and its fellow Newton County town of Porterdale along present-day State Route 81;
- the Rose Route, a highway running between Thomasville and Lakeland, Georgia entirely on a road now known as State Route 122;
- the Nathan B. Forrest Highway, which connected Rome, Georgia with Mobile, Alabama and mainly followed present-day U.S. 411 in Georgia, but also U.S. 11, and U.S. 43 south of Birmingham, Alabama;

- the John B. Gordon Highway, a route that began at the Tennessee/Georgia state line and ended at the Georgia/Florida state line after it passed through the Georgia cities of Dalton, Marietta, Atlanta, Griffin, Americus, Albany, Thomasville, and Beachton on what appears to have later become U.S. 41/U.S. 76, U.S. 41, U.S. 41/U.S. 19, and U.S. 319;
- the Okefenokee Trail, a highway that joined Augusta with Waycross, Georgia and was routed on what is now U.S. 25 between Augusta and Statesboro, U.S. 25/U.S. 301 between Statesboro and Jesup, U.S. 84 between Jesup and Waycross, and U.S. 1/U.S. 301 between Waycross and the Georgia/Florida State Line; and
- the Uncle Remus Route, the route of present-day U.S. 441 between Cornelia, Georgia and Lake City, Florida.

Although several of these named highways shared their alignments with the Dixie Highway, none of them ever assumed the importance that the Dixie would play in the state's development of better roads, and by 1926, traffic counts indicated that it was the most heavily traveled highway in Georgia.<sup>18</sup> While many of these tourist trails have faded into obscurity or have even been completely forgotten in the towns they once passed through, the Dixie Highway's name continues to appear on street and highway signs in the state, as well in the names of a few businesses that line the Dixie's routes through Georgia (National Touring Bureau 1949:9, 19, 22, 23; Aycock 1981:301-302; Preston 1991:61-63; *Douglas Enterprise* 23 September 1948).

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<sup>18</sup>In his *Dirt Roads to Dixie*, Preston states that "in 1922, 80,640 motor vehicles came down the Dixie Highway and crossed the St. Johns River Bridge in downtown Jacksonville on their way south to St. Augustine, Ormond Beach, and points south" (Preston 1991:125). Because both the Eastern and Western Divisions routed motorists through Georgia, it must be assumed that a large majority of these same cars also traveled the Dixie in the Peach State.