

formal clothing. As usual, I lost. His friend Governor Ralston was splendidly attired for the occasion, but Carl had compromised with formality by wearing a blue serge business suit.

President and Mrs. Wilson were delightful, and I was thrilled by their asking us to join them later on their private car. But Carl wouldn't go. He just said, "I'm not going. I'm going home." He sounded a little annoyed by what I knew he considered my butterfly tendencies, and I thought it prudent to call it a day and go home. But I was bitterly disappointed.

"I've never seen a private car," I burst out as we were driving back to Blossom Heath. Carl stared at me. "If you want a private car that badly, honey, I'll get you one. But I can't see why you should get so excited over meeting President Wilson. He's a great President, but after all, he's just another man."

I realize that I am writing as if Carl alone were responsible for the building of the Lincoln Highway. Of course, that is not true. The industries and the individuals who subscribed to its building, the states and the cities and villages that added their links to it in "seedling miles," the farmers who took time from crops and herds to go and help with plow and mattock, the ministers all over the United States who made Abraham Lincoln the subject of their sermons on the Sunday before the dedication, the schoolchildren who gave their pennies to the Highway fund—one little school in Alaska sent in eleven cents—and those public-spirited persons who were far away from the benefits that might be received from such a highway, persons in Maine, Alaska, Honolulu and even London, but who sent in their subscriptions—all these were its builders.

Everything Carl did had its supporters. All his works were shared. It is unfair to give him the sole credit. Each work of his would require a separate book to give full praise to all who were deserving of it. But his was the dream and, for Carl, there was never any question of glory. How angry he was made by the persistent suggestion that the new road be called Fisher Highway! Out of all the paved ribbon on which those who came after him would drive so easily, only a few miles would bear Carl's name, and that against his will. This was the Fisher Pass in

Utah, named—without his being asked—because it would not have been completed without his twenty-five-thousand-dollar contribution. It was the doing that mattered with Carl, not the thing done. Despite all his efforts, however, against personal publicity, thousands of newspaper clippings printed after the name Carl Fisher, "Father of the Lincoln Highway."

Carl had said long before actual work on the road began that the United States would never be content with the building of this single road. It would stimulate the nation with the desire to build more, he said, and he was right. Within a dozen years after the dedication of the Lincoln Highway, nearly one hundred highway organizations had been founded on the principles of the Lincoln Highway Association and were bent upon the work of building roads for all America. Commissions came from all over the country to study the transportation values of the great Lincoln Highway that was saving an incalculable amount of foodstuffs in marketing, developing product deliveries, and opening up remote and lovely parks and mountain regions. Other commissions also came from all over the world to watch the Lincoln Highway grow, link by link, through the years, putting an end to isolation, acquainting the states with one another and narrowing the area between two great oceans.

One of the highways to be developed in this new road-building era was the Dixie Highway, likewise "fathered by Carl Fisher."

Back in 1914 President Wilson had written to the Lincoln Highway Association a request that had to be denied: "I am sure that the whole country is interested to see to it that there should no longer exist a North or a South in this absolutely united country which we all love, and that the imaginary Mason and Dixon Line should be made once and for all a thing of the past; and as a small contribution to that end I earnestly suggest that the Lincoln Highway Association should grant permission to place the official Lincoln Highway markers on the macadam roadway running from Philadelphia to Washington, through the properly selected streets of the latter city to the Lincoln Memorial now under construction, and from thence along the