

United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service

1987-10-23  
OCT 23 1987  
NATIONAL REGISTER

# National Register of Historic Places Registration Form

This form is for use in nominating or requesting determinations of eligibility for individual properties or districts. See instructions in *Guidelines for Completing National Register Forms* (National Register Bulletin 16). Complete each item by marking "x" in the appropriate box or by entering the requested information. If an item does not apply to the property being documented, enter "N/A" for "not applicable." For functions, styles, materials, and areas of significance, enter only the categories and subcategories listed in the instructions. For additional space use continuation sheets (Form 10-900a). Type all entries.

### 1. Name of Property

historic name Lincoln Highway  
other names/site number Douglas County Road 120; NeHBS # D000-14

### 2. Location

street & number County Road 120 between 180th and 191st Streets  not for publication N/A  
city, town Elkhorn  vicinity  
state Nebraska code NE county Douglas code 055 zip code 68022

### 3. Classification

Ownership of Property	Category of Property	Number of Resources within Property	
<input type="checkbox"/> private	<input type="checkbox"/> building(s)	Contributing	Noncontributing
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> public-local	<input type="checkbox"/> district	_____	_____ buildings
<input type="checkbox"/> public-State	<input type="checkbox"/> site	_____	_____ sites
<input type="checkbox"/> public-Federal	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> structure	<u>2</u>	_____ structures
	<input type="checkbox"/> object	_____	_____ objects
		<u>2</u>	<u>0</u> Total

Name of related multiple property listing: NA

Number of contributing resources previously listed in the National Register 0

### 4. State/Federal Agency Certification

As the designated authority under the National Historic Preservation Act of 1966, as amended, I hereby certify that this  nomination  request for determination of eligibility meets the documentation standards for registering properties in the National Register of Historic Places and meets the procedural and professional requirements set forth in 36 CFR Part 60. In my opinion, the property  meets  does not meet the National Register criteria.  See continuation sheet.

*[Signature]* 10-19-87  
Signature of certifying official Date  
Nebraska State Historical Society  
State or Federal agency and bureau

In my opinion, the property  meets  does not meet the National Register criteria.  See continuation sheet.

\_\_\_\_\_  
Signature of commenting or other official Date  
\_\_\_\_\_  
State or Federal agency and bureau

### 5. National Park Service Certification

I, hereby, certify that this property is:

entered in the National Register.  
 See continuation sheet.

determined eligible for the National Register.  See continuation sheet.

determined not eligible for the National Register.

removed from the National Register.

other, (explain:)

*[Signature]* 12-1-87  
Signature of the Keeper Date of Action

**6. Function or Use**

Historic Functions (enter categories from instructions)

Transportation/Road-Related

(Vehicular)

Current Functions (enter categories from instructions)

Transportation/Road-Related

(Vehicular)

**7. Description**

Architectural Classification

(enter categories from instructions)

Other: Brick Roadway

Other: Steel Truss Bridge

Materials (enter categories from instructions)

foundation \_\_\_\_\_

walls \_\_\_\_\_

roof \_\_\_\_\_

other Paving Brick

Steel

Describe present and historic physical appearance.

This portion of the Lincoln Highway is located east of Elkhorn, Nebraska, between 180th Street and approximately 191st Street. It is 4,580 feet long, 18 feet wide in the center of a 66 foot right-of-way, and paved with 4" x 4" x 8" paving bricks. The one bridge in this section of roadway is a 1920 steel Pratt pony truss, 81.5 feet long with a 31 foot approach and hand rail on its east end. The integrity of both the highway and bridge are excellent. This nomination consists of two contributing structures: one roadway and one bridge.

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This 4580 foot (.87 mile) long section of roadway is located approximately one mile east of Elkhorn, Nebraska, and runs from 180th Street to approximately 191st Street. It is part of a three mile stretch of the Lincoln Highway, constructed during the period March through July, 1920. The original dirt road was regraded to the existing (1987) grade. The finished pavement is 18 feet wide, located in the center of a 66 foot right-of-way. A 12 inch concrete base was poured, then standard 4" x 4" x 8" paving bricks were laid in 4 inches of sand on top of the concrete. The pavers were placed so as to leave a one foot concrete edging on both sides of the roadway.

A steel truss bridge was constructed over a tributary of the west branch of Papillion Creek in 1920. The bridge (Douglas County Bridge #395), constructed of steel, is a single span Pratt pony truss, a type typical of late 19th and early 20th century road building. The bridge floor is 81.5 feet long made of pre-cast deck units. The construction depth of the structure is 11.5 feet and it spans the creek at approximately 20 feet above the stream bed. It is supported by three piles, the two at either end of the 1966 approach being of steel. The one at the western end of the bridge is the original pile and of unspecified composition, presumably steel. A 31 foot approach with a hand rail (construction depth, 4.7 feet) was added in 1966 and extends eastward from the end of the bridge. While the bridge is presently safe, bank control and bridge maintenance and repair are needed.

See continuation sheet

**8. Statement of Significance**

Certifying official has considered the significance of this property in relation to other properties:

nationally  statewide  locally

Applicable National Register Criteria  A  B  C  D

Criteria Considerations (Exceptions)  A  B  C  D  E  F  G

Areas of Significance (enter categories from instructions)  
Transportation  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

Period of Significance  
1913-1930  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

Significant Dates  
1920  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

Cultural Affiliation  
N/A  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

Significant Person  
N/A  
\_\_\_\_\_

Architect/Builder  
N/A  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

State significance of property, and justify criteria, criteria considerations, and areas and periods of significance noted above.

This portion of the Lincoln Highway is significant on the state level under Criterion A as a section of the first vehicular trans-continental highway in the United States. Designated as part of the highway from its inception in 1913, this section was paved and bridges erected in 1920. In 1930 the official highway route was changed, by-passing this segment. It is from this era as the Lincoln Highway that the period of significance is derived. This stretch of roadway is the only known rural section of the Lincoln Highway in Nebraska that retains the historic materials and character of its 1920's period of usage. As the "middle" mile of a three mile segment, this portion of roadway was selected for having the least deterioration and the least roadway and bridge repair/replacement with non-historic materials.

**History**

The first recorded road from Omaha to Elkhorn Station was approved August 22, 1868, by the Douglas County Commissioners. Minor changes were made by Board action in 1873 and 1874. Another change was made on July 23, 1877, which located the road almost exactly as it is today (Map 1).

When the Lincoln Highway was established in 1913, the Omaha-Elkhorn road was part of the route. On November 18, 1919, the Douglas County Board officially approved the road as the **Lincoln Highway**, and it has not been changed in location, right-of-way, structure, or surface (except for maintenance) since that date. During the period March through July of 1920 the road was re-graded, three truss bridges were built, and paving bricks were laid in sand on a concrete base. Construction was completed into Elkhorn in July of 1920.

See continuation sheet

**9. Major Bibliographical References**

Previous documentation on file (NPS):

- preliminary determination of individual listing (36 CFR 67) has been requested
- previously listed in the National Register
- previously determined eligible by the National Register
- designated a National Historic Landmark
- recorded by Historic American Buildings Survey # \_\_\_\_\_
- recorded by Historic American Engineering Record # \_\_\_\_\_

See continuation sheet

Primary location of additional data:

- State historic preservation office
- Other State agency
- Federal agency
- Local government
- University
- Other

Specify repository: \_\_\_\_\_

**10. Geographical Data**

Acreege of property 6.9

UTM References

A 

1	4	7	3	14	8	3	15	4	5	7	3	8	0	0
Zone			Easting				Northing							

B 

1	4	7	3	3	4	7	5	4	5	7	2	9	4	0
Zone			Easting				Northing							

C 

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D 

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See continuation sheet

Verbal Boundary Description

The east boundary is the west edge of the 180th Street intersection. The west boundary is the point 4580' west along the road where the surface changes from paving brick to concrete. The north and south boundaries are the lines of the legal right-of-way which are 33' on either side of the center line of Douglas County Road 120.

See continuation sheet

Boundary Justification

See continuation sheet

**11. Form Prepared By**

name/title Bob Adwers; Kathleen Fimple, Preservation Historian  
organization Nebraska State Historical Society date July, 1987  
street & number 525 Branding Iron Dr.; 1500 R Street telephone (402) 289-4719; 471-4775  
city or town Elkhorn; Lincoln state Nebraska zip code 68022; 68501

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One small (approximately 8 feet square) replacement of brick pavers has been done with asphalt. The road and bridge are basically as constructed in 1920. The highway is marked by replica Lincoln Highway markers and signs, erected in 1976. The reproduction of these was based on an original marker and sign which were subsequently stolen. Despite the fact that this roadway signage is of recent construction, it is in keeping with the historic character of the highway.

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In 1925 the Federal Highway System Designation was made law and the Lincoln Highway became U.S. #30.

In 1930 the section of U.S. 30 starting in Missouri Valley, Iowa, running through Council Bluffs, Iowa, Omaha, Nebraska and Elkhorn, Nebraska and ending in Fremont, Nebraska was changed. It started in Missouri Valley ran through Blair, Nebraska and ended in Fremont. The three mile stretch of U.S. 30 and the Lincoln Highway was by-passed and became Douglas County Road #120. It is this era as the Lincoln Highway from which the period of significance is derived.

In 1934 West Dodge Road was extended straight west across the Elkhorn River where it Y'ed to the north and south. This first four-lane road took practically all traffic off the three mile stretch of what is now known as the Old Lincoln Highway--and is the reason that the road was never changed, resurfaced, moved or rebuilt.

In November 1975 the Douglas County Board passed a resolution to preserve and maintain "as is" Road 120 and rename it "The Old Lincoln Highway." On July 11, 1976, as part of the Elkhorn Bicentennial Celebration, the Lincoln Highway was re-dedicated and exact replicas of concrete markers and Lincoln Highway signs were placed along the road.

**Significance**

In 1903 the first known auto trip across the United States was made from the Pacific to the Atlantic coast, from May 23 to July 26, by Mr. H. Nelson Jackson, driving a 20 horse power Winton. Jackson's route included an approximate three mile stretch of primitive dirt road in Nebraska that paralleled the Union Pacific railroad tracks, and in fact was the railroad right-of-way in some places, into the town of Elkhorn, from Omaha. In 1908 the famous New York to Paris "Great Race" included the same three mile stretch of road.

In 1913 the Lincoln Highway Association was established, and on September 10, 1913, "The Proclamation of the Route of the Lincoln Highway" connecting New York to San Francisco was made. The Omaha-Elkhorn stretch was included on "The Route." This proclamation marked the establishment of the first trans-continental vehicular highway in North America.

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The Lincoln Highway Association published its first complete official guide in 1915. It was completely revised in 1916 with accurate information about the official route. The route from Omaha to Elkhorn is described in detail. It follows the original three miles as verified by Douglas County road maps of 1916.

In the summer of 1919 the United States Army "Continental Convoy" of 39 heavy trucks, 10 passenger cars, eight dispatch motorcycles, other miscellaneous mobile equipment, and a detachment of almost 200 men crossed the United States on the Lincoln Highway testing the equipment. A young captain named Dwight D. Eisenhower was in the convoy. Many people watched the caravan as it passed through Elkhorn (eyewitness account of Mrs. W. E. Holling, and the memory of L. W. Roper of Council Bluffs, Iowa, a private in the army unit that made the trip.) This convoy heralded a new method of moving equipment and men long distances.

By 1920 trans-continental motorized vehicular transportation, of people, equipment and goods, was part of the American way of life. The automobile had come of age and was being used for local and regional travel as well. The Lincoln Highway Association was a pioneer in this field. In Nebraska the three mile stretch of roadway from Omaha to Elkhorn is the only known rural portion of the Lincoln Highway that retains the historic materials and character of its 1920s period of usage, with the .87 mile segment retaining the highest integrity.

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The integrity of the three mile stretch of County Road 120 between Omaha and Elkhorn varies significantly and is the basis for the selection of the 4580 foot long (.87 mile) segment to be nominated. The segment from Dodge Street to 180th Street receives large amounts of heavy truck traffic which has resulted in severe deterioration of the brick surface, numerous asphalt patches, removal of the bridge and asphalt surface replacement where it once stood. The segment from 192nd Street into Elkhorn receives heavy automobile traffic and has several asphalt patches. The intersection at 192nd Street and County Road 120 has been rebuilt in concrete, including all four approaches. From the end of the east concrete approach to the 192nd Street intersection east to the 180th Street intersection, the road receives little traffic and is in excellent condition with only one small asphalt patch. It is this segment that is to be nominated, which includes the total 66 foot legal highway right-of-way, which has been historically associated with the property.