

Carl W. Brown

Missouri State Highway Engineer

1936-1951



Carl W. Brown was born on January 7, 1887, in the city of Vandalia, Missouri. He received his early education at the local public schools there in Rails County and graduated from Vandalia High School.

In 1904, Brown enrolled in the college of engineering at the University of Missouri. He put those studies on hold in 1907 to work on a construction project for the Electric Railroad in the Missouri counties of Monroe and Audrain. The following year, Brown took a job as a surveyor on an early toll road in Lincoln County, Missouri. Brown ultimately earned his civil engineering degree from the University of Missouri in 1910.

After his graduation from the University of Missouri, Brown worked as a transit-man and assistant resident engineer for the Burlington Railroad until 1915, he also did private engineering and contracting work, as well as some farming, in his home state. Brown was subsequently elected county engineer and surveyor for Rails County, Missouri, and served from 1915 to 1918.

In 1918 his career with the Missouri State Highway Department began when he accepted employment as office engineer and chief clerk. Brown quickly made a positive and strong impression in carrying out his responsibilities, and was promoted to assistant state highway engineer in 1920.

Brown continued to steadily rise through the ranks of the Missouri State Highway Department and in 1936 was appointed its chief engineer. He ended up serving in that role under nine Missouri governors.

Along with overseeing the construction and improvement of roads throughout Missouri, Brown was also active in various engineering and professional circles. He served as president of several organizations, including the Missouri Highway Engineers Association; the Mississippi Valley Conference of State Highway Officials; and the American Road Builders Association.

Brown was also a member of both the Missouri Society of Professional Engineers and the American Society of Civil Engineers.

Adapted from:

Transportation History

<https://transportationhistory.org/2021/09/13/1955-the-passing-of-a-leading-state-highway-official-and-one-time-aasho-president/>

See also:

AASHTO Presidential Profile: Carl W. Brown of Missouri

<https://centennial.transportation.org/newsletter/newsletter122014pres.html>