

## **Rolen J. Windrow**

Consulting Engineer



During 1922, the new Missouri State Highway Commission began its work in constructing the state highway system as mandated by the Centennial Road Law.

One of the first acts of the commission was the hiring of Rolan J. Windrow as a consulting engineer and personal representative of Chairman Theodore Gary.

Windrow would travel to Washington, D.C., to confer with officials of the Bureau of Public Roads.

In February 1922, Windrow and Chief Engineer Alexander Graham began locating and designating the 1,500-mile system of primary, hard surfaced roads. These cross-state highways would connect the principal cities having populations of 2,500 or more, using the most practical and direct routes while avoiding the smaller towns and villages.

The primary road system would be so laid out to directly serve as much of the state population as possible. Graham and Windrow made personal inspections of the proposed primary road locations, giving special consideration to the primary route linking Kansas City and St. Louis. They ultimately chose a northern route which would cross the Missouri River at Boonville.

On June 1, 1922, Bion H. Piepmeier replaced Graham as Chief Engineer. Piepmeier and Windrow completed the study of the primary road system in July, which the commission adopted on August 1 after three days of public hearings. When constructed, the 1,545 miles of primary roads would connect twenty-six cities, serving 91 percent of Missouri's urban population and half of the state's total population. The state secondary routes connecting the county seats brought the total state road mileage to 7,640. Most of the highways would be constructed with federal aid. The State Highway Commission devoted one-third of the available funds to the primary routes and two-thirds to the secondary routes.<sup>18</sup>