

GIVES HINT ON ROAD PLANTING

Jensen Says Trees Give Expression to Landscape

By JENS JENSEN

(Landscape Architect, The Lincoln Highway Ass'n.)

Editor's Note: This is the last of a series of three brief articles on roadside beautification by the American landscape architect who has given most thought and study to this important work. Mr. Jensen has been retained by the Lincoln Highway Association to carry out the beautification of the Ideal section of the Lincoln Way in Indiana and to plan an Ideal camp site for tourists there. He is President, Friends of Our Native Landscape and a governing member of the Art Institute of Chicago. He is a resident of Wilmette.

Trees, like human folks, have individual characteristics. Various kinds of trees differ in this way considerably just as do shrubs and flowers. We are too apt to overlook this matter which is so important in getting the best or rather the finest expression out of the plant. A lane or road arched over by elm trees, for instance, is quite a different thing than one arched over by oak and sugar maple. The branches of the elm trees produce a gothic curve which neither oak nor sugar maple can. White pines on top of a cliff seem to extend the cliff many feet higher than it really is. White oak, birch or sugar maple will give a similar expression to a hill.

Golden Catkins

I still vividly remember passing through Missouri one May day when the white oaks were in flower. Everywhere the hilltops were crowned with the golden catkins of the white oak silhouetted against the blue sky. Those are things we want to take advantage of in roadside planting. It is worth while and in this way we will establish landmarks of outstanding beauty if we are guided by nature. It is folly to plant white pine where it will not thrive as one so often sees it done. Where the land is boggy tamarack in the North or cypress in the South, we should select the tree that expresses such lowland landscape most beautifully. It is at home in its own environs and here it will give us joy and beauty in full measure.

As a general rule more beauty and dignity is the result of planting a group of one kind of tree instead of mixing them. I am not here speaking about forest or woodland planting, but about planting along our highways. Where the adjacent landscape is not interesting, the roadside picture would be enhanced by a promiscuous planting of trees, not in a formal line but in a scattered way so that you meet many trunks in place of one as you pass down the highway. In other words, this is the place for a lane of trees shutting off the view of the adjoining country.

Planting for Perspective

Where the views of the surrounding country are not only beautiful but where your eye wants to reach the contours of the land in order to get the greatest value of the picture, the planting should consist of low shrubs like our native roses broken perhaps by plums, crabapples, or hawthornes, or intercepted with still lower material like native herbaceous plants. Such especially would be the case out here on the prairies of the Middle-West where it is desirable to prevent shutting in and squaring up the prairie landscape. Hawthornes, especially are so expressive in the prairie landscape with their stratified branches symbolizing the horizontal lines of the plains. Crabapples and native plum also are a strong note in the prairie landscape. One can recognize Iowa by its many native plums found in the hedge rows everywhere.

A few oaks, sugar maples or beech, or in the northern country, birch, at the turn of the road will add as much interest here as the church or other public buildings at the end of a street vista. It will also give perspective to the open country beyond as one looks through or between the trunks of the trees. I recently passed over a road where a walnut of great age had been left at the turn, and in another instance in one of our northern states, a white pine more than one hundred feet high had been left in a similar situation. In each instance the tree became a landmark. It is worth while planting landmarks and it is just as easy to do the right thing as the wrong, and the result cannot be measured in dollars and cents.

Planting in Open Country

Take the roadside in a low and wet landscape where you want to emphasize and still not hide the beauty of such a landscape. Nothing is more fitting than the red osier dogwood. You need not be afraid of overdoing the amount of planting in such a situation; it will always be in scale with the great open country surrounding it and will never dominate the landscape. There may be other places where an overdose of red osier dog-

wood would become grotesque and irritating but not so in the open country.

Imagine a sloping hill covered with roses, or if in a pine country, with junipers or horebells, or in the South with Yuccas. Such a sight might be worth going many miles to see. The top of a bluff may be crowned with oak or maple and in the pine country with white pine. It there be a rock cliff at a turn, such plants as native grape, bittersweet, red elderberry, yellow honey-suckle, junipers, horebells, blueberries, goat-beard spirea, etc., all in accordance with what will grow in that section of the country and make the most beautiful picture, should be planted. There are a great many other plants that will grow in such a situation and enhance the barren cliff, as there are many other plants that will grow on the clay or gravelly bank than those I have mentioned. The native vegetation is always the correct and sure guide to follow. Avoid stiff formality of planting.

Alleged Speed Trapper Shooed by Motor Club

Henry Fitzgerald, J. P., emertus of Lake Forest, has returned to his occupation of making life hard for motorists, according to a report from the Chicago Motor club. According to this report Fitzgerald is the subject of many complaints from motorists charging the erstwhile Lake Forest magistrate with making indiscriminate and uncalled for arrests at Glen-

view.

Fitzgerald formerly operated a speed trap along the Telegraph road near Lake Forest and in rounding up his quarry acted sometimes as an arresting officer, and at other times as the presiding magistrate at trials for speeding, it is said.

The Chicago Motor club charged Fitzgerald with working with township commissioners, and recently instituted qua warrant proceedings. The J. P. and the commissioners resigned their positions shortly after the proceedings were started, it is said.

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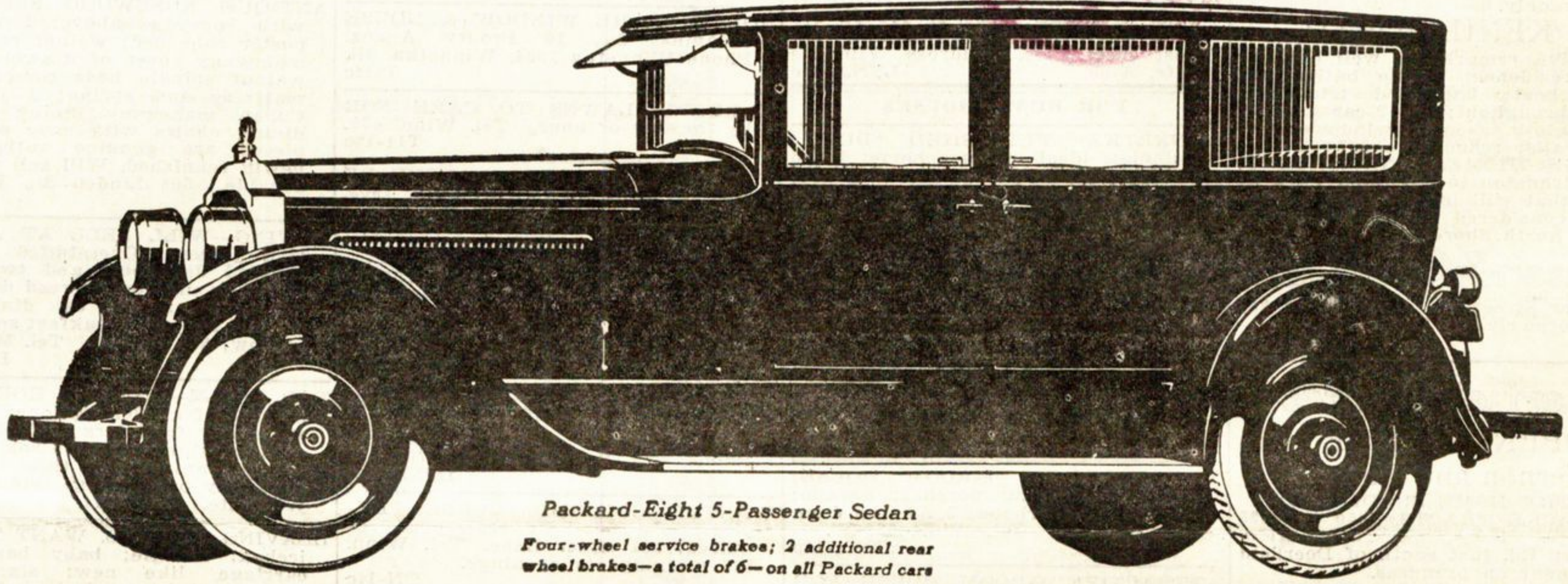
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