

Overview

The American Automobile Association (AAA) was founded in 1902 to popularize, provide information, and lobby for the improvement of roads for the newest means of transportation – the car. The map features a legend listing the various road conditions found on the chart (left center) ranging from improved to poor roads. The best roads are those in the Jacksonville-Yulee-Fernandina area and along the east coast between Jacksonville and St. Augustine southwest to Hasting and southward all the way to Florida City; the Bartow-to-Arcadia road in the central part of the state; and those in the Tampa Bay (Hillsborough-Pinellas County) area. While these roads provide a sharp contrast with those in extreme south Florida, the panhandle, and west Florida, the map gives an excellent look at the development taking place at this time – including the Jacksonville-to-Miami corridor; the Tampa Bay area; and selected portions of the mid-peninsula.

This map was produced in the Washington, DC headquarters (AAA had dual headquarters at this time - a New York headquarters since 1902 and the Washington since 1913). This was only the second map produced by the DC office and 1917 was the first printing of the map. The map was drawn with pen and ink on an oversized linen base. All words were hand lettered. The linen base was then photographically reduced to the 18" x 22 ½" size at the printer.

Who is the Cartographer?

The draftsman was Alfred G. "Fred" Seiler. Fred graduated from McKinley Tech in Washington, DC and had come to AAA from the United States Geological Survey in 1914. In 1918, he would become the manager of the DC Touring office. In this capacity, he would provide AAA members with routing information and conduct road surveys – we called it pathfinding in those days. For example, in November, 1923, he spent several weeks exploring seven different combinations of roads between Washington, DC and Jacksonville, FL. He then reported on road conditions, surfaces and construction detours to AAA clubs, members and the weekly radio audience he had on DC's WRC radio station. To learn more about the AAA, visit their [newsroom](http://newsroom.aaa.com/about-aaa/history/).
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Essential Questions

- How does a map invite people to travel?
- How did the availability of cars and AAA's advocacy for the improvement of roads kick-start tourism in Florida?