

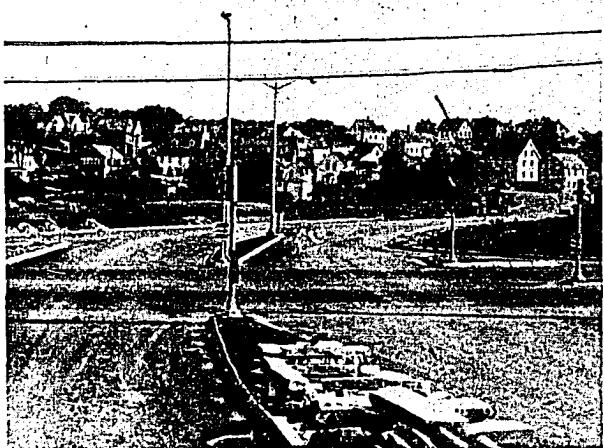


Million-Dollar-a-Mile Golden Road

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Route 128 Has Earned Name "Avenue of Modern Industry"

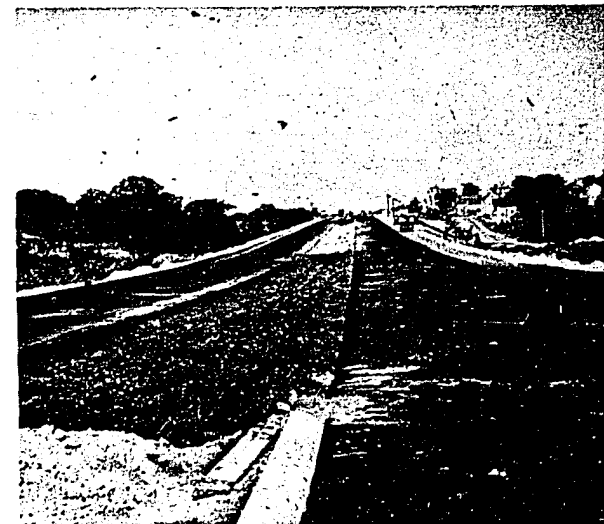
By K. S. BARTLETT



Want a bit of New England's famed chowder? You're at the right place. The Gloucester extension of Route 128 ends at Eastern av. in Gloucester and just around the corner is Fish-Pier at the head of the Inner Harbor.



Contractors building the 1.7 miles of the Gloucester extension found huge rocks dropped by visiting glaciers tens of thousands of years ago. More than half a million tons of rock (many kinds and varieties of hardness and weight) plus earth and plain dirt have been taken out to make your driving easier. Here you're looking at one of the tough spots during the last weeks of construction.



Looking east toward Rail Cut Hill during the last days of construction on Gloucester Extension, the northern end of the Circumferential Highway, Route 128.

"The Golden Road" someone once nicknamed Route 128. "Golden" Massachusetts Public Works Department's Circumferential Highway is proving in terms of safer, easier, pleasanter driving and in time saved and many big city traffic jams avoided.

It has been "golden," too, in a money sense, for out-of-state industries have moved there or opened branches bringing jobs and dollars for Bay Staters. That earned it the name, "Avenue of Modern Industry."

As superhighways go it hasn't cost too much.

Approximately \$1 million a mile for 65 miles of the great three-quarter circle from Gloucester on the North Shore to the high speed interchange in Braintree where it will meet the Southeast Expressway coming south from Boston.

Cost of this 65 miles, all completed or now under construction, is a bit less than \$65 million. That covers land damages, engineering, planning and construction costs since Route 128's start back in 1936. Fifty-eight miles of the highway have been opened for traffic for nearly two years.

The remaining seven miles should be completed by the end of 1959, according to State Public Works Commissioner Anthony N. DiNatale's speeded-up road program.

Use of Route 128 is increasing. Daily average for all 1957 at the Burlington Traffic Control Station was 30,000 cars. P.W.D. men make regular week by week traffic counts at that point.

On the basis of that daily average they'll tell you that in that area (it applies only to Burlington) the number of "vehicular miles" driven during 1957 was 635.1 million. That's enough miles for three round trips between earth and sun with a jaunt to Mars and back thrown in.

Here are more figures all from the Burlington station.

Sunday, Aug. 3, broke all records with 59,961 vehicles.

Fourth of July week-end this year ran 11 percent ahead of the corresponding week-end of 1957 with 51,656 cars against 45,729 in 1957. July 4, 1957, fell on Thursday, not on Friday as this year, but the increase is notable just the same.

Here are some more daily averages in four key months:

	April	July	Oct.	Dec.
1956	29,445	41,341	32,299	29,256
1957	31,545	44,770	33,546	32,453
1958	32,854	44,874		

Sizable increases in daily averages except for July of this year (up only 104) in a pretty bad weather month, tells the story.

Under construction now are three widely separated jobs. The "Gloucester Extension" to carry traffic from Washington Circle, Gloucester, to the famed Gloucester Fish Pier, will be finished by Thanksgiving.

Next are two pieces on the southern end. One's a \$6.5 million job for 4 1/5 miles of highway (plus 2 1/2 miles of ramps) from Ponkapoag rd., a little east of Route 138 to a point 2000 ft. west of Granite st. (Route 37) in Braintree.

The other is a \$2.9 million job for a little more than half a mile including the Braintree interchange. Both are scheduled for completion by the end of 1959.

Here are features of these two last contracts. First are two high-speed interchanges. One to connect Route 128 with the Fall River Expressway (which should be finished by mid-Summer, 1959) is a huge, "Y" shaped directional interchange, designed to allow motor vehicles to leave or enter either highway without need of much slow-down in speed and without the "bumps" which go with clover leaf interchanges even when speed is greatly cut down. Clover leaves aren't out-of-date. They're more economical of space and best for some conditions.

Approximately 3 million tons of material, mostly peat, will be dug out of the Ponkapoag-Granite st. area and replaced with 3.4 tons of fill.

Two improvements in the Northern part of 128 are now being studied. One for widening about 3 1/2 miles from Route 9 - (the Worcester Pike) to Route 1 in Lynnfield to three or possibly four lanes each way would cost maybe \$30 million. The other is for a huge new interchange with Route 1, cost maybe \$4.5 million.

Later, it's hoped, Route 128 can be extended deep into Hingham. P.W.D. has applied for Federal funds (under the 90-10 provision) to build 4.7 miles from the Braintree interchange to Route 3A in Hingham. Survey and planning work is now underway.

Including land damage and planning, as well as construction, the job would cost around \$30 million with Uncle Sam putting up 90 percent and the Commonwealth 10 percent. A high-level, fixed-span bridge over Fore River on the bay side of the Fore River shipyard and some other important installations would be necessary.

It's hoped work can start next Summer, project might be finished by the end of 1962.

Route 128 was officially named Yankee Division Highway, but it's generally referred to now by its route number or the popular name Circumferential Highway.

It's essentially a connecting or link-up highway. You may drive on it a mile or 20 miles or 40 miles, but you'll leave it eventually for one of the other roads with which it is connected.

Here are a couple of examples, plus some outstanding advantages: By the end of 1960, you'll be able to drive without seeing a stop light from Canton, turn down the Fall River Expressway and go all the way to Fall River.

Or you can drive on 128 from Dedham to the Braintree Interchange and go into downtown Boston over the Southeast Expressway and Boston Central Artery.

COVER

Autumn glory along Route 128. Picture taken from plane, looking north along the highway from near the interchange with the East-West Toll Road (Massachusetts Turnpike) toward Waltham and Lexington. In left foreground main line of the Boston & Albany R.R. at Riverside with old Nickerson Field, once Boston University's football and baseball field, beyond. In background you follow the Charles River and the Circumferential Highway.