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HISTORIC SIGN PAINTER & MAKER
*Hand-crafted signs in the style of
18th and 19th century artisans*

Blue Eagle Tavern

Research shows there were likely more eagle-themed inns and taverns than any other type in America, especially after the Revolutionary War when the eagle became the most popular image for inn signs. In spite of Benjamin Franklin's suggestion for a turkey, Congress adopted the bald eagle for use on the Great Seal of the United States. The eagle dates back to Roman times when it symbolized strength, skill and bravery, appropriate for American innkeepers to adopt during the Revolution.

Many early signs featuring lions had on their reverse side an image of an eagle. Rather than paint new signs, innkeepers simply turned the sign around, sometimes out of fear of retaliation by patriots who often shot at signs with lions representing King George III of England.

On tavern signs blue eagles were also more popular than red eagles during the Revolutionary War. Along with symbolizing freedom in their color, they may have been inspired by the blue-cobalt eagles which decorated stoneware jugs. That's the inspiration for this sign, which is based on the Blue Eagle Tavern, four miles west of Zanesville, Ohio. As I've chosen to create this sign in a horizontal format, this would represent a sign from the early 1800s. Signs of the 1810s or earlier were almost always oriented vertically. The typographic style of square, slab serifs is also much more typical for many 1800s period signboards.

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