



THE MILESTONE SOCIETY

Newsletter 17

July 2009



The Cover Picture The cover drawing appeared in the CTC GAZETTE in July 1932 and shows the milestone in Atherstone, Warwickshire. It was known as the 3L stone but distances were not accurate as it was slightly more than 100 miles to London and Liverpool and less than 100 miles TO Lincoln. Two of the distances were later replaced with closer Ls; Lutterworth 17 ¾ and Lichfield 15. The stone is now painted black with gold lettering and stands outside the Red Lion Inn (although the artist, Frank Patterson, located it at the Old Red Bull). The inset photograph was taken by Carol Haines in 2000.

EDITOR'S COMMENTS

Welcome to the latest Milestone Society Newsletter under new editorship. Alan and Carol have done such a splendid job during the past eight years and 16 issues, I sincerely hope that I can serve the Society in similar vein. I shall keep the NL in the same format, but will add one or two new topics, as time progresses. First will be on any relevant news about toll houses nationwide. I would like to start with information that has hit the press since the foundation of the Milestone Society. The success of the NL is very much in the hands of its readers. Please participate as much as you can, by sending in anything of interest for publication. Anything that may-have caught your eye in your local or national papers, parish magazines etc. Also we are looking for someone who could offer us a design or picture for the front cover of future Newsletters.

Since the 2010 spring meeting will be held in Essex, perhaps the theme for the next issue should be based on East Anglia. So, please help us to continue publishing this Newsletter.

OUR FIRST NEWSLETTER EDITORS, AN APPRECIATION.

The Society's Newsletter is one of the key lines of communication within our membership, arguably the most important one. It has appeared without fail every six months, in January and July each year, from the very early days of the Society. Issue number one dates from July 2001, quickly reporting on our inaugural (and first formal) meeting held at the Black Country Museum on 19 May 2001. At that time we were all finding our feet, a committee had been formed and from the outset the husband and wife team of Alan and Carol Haines volunteered to edit the Newsletter. They have done so splendidly ever since, with sixteen issues appearing over eight years under their skilled direction.

We could not have been in better hands, as both Alan and Carol were (and remain) well versed in the editorial arts, and with good production contacts close by their home near Norwich to ensure a publication in an attractive and to my eye bold, black and white style in the standard A5 format. Like all such publications, its own growth reflected that of the Society itself, and it has increased from a respectable twenty-page starter to an average of 28 or 32 pages, a comfortable size for its editors to handle, the membership to contribute to and the Post Office to deliver within the standard rates. Now Alan and Carol are stepping down and wrote their final editorial comments in issue 16. There's no need to repeat what they said there, and obviously they have

enjoyed the task, although it has doubtless had its more frustrating moments, probably associated with un-openable computer discs, over-much use of IT wizzos of one kind or another, and writers (like me) who tend to over-do the word totals ! We thank them sincerely for undertaking all of this, looking forward to their continuing close involvement with Society matters, especially in Norfolk, via our Editorial Panel, and through Carol's essential study of our subject, "*Marking the Miles : a history of English Milestones,*" published in 2000.

We welcome as our new Editor Chris Woodard, who is based in Monmouth, and look forward to the next generation of Society newsletters, a vital source of information sharing and also of course building nicely as a permanent record of the Society's work and achievements. May he enjoy the task, and please can members continue to contribute material, however briefer interim it might seem, so that we can all share in what's going on.

David Viner (Chairman)

THE SOCIETY'S ROLE

Published Aims & Objectives are required of a registered charity such as ours, and it's probably time to give them an airing once again in the pages of the Newsletter. They may seem 'worthy' (and they should be!) and perhaps formulaic in the modern style of conformity, but nevertheless our key Aim remains the basic tenet around which the Society operates. The document was adopted as one of our earlier policies way back in May 2001. So the question is, after eight years, is it still fit for purpose? The document is published again here now to stimulate any debate around that point, bearing in mind our autumn AGM on 3 October in Wells.

When the committee has undertaken its periodic reviews in the past, we've pondered what might be added to this core statement, specifying for example toll-houses and other turnpike built heritage as a named 'activity', and of course the Society's database already includes a specific component on toll-houses. One could argue either way that this (or isn't) subsumed within the overall aim. Recently there has also been a lively (and continuing) debate on our Society's role if any in relation to the rich heritage of mileposts and markers on the UK canal network, where the same arguments could apply.

It's a sign of maturity that we should keep all this under review, perhaps revisiting specifics at the AGM but certainly (in my view) being careful not to overreach our core function in relation to 'milestones and other waymarkers of the British Isles'. Note that this doesn't specifically commit only to roadside heritage. With only so many members actually active on the ground, busily recording and arguing for conservation, it would be easy to expand beyond the capacity of our essentially volunteer base. So, WHAT THOUGHTS ?

David Viner (Chairman)

THE SOCIETY'S AIM & OBJECTIVES

AIMS

To identify, record, research, conserve and interpret for public benefit the milestones and other waymarkers of the British Isles.

OBJECTIVES

To publicise and promote public awareness of milestones and other waymarkers and the need for identification, recording, research and conservation, for the general benefit and education of the community at large.

To enhance public awareness and enjoyment of milestones and other waymarkers and to inform and inspire the community at large of their distinctive contribution to both the local scene and to the historic landscape in general.

To represent the historic significance and national importance of milestones and way markers in appropriate forums and through relevant national organisations. To organise and co-ordinate relevant practical projects at both national and regional / local levels, thereby enhancing public access.

To protect, preserve and restore milestones & other waymarkers through the planning process, representing their significance to appropriate authorities locally & nationally.

To manage the Society's affairs in ways which maintain effective administration and appropriate activity, including the establishment of regional groupings through which to delegate and devolve the Society's business.

GOVERNMENTAL CIRCULAR

Department of the Environment
2 Marsham Street, London SW1

Circular ROADS 13/75

The Chief Executive
County Councils of England
Metropolitan Counties
London Borough Councils
The Director General, The Greater London Council.

Our reference HM 14/01

Date 19 March. 1975.

Dear Sir,

PRESERVATION OF MILEPOSTS

Stones or posts marking mileage on highways are important indications of historic development, especially for the turnpike age. and the Secretary of State is anxious that they should be preserved wherever conditions of cost or practical difficulties of siting do not rule this out. He therefore asks that the following points should be borne in

mind by his agent authorities in dealing with works on trunk roads and by local highway authorities on other roads.

Stones and posts should be retained on their original sites whenever possible. If a post has to be moved because of highway widening or for traffic purposes it should, if physically possible, be re-set at the same distance point but further back from the road centre. The advice given in the Traffic Signs Manual should be followed when relocating mileposts. If a diversion by-passes the highway at a milepost point, the post should be retained on the original alignment if this is practicable. In cases of extensive redevelopment at the site of a milepost, the possibilities of retaining the post and including it in the new development should be considered. Should there be some reason, such as a development that obliterates the highway or a risk of vandalism, which compels the removal of the post entirely, the owners should be asked to offer it to a local museum or other custody for preservation.

Museums and local preservation societies may be interested to make and keep photographic records of historic mileposts, whether threatened or not. It is suggested that in any case where a milepost will be removed by road works, such local interests should be invited to record it for posterity before removal.

It is the policy to schedule mileposts only if they are the best examples of their type. Scheduled posts are protected under the Ancient Monument Acts and must not be altered or moved without prior reference to the Ancient Monuments Secretariat in the Department of the Environment. Mileposts have also been protected by listing under Section 54 of the Town & Country Planning Act 1971 and preceding legislation. Local highway authorities must consult the relevant local planning authority in cases where listed mileposts are effected.

Any enquires about this Circular should be made to DOE, HM2a at Marsham Street, London (telephone 01-212 8514). Distribution enquiries should be made to Highways Manual Branch at Marsham Street (telephone 01-212 4944).

J.M. Entwistle Assistant
Secretary Department of the
Environment.

Sent in by JV Nicholls. (Cheshire)

QUESTION:- Who was the Secretary of State in March 1975, and should he be made a Honorary Member of the Milestone Society? - Editor.

REPLICA MILESTONES

I have recently been closely involved in the manufacture and placement of a brand new replica iron milestone at the roadside of the A442 Bridgnorth - Kidderminster road in Shropshire. The subject of new milestones is controversial to some members of the Milestone Society because the various aims and objectives of the Society (as recorded on page 4) do not specifically include the procurement of new ones. So there is nothing about making new ones !

My original reason for joining the Society was my interest in old things (like canals, cars, clocks, railways, windmills, bridges etc) and spotting in the Telegraph Motoring section on Saturday 17th May 2003 about two blokes in Cumbria who had been persuaded by their wives, who were on the local Parish Council, to restore a couple of old cast iron fingerposts. A historic adviser to English Heritage (Charles Wagner) was quoted in the article as suggesting that people interested in preserving old road furniture should join the Milestone Society.

So there we have it! The Society is concerned with the preservation of old roadside furniture, not the making of new ones.

In Shropshire during 2008, three new concrete milestones suddenly appeared on the direct (unclassified) road between Bishops Castle and Shrewsbury, each stamped SSDC 2008 on the back. Two of these filled gaps in the series of milestones along this road, but one replaced an old sandstone milestone which was not (as far as I have been able to determine) badly damaged. Also a completely new sandstone milestone with metal plate attached has been placed by Shropshire Highways on an unclassified road at Great Ness (which runs parallel to the A5 and which is believed, by the local Parish Council to be the original section of the Holyhead road, before Telford created his masterpiece). This is not a replacement nor is the stone an exact replica of those on the real A5 near-by. The new MS that I was involved with (also in 2008) resulted from a series of events;-

1. An old cast iron MP was broken into pieces by an errant motor vehicle.
2. The pieces were recovered by a MSS member (and National Trust official) and handed to me.
3. In liaison with Shropshire Highways I arranged for the pieces to be welded together.
4. The local NT workshop made an oak post on which the restored MP was mounted.
5. It was replaced at the roadside by Shropshire Highways.
6. Two days later it was smashed again by another car, but this time the owner was known.
7. Shropshire Highways pursued the car owner for the cost of another repair.
8. A new cast iron MP was made and placed by the roadside by Shropshire Highways.
9. The new casting is dated SCC 2008

As a result of an earlier contact from a freelance writer, this story was used as the basis for an article in the January 2009 Shropshire magazine which, in turn was picked up by a researcher at BBC television. A three hour filming and interview session resulted in a two minute piece in BBC Midlands Today programme, both at lunchtime and on the evening of the 8th of January.

The point of interest hereto the Magazine and to the television researcher was the story of the new MP.

The point of interest to SSDC at Bishops Castle was to re-create the sequence of ten milestones. The point of interest to the Great Ness parish Council was the added status to their history that the new milestone would provide.

Although the MSS aims & objectives do not include the procurement of new & replica milestones, it is clear from my own recent experience that, in our role of promoting old milestones to public awareness, and to Parish and District Councils (and Highway Authorities) in particular, we can and will also generate interest in new and replica milestones.

Alan Reade

The day after Alan emailed the above article to the Editor, -with a copy to John Atkinson, John received a phone call from Jill Nicholls, Clerk to Atcham Parish Council near Shrewsbury, asking for help and information on how to replace a missing 19th c cast iron MP, which used to stand just to the west of old Atcham bridge on the B4380. Is that coincidence? Watch out for further developments.

MILESTONE PUBLICITY

There is an oft-heard argument that, in drawing attention to the existence and location of old milestones, the risk of their being stolen is increased. In Shropshire, between 1995 and 2005, 39 (12%) of the 321 recorded milestones from the original total of 640 have disappeared. Of these 22 were cast iron and 17 were of stone. Of the cast iron ones, several have gone missing after being " saved " by Shropshire Highways and although presently missing, may yet turn up in a store shed somewhere. The balance between the two types is therefore about the same. Some metal MPs have been smashed, the pieces often being taken away in skips to the tip, or taken by a local farmer for his yard. Some markers have been clearly run over by road traffic, farm machinery or hedge cutting tractors. Others have been broken and the pieces thrown about the verge or into an adjacent ditch or field. Many metal plates have been removed in the past, but almost none during the last ten years. A few have been stolen. Indeed one cast iron example from the B4371 Church Stretton to Much Wenlock road turned up in an antique centre a mere 7 miles from its original position, rapidly disappearing again after the proprietor was challenged. A stone milestone on the A489 west of Church Stoke on the Craven Arms to Newtown road has recently disappeared for no obvious reason. The stone was slightly damaged but had an interesting engraving on the face. Further investigation needs to be undertaken. By and large, from experience, theft is no more likely and indeed, is possibly quite less likely to be the principal cause of losses than other things. There is a strong argument to suggest that the sort of publicity that the MSS generates will result in milestones being better maintained, especially by lifting, painting and/or lime-washing them, which not only demonstrates to a potential thief that the stones are owned and looked after, but also makes them more visible to the hedge-cutters and road users. As an additional benefit, recent press publicity has resulted in two old plates from milestones on the B4380 Shrewsbury to Ironbridge road being handed in, one by a resident who "rescued" one after the stone had been damaged, and the other by a vicar, formerly from Ironbridge now living in Bridgnorth, who brought the plate in a junk shop some 30 years ago. Perhaps there is no such thing as bad publicity for milestones!!

Alan Reade

NOTES AND QUERIES

Roehampton Mounting Block Re NL16 p3. *Colin Woodward (Middlesex)* reports that the Roehampton mounting block is sadly lost, but the other stone that Derek Renn (Surrey) refers to, east of Otford in Kent can still be seen. It is in the adjoining parish of Kemsing, at the junction of the Pilgrims Way and Chuldsbridge Lane (TL547591), and is a scheduled Ancient Monument. The date unfortunately is now unreadable, but if it is 1702 it is probably the oldest dated milestone in the county of Kent (except for the Roman period). There is a iron protection bar making the inscription difficult to read, and gives the milestone the impression of looking like an abandoned suitcase !!! The milestone is not on a turnpike road, therefore possibly erected by the local parish. The elevation facing the Pilgrims Way is blank, or almost so. The rear elevation reads, " THE WAY / TO : DAR (T) / FORD : 12 / MILES." The eastern (track) elevation reads, " TO MALL / ING 10 / MILES. " The western elevation reads, " TO / BROM / LY 12 / MILES." The top has the date " 17 0." There is some garbling of lettering, e.g. confusion of " 10 " with " TO," and it appears that at sometime there may have been an attempt to change the inscription to " MAID / STONE " instead of " MALL/ ING," but the former is 15 miles away, not the 10 shown on the inscription. The " E " in Bromley has been dropped. (Fig 1)

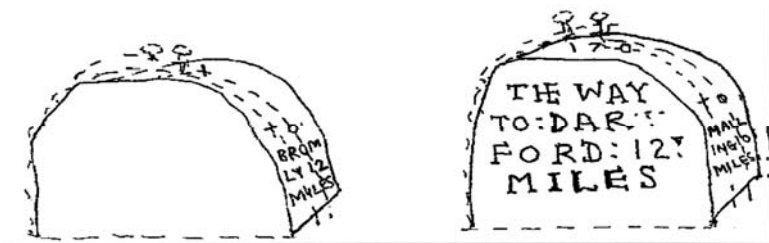


Fig 1

The milestone does not follow the convention of inscription facing the traveller in the direction being travelled, but does the opposite. It is clearly of an early style. The " Way to Dartford " is today just a track.

Twin Surrey Milestones Re NL16 p3.

Derek Renn & Roger Powell (Surrey)

reported that, contrary to what was reported in the last Newsletter, both confirm that the Milford Mousehill MS (SU94524118) is still there on the east side of the A283, opposite the junction with Cramhurst Road.

The next one, in a front garden wall on the west side of the road a mile south (not two miles as has been reported) at Witley (SU94733959), is that shown in Mr Howie's other photograph. In the *Guide to the Industrial History of the Borough of Waverley* (SIHG Guildford, 2003) it was stated to have no visible lettering. Today its lettering and edges are remarkably sharp; HYDE PARK CORNER has been scrubbed recently, perhaps to remove graffiti. The wall a few feet to the right has been rebuilt and the rubble coursing has a break at the join where the MS might have once stood. The original stone may have been damaged beyond repair sometime in the past, and that

the inscription was copied exactly by mistake either from a pattern or from that on the Milford/Mousehill MS. The next MS at Wormley Hill, a mile beyond Witley, has the correct mileages. It has been moved from SU948381, beside the gate of Milestone Cottage, perhaps occasioned by a widening of the road. The pyramidal top has been knocked off, probably to cancel the OS benchmark which had become inaccurate because of the move.



Fig 2

The Robber Stone (Salisbury Plain) ReNL4 p5. *Rob Smith (Swindon)* Since there was no illustration of the Robbers Stone (A360 at SU008 513) in NL4, he thought that a sketch (Fig2) might be of interest. The Plaque reads;- " AT THIS SPOT / Mr Bean of Imber was/ attacked and robbed by/four highwaymen in the / evening of Oct 21. 1839. After a spirited pursuit of/ three hours one of the felons / Benjamin Colclough / fell dead on Chitterne Down. / Thomas Saunders / George Waters & / Richard Harris / were eventually captured / and were convicted at the / ensuing Quarter Sessions at / Devizes, and transported for / the term of fifteen years. / This monument is erected / by public subscription / as a warning to those who/ presumptuously think to/ escape the punishment God has threatened against / Thieves and Robbers. He also mentions that there is another stone 2 miles away in an inaccessible part of the Plain used for military training. It marks the spot where Benjamin Colclough fell dead and bears another grim warning to would-be felons.

Mystery Post Re NL16 p3. *David Blackburn (Derbyshire)* may have the answer to Tim Richard's query re. the post on the B6057. The stone is one of 9 specially erected by the Holymoorside and Walton Parish Council to mark the millennium. The lettering is fairly complex - BP stands for boundary post (It's where three parishes meet whilst the other seven have the letters BS - where two parishes meet). SOUTH identifies it as the southernmost marker. STANDS IN is part of a saying David has not been able to fully identify, but each post has a 2 word inscription, and the date 2000. From the North stone going clockwise around the eight points of the compass ending at the central stone the message reads;- High Over / Low Years / Millennium Over / Our

Record / Stands In / Derbyshire Engraved / Within All / Land These / Obelisk Note. As well as the unknown inscription, the initial letters of the 2 words combine to form the parish name - ie Walton and Holymoorside.

Finally, two time capsules have been buried. The first is adjacent to the centre stone, the other is by the East boundary stone. Those who wish to take it a bit further, and find out what the meaning of the riddle is, may be able to discover the answer in three ways. For the members of the community have written their own song, " High Over Low." They have also created their very own ginger-bread and a special brewed beer. It may be worth investigating further.

County Bridge Stones Re NL16 p 10. *Carol Haines (Norfolk)* writes in to say that Ian Thompson's article may have solved the puzzle of a small, black-painted stone at the rear of the pavement in the main street through Lodden. It reads B/COUNTY / 1888. (Fig 3)

Local historians were completely stumped. However it is roughly 100 yards from the bridge over the river Chet. This stone is obviously much later than the Cornish bridge stones and was possibly installed when the County Council came into being.

There is a good chapter on the history of bridge maintenance in Sidney & Beatrice Webb: English Local Government. Vol.5: The Story of the King's Highway (1913). Early bridges were often built by monasteries or by " benevolent testators." The Statute of Bridges (1531) stated that where no other liability could be proved, the burden of maintenance should fall upon the county. The Statute also said that the authority extended to the road 300 feet from each end. At first, county maintenance, for which a rate was levied, only covered bridges on the main highways; Towns, parishes and private individuals were responsible for others. From the 18thc when wheeled traffic was increasing, new bridges were needed and packhorse bridges had to be widened, so maintenance costs started to become a burden on counties. An Act of 1803 could do little to reduce the financial responsibilities, but said that any new bridges must be built to an approved standards and under the inspection of the County Surveyor.

Unfortunately the Webbs say nothing about bridge stones, but the 1803 Act might be a significant date.

In the West Riding of Yorkshire it seems that there are several stone bridge markers. Instead of the letter C they have the letters WR. There is even a metal marker near the bridge over the river Rawthey, 5 miles north of Sedbergh, which was the old county boundary with Westmorland.

In 1602 the W.R. JPs named 48 bridges to be kept repaired by the county. There are other stones near bridges with a " + " on them. As most are quite worn, they may pre-date the W.R. stones and indicate that the local abbey was responsible for them.

John Langdill (Cheshire) reports that he has found a " C " stone at Gurnett just south of Macclesfield on the old 1762 turnpike road to Leek (SJ924718) - just inside the entrance to a Garden Centre. The stone is 50 yards from Sutton Bridge, and therefore may have been moved for safety at some time.

To-date " C " stones have been reported in Devon, Cheshire, Cornwall, Norfolk, and Yorkshire. - Are there any more from the other counties ? - Editor



Fig 3



Fig 4

Is this the oldest kilometre marker in Britain ?

It first appeared on the internet (Flickr) back in July 2008, asking whether the 1908 London Olympic Marathon marker (Fig 4) at Barns Pool Bridge, at the top of Eton High Street is the oldest Kilometre marker in Britain. It is certainly at the correct place, as the marathon course ran from Windsor Castle to the White City Stadium in West London.

The plaque displays two sets of distances, and is pointing towards London, with the inscription: MARATHON ROUTE, 25 MILES and 40.2 KILOs.

From the picture uploaded on the 24th July 2008, a hawk eyed observer would have noticed that the screws holding the fairly rusty metal plaque on to the wall are bright and seem to be new. The question now arises, was the plaque taken down in 1940, and has it only recently been put back. If so, where has it been for the last 68 years?

I-SPY Milestones. Re NL16p5. In response to Keith Lawrence's question - How many of the I-Spy milestones have survived ? *Christine Minto (Yorkshire)* reports that there were also two pages of milestones in the I-Spy No 9 - Street Furniture book, with 6 illustrations.

From Book No 9. A milestone used for another purpose (30) such as a seat as the one illustrated, was originally opposite the church at the end of Ogden Lane in Rastrick. It may have been moved to Jumble Dyke on the other side of Church Street. The stones at each end of the seat are identical, so artistic licence was in play. With inscriptions to Brighouse and Denholme Gate the original stone would have been on the A644 between Hipperholme and Stone Chair. Near the Raggalds Inn, north of Queensbury, there is a stone, mostly sunk in the tarmac, of the same design. Only the TO is visible, but it is quite distinctive.

The White Lady at Esher, Surrey (28) survives, whilst stone (26) on the A48 between Cardiff and Cowbridge- stating London 164 miles, and stone (27)- XXII / miles from / Westminster /to Sarum 71754 on the A30 are both missing.

Can anyone identify stone (25) - LXI TO LONDON - the milestone with Roman

figures, and also the French milestone (29)? - Editor.

From the I-Spy Book 10, the illustrations on p5 in NL16, (Fig 2) the Bradley Stone on the B4204 survives.

Irish Milestones NL16 p11 In reference to the section about the series of mile stones on the roads N69 and N71, the report should actually read - " none survive on these roads in the County of Kerry."

Norman Tipping (Beds) wishes for the record to be corrected before T.K. finds out on his next visit to Ireland ! !

On the Ground. No5. Milestone survey of Anglesey *John Higgins mentions that the milestones on route one, the old post road to Holyhead, were erected in 1752. R. T. Pritchard the well known authority on the post roads and turnpike trusts of North Wales, records that William Morris, a customs official at Holyhead, wrote in August that year to his brother John, who was working at the Admiralty in London, mentioning the erection of a set of new milestones that had been presented by the owner of the " Dublin Pacquet. " Wouldn't it be terrific if one of today's ferry companies, Irish Ferries or Siena Lines, were to sponsor the restoration of the stones on the 260th anniversary of their erection on the old post road across Anglesey?*



12 milestone

20 milestone

R.T. Pritchard, when he wrote the article "The history of the post road in Anglesey, " in 1954 for the Anglesey Antiquarian Society, mentions that he was aware that the following milestones were in place, 1,3,10,11,13,14,16,18, 19,20,22,23, but one or two others may also have survived. John therefore has found numbers 8,9,12,17, and 21 in his research, whilst sadly number 23 has gone missing.

ITEMS IN MUSEUMS - AN OXFORDSHIRE TOLL BOARD

Society Chairman David Viner's professional wanderings around museum display galleries and especially into reserve stores around the country (usually in his "day job" searching for traditional farm wagons and carts) occasionally produce gems relevant to road and turnpike history. David reports now on his latest finds, this time in the

Oxfordshire Museums Resource Centre at Standlake, a few miles south of Witney on the A415 towards Abingdon

The Standlake Centre holds the county council's reserve collections and the service as a whole owns a fine collection of Oxfordshire wagons, some of the most shapely, well designed and built as any in the country. Supporting information includes tools and equipment from various wheelwrights and suppliers, for instance a fine signboard from 'CORBY BROS/TRAP, VAN & TROLLEY WORKS /Headington Quarry, Oxford'.

Also presented is a rather battered AA Safety First roundel sign from Cassington (Witney 7, Oxford 6, London 62), plus - a joy to find virtually intact if rather faded - the former tollboard from Ascott under Wychwood, which is catalogued into the museum collection as OXCMS: 1987.71.1.

The story of its re-discovery is told in a short article in *Wychwoods History*, number 16 for 2001, pages 38-9, which reveals a series of remarkable incidents ensuring the preservation of this board through to the present day. This also shows the continuing local care for a piece of road history, preserved for what we would now call local 'community' interest.

The toll house to which it belonged stood on what is now the B4437 Burford to Charlbury road, just west of the turn to Ascott under Wychwood, and also west of the turn to Leafield (164: SP 3017). Payment of tolls here released access through the Dyers Hill gate entering Charlbury. The board shows the usual range of charges but no date.

Believed to be the original board from the turnpiking of this route in 1800, its survival is thanks to village wheelwright Jack Young, who hung it in his workshop. It was then stored at College Farm, and for many years displayed in Ascott School. When that closed in 1987, the board made its way via Woodstock museum to Standlake. As is so often the case, the painted lettering stands proud of the faded broad surface - a classic of its kind and still in a way 'on display'. For access to the Standlake store, phone 01865 300557 or go to www.museums.resource.centre@oxfordshire.gov.uk

Recounting my discovery to various colleagues produced more on this road and its milestones. Mervyn Benford recalled photographing two surviving stones along this section of the B4437 west of Charlbury, although 'not easy to read any more'. Alan Rosevear had also been this way; vol 8 in his extensive series of booklets on *Roads across the Upper Thames Valley* [RUTV for short] describes the Charlbury roads and the late trust set up to administer them, confirming the 1800 dating. A network of roads ran to the four points of the compass from Charlbury, the small trust administering some thirty miles of rural roads and not surprisingly raising relatively small amounts of income from its seven toll-gates at Witney, Brown's Lane, Ditchley, Baywell, Dyers Hill, Henley Nap and Great Tew.

The milestone series is recorded in the Society's database as SPGY 00-09, although only nos 00, 01, 04 and 05 have been found and not in wonderful condition. So here's a nice little challenge for somebody - to research afresh these routes through the lovely west Oxfordshire countryside, checking on the state of the surviving stones and adding more information to the database. Any takers?

The RUTV series was listed in *Milestones and Waymarkers* Volume One, page 47, contact Alan if you're still seeking any particular issue.

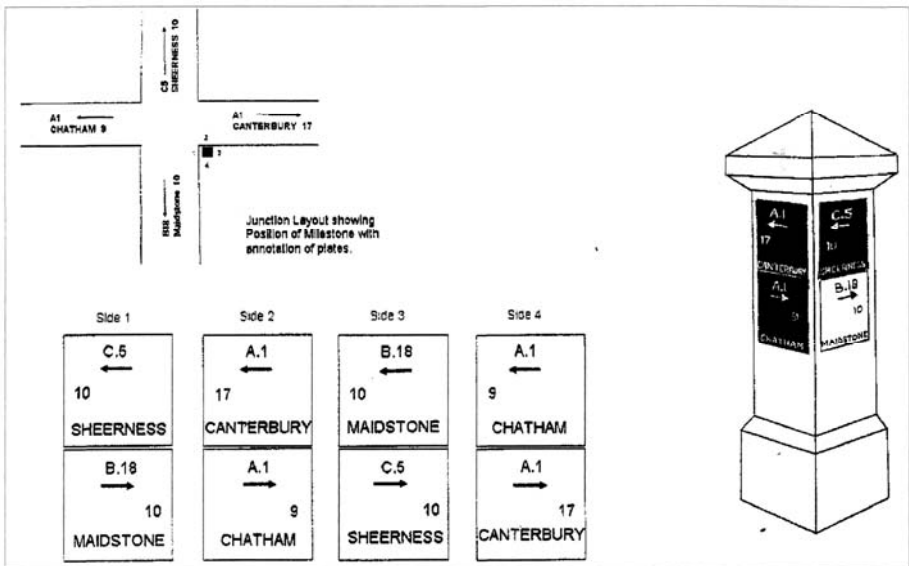
David Viner (Glos)

MICHELIN'S PROPOSAL FOR FRENCH STYLE CORNER MILE-POSTS

Hidden away in the National Archives at Kew is a letter dated 2nd November 1920 from the Michelin Tyre Co Ltd (ref MT34/266) enclosing a document prepared by Andre Michelin. This document is entitled " Notes Presented to His Majesty's Ministry of Transport on Road Numbering in the British Isles.' When, in 1919, the newly formed Ministry of Transport inherited the road numbering proposals they invited comments and ideas from all interested bodies and the Michelin company was one of these.

Michelin explains how they have worked hard with the French authorities to ensure their system of numbering was of practical use to the motorist and not just for administrative purposes. He adds that he gives credit to the British Government for their initial ideas and would like to set out the following four points based on his years of study.

1. To use letters to indicate different classes of road and to keep the maximum number of digits to three for ease of remembering. First class roads could start with A and second class roads with B. Should second class roads be likely to exceed 999 i.e. Three digits, then further letters of the alphabet could be used



possibly allocating one to an area e.g. England, Scotland, Wales. Class letters would also avoid the necessity of printing road maps in colour to indicate the

class of road.

2. Colours are suggested e.g. White on red for first class roads and black on yellow for second class roads. It was claimed that these combinations are more distinguishable than black and white.
3. Sign posts for the new signs are considered, because they are initially the most economic. However it states that they are outside of the drivers normal line of sight, especially at night when headlights would not illuminate them. Trees can also obscure them and they are prone to damage by " small boys " and "ill disposed persons "
4. Corner Mile-Stones are acknowledged as being an initial expense but due to their durability are the most economic in the long run. The existing mile-stones in France are sighted as a good example, having been erected " several centuries ago and are in as good condition as the day on which they were erected.' 'Corner Mile-Stones could be erected as a rolling programme as the signposts become destroyed.' Dimensioned coloured drawings are included along with suggested positions and wording for the plates. Finally it notes the enclosure of a model of a Corner Stone. (I wonder what has happened to it?)

There is no MoT reply on file but the suggestions were obviously considered, as various pieces of text are marked and underlined. Indeed Andre Michelin continued his interest, albeit on just the number aspect, as referenced in the book "A, B, C & M, Road Numbering Revealed " by Andrew Emerson and Peter Bancroft, published 2007. The two illustrations are all re-drawn from those provided by Andre Michelin. Sadly permission could not be obtained from Michelin to reproduce the originals. The Corner Mile-Stone itself measures 5' 10" high from the ground level with the base 18" square. All other aspects are also fully dimensioned on the original drawing. The plates are 13"x12", the A classified roads are white on red, the B is black on yellow and the C white on blue. The latter colour combination would seem to indicate the possibility in his mind of third class roads, and somewhat conflicts with his ideas in item 1. above of allocating subsequent letters to different areas for second class roads. The drawn example of a junction layout shows the position for the Corner Mile-Stone and the details of four sets of plates are annotated to this layout. It is an interesting "might have been" thought. However with the benefit of hindsight its limitations can clearly be seen with the level of traffic and the complexity of our roads today.

Rodney Marshall (Luton)

HINDHEAD A3 IMPROVEMENTS

The new tunnel and road under construction at Hindhead, Surrey, have necessitated the removal of two milestones. The first one close to the county border, just inside Hampshire, has already been relocated.

A meeting was held on the 20th of February this year, to discuss the future of the second milestone. Nigel Mee from the National Trust invited all interested parties to attend a meeting to discuss the relocation of the said milestone as part of the old

A3 would eventually be closed. Peter Le Page represented The Milestone Society. The first part of the meeting was to visit the current site on the lip of the famous " Devil's Punchbowl" (SU896358). Sadly the milestone was not in situ, but after a period of searching, it was finally discovered by the Mayor of Haslemere below a steep bank lying on its side. Removing the moss the legend " Portsmouth 30 " could be clearly seen.

The second part of the meeting was to find a suitable site for the stone relocation. The Highways Authority did not want to be involved, so they had handed over the stone to the National Trust, who in turn contacted the contractors Balfour Beatty who are building the tunnel and new road, and asked them to do the actual relocating. They agreed, and were willing to store the stone in their compound until 2011 when the tunnel project is complete. The relocation site that has been chosen is at SU899359 on the recently constructed Cycle roadway, near to the Sailors Stone and the monument. Instead of being on the west side of the road, the new position will be on the east side, which means that the distances on the side facing will be incorrect, but the fact that the stone has been preserved is the important thing.

Peter Le Page (Surrey)

The Sailors Stone was erected in 1787 by the Stillwells of Cosford House, Mousehill (Milford) to remind travellers of the murder of an unknown sailor on September 24th the previous year.

Three footpads were arrested that same day and were hanged on Gibbets Hill at the site of the monument. Even though the cycleway passes these sites today, this was actually part of the main London to Portsmouth road between Milford and Hindhead until 1826, when the present section of the A3 was built. Charles Dickens on his many travels from Lamport (Portsmouth), to London would pass the Sailors Stone, and actually mentions this spot in his famous novel Nicholas Nickleby. If the above said milestone is pre -1826 then it might be finding its way back close to its original location.

VICTORIAN FINGERPOSTS IN WESTMORLAND

In the last Newsletter in January 2009, we briefly reported on some cast-iron finger posts in Westmorland, which had embossed numbers on the collar. A lot seems to have happened since then! We located some 29 complete posts and 6 others with the distinctive curved arms (Fig 5) mounted on the other posts. We found numbers ranging from 1 to 48, with numbers 1,3 and 6 being repeated. These fingerposts occur all over the old County of Westmorland.

Then in early December last year numbers 1 and 3 in Hutton Roof, both in reasonable condition, were replaced by modern "Cumbria" fingerposts! After a few frantic calls, Capita found the old ones and asked us to look after them pending a possible restoration. We then started our campaign for the conservation of all of them.

We now know where and when they were made, by whom and how much they cost.

These fingerposts date right back to Victorian times. When Westmorland County Council started in 1889, followed by the Rural District Councils in 1894, they started to modernise the highways and replace the wooden fingerposts with iron, led by Joseph Bintley, the redoubtable Westmorland County Surveyor. The first 15 were cast on 18 March 1894 in Joseph Bowerbank's Victoria Foundry in Penrith, (in the County of Cumberland!) as shown in the Foundry Days Book and Ledgers in the Carlisle Record Office (Fig 6). They were sold to W.C.C. for 36s 6d each, which included the cost of the wooden patterns for casting. These first posts had "6" wide arms but only two of these have been found, in Milburn and near Brampton (Appleby), both now in rather poor condition.



Fig 5

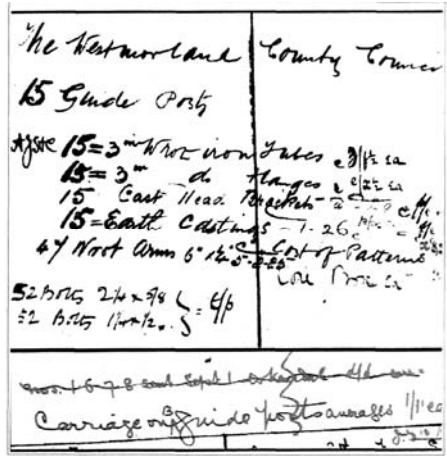


Fig 6

Sixty more guideposts, at £2 each, were "erected in various parts of the county" in May 1896. Some are still in place today but all of these have "8" wide arm and a "Bowerbank, Penrith" foundry plate on the post or the remains of the plate mounting screws. Further Bowerbank fingerposts followed in 1897 (Arnside), 1898 (Hutton Roof) and 1900 (Musgrave and the East Ward), bought both by W.C.C. and the Rural District Councils. Bowerbank's Day Book records that 13 posts were cast on 11 July 1904 and "Nos. 1.6.7.8 sent Sept 1 to Kendal". So it is probable that the distinctive numbers were serial numbers within each order, and explains why some numbers are duplicated. For example, the number " 1" in Newbiggin was first on a wish list prepared by the R.D.C in 1899. On 18 August 1905, Joseph Bintley reported that there were 165 guideposts in Westmorland, 113 of iron, 50 of wood and 2 of stone. Iron fingerposts were also made in Cumberland, even earlier in the 1890s, in the Waterloo Foundry of Daniel Clark in Carlisle, but unfortunately their upright posts of lap-welded steel have since rusted away, though some have been remounted. Many thanks to those who are helping in our campaign to conserve these early finger posts, and to Mrs Bowerbank and the Cumbria Record Office, Carlisle, for permission

to print the photo of the Bowerbank Day Book records.

We would be very interested to learn of other Victorian fingerposts and their history in other counties.

Kate & Mike Lea (Westmorland)

FOREIGN PARTS

Pound, Shillings and Pence or Libre, Sols and Deniers.

Whilst on a recent holiday to Brittany, Michael Knight of Bedford came across an old toll to cross the lower Vilaine river, which had been a profitable venture operated by the local abbey prior to the 1789 revolution. He noticed that there were three basic groupings for charges, animals, merchandise and passengers, very much similar to the charges on the turnpike roads of 18thc Britain.

But what actually caught his eye was the use of the letter 'd' for denier, in the same fashion as Britain used to do until 1973 with the old pence. Was this a coincidence, or was there actually a connection with Britain's monetary system ?

On his return he discovered the following between the two currencies. Under the Saxons the coinage in Britain was based on the precious commodity of silver, and from one pound (lib - originally 12 oz to the lb), 240 'Sterlings' were minted. The Normans brought over their French traditions and customs in finance. 12 Denier = 1 Sol or Solidus, 20 Sols = 1 Libre...Sounds rather familiar, but with different names.

In 1279 Edward I of England and France introduced the grout (equates to 4 silver pence). For many decades both countries on either side of the channel had a common currency which gradually differed with the minting of new coinage soon after the Tudor era. Only after around 1400 did English-type words and names become part of our language. The French stuck with Sols (Shillings) and denarius (pence) right up to their metrication which took place sometime after the revolution, when francs, cents, and sous came into use.

We on this side of the Channel, however, hung on to the pre-Conquest basis for almost another 200 years. By the time of the turnpike era, Britain had moved on to the gold standard, and the guinea, neither of which would have passed hands at a toll gate.

It is interesting to consider our island's history. It seems we do not like change –for our postal system was created in 1635, some 150 years after the German family Thurn und Taxis (originally from Italy) had established the first International postal service, which operated between Brussels and Innsbruck.

Can anyone provide other road and road service examples where Britain lagged behind the rest of Europe ?

From where did we get the idea of toll roads and turnpike trusts for example ?

LOST AND FOUND

(Reported by the Society's County Representatives unless otherwise stated)

Cheshire As mentioned in NL16 p18, the milepost that had been saved from ebay and was waiting for Cheshire C.C. Highways Department to restore it to its original site

is hopefully back in place as we go to press.

Mike Faherty thought it would be a good idea to publicise the successful story in time for the Spring meeting in Altrincham in May, especially as the MP came from only 9 miles away (Fig 7).

Cornwall

Three MS have been found, thanks to the Cornwall Council's Historic Environment Officer, Jane Powning, which can now be added to the Society's database. They are :- 1/ - Near Morvah Church in Penwith (SW402352) on the B3306, 2/ Bosullow Common (SW416345), and 3/ Alexandra Road, St Austell (SXO18523). Sadly the 19thc milestone, with a triangular pyramid top and square base at Tolroy near Hayle on the B3302 (SW562359) has recently disappeared.

Devon Dartmoor National Park Authority reports that one of its important late 18thc granite milestones (fig 8) with the inscription - " *Ashburton 9 Tavistock 11* " went missing sometime at the beginning of April this year. It was located on the northside of the B3357 between Dunnabridge and Huccaby at SX652741, and Tim Jenkinson has stated that he last saw it in place on March 14th. The theft, sadly, has broken up a complete intact set that ran from Tavistock to just above Dartmeet. Fortunately the D.N.P.A have micro chipped many granite artefacts, including this milestone, which hopefully will assist in its recovery.



Fig 7



Fig 8

Norfolk Two losses have been reported this year. The first is the Kings Lynn 12 MS at Heacham on the A148, which was photographed in 2002-3, but now cannot be found. Whilst the Gooderstone MS, which seems to have been stolen ten years ago, has only recently been brought to the Society's notice.

Pembrokeshire Sadly it has been reported that a pair of cast-iron milestone plates that have recently been restored by Pembrokeshire C.C, were stolen from the side of the A40, sometime between the 11th and 12th of March this year. One plates inscription

reads "6 Miles to Haverfordwest" whilst the other has inscribed, "3 Miles 780 yards to Narberth, 12 Miles 922yards to Pembroke"

The milestones are well known throughout the county for their distinctive usage of the Yard. Made by Marchchurch Iron Foundry in Haverfordwest in around 1838. This crime now leaves 30 miles of the Pembrokeshire A40 trunk road with just a small handful of stones, therefore further depleting the road's historical interests. (*Internet*) Yorkshire The milepost that was stolen in 1995, from near the Highwayman Cafe on the A64 between Malton and York has been reclaimed by the City of York Council, from ebay. They collected the item from Fulford Police Station, and are planning to return it to the original site, after the Council's blacksmiths team have restored it. The milepost was made by F.Mattison & Co of Leeming Bar, who operated between 1851 and 1937 and were the town's biggest employers at the time. It is thought that the milepost was put up on the York to Scarborough Turnpike Trust road, sometime between 1851 and 1865. (Fig 9)

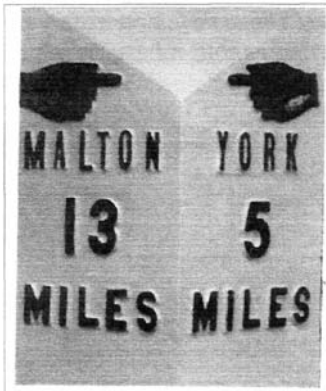


Fig 9



Fig 10

TOLL HOUSE NEWS *Since the foundation of the Society many toll houses have featured in the press or on the internet. Out of interest the following information has been gathered together by the editor. Future contributions -would be most welcome.*

March 2003 Caernarvonshire (Fig 10) (1811) at Porthmadog was bought by the Welsh Assembly Government from the Rebecca Trust, who had been collecting the 5p toll from passing motorists for the past 25 years. The Trust was set up by local trustees who wanted the money distributed among worthy local charities. Prior to the handover in 1978 the money had been pocketed by the descendants of W.A.Maddock (who had originally constructed the Cob). Because of the sale of the Cob toll house to the Welsh Assembly, the local charities in Porthmadog and Penrhyndeudraeth will be able to continue to receive their benefits as a trust fund has been created. (*Internet*)

May 2003 Worcestershire A ceremony took place on the 15th May, to mark the site of

the old Bewdley toll house (1798), which was demolished in 1960. The toll house site was on the Wribbenhall side of Telford's bridge. A paved area and plaque was officially unveiled by the President of Bewdley Civic Society, Lord Sandys. (*Internet*) 2004 February Bristol - Ashton. The City Council is facing opposition and objections about turning the " Roundhouse ," a listed former toll house, from a residence for the elderly to a home for recovering drug and alcohol users. (*Internet*)

2005 June Herefordshire. The unusual three storey with one room on each floor Hoarwithy toll house, perched by the River Wye, is up for sale by the Herefordshire County Council. They have owned it since 1935. The toll house was purpose built for a bridge keeper who also operated the cross-river ferry from the site. Fishing lines can be cast from the downstairs windows. (*Reported by the Hereford Times*)

2006 February Warwickshire The Coventry Evening Telegraph reported on the 6th that the 19thc Grade II listed toll house which forms part of the village hall at Bourton on Dunsmore, near Rugby has just received a £49,900 Heritage Lottery Fund grant.

2006 June Glamorganshire. Sadly the toll house in Coity Road, Bridgend which had been in a state of dereliction for a number of years has been demolished. That leaves just two surviving in the Bridgend area (Jaggers Night Club and a residential building on Newcastle Hill).(*Local research*)

2006/7 Monmouthshire The Bigsweir Bridge toll house on the A466 recently fell into a ruinous state due to the fact that the lead on the roof had been stolen overnight. The building had been renovated in 1981 by young persons aged between 16 - 18 years who were employed by the Gwent County Council planning department under the youth opportunities programme. (*Local Observation*)

2007 November Carmarthenshire Residents in the village of Llangadog are blaming drivers using satellite navigation for the destruction of recently restored landmark buildings. One of these buildings on a narrow stretch of road in the middle of the village has been hit at least 3 times. Now a solicitors office, it is believed to have been the local toll house. (*BBC News Internet*)

2008 January Derbyshire Plans were announced that the toll house at Shottlegate (built in 1764) will be demolished to be replaced by two modern dwellings. Known as Byeways Cottage on the Ashbourne to Nottingham road, it was part of the route along which salt was for centuries brought into Staffordshire. At the end of its role as a toll house, it became a pub known as the Gate Inn. In 1933 it became a tenanted cottage. Its future looks bleak. Is there an update available? (*Internet*)

2008 January Lancashire The Rochdale Observer reported that the Littleborough toll house on the corner of the Halifax and Todmorden Roads may actually be an imposter. The Littleborough Civic Trust placed a Blue Plaque on the building some years ago, but now they are being challenged by the local Historical and Archaeological Society who claim that the actual toll house was 200 yards further down the road. They are, therefore requesting the Civic Trust to remove the heritage accreditation and to apply to the local council to strip the building of its listed status.

2008 November Surrey The former toll house in Chiddingfold (1751) on the old Petworth to Windsor road became national news when the present owner decided to pull down a rotten 20 year old 120 ft long garden fence as it had become a danger to

the public. Salvaging the remaining supporting posts, he rebuilt the fence with new panels. Unfortunately Waverley Borough Council demanded that the fence should be pulled down on the grounds that the fence was an eye sore and being a new structure needed planning permission.

The original "Table of Tolls" sign from the Chiddingfold tollhouse is now displayed in the museum at Haslemere. (*Daily Mail / Internet*)

2008 November 28th Anglesey For almost twenty years the Holyhead/Penrhos Toll House Tea Rooms have been run by Anglesey County Council to assist and help employ young people with learning disabilities. Whether it was locals, the weary traveller, or the milestone /Telford enthusiast, all received a very warm welcome there. Sadly the local county council announced the closure of the premises, whilst they took on a feasibility study into the improvements and modification requirements to meet modern standards of health and safety issues. Distressingly, an update was issued in March, stating that the tea rooms will not be open this year. (*Internet*)

2008 December Berkshire The Whitchurch Toll Bridge (1792) hit the news with local public demonstrations because the present owners wish to raise the toll from its present 20p to 40p to help raise £3.2 million by 2013 in time to build a new bridge. The Grade II listed bridge, the third on the site, was built in 1902. (*Internet*)

2009 April Devon The owners of Plants Galore at Forches Cross have won permission to demolish the old toll house there, and build a replacement house as part of a deal that will improve an awkward road junction on the A382. Sadly the members of the Teignmouth Council Development Control Committee voted overwhelmingly to demolish the building, and work will go ahead shortly.

A last minute appeal to get English Heritage involved and list the 18th century building failed. Further delay has taken place as the Council has disapproved of the proposed plans of the building that will eventually replace the toll house. (*Internet*)

2009 May Oxfordshire The grade II listed 9 arch Swinford Toll Bridge near Eynsham is up for sale at a market valuation of £1.65million, and has been described as the finest bridge on the river Thames. At present its annual takings are around £200,000, and 4 million vehicles a year (at 5p per car & 50p a lorry) cross the river at this point. An Act of Parliament in 1767 permitted the bridge to be built, and the private owner was allowed to charge a toll, which is still to this very day an income that is tax-free. It also attracts no capital gains tax, inheritance tax or stamp duty either. This privilege is not unique, for it still survives with a few other remaining toll bridges in England. It was built by the Earl of Abingdon (who had lands on both sides of the river), during the golden age of Georgian architecture, design and craftsmanship. Adjacent to the bridge, and included in the price, is the toll keeper's two bedroom cottage, which has fishing and mooring rights in the vicinity.

It replaced the notorious centuries old ferry that had in 1635 claimed the lives of four Welsh sheriffs who were on route to London to pay Charles I £800 of Ship money. In 1764, three years before the bridge was built, John Wesley nearly drowned on the nearby causeway.

Campaigners are asking David Cameron the Conservative leader and local MP to back their cause, to get the County Council to purchase the bridge and abolish the toll.

Mervyn Benford has suggested that in order to prevent losing such a distinctive part of our road-side heritage and history, and because of the events that are taking place a few miles down river at the Whitchurch toll bridge, Berkshire, the National Trust should consider purchasing the bridge, giving free passes to its members, but charging non members *Watch out for further news in the next issue.*

Foreign News Holland like Britain was littered with toll houses during the 18th century. Sadly only a handful survive in good condition. One of these is the *Oude Tolhuisje* on the *Stichtse Kade* in the town of Ankeveen.

Published in a 2007 newspaper a reader asked, " Years ago, a friend painted a picture of the Bone Gate Inn, in Surrey, with the verse.' This gate hangs and hinders none, refresh, pay and travel on,' - could you tell me anything about the rhyme ?"

The published answer read, " This rhyme is quite commonly found on pubs with names such as the Gate Inn, and the Hanging Gate. A tavern in Troy, New York displays the very same lines. There seems to be a connection between these types of pub names and old toll gate sites. When the tolls were removed, pubs were established in their stead for the refreshment of the traveller, and the verse, thus became a popular inn sign.

There is a proverb,' For the gate hangs well that hinders none.' Gate public houses can be found at the site of or near to old medieval town gates."

COUNTY NEWS

(Contributed by the Society's County Representatives unless otherwise stated.)

Cambridgeshire

The Hemingford Grey milestone on the B1040 has been reinstated close to its original spot, at Galley Hill, by the Contractors Atkins and the CCC. On the A1310 near Stump Cross the Hixton milestone has been repainted

Caernarvonshire Found on the internet - a press release in August last year, issued by Lea Hughes, project officer of the Llyn Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty (AONB). Namely, that the project to restore the traditional black and white finger posts on Llyn had been successfully completed, after a grant had been obtained from the Llyn Sustainable Development Fund. The work was carried out by Signpost Restoration Ltd.

The original signs were made by Royal Label Factory of Stratford upon Avon, Jones & Jones of Flint, and J.H.Williams and Sons of Porthmadog.

The project followed on from the already completed task of restoring the milestones and the existing village nameplates throughout the area.

A worthy mention for a worthy cause. Well done Llyn and AONB.

Cheshire In March six mileposts were repainted by John Higgins in and around Bostock, Cranage, Holmes Chapel, Moston and Stanthorne.

Cornwall Recently, Cornwall County Council and the Cornish District Council amalgamated as the new Cornwall Council. The Society's vital contacts are the same but may have a different title. The partnership between the new CC and the Society for the repainting of the milestones continues. During the last year 70 stones have been painted by Ian Thompson (IT). This was celebrated by a Council press release. Radio

and television interviews followed.

The Bodmin Trust milestone (B4) on the A30 near Blisland was reported as damaged in February. The Highways Agency Mouchel Enterprise recovered the broken stone and arranged for it to be repaired by C.F.Piper and Son of Liskeard. IT was brought in to paint the stone, and it was re-erected at the end of April. Another broken stone, this time at Hatt on the A388 was reported by new member Peter Goodchild. The normal channels have been notified and repair and re-siting of the stone is in hand.

Finally, the milestone at Blue Anchor (erected 1830), which has had its plate missing for a while, has had a new one installed, after a small grant was given by the retiring Restormel Borough Council. The plate with the distance of "London 238 miles" (unique feature for this set of milestones), was designed by IT and cast by Terrill Brothers' foundry in Hayle.

Devon County Rep Tim Jenkinson (TJ) reports that 2008/9 has seen a good increase in membership numbers for Devon, and is standing at an all time high of 20 people. Requests for talks continue to be made, providing opportunities to discuss the work of the MSS at local level. Renovations of two MS in the parish of Butterleigh on the old road between Exeter and Tiverton have recently been undertaken by Alan Rosevear (AR) in agreement with both the Parish and Devon County Council. DCC have been supplied with a list of 12 MS across the county that are in need of urgent attention and work has begun on salvaging these stones, most recently in the South Hams where a marker between Plymouth and Totnes near to Charford Manor has been rescued.

The early 19thc MS on the A38 dual carriageway at Haldon Hill, 7 miles from Exeter (Exon), reported on in NL15, has been returned to the roadside following a period of being kept in storage by Mouchel Enterprises during work to erect crash barriers. Thanks go to Nick Hawtin and Ruth Banting of Mouchel for their help in this matter and their enthusiastic liaison with the Milestone Society throughout.

AR and TJ have rediscovered a rare End of Trust stone that has eluded successive searches since 2003. The stone, on the A386 near Lydford, has been mentioned in at least two publications (1988 & 2002). It was erected by the Okehampton Turnpike Trust, but was only found by the Society in September last year. This is only the third such marker to be found around the town. In further searches in the area AR found a rare MP, showing the distances of 8 miles to Okehampton and Tavistock respectively. A lone MS marking 8/miles/from/Totnes has been discovered by eagle eyed council worker Mike Peek in the village of Aish on South Dartmoor. The find is unusual in the fact that it is not on a recognised turnpike, but it does show that some Trusts did place markers in fairly remote places, to help lost travellers. Others have been located in the Tavistock area.

Plympton District and Civic Society has repainted the 5 mile Grade II listed MP on the A38 in Ridgeway outside Plymouth. They also wish to repaint the MP at the 14 mile point at Wrangaton Cross.

Finally a rare MS inscribed with the shortened name Oketon/3 on the A3079 at Yelland between Holsworthy and Okehampton has been reinstated by DCC and Okehampton division of Highways Agency, following an accident there.

Essex Two listed milestones on the former A130 at Rettendon and East Hanningfield, that have been hidden for the past ten years by undergrowth, were restored earlier this year by Mike Davies and John Nicholls. John also discovered a "lost" milestone by the A1017 at Staurmer. Originally recorded by Essex County Council Heritage as a broken milestone and milepost, only the repaired milepost had been recorded by the Milestone Society. The broken stone lies on the grass verge opposite the milepost. It is hoped it can be put back in place later this year.

The grade II listed milestone on the A1017 between Gosfield and Sible Hedingham was noticeably absent on 25th May this year. After enquiries, John V. Nicholls was told that the landowner adjacent to the site had removed it for safekeeping after it had been knocked over by a car two years ago. Essex Council Heritage Conservation and Mid -Essex Highways have been informed.

Kent NL15 Front cover shows Maidstone 11¾ Marden 4 milestone, which in March this year, Lionel Joseph found to have been " flailed." Sadly it needs to be replaced and relocated. It turns out the old cast iron plate looks to be a post war casting that had no square boss on the back for the setting in lead. The original would have been lost or destroyed during the panic wartime removal.

In the meantime Lionel has saved the broken pieces of plate and is willing to create a new plate out of aluminium, if Kent CC is willing to provide a new stone.

Lancashire For many years the residents of Pendleside have complained that the " modern 1960s " road signs were deemed " visually unacceptable " in rural locations. The County Council in 2002/3 agreed that the communities could revert back to earlier styles. Since then, new finger post signs have been made out of hardwood , painted white, and have aluminium letters to a 1930s design, and finally mounted on the original iron poles.

John Higgins asked the University of Manchester for their milestone records, and received four sets in reply. He has since walked the streets of Greater Manchester and has recorded a total of 84, of which 31 were found in the Parish of Saddleworth (Oldham), probably the most populated parish in terms of milestones in the entire country. *Unless you know different!*

With the completion of the survey in Southern Lancashire, the findings for Greater Manchester have been placed on the H.E.R. kept by Manchester University, and those recorded in Merseyside have been passed to the Merseyside Archaeological Unit. In due course John will furnish Lancashire C.C. with a full report for their H.E.R. In the meantime, John has informed the conservation officers, in West Lancashire, Chorley, Blackburn-with-Darwen, Rossendale, Burnley, Hyndburn, South Ribble and Preston of what they have.

Norfolk. There have been two significant restorations this year. An 18th century milestone became the focus for the opening ceremony of a roundabout in March. The stone (Norwich 14, Ipswich 29) was north-west of the dangerous cross-roads on the A140 with the B1134. The stone was very well restored thanks to Norfolk Planning and Transportation Dept and contractors May Gurney. It was moved to the south-east corner of the junction for the ceremony but was returned to near its original position later. An NCC Main Road milestone (Norwich 15, Lynn 25), one of only two examples of this

particular design, had been knocked over some time ago and become lost in the undergrowth of vegetation. When requested, the county highways department set it upright again and thoughtfully put a marker post near to it. They accepted our offer to paint it, and this has now been done. It is now clearly visible on the B1145 at Billingford. Ditches are obviously a common resting place for missing milestones and two found recently are waiting to be recorded and added to the database. The first, from near Pulham St Mary, was recovered from a ditch and placed in a garden. The parish council now plan to re-erect it in the centre of the village with a plaque giving the now missing mileage (Norwich 14, Harleston 2). Another ditch rescue has now been restore-d to Coxford (Lynn 16, Fakenham 5).

Shropshire On the 8th of January Alan Reade was heard on Midland News talking about Shropshire milestones, and whilst on the air he encouraged their study and gave a good plug to the Milestone Society.

The database for the county has almost been completed, and has been deposited at Shire Hall, Shrewsbury. The replacement of the milepost on the A442 at Quatt, was the culmination of a fantastic cooperative effort, between Shropshire Highways (who paid for it), the NT (Jeremy Milln who recovered the pieces), Butlers Patternmakers (who made it), and Alan Reade (who generally fussed about - [his very own words]). Others have been mentioned in a previous article.

New member Peter Leigh of Albrighton, recently retired from a long career in the road sign industry, advised members that the alloy fingerposts with circular finials can sometimes be pre WW2 origin and therefore worth recording.. Therefore it was agreed that one of this year's projects was to do just that.

Somerset The county spring meeting on 4th April, reported that two milestones had been found, badly damaged. One at Stratton-on-the-Fosse had been smashed to pieces



Fig 11



Fig 12

and some of those pieces have been retrieved and are in storage until the remaining

pieces can be found. The other at Leigh-on-Mendip had been broken in two with its mile plate missing. Somerset CC Highways Dept have said it is at their depot. On a brighter note the contract with Frome Town Council to repaint two milestones, two turnpike boundary markers and a town boundary marker (Fig 11) has recently been completed. Meanwhile David Brown who has joined forces with Shepton Mallet town regeneration scheme called " Shepton 21," has been given clearance by the CC to repaint the stones in the area. The first posts to be given a lick of paint were at Chelynch, Nettlebridge (Fig 12 -group members David Brown & David Dowding), and Shepton Mallet. A further 20 stones will be painted to complete the task later this year.

Finally, an article called " Somerset Roads twenty years on" by Brian Murless (Co-author of the "Somerset Roads" milestone survey of the 1980s) written for the Somerset Industrial and Archaeological Society, reported that Somerset Heritage Services, a department of the CC, in conjunction with the county Highways, has begun selective restoration along certain routes. " The first scheme to be completed is a 5 mile stretch of the Taunton Turnpike from Taunton to the Quantock Hills where replacement Pennant stones and replica milestone plates, cast in a Chard foundry, sit comfortably with surviving 19th originals." The "Taunton 4" mile plate had been rescued after the stone had been damaged beyond repair. It has now been remounted. Staffordshire Last September John Higgins and David Wright were repainting the eleven boundary posts in the Doxey area of Stafford, when they came across one that was broken. The top was completely loose, and so David retrieved the item, for safety. In the meantime Doxey Parish Council alerted Frosts, the local blacksmiths from Eccleshall, and the lower half was taken away.

In January this year, David dropped off the top portion at Frosts, only to find that the job had already been completed with a replica top (less coat of arms etc) and replaced the whole lot. Doxey Parish Council, on hearing about this, arranged for the post to be dug up again and returned to Frosts, who cut off the new bit and put back the old bit. SCC was involved in returning the post to its original position, only now looking a lot smarter.

Lichfield Highways Department found a fingerless post recently at Edingale near the A513 between Aerewas and Tamworth, and wanted advice from the Milestone Society on renovation. After last year's news that Eccleshall Parish Council were to replace two mileposts that had been missing for years - with new casts, it seems Yoxall Parish Council wish to do the same along the A515.

Surrey The group met on the 9th of May at Send Manor, where it was reported that several "finds" had recently been made by Colin Woodward. First, a milestone with " London Bridge 2 miles" on it, situated on the front wall of " The Mayflower" public house on the north side of Rotherhithe Street, at the junction with St Marychurch St, in Rotherhithe (TQ352799). This is the second closest stone to London Bridge, the nearest still being the Southwark Obelisk which includes the inscription, " One mile XXXX feet."

The other "finds" were a boundary marker on Battersea Bridge saying " Battersea Parish," and " Chelsea Vestry no 49a Parish boundary," and two markers on Albert

Bridge, Battersea.

Colin also provided details of the four toll houses on Albert Bridge, which today are disused but continue to be maintained as part of the bridge's upkeep. The two southern ones are counted as being in the old county of Surrey. (Colin believes that this is the only bridge in central London to still have its toll houses.)

Jennifer Hills reported that the milestone at Pratts Bottom had been broken for some time, and following the meeting, a letter had been sent to Waverley B.C. about its hopeful restoration.

Much discussion took place about other subjects, and Lionel Joseph brought along the new carved stone "37 miles from London," for the site at Southwater, one mile south of Horsham in Sussex.

Finally Glenda Law volunteered to be responsible for answering queries about West Sussex milestones etc to help John Griffin of East Sussex out.

Wiltshire It was reported by the BBC in October 2006 that the traditional wooden fingerposts are being used to replace more than 400 metal signs in rural Wiltshire which have fallen into disrepair.

The wooden fingerposts are being made by a local carpenter, and where possible metal letters and other parts have been reclaimed from the previous signs. The wooden fingerposts have been made from slow-grown spruce from a sustainable forest and hopefully will have a 30 - 40 year life expectancy.

Worcestershire Since the completion of the Bradley stone project between Worcester Cross and Bradley Green, members have decided that the 2009 project will be to renovate all 18 stones between Worcester and the Gloucestershire county boundary at Eldersfield (B4211). Powick Parish Council, and Upton Civic Society have already offered to help, and it is hoped that the project will be completed by December 2010.

PUZZLE CORNER

QUESTION 1 from Newsletter No 16

Where can a French milepost be found within 9 miles of Big Ben, London ?

ANSWER THE EMBRY KILOMETRE STONE. During a sortie over northern France by 107 squadron of 12 Blenheims, led by Wing Commander Basil Embry, his aircraft was shot down and he was captured. The German captors gathered prisoners and began to march the group back to the rear. Basil Embry had decided to escape and arranged to do so as they were marched along. He waited for the right moment then stepped out of the group, rolled down a bank and hid in a ditch until the rest of the column had disappeared.

After his successful return to England on 2nd August 1940 he gave a detailed account of his adventure. In 1950 he recalled how he and other prisoners considered the sight of a kilometre stone with the name EMBRY on it a good omen for his escape attempt. The local French municipal authorities later presented it to him as a memento of his 6 weeks on the run, and his kilometre stone is now housed in the Battle of Britain Museum, Hendon, London. The museum can be readily accessed from central London

by taking the Northern line to Colindale.

Alan Haines (Norfolk)

Question 2 -Where, When, Why? Re-Turnpike gate at London event this millennium?

ANSWER THE CHELSEA FLOWER SHOW 2007 had an exhibit which was created by Telford and Wrekin Council, sponsored by Ironbridge Gorge Museum Trust to mark the 250th anniversary of the birth of Thomas Telford. It won a Silver Floral Medal. The Exhibit was set in the 1820s when a Toll keeper was able to do a little gardening, and featured a Telford Tollhouse, privy, tollgate, green picket fence and even the highway itself, with a milestone. The garden was divided into fruit, vegetables and herbs, and a pleasant decorative area with ornamental plants.

Editor

NEW QUESTION ??

In NL12 p24, reference is made to a milestone that was seen on TV in an episode of "The Avengers," aired in 1966. The question is, have there been other milestones that have had a cameo role in other TV programmes/series or films ? *Please can we have some feedback to this question. Answers please to the Editor.*

MONUMENTAL MONUMENTS

Carmarthenshire In NL14p21 it was reported that the Mailcoach monument on the A40 near Llandovery had its top removed sometime in 2006. It seems that the obelisk received a heavy blow from the rear, possibly by a falling rock, and therefore the authorities decided to repair it. Sadly the funds were not available in 2008, but Brecon Beacons National Park Authority is pleased to announce that work is about to begin shortly. A restoration programme to bring it back to its former glory includes the repair of the metal railings, and to whitewash the stonework, so that it becomes more visible to the motorist. Finally a notice board with historic notes of the area will be erected beside the monument. The task of restoring the stone was last done by Postal Officials in the 1930s.



2005



2009

BBNPA is also about to take an inventory of all the milestones and boundary markers within the park area.

SPRING MEETING AT HEBDEN - 19th APRIL

The lambs were enjoying the sunshine punctuated by April showers as 26 milestoners gathered at Hebden Village Institute for another lively day. Our guest speaker, local historian Maurice Taylor, introduced us to the Ancient Right of Sanctuary, including boundary stones around Ripon, then Christine Minto took us on a tour of Scotland, with excellent photography of landscapes as well as mileposts. The lunchbreak gave time to sample Terry Witham and Heather's delicious cakes as well as to browse the Keegan travelling book-stall and other displays - Frank Minto had produced CDs of the Diamond Collection and Liz Hayes some photo-bookmarkers. The afternoon speaker was June Scott who cast light on the life of the rakish Blind Jack of Knaresborough, from the research by Dr Arnold Kellett. Dr Kellett came along and read a poetic tribute too.

The final session contributions included Jeremy Howat's experiences of restoration partnerships and a suggestion about a website for sharing knowledge of restoration projects. As Blind Jack's epitaph exhorts: "Reader, like him, exert thy utmost talent given" - there's certainly plenty of talent amongst our Milestoners !!

Jan Scrine

SOCIETY SPRING MEETING AT ALTRINCHAM - 17th MAY

The Society's national meetings are held at venues around the country with the aim of supporting local activity and to give the members a chance to see what is happening beyond everybody's local bailiwick. This year's Spring meeting was held at Altrincham in Cheshire, an area last visited back in February 2004 at the nearby Quarry Bank Mill at Styal.

The venue was Altrincham Town Hall, a delightfully period piece built in 1900 and in recent years refurbished as a focal point in the town's conservation area, an attractive and quiet urban spot on a Sunday morning. The panelling and leaded lights were a feature to gaze upon as proceedings took place in the Council Chamber, a good choice of venue and thanks to several members whose combined efforts brought this meeting together.

The response was positive with some fifty members and a welcome if small number of guests attending. The chosen date was a Sunday, the idea being that traffic would be lighter and access easier than a busy Saturday so close to Manchester. Chairman David Viner opened the proceedings by checking how many had used public transport to get to Altrincham (half a dozen only) and how many had taken advantage of the splendid tram system link from central Manchester (one only), so car travel remains the obvious and convenient favourite. This may not be very green, and the Society is aware of the balance to be struck here on these things.

Four presentations were given on local topics. Alan Reade spoke of the way he had approached the assembly of evidence for Shropshire milestones, as a resident of the county, as the Society's representative and as someone with a long involvement in the

road industry. He was aware of extensive earlier surveys, obtained access to them and pulled them together using his own convenient localised system to cope with such a geographically quite large county. He was also able to recount various successful conservation projects, one of which gave him valuable air time on west midlands regional television.

Cheshire's distinctive series of mileposts are well known, with marked similarities to those in Staffordshire (equally well-known through the work of John Higgins and co in that county) and John Nicholls introduced us to the main types, with especial reference to the milepost replacement programme of the final years of the nineteenth century. Apparently the same, the variants proved fascinating as John drew upon his expensive range of images. Keith Lawrence, now firmly ensconced back in Cheshire from his previous close involvement with Hampshire's roads and milestones, rounded off the proceedings with a review of the Cheshire road network, using map sequences to reveal some of the now lost roads visible from a close study of the map evidence. Even more dramatically, Keith showed us a new tool (for me anyway), Google Earth, another new way of reading the landscape from above.

The Manchester University Landscape Project on Alderley Edge in Cheshire provided the context for the work which John Adams described with especial reference to the standing stones and other boundary markers of 'the Edge'. He posed a number of fascinating questions, such as what makes a standing stone what it is (or seems to be), when does one become historically significant, and what does one make of the folklore which can often be found 'clinging' to them? In a fascinating talk, John took us into a land of make-believe, and belief, where the simplicity of the stones themselves took on a new and wider meaning.

In response to the email debate amongst a number of Society members (a happen chance emailing, not intended to be exclusive in any way), the committee had invited Elizabeth Turner to speak on the conservation of West Midlands canals. Lizzie is one of the British Waterways network of Heritage Advisers, and she spoke enthusiastically of the group's work, largely a struggle to achieve and maintain a good standard of conservation in a nationwide network under enormous financial pressure. Her enjoyable talk included a short study of canal mileposts, opening up the debate about whether the Society has a role in recording and indeed in arguing for the conservation of such canal waymarker heritage. The role of the numerous canal societies was noted, and so too the perhaps higher proportion of restoration and indeed new waymarker projects which the waterways seem to favour compared to the road network. Much more for debate here, obviously.

All the speakers kept to time, delivered on their respective topics and gave much food for thought to an appreciative audience, for which they are all warmly thanked. Steadily, as the Society encourages activity in various counties around the country, and reports on them in this way, it is becoming clearer just how rich and varied our milestone and waymarker heritage actually is.

David Viner

Hopefully Terry Keegan's report on the Society's meeting at Aberfoyle, and an article on Scottish milestones will be published in the next issue of "On The Ground."

FOR SALE Ken Diamond's collection of photographs (4500 - as .jpg files) on 2CDs or 1 DVD, either -R or +R format. £2.50 per set. - Proceeds to Yorkshire Group funds.

Frank Minto, 10 Derwent Place, Wombwell, Barnsley, S73 0RT - 01226 753599

NEW PUBLICATION. "Toll Houses of South Devon," by Patrick Taylor and Tim Jenkinson published by Polystar Press. On sale from 24th June. Copies will be available at the AGM. -Book on the toll houses of North Devon due out 2010.

TWO NEW POSTCARDS to add to your collection, from Cheshire and from Somerset, available at all good Society meetings.

FUTURE SOCIETY MEETING - ANNUAL CONFERENCE & AGM
Saturday 3rd October - Wells Museum, Cathedral Green, Wells, Somerset, 10am-5pm.
Strong west country theme. Refreshments available on arrival, bring your own lunch, or grab a snack from one of England's smallest city's cafes or hostelrys.

ATTENTION ATTENTION ATTENTION

This is the final call to remind you that this year's subscriptions are now due. Please send them as soon as possible to the members secretary, to avoid any future disappointment.

If you haven't returned the Milestone Archive Survey enclosed in the January Newsletter because you don't have any photographs, relevant books etc, please would you be able to enclose a note to that effect with your subscription cheque? It would be very helpful for our purposes. Of course, if you do have relevant materials but haven't yet responded to our survey, we would be delighted to know about them !

Brian Barrow - Membership Secretary, Larkrise, Clavering, Essex, CB11 4QT.

DEADLINE FOR THE NEWSLETTER FOR JANUARY 2010

Contributions for inclusion in the January 2010 Newsletter should reach the Editor by Friday 7th December 2009 at the following address:-

Chris Woodard, 19 Kingswood Road, Monmouth, Monmouthshire, NP25 5BX.

Email:- chris.woodard@tiscali.co.uk or welshmilestones@tiscali.co.uk

Submission of articles in electronic form (floppy disc) using Microsoft Word is particularly convenient. However, if you have a recent PC with Microsoft Office XP or word 97 please use the "SAVE AS" option (not "SAVE") and save files in word 5.1 for Macintosh format. If this is not an option, please save RTF (Rich Text Format), word 6.0/97, or (from Windows XP) word 97-2003 + 6.0/95-RTF (*.doc) format.

Contributions, are very welcome, but are accepted on the understanding that the Editor reserves the right to modify received copies to achieve a suitable length or style consistent with the overall size, aims, and content of the publication.

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