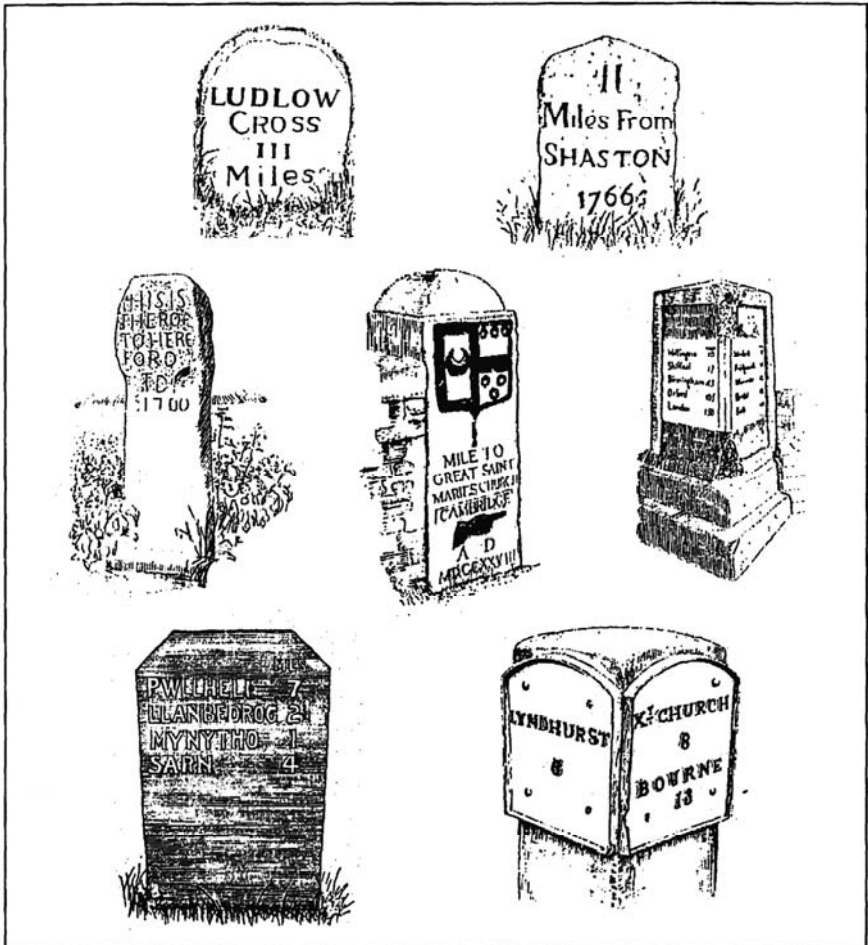




THE MILESTONE SOCIETY

Newsletter 5

July 2003



The Cover Picture - The drawings of the milestones shown on the cover are copied* from *AA Illustrated Road Book of England and Wales (1961)*. The location by county of the milemarkers, starting from the centre then continuing clockwise from the top left-hand corner, are as follows: Cambridgeshire, Shropshire, Dorset, Shropshire, Hampshire, Caernarfon (Gwynedd), Herefordshire, Reproduced with the permission of AA Publishing.

EDITORS' COMMENTS - As can be seen from the sections headed 'Members in the News' and 'Reports on Restoration', there has been a great deal of activity by members to spread the word on milestones and related topics in the media, for which we are very grateful. Yorkshire in particular has produced a sheaf of newspaper cuttings. If we have missed anyone out we apologise; it is simply because we have not received the information. An apology may also be required for omission of material which was submitted for this Newsletter but which we have to hold over to the next issue for lack of space. The number of contributions is most gratifying and reflects the high level of activity and interest amongst our members. Work has obviously been going on quietly behind the scenes, as Alan Rosevear has now entered over 1,500 milestone records into the Society's database. As we estimate that there are between 6,000 and 7,000 milestones in the country, a significant proportion has now been found and details put on file.

COMMITTEE MEETING (Jewry Wall Museum, Leicester, 8 February 2003) - Apologies were received from Brian Barrow and the Minutes from the previous meeting confirmed. Under matters arising it was decided not to pursue registration for use of modern OS maps, the situation regarding insurance of the Society in regard to public liability through our affiliation with the Council for British Archaeology was confirmed (see previous Newsletter for details), and the question of the mileplate from the A449 on sale through an antique dealer was revisited at some length. Staffordshire County Museum did not have funds to buy the plate (the price had now dropped by £20 to £130) and the Committee felt that if the Society were to purchase it a precedent might be set which could then encourage theft in future. It was decided that an effort should be made to determine its history by approaching Staffordshire C. C. Financial matters were considered with a statement from the Treasurer and a useful document from the Membership Secretary summarising estimated costs (including projected Journal costs) to the Society per member was discussed. Roughly, the present cost was £7 per member but this did not include other Society expenditure, such as contributions to the running costs of the County Groups, which are not easily quantified since this has only recently been initiated, and publicity material which requires investment to raise the profile of the Society. It was decided that it was not necessary to have a separate subscription rate for 'European members' to cater for postage rates outside the UK (an application from Eire has been received) and that such extra costs were likely to be small and should be absorbed by the Society at present. On the question of the general membership rates, it was felt that although a rise might be necessary in future, no immediate change was desirable and that the matter should be kept under review, especially after the publication of the Journal, when figures for the publication and distribution costs would be to hand.

Membership subscriptions are currently 311, which include 51 Family and 9 Corporate subscriptions (making the number of 'named' members 362); notably we have a member from the USA and one from Australia. It was encouraging to learn that we now had a County Coordinator for Nottinghamshire and possibly one for West Gloucestershire; replacement coordinators were reported for Lincolnshire, Radnorshire and Oxfordshire. Good progress on the National Database is being made with an estimated 23% of the total known number now having been entered. The Committee members then signed the document which allows us to proceed to charitable status, and the progress towards the 3rd AGM at Crich Tramway Museum was summarised along with suggestions for speakers. Possible dates and venues for the Autumn meeting were considered and Jeremy Milln offered to explore possibilities for a suitable location. Promotion and publicity was discussed at some length the issues being somewhat related to the requirement for information packs for County Coordinators to help the County Groups in such matters as obtaining financial support for projects, interesting local bodies, etc. This more immediate aspect needed to be addressed separately from the one of more widespread, national publicity which requires, essentially, a development of the one-page pamphlets which we currently have available into an attractive folder (for inserted sheets which can easily be updated as required) or a small booklet. A further and possibly less expensive option would be a one-page pamphlet printed in colour rather than having the current photocopied format. The idea of producing postcards as a means of advertising was a good one but was shelved because of the apparently large cost involved. Mervyn Benford and Mike Buxton kindly agreed to collate material into a package which would be of direct use to the County Coordinators. The advert in the Newsletter for a Publicity Officer had not produced a volunteer and there is an urgent need for this post to be filled.

The most pressing commitment for the Committee is to arrange for the production and distribution of the first issue of the Journal. After some discussion, it was decided that the format should be A4, double column, with Baskerville typeface and preferably a laminated cover. An example of a society journal incorporating such features was to be forwarded to the Production Editor. Although the title of the journal had been decided as *Milestones and Waymarkers - The Journal of the Milestone Society*, the question as to its accuracy in describing projected content was raised - a point which had been touched upon but not fully explored at the previous meeting for lack of time. An alternative suggestion for the title was *Waymark* but a vote taken was marginally in favour of the original title. However, the Chairman suggested that the committee members should carefully reflect on the alternatives and confirm their preference with him, when a majority decision on the title would be made.

THE SPRING MEETING (Crich Tramway Village, Crich, Derbyshire, 10 May 2003). - The actual venue within the site was an upstairs room in the Red Lion Hotel, a building originally standing in Stoke on Trent; 65 people attended. Following a welcome from the Chairman, David Viner, in which he pointed out that there would be time at the end to look around the museum and spend the

penny, provided on entrance, on a tram ride, the AGM was held in which the Chairman gave his report on the year. The membership is healthy (over 300) and although a registered charity status for the Society remained a key aim, the progress was somewhat tortuous. Work towards good practice guides was continuing and Mervyn Benford and Mike Buxton had produced a folder of 6 leaflets for County Coordinators to consult and distribute as required, and attractive leaflets and an advertising poster were also available for purchase. Some county groups were producing their own local publications, work was continuing on the Jack Diamond collection and Jack Ward's archive of slides and record cards was now in the National Monuments Record Archive at Swindon. The question of restoration was highlighted by the issue of a plate (Stafford 9/W'hampton 7) for sale at a Cirencester antique shop, which after considerable discussion (largely by e-mail) amongst the committee was recovered by the Society for eventual reinstatement at its correct site. Another now on sale at an inflated price highlights the issue of commercialism versus restoration, and establishment of provenance is clearly the key issue. Progress to publication of the Journal continues with many refereed articles now in hand and a format has been agreed. Current tasks are continuing the compilation of the National database (currently about one-third of the expected final number have been entered), raising the profile of the Society, support of Coordinators, and publication of results. Comments from the floor included recognition of Jack Ward's 90th birthday, the fact that all Staffordshire milestones were replaced in 1800 with cast iron versions and thus other examples of the older variety may be surfacing, the fact that the police have previously expressed interest in lost milestones, and that the old Road Traffic Act, which includes milestones and allows action to be taken against miscreants, is still in force.

The Treasurer's formal report covered the period 1/6/02 to 7/3/03 and showed an increase in funds of *ca.* £1000 with total assets of over £5000, a necessary reserve in view of the likely cost of publishing the impending journal. It also highlighted the cost per member, the contribution to Coordinators' expenses, the fact that meetings can make a profit (Devizes brought in £300) and the fine contribution of the retiring coordinator for S. Cumbria /N.Lancs, Ken Broadhurst, who had forwarded a sum of £141 raised by his group through coffee mornings, etc. A full set of annual accounts will be available in July from the Treasurer on application. The election of officers followed, the only change being the addition to the committee of Tony Boyce as Publicity Officer, but consideration should be given to the post of President. It was agreed that subscriptions should remain at current levels. Under AOB, John Donovan gave information on Cambridgeshire and Huntingdonshire, it was noted that Wetherby Rotary club was helping to restore milestones, and Mervyn Benford introduced the Guidance leaflets and also a poster and illustrated notelets (available for sale) which can act to promote the Society. Postcards are also in preparation.

Howard Smith then gave a fine talk on *'Sheffield to Derby Roads from Roman times to the 20th century'*. He pointed out that in olden times, the Peak District lacked roads, that most traffic was W to E, and that there was mainly pack horse trade. Sheffield was not a route centre and the core of the turnpike road was

on top of an old Roman road. The first major Sheffield to Derby turnpike, a distance of 35 miles, established by the 1756 Act, followed the original pack horse route and headed south over the moors to Chesterfield. There were 11 severe gradients (some 1 in 9) on the route and extra horses were required at such points leading to signs to 'put on' and 'take off'. Sound evidence of a bridge widening was shown with dates engraved into the original (1717) and later (1758) stonework. The talk was nicely illustrated with slides showing the modern day sections of the road, milestones, and inns which have survived from the early days.

After lunch Howard Smith gave the talk on *'Marking the Way - Milestones, Guide Stoops and other Waymarkers'*, which was originally scheduled to be given by Stephen Perry, who unfortunately was unable to attend because of illness. His emphasis was on the Peak District in Derbyshire. The inherent, common fear of getting lost was clearly the driving force behind the erection of such markers, and slides of difficult terrain such as cotton grass bogs, as close as 5½ miles to Sheffield Town Hall, emphasised the point, as did the fact that snow and fog could quickly lead to loss of orientation by the traveller. The use of natural aids to navigation such as tumuli were also important, as were man made items such as stone cairns. In the Middle Ages, monks marked routes with crosses and sometimes wooden poles were used. The word 'stoop' has a Scandinavian origin and an Act of 1697 allowed magistrates to erect guide stoops to aid travellers. There were no standard stones but a carved pointing hand helped to make directions clear. Interestingly, the word 'way' appears on only one stoop - the word is of Saxon origin and was in use, rather than 'road' until the late 16th century. Shakespeare uses the word 'road' only once! Illustrations by slides of many stoops were given, some of them showing interesting variations in spelling of local names; one inscription was even written backwards! Some of the stoops have found alternative uses as gate posts, indicating that their removal by farmers may be a case of preservation rather than vandalism!

The issue of authenticity was the subject of a talk by Barry Joyce, Conservation and Design Group Leader for the Derbyshire County Council. Responsibility for milestones generally rests with the County Council but partnership with Parish Councils should be encouraged. Milestones are under threat from theft as well as damage - in the last 5 years 2 cases of theft have occurred in the County. The speaker argued against replication and recutting of old stones; also putting a new plate on an old stone should not be encouraged but putting an old plate on a new stone might be acceptable. In an interchange of ideas with the audience, he suggested that in any replacement it should be made clear that it is a new artefact, preferably with a suitable mark or statement confirming that it is a copy. The importance of using good practice was emphasised when a member commented that original patterns for some plates had been found, thus allowing recasting of missing originals. As regards listing rather than scheduling objects, the speaker favoured listing.

The final contribution came from Alan Rosevear who gave a perspective of the Derbyshire milestones from the National Database. This illustrated the use of the database as a tool by comparing amongst other things stone versus metal markers. The enormous variety of the Derbyshire milemarkers was clear from the

examples given.

There followed a members' discussion session, when the issue of archiving images was raised, a matter that will be addressed at the next committee meeting. A likely scenario is that the master copy of each County database and the corresponding photographic record are kept locally. Scanned images of the photographs recorded on CDs would allow copies to be sent to the National Database Coordinator along with the database, but a copyright assignment will be required for these images so that they may be made freely available as necessary. Encouragingly, over one third of the English milestones are now surveyed and entered into the database. The meeting closed at 16.05.

NEWS FROM THE COUNTY GROUPS

North Bedfordshire and some adjacent districts - Michael Knight has given 5 lectures to a range of audiences and reports that resulting from his explorations the number of known milestones in Bedfordshire has increased five-fold. In his area of interest, re-erection of 2 newly discovered milestones is being pursued by Southoe P.C. (Hunts.) on the Great North Road but in a safe location away from the A1. Similarly, nearby Brampton (at the A1/A14 intersection) is keen to re-erect their 3 newly discovered stones. Catworth P. C. (Hunts.) wish to regain 2 milestones removed during widening of the A14 and already have 2 on the quiet B660.

Cambridgeshire - Grainne Farrington writes that identification of the Cambridgeshire milestone and waymarker sites (about 258) is thought to be complete and there are about 20 routes to be considered. 151 sites have been recorded with the expert help of Mike Hallett and these are available on CD Rom. Mike Knight (N. Bedfordshire coordinator) has also been of great help by giving talks. Although there are few active members, Grainne has spoken on local radio and written articles and sees the way forward through involvement of various groups such as District and City Councils, Conservation sections, Parishes, Historical Societies, Road engineers, etc. Encouragingly, Huntingdonshire District Council has agreed part funding for some restoration projects, including the waymarkers in St Ives and Brampton. Six milestones have been found in depots and will be reinstated in due course. Although South Cambridgeshire District is aware of work required, funds are more scarce; East Cambridgeshire and Fenland District and Peterborough Unitary Authority, with few sites, will be contacted as and when the need arises.

Derbyshire - John Higgins has arranged several meetings for the group on second Tuesdays every third month, the next ones being on 12 August and 11 November 2003 (contact John for venues), and has recently published his Spring news-sheet. John has completed the photographic record of the county's milestones (Alan Rosevear has now entered up all of the records for Derbyshire), and also the most accessible guide stoops. John would welcome volunteers to find some of the more out-of-the-way stoops, and also canal milestones. A list of

'Milestones at Risk' is being compiled. To qualify, a milestone must be at serious risk of being destroyed or damaged and, especially if it is listed, the local authority needs to be aware of the problems. A recent article in the *Derby Evening Telegraph* highlighted the need to protect the county's milestones.

Dorset - John Tybjerg reports that the main search phase in Dorset has been completed. Initial searches, based on the main known routes throughout the county, led them to check the gaps where milestones were missing. Further investigation of the old-maps website identified more routes where milestones did at one time exist but a search of these gave no extra finds. In summary, of 230 different Dorset milestones known to have recently existed, 209 have been visited, photographed, surveyed and a GPS position taken. Of the remainder, 8 are confirmed as now missing and 13 are considered too dangerous to approach without some form of traffic control, although 9 have been seen from a car. He is now updating his list of volunteers and sharing out the milestones amongst them for monitoring and, where possible, a bit of grass cutting and washing.

Letters to the four main highways departments of Dorset C. C. led to re-erection of one milestone and some nice refurbishment of a cast iron milepost near Sherborne. It seems that the Northern Area plan to restore all their milestones in 2003/4. As part of the Dorset Heritage Strategy, milestones are mentioned with other items in the Transport section but they might have fairly low priority.

Essex - Contact is being maintained with Essex members via the quarterly *Essex Waymarker Digest* newsletter, the May/June 2003 issue being the sixth in the series. John Nicholls (County coordinator) located two Grade II listed stones thought lost on the Colchester to Clacton route. Another (unlisted) stone was discovered at Newport along the Hockerill Trust. Peter Brown (MSS member, Stansted) also confirmed the existence of the Birchanger stone on the same route. Another stone was located on the Halstead to Sudbury route at Bulmer Tye. Peter Nelson located the LONDON 26 stone at Galleywood on the Margaretting to Maldon route. This is the one before the milestone that was the subject of an article in Newsletter 3. Pat Watkinson, the Great Leighs history recorder, reported that a stone in the village (on the Chelmsford to Braintree route) was still extant and it was learned that it was planned to raise the badly sunken stone after suitable enquiries had been made. The number of confirmed surviving milestones in Essex has reached 126.

Sadly, the Ugley milestone has been "vandalised". Persons unknown have drilled the stone on either side and screwed on reflective red triangles. Additionally, an attempt has been made to clean the stone with a coarse abrasive. An attempt to contact the persons responsible by leaving a note was unsuccessful. The coordinator has had experience of cleaning several limestone milestones and found that a mild soapy solution and a laundry brush was more than adequate. Legends can then be repainted using artist's acrylic paint. Another tip for highlighting legends for photographic purposes is to use artist's charcoal sticks or, on darker stones, blackboard chalk. A further disappointment came to light on 11 May when a previously unchecked milestone near Rayleigh turned out to be nothing

more than a mid 20th century kerbstone turned on its side and engraved! Older cast iron guideposts of Essex are being recorded; almost 70 can be seen online at www.milestonesonline.co.uk/guideposts along with most of the Essex milestones. This website also features some Dorset milestones and the first milestones of Cheshire were added in mid-May.

Norfolk - The coordinator has acquired a scrap book on roads which was compiled about 20 years ago by Philippa Miller, a former art teacher. The album contains over 100 photos of Norfolk milestones, some of them now vanished. Philippa (now aged 98) and a friend spent many years driving around the county photographing unusual wayside features, and produced three books on Norfolk village signs.

The latest project for Norfolk Women's Institute is to find and photograph their local milestones. With nearly 7,000 extra pairs of eyes looking for them, it is hoped that more previously unrecorded ones will come to light, and the continued existence of many others will be confirmed. Sadly, to balance the gains, there are losses. In March we found that one of the handsome stones with shield-shaped metal plate from the Norwich-Swaffham turnpike had been smashed and its plate was missing. As it was in a lay-by it is unlikely to have been an accident. It had been photographed intact in October 1999, and before-and-after photos have been sent to the County Council who are keeping the information on file in the hope that the plate will turn up. The inscription reads: NORWICH/13/DEREHAM/3 and was located near North Tuddenham.

Sixty county records have now been completed and entered in the Society's national database.

Nottinghamshire - As there are few members here at present meetings are not being arranged. However, some Derbyshire members are photographing Notts milestones in their travels and Robert Dodd has offered to act as temporary coordinator, although work commitments prevent him from playing an active role at present. He can be contacted in the evenings or at weekends.

Radnorshire - Tony Boyce reports that seven members attended the group's January meeting at Penybont. Good progress on the recording of this old county's milestones was reported. Although some are missing and a few badly damaged, generally the situation is quite encouraging. During the course of one Rhayader member's survey a milestone was smashed into by a lorry and so the photograph recording its existence is of the damaged and dislodged stone.

Gwyneth Guy, who previously has carried out milestone listing work in Radnorshire for Cadw: Welsh Historic Monuments, is the group's new coordinator. Now that the society has arranged for insurance cover, Powys County Council is happy for members to paint or carry out minor repairs on milestones, as long as these are not close to the carriageway and provided a work schedule is drawn up beforehand. Any conservation work by the group will be held in abeyance, however, until a milestone database for Radnorshire has been completed.

S. Cumbria/ N.Lancs. Ken Broadhurst has retired from the post of Coordinator; the Society thanks him most warmly for his tremendous efforts on its behalf.

Somerset - Janet Dowding writes that a meeting of the Somerset Group took place on 15 February. Five members were present; another two were unable to attend; and Somerset C.C. again failed to respond to our invitation. Everyone said how much they enjoyed the Devizes meeting and how good and interesting were the presentations.

The members discussed topics such as the finding and recording of certain milestones in the area each member had covered so far; the ones that still had to be investigated; the areas of Somerset (mostly in the west and south) in which we did not have a handy member living so would take longer to cover; the plight of certain milestones which had been uprooted; the loss of places since being photographed; the condition of milestones where plates had become loose and needed attention before they went missing. By this meeting 232 milestones in the county had been investigated and recorded. The vast majority are intact, while a few are without their plates, two are completely new, and 2 or 3 have been recorded which have vanished but for which past photographs exist.

Janet had a small article on the Milestone Society published in the winter 2002 issue of *Five Arches*, the magazine of the Radstock & Midsomer Norton & District Museum Society. Another longer article with photographs has been sent to the Bath & Camerton Archaeological Society which hopefully will be published in the March 2003 issue of *Camertonia*.

All the big libraries in Somerset have now been sent a M.S. leaflet for display, and hopefully the smaller ones will get one in due course.

Staffordshire - John Higgins reports that the group is holding regular meetings which take place on third Wednesdays every three months, the next being on 16 July and 15 October 2003 (contact John - - for details). He has completed photographing the county's milestones (Alan Rosevear has now entered up all of the records), and would also like to compile a complete record of canal milestones in the county. The group are keen to produce replacements for the standard cast iron 'Charles Lathe' mileposts where they are missing if the parish councils are prepared to foot the bill. The County Council has been asked if they would agree to this, and an encouraging response has been received. A list of 'Milestones at Risk' is being compiled (see under Derbys.). John has devised 2 N. Staffordshire milestone trails starting at his house. Trail details (history of the stones, where to park, etc.) are free when staying with John, where B & B and self-catering accommodation is available. Ring John for details, charges and availability.

Warwickshire - Mike Buxton reports that six people attended the meeting at Henley-in-Arden in March. Keith Woodward had earlier reported that an approach to the Parish Council about restoration of the metal milepost at Slowley Green Farm Over Whittacre had met with no success so far but he has found the milepost on the A446 in Coleshill. Mike had attempted plotting of the old turnpike roads onto current OS

maps but it was noted that some of the old turnpike roads had been downgraded to very minor roads or even tracks. A copy of the 1787-89 Yates map of Warwickshire which records turnpike roads and milestones was examined.

In the current milestone survey conducted by Joy, Karl and Mike, at the time of the meeting 31 milestones/posts had been surveyed and a proportion had been recorded on the national database by Alan Rosevear. Seven milestones were declared lost with a further eight probably lost.

A new 'millennium' milestone on the Coventry-Kenilworth road made entirely from marble was also reported, and a mile plate in the centre of the bridge over the river at Wootton Hall, Wootton Wawen and the 1748 milestone set into a wall in the High St., Henley in Arden were noted. The disappearance of the milepost at Halford Bridge some six weeks before this meeting was a matter of great concern since it had only recently been surveyed by Mike. Two other mileposts had disappeared, one at Portobello Cross, west of Shipston on Stour on the A429 Fosse Way some twelve or more months ago and at Ditchford Hill (on the same road but just inside present Gloucestershire) some two to three years ago.

A letter had been drafted to be sent to all the historical societies in Warwickshire. A source of milestone plates in either cast iron (or bronze for better durability) at competitive prices had been discovered. It was thought a standard Milestone Society plaque should be attached to any re-plated milestone stating that it had been surveyed and was under the guardianship of the Society.

Mike noted that member John Calladine was preparing an article on the subject of the unusual cast iron posts with ornate arms on the road between Long Compton and Stratford-upon-Avon for the Midland (GB) Postal History Society and wondered if anyone in the Society had any knowledge on them. Did wooden boards showing mileages hang from the arms, and who paid for them? There is a story that the unusual cast iron posts were used by mail coaches to hang bags of letters from them for villagers to collect, but John suspects they may have been mileposts. Members with information could contact Mike Buxton in the first instance.

The next meeting would be in September 2003 - venue, etc to be announced.

NOTES AND QUERIES

Additional information has been received on several items in previous Newsletters: The Standard in Cornhill (NL3, p. 12): Ted Flaxman (Oxon), who is researching the Guild of St Christopher of the Water Bearers, points out that the Standard did not use 'waste water' but was fed by lead pipes from springs on higher ground north of the City of London. Water was too valuable a commodity to be used for street cleaning and the Standard was used extensively by the water bearers.

Model milestones (NL4, p. 12): Bronwen Parr (Cambs.) came across another model at an Antiques Centre in York. The grey lead model bore the legend TO LONDON V MILES. It was part of a two-piece set of Dick Whittington and the milestone which sold complete for £35. However, the stall holder had only the milestone which he was getting rid of for £6!

Guildford granite marker (NL4, p.13): The lettering on the stone - P.B.G. (not C)

1868 - marks the Parliamentary Boundary of Guildford, which had been extended beyond the old borough limits. Derek Renn (Surrey) recommends Richard Williams' articles in the Surrey Archaeological Society's *Guildford Group Bulletin* for December 1988 and 1989 for further information.

IoW milestones (NL4, p.20-21): Derek Renn can add another to the list, just S of Brading (SZ 603860). He also notes a classic Tollgate Cottage on the Niton road at St Lawrence (photograph in *The IoW Village Book*).

Surrey stones (NL4, p. 11): Joan Harlow (Surrey) has received information from David Taylor (Esher Local History Society) about the stones marked on the Esher Milbourne Inclosure Map 1821. They are part of the northern boundary of 'Mr Evelyn's Free Warren', a rabbit warren centred around a house now called The Old Cottage in The Ridings off Sandy Lane, Cobham. The stones are also noted in Nicholas Lane's map of 1618. The Tilworth Hatch stone should read Titworth and according to the 1618 maps the three points on the boundary were then marked by holes. There is also a round stone approx. 19 inches high on the Portsmouth Road marking the boundary of Esher and Cobham, the inscription of which is now almost indecipherable.

Stone in Bedford (NL4, p. 13): Michael Knight says that the post (concrete) deeply buried in the pavement opposite the former theatre is a Bedford C. C. marker.

The Three Hundreds Stone. Mary Woodgate (Suffolk) has sent information about a three-sided stone, thought to be 15th-century, which stands on a triangle of grass at a road junction on the Cockfield to Felsham road between Bury St Edmunds and Lavenham (TL 926560). The markings on it are now illegible. It once marked the boundaries of Cosford, Babergh and Thedwastre Hundreds, and is now the boundary of three District Councils - St Edmundsbury, Mid Suffolk and Babergh. Close by is Stone Farm. Some old maps call it the Three Hundreds Stone and it was obviously an important marker. Mary would like to find out more of its history; can anyone provide further information?

Roman rock. Just to prove that milestone information can crop up in the most unlikely places, Norman Tipping (Bucks.) has sent a cutting from *Amateur Gardening* (23.11.02). A farmer near Pontefract found a lump of stone in a field and thought it would be suitable for his rockery, until he noticed a faint inscription on it. It turned out to be the top of a Roman milestone from the reign of the emperor Florianus, AD276, and showed a distance of 26 miles to York. A Roman road runs through the farm. The stone is now on loan to the Pontefract Museum.

The tale of the Pontefract milestone also featured in an article in *The Dalesman* (April 2003). This is the third Roman milestone to be unearthed in the Castleford (Lagentium) area, along the road to Doncaster (Danum) and York. One hundred years ago a stone was found with an inscription to the Emperor Decius (249-251 AD). When Gallus and Volusianus became Emperors (251-3 AD) the stone was turned upside down and recut. This milestone ended up in Leeds. Soon afterwards another Roman milestone was found near what was probably the southern gateway to the fort. This is now in the Yorkshire Museum in York. The

author of the article makes the point that although three Roman milestones have been found close to Castleford, the town has been unable to keep or display them.

Herefordshire distances. Two cuttings from *The Countryman* (March 2003) sent by Joan Harlow (Surrey) picture mileposts in Herefordshire. A triangular post at Cradley on the A4103 uses larger figures for the fractions of a mile. The second post in Breinton parish shows 0 miles to Sugwas. The unusual place name probably derives from an Old English name of a bird and a swamp.

JACK WARD - AN EXPERIENCED MILESTONE HISTORIAN

It is with great sadness that the Society reports the death of Jack Ward in May this year. He was cataloguing milestones long before the Society was founded. In the 1970s and 1980s Jack, who lived near Barnsley and who was a friend of Ken Diamond, took a large number of photographs (around 450 slides) of milestones that interested him throughout the country and generated corresponding record cards capturing basic information such as locations and legends. Jack lodged these records with English Heritage and generously forwarded an electronic copy of the record sheets to Alan Rosevear, who looks after the IT aspect of the Society's research as well as being a County Coordinator. The original slides can be seen by prior arrangement with the National Monuments Record Archive at Swindon. Alan extracted the information from the individual files and put them into the Excel format used for the Society's database. Alan told Jack that they would be invaluable to start off databases for the Counties where we currently have no electronic record and has distributed the relevant files to the corresponding County Coordinators who can use them as an initial search list. The old photographs that Jack accumulated will be of considerable value when stones are to be restored to their original condition and the record of inscriptions will assist where recent erosion has destroyed the surface of a stone.

Jack's long standing interest led to correspondence with many government departments and local authorities and he gave countless talks to societies. His wealth of experience was invaluable to the Society; his helpful replies to questions placed in the Notes and Queries section of the Newsletter stands as testament to this! Jack was actively keeping an eye on the milestones in his area; his dismay at not being able to see the milestone in the Pontefract museum recently was allayed when he was informed that it had been loaned to Wakefield Museum for a few months.

BASINGSTOKE HERITAGE SOCIETY SURVEY

Colin Williams of Basingstoke reports that during 2001/2 the local Heritage Society completed a survey of all milestone sites within the Borough of Basingstoke & Deane. The Society then referred twenty-three stones, plus another from outside the borough but on a local turnpike, to the Department of Culture, Media & Sport to be considered for listing. Eventually, twenty-three were accepted to be added to the three already listed; unfortunately the stone not accepted was almost certainly the

oldest and probably unique but it was in extremely poor condition.

The survey had identified sixty-seven sites; these were situated on the Basingstoke/Preston Candover Turnpike (B3046), and sections of the turnpikes to Stockbridge (A30 west), Odiham (A30 east), Reading (A33 north), Winchester (A33 south), Alton (A339 south), Andover (B3400), and the Winchester/Newtown River (A34), and Andover/Chilton Pond (A343) Turnpikes. Stones were found, in varying condition, at forty-one of the sites. Local contacts produced information about the removal of stones during the 39-45 War, the last sightings of stones now disappeared and what had happened to them, the removal of stones because of road works, and even in one instance led to the discovery of a stone which had been up-rooted and dumped. Local publicity resulted in varying reaction from why the enquirer's particular local stone had not been listed to adverse comment on restoring stones!

By comparing the results with a 1969 survey of Hampshire roads by the University of Southampton which had included milestones it was established that eighteen stones then identified could no longer be found and nine others had received significant damage - generally by the loss of their plates. Unexpectedly six stones were found which had not been recorded in the 1969 survey; this raised the probably now unanswerable question as to whether any other stones were missed in 1969 but have since disappeared.

With the completion of the survey and of the listing process, the all-important preservation/restoration is now receiving attention: firstly by looking to the County Council to do more than offer a degree of protection to listed stones during road works, etc., and secondly by working with local councils and councillors to take an interest in those unlisted stones which offer some potential for restoration.

A COMMEMORATIVE MILESTONE IN SOMERSET



The accompanying illustration shows a new milestone put up by Brent Knoll Parish Council to mark the Millennium - a rather more imaginative stone than the many (nice though they are) placed for the Millennium by parish councils which show just 'M M' or '2000' and the name of the village. This one commemorates the first milepost on the Bridgewater (sic) Turnpike and stands beside the A38 on the grass verge at White Cross, north of Junction 22 of the M5 and a couple of miles east of Burnham-on-Sea, Somerset.

The Bridgewater Trust, 1730-1870, was the third trust to be set up affecting Somerset, preceded only by Bath and Bristol. It ran from White Cross in the north, as far west as Nether Stowey where its terminus stone survives, though very weathered, in the vicarage wall; as far east as Ashcott, and as far south as Thurloxton

and Bishop's Lydeard. Five toll houses still exist in the Bridgwater Trust area. Only 6 milestones have been found and recorded so far in this turnpike area. However there are many more sites to be investigated as soon as time and weather allow!

Janet Dowding (Somerset)

CRANLEIGH OBELISK

Accounts of the origins of the obelisk at Cranleigh, Surrey say that it was built in 1796 by John Ellery, the local doctor, to commemorate the opening of the Guildford to Horsham turnpike road. The road in turn was reputed to have been created to aid the Prince Regent on his journeys from Windsor to Brighton. An article published by Surrey Archaeological Society in 1992 (Chris Budgen: 'The Bramley and Rudgwick Turnpike Trust'), sent by Derek Renn, attempts to clarify the history of both the road and the obelisk.



The turnpike through Cranleigh was not, in fact, opened until 1818. It made use of existing roads and was created to form a shorter route from the 1757 turnpike from Guildford to Newbridge near Billingshurst in Sussex, and a turnpike opened in 1809 leading from this road at Alford Crossways to Horsham. Although the new turnpike from Bramley to Rudgwick was less than 9½ miles long, it was divided into two districts for administration, the first covering the road between Bramley and Wonersh, the second overseeing the remainder through Cranleigh and Ewhurst. It is likely that the first 2¼ miles at the northern end were never built, and the turnpike started at the toll-

gate at Gaston, continuing through other gates at Cranleigh and Cox Green, and ending at Rudgwick where it met the Guildford to Horsham turnpike.

From its inception the turnpike had financial problems. Several subscribers failed to provide the promised funds, John Ellery in particular requiring reminders from the clerk to the trust. The road ran over Weald clay and required a large supply of stone and gravel which had to be transported from some distance away as it was not found locally. Bundles of faggots were sometimes used on the road instead. Traffic, and therefore toll receipts, were poor, and as the initial subscriptions were over £1,000 short of the construction expenses, the road never made a profit. When the Horsham to Guildford railway opened in 1865, the death knell of the turnpike was sounded and the last record of a toll collector is from 1871.

The history of the obelisk, however, is no nearer to being solved. Derek

Renn comments that the Prince of Wales had been travelling to Brighton since 1783, probably using local roads, and as the metal mileage plates around the column give distances of 31 miles from both Windsor and Brighton, it could have been erected to show that this was the halfway point. The obelisk stands opposite the house once owned by John Ellery, and he was active in the affairs of the turnpike trust, but so far no evidence has been found that he was responsible for its construction. The base is made of local limestone, the column of sandstone blocks, and the top of rendered brickwork. A report in 1831 describes a pineapple on top, but this has long-since gone.

REPORTS ON RESTORATION

Barncliff Stoop, Sheffield - David Blackburn (Derbys.) has sent an article from the *Sheffield Weekly Gazette* (19.12.02) detailing the restoration of Barncliff Stoop on Redmires Road, Sheffield. It was one of a series of skyline markers across the open moor between Sheffield and Hope and may be over 500 years old. Stanage Pole is the only other marker surviving. The stoop used to have a milestone on top (Sheffield 3/Hope 7) but this was stolen in 1860 and used as a garden ornament at nearby Burntstones Hall. It disappeared again in 1964 when the hall was demolished. In 2000 it turned up in the City Museum at West Park where it will remain. £1200 was raised to have an exact replica made and this has now been placed on top of the six foot high stoop.

David was particularly impressed by the number of organisations involved in the restoration: Westminster Tenants & Residents' Association, Hallamshire Golf Club, Hallam Community & Youth Association, S. Yorkshire Industrial History Society, Lodge Moor History & Conservation Group, Hunter Archaeological Society and City Museum. The MP for Hallam, Richard Allan, declared Barncliff Stoop reunited with its milestone.

East Riding Mounting block - Another account of a Yorkshire restoration which followed some excellent detective work has been received from John and Janet Harland: Following our update on the survey work carried out in the East Riding of Yorkshire in Newsletter 2, Brian Davey, a member from Halifax, sent a note with some photographs he had taken some time previously. One of them was of a mounting block with a cast iron faceplate that had disappeared in the early 1980s from the A1079(T), just east of Market Weighton, following an incident with a vehicle. Whilst we were able to tell Brian where it had originally been, its present whereabouts was unknown although all of the others in the photographs were still *in situ* and had been surveyed.

Brian contacted us again and said that the stone was in a farm not next to a road, was likely to have been seen whilst on a long distance walk and was possibly in the North Cave area - he would look through his old notebooks to see if anything was mentioned. A little while later he wrote that it may be Arras Farm as a description of the walk (Wolds Way) mentioned passing between two barns both of which could be seen in the picture. A couple of days later Hazel Armstrong did a

quick visit and confirmed that it was still in place so we followed this up with a long walk, posing as ramblers, to take photographs so that we could pressurise the Highways Agency to reinstate it at its correct location.

A letter was sent enclosing photographs and plans, showing where the stone actually was and where it should be, asking what action they would take to restore their property to its rightful location. Another letter a month later elicited a response that their contractors had visited the farmer and that he had given his consent for its reinstatement (rather cheeky since it had been unlawfully removed originally).

By December 2002 the mounting block had been reinstated in its correct location, however it was put at right angles to the road rather than parallel to it. This means that the plate can only be read when travelling in one direction and if anyone had attempted to use it to mount a horse, the horse's head would be stuck in the adjacent quickthorn hedge. The Highways Agency was contacted again to ask if there was a chance of them rectifying this. However, the road was de-trunked and became the responsibility of the East Riding of Yorkshire Council, who have now turned the stone round.

Harrogate area - On 14 January 2003 both the *Yorkshire Post* and the *York Evening Press* carried a story, with photograph, of Brian Bradley-Smith whose retirement hobby is painting the milestones in the Harrogate district. As North Yorkshire County Council's budget does not allow for regular maintenance of the milestones, Mr Bradley-Smith volunteered to do the work for nothing. The highway authority has supplied him with cleaning materials, brushes, paint and a list of 32 mileposts in the district. By the date of the article he had restored 9 of them, doing a risk assessment first to ensure that he can work in safety. He said: 'It's a very rewarding pastime although, due to the state of repair, it takes longer than I had first imagined. But it does mean that I can really see the benefit of my work. I would encourage people in other areas to do the same.'

Anglesey - News has been received that the Telford milestones along the A5 in Anglesey have been restored and repainted. All but the last two stones near Holyhead seem to be in place. Telford's Holyhead road through Wales has been designated an Historic Highway with a special coach-and-horses sign.

Cambridgeshire boundary post - Michael Knight, the coordinator for Bedfordshire, was approached by Stilton Parish Council to ascertain whether he had any details of a boundary post which had disappeared during the up-grade of the A1 close to the village. Unfortunately he had no illustration but contacted Bronwen Parr who did have a photograph of the missing boundary post and also of a milepost in the village which had been demolished possibly 20 years ago. It is hoped that the parish council will be able to arrange for replicas to be made and erected in the original sites.

Pembrokeshire - Anthony Rhys Davies reports that the cast-iron milestones (many buried in hedgerows and on the verges of the roads leading to and from

Haverfordwest, Tenby and Pembroke) have recently been dug out, cleaned and restored. This work has been carried out by an enthusiastic team from the maintenance department of Pembroke County Council who are known as 'The Grassbusters'. Their work is attracting a lot of appreciative comment from visitors and locals alike. Those on the county's trunk roads - the A40 and A477 - have also been restored over the past year by the Highways Agency and are crisply black and white again.

These milestones were made in the middle of the nineteenth century, most of them by the Marychurch family whose foundry was situated in Bridge Street in Haverfordwest. Milestones at both Crane Cross and Carew Cross have been temporarily removed due to the road widening and by-pass works respectively. Both Authorities have given assurances that these will be re-instated when the works are finished.

Both local papers ran the story and Anthony was interviewed on BBC Radio Wales during which the Milestone Society received good publicity. A newly discovered County marker stone for the Pembrokeshire & Carmarthenshire boundary brought about another interview, with the Western Telegraph newspaper, and resulted in an article which appeared with a photograph. As a result of the article, Anthony went to see and photographed a cast iron milepost ('8 miles to Tenby') in a local garden; Pembrokeshire C. C. have agreed to remount it in the autumn. Finally, Anthony reports that the local council is to tackle restoration of a milepost recently re-discovered by a farmer, Mr James, half buried outside Lamphey; his mother used to walk past it every day on her way to school in 1901.

Fife - Laurence Dopson informs us that there have been lengthy discussions on the status of milestones and waymarkers in Fife with Fife Council and other preservation societies. These are noted in the Crail Preservation Society's 2002 report. Members were told that Fife Council is now taking this task in hand and is gradually restoring these markers.

MILESTONES FOR SALE - DEVELOPING A SOCIETY POLICY

From time to time an item of interest to the Society - a plate from a milestone or a milestone or milepost itself - surfaces for sale, often through the antiques trade. A case in point, which has exercised the Committee considerably over the past few months, was the appearance of a mileplate (from the A449 at the Gailey roundabout) for sale for £150 at Cirencester Antiques Market. Initial enquiries by Jeremy Milln indicated that the relevant county (Staffordshire) was not going to take action and that the police required proof from the supposed owner that the plate was in fact stolen. A local museum also was not interested in funding a purchase. Further checks at a later date showed that the price had dropped to £130. No theft could be established. Mervyn Benford took the matter further by contacting the dealer wishing to sell the plate who said that he had bought it for £100 at an open big antique event in Gloucester from a casual seller of auto and railway jumble. It was put to the dealer that in his own interest a detailed

provenance was necessary, that the Society was trying to discourage trade in milestones and related items, and that it was keen to see it restored to its rightful place. After rapid consultation between the committee members by e-mail in which issues such as that publicly advertising the value of such items may encourage their theft and subsequent sale, that publicising the restoration could make dealers aware that items offered for sale might be stolen goods, that it could make councils and heritage organisations aware of a potential trade in such items, etc., it was decided to acquire the plate for the Society and thus its eventual restoration but only by covering the initial cost of the plate to the dealer. Indeed, Mervyn offered and secured the plate for £99, thus making a subtle point that we were not purchasing the plate to provide a profit for the vendor. The Committee is grateful for Mervyn's initiative in this matter.

The Staffordshire coordinator, John Higgins, was delighted that the plate had been retrieved and the Society looks forward to its formal restoration to its rightful position, with accompanying appropriate publicity in the media indicating that the Society is alert to the problem of apparently lost milestones or related items later appearing for sale. As guidelines for action in a similar situation, should it occur in future, the following seem most reasonable if the Society believes the item is sufficiently unique that it should be acquired for restoration: (i) it should be ascertained as far as is reasonably possible that the item is unlikely to have been stolen; (ii) in seeking to publicise the good work of the Society through this action, the purchase price should not form part of the publicity; (iii) the Society should use such an occasion to send out a strong message that all milestones are being watched, that they belong to Highway authorities and are not there to be plundered; (iv) a great number are listed items and as such it is a criminal offence to remove, damage, or destroy them, or to alter them without the necessary consent; (v) the Society uses the re-instatement event, if it can be achieved, to publicise its presence in the best possible positive light.

EARLIER CONCERN ON MILESTONE PRESERVATION

The following letter has been discovered by Jan Scrine (Yorks.). It was dated 19 March 1975 and sent to the Chief Executives of all County Councils, Metropolitan Counties, London Borough Councils, and the Director General of the Greater London Council. It was signed by J. Entwistle, Assistant Secretary, Department of the Environment.

Dear Sir

PRESERVATION OF MILEPOSTS

1. Stones or posts marking mileages 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 considerations 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.

2. Stones and posts should be retained on their original sites wherever 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 re-locating 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 possibility of retaining the post and including it in the new development should be considered. Should there be some reason, such as redevelopment which obliterates the highway or a risk of vandalism, which compels removal of the post entirely, the owners should be asked to offer it to a local museum or other custody for preservation.

3. 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.

4. It is the policy to schedule mileposts only if they are the best examples of their type. Scheduled posts are protected under the Ancient Monuments 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 and Country Planning Act 1971 and preceding legislation. Local highway authorities must consult the relevant local planning authority in cases where listed mileposts are affected.

(References on the letter are: Circular ROADS 13/75, and HM 14/01, if anyone wants to enquire whether their local authority followed these instructions! - Eds.)

THE 'TRAVELLER'S REST'

The Traveller's Rest' or 'Traveller's Seat' milestone lies at SO 425183 on a good minor road connecting the B4347 (Monmouth-Pontrilas) to the B4521 (Abergavenny to Ross-on-Wye via Skenfrith). The latter was in fact the route designated A40 in 1923, but later was downgraded when the A40 was re-routed via Monmouth in the 1930s. The milestone stands on a road that carried coaches in the late 18th century, and the inscription reads:

Traveller's Seat, erected 1780, to New Inn 2 miles, from
thence to Crickhowell 13¾ miles, Brecon miles 12, to Ross
miles 10 from thence to Gloucester miles 16, from
Gloucester to Brecknock 54 miles.

The wording appears to imply that the section of the B4521 from Norton to Cross Ash was not then in use or unfit for coaches, and also by the omission of any mention of Abergavenny, that a route from the stone to Crickhowell may have bypassed the town (there is a plausible route of the correct mileage via Campstone Hill, Llanfihangel Crucorney and Stanton passing through the valley to the north of the Sugar Loaf mountain). The coach route from Monmouth to Abergavenny at that time would have been via what is now the B4233. The route from the stone to Abergavenny, joining the B4521 at SO 390183, is now largely derelict but can be followed on foot with boots and persistence!

Derek Bissell (Gwent)

MANX STAMPS



Further to the article in Newsletter 4 (p.22) about the possibilities of the Royal Mail issuing a set of stamps marking the milestones of Britain, Janet Dowding (Somerset) has drawn attention to the fact that a milestone has already appeared on a stamp. It is one of a set of stamps called 'Photography - the people's choice Part II', showing photographs taken by various people of different aspects of the Isle of Man. The subjects include plough horses, Manx emblem, fishing fleet and Loughton sheep. The milestone photograph was taken by Mrs B. J. Trimble and has a face value of 23p. It shows a

well-preserved black and white milestone with the Manx emblem at the top (see black and white reproduction here).

The complete set of stamps including the milestone one, which was originally issued in October 2002, can be obtained from The Philatelic Bureau, P.O. Box 10.M, Douglas, Isle of Man, IM99 1PB.

THE LISTING DEBATE

Listing can draw attention both to the 'value' and to the downside of owning an ancient monument. Derek Renn notes that one of the three Esher milemarkers scheduled in 1955 disappeared immediately afterwards. Fortunately the inspector had photographed it at the time.

In Newsletter 4, p.20, we stated that all Britain's post boxes were going to be listed in a special arrangement by English Heritage and the Post Office. As usual, one shouldn't believe everything you read in the press - *The Independent* in this case - since this is not completely true! Hopefully a quote from English Heritage's own magazine, *Heritage Today*, will set the record straight: 'A new policy has been agreed meaning that all Royal Mail postboxes in operational use will now be retained at their existing locations, unless exceptional circumstances necessitate their relocation. This will reduce the need to actually list pillar boxes, and it will secure

their long-term care and maintenance.' A register of all post boxes will also be created.

WILTSHIRE FINGERPOSTS

Swindon is noted for the complexity of its roundabouts and the never-ending expansion of its housing. Matters rural might not be expected to feature very highly but, in fact, the borough council's area takes in a large tract of country that used to be Wiltshire-administered. This includes Chiseldon, Liddington, Bishopstone and a string of other villages - and it is here that are to be found some of the best modern fingerposts. Of late, the council has refurbished or replaced many of these traditional signposts, inherited from the county council, as well as erecting some in new locations. These are the genuine article - black and white-painted specimens demonstrating a good standard of workmanship and stouter than those encountered in many parts of the country. Retention of the honest fingerpost is certainly one way of cutting down the over-signing that blights so much of the countryside and Swindon is to be congratulated on setting such a good example in this respect away from the main road network.

Tony Boyce

16 MILES TO ANYWHERE YOU LIKE!

On a visit to that part of Ireland where I had spent all my holidays during the first nine formative years of my life, I naturally kept a beady eye open for any signs of old milestones. Enquiries among the locals as to the possibility of any being in the area brought a response of incredulity that anyone should be interested in old stones as the local countryside was all but buried in granite stones and boulders of all sizes. For millennia lumps of granite had been the curse of these subsistence farmers and it was difficult to arouse even the slightest interest for the preservation of even the smallest and oldest of stone objects such as a milestone. However, I was informed of a local lad who had planted a milestone in the middle of his front lawn and I duly headed that way to photograph the stone and, hopefully, to find out about its history. I had no problem with the photograph but as to getting any information on its history I hit a blank wall. No amount of persuasion could force him to tell me as to its previous location though I was reasonably certain that he had 'retrieved' it from some roadside ditch whilst working the big yellow digger I could see parked in his yard. The 5 ft tall granite pillar had the figure 16 carved into two of its faces so I hoped to pin him down by asking, '16 miles to where?' The only answer I got was, '16 miles to anywhere you like!'

Terry Keegan (Wares.)

COINCIDENCES

An 80 year old friend of my husband Frank told us of a milestone in a wood where he played as a child when visiting his Grandma who lived in the nearby tollhouse.

One of my own cycling clubmates who works for nearby Wentworth Woodhouse Estate told me of a milestone in a garden in Wentworth - the same stone with the inscription 'From Wentworth Houfe VII Miles'.

When the Estate was selling some land and trees at Hooton Cliff, the Head Forester, now 83, took the stone home because it was broken near ground level, and erected it next to his house wall. This stone was one of a series erected by the first Marquis of Rockingham to show the distances from Wentworth House. These were on the coaching route from his property in South Yorkshire to Barnby Moor on the old Great North Road. Two stones are still *in situ*. The 10-mile one is in a wall, which is always being demolished by wayward vehicles, surrounding Crookhill Golf Course in Conisbrough. The 13-mile stone is in the hamlet of Wilsic on the way to Tickhill. A fourth stone is in a garden at the other end of Wombwell from where we live and is the 6-mile and has been there for many years. It would have been at the western end of Hooton Roberts where the old route that is now a bridleway went uphill, past the church, across where the 'new' turnpike road (Tinsley to Doncaster 1764) would be made, and onto the Hooton Cliff track.

David Hey in his book (*Packmen, Carriers and Packhorse Roads*) describes the original survey in the 1720s by Joseph Ludlam for Thomas Walker-Wentworth, later the 1st Marquis of Rockingham. In 1750, the Marquis paid £500 for the drawing of maps, repair of roads and setting up of milestones. The 1-mile stone may still be in place on the Wentworth Estate and I'm hoping to access this private land sometime to check this.

There is some history to be investigated on the Tinsley to Doncaster turnpike too. Some of the remaining triangular stones have old inscriptions on the two faces pointing away from the road now with the new front face having a recess for a metal plate. These plates were presumably taken off in 1940. Ironically one remains, at the end of Deadmans Hole Lane in Tinsley where during the war many iron and steel works produced munitions from scrap metal!

Two days before the Crich meeting when cycling through the village of High Melton, less than 9 miles from home I spotted a new milestone: ... 'Houfe IX Miles' inscribed on the stone suggested it would have had 'From Wentworth' on the damaged part. The stone had been almost buried for at least 40 years but has been raised and reset during recent roadworks. I had looked at an old map and considered a possible route from Wentworth Woodhouse to the Great North Road north of Doncaster. Retracing towards Wentworth in Swinton at the canal bridge I had covered just over 4 miles. There, set in the bridge parapet, is a stone stating 'FROM WENTWORTH 5 MILES'. The canal is late 18C with the bridge rebuilt in 1805 and 1931, which might explain the different style of lettering and stone. So, the first Marquis must have provided milestones northwards as well as to the south. But on which route did the VI stone stand? I suspect the northern route.

Christine Minto (Yorks.)

IT REALLY IS WORTH MEASURING MILESTONES!

We stopped at the 'last' stone on the Tadcaster to Doncaster Turnpike, almost in

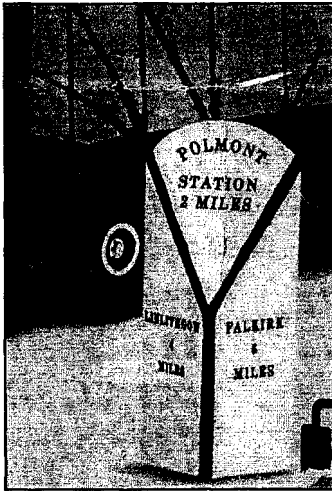
Taddy itself, opposite John Smith's Brewery, and there was a rather damp £10 note. On coming to spend it, the girl at the cash desk looked at it rather closely but she did give me my change!

Statistics - the road was turnpiked in 1758, there are still fifteen stones made by Brayshaw and Booth, Liversedge, on its 27¼ miles length but four are incomplete. Two others have gone missing since the early 90s. There is one much older stone showing the mileages to York 18 and London 180.

Christine Minto (Yorks.)

IN SEARCH OF THE CORGI MILESTONE

In the Milestone Society Newsletter No. 4 (January 2003), mention was made of a miniature milestone produced by Corgi, with distances to Linlithgow 4 miles, Falkirk 6 miles, and Polmont Station 2 miles (see LH photo). Falkirk and Polmont



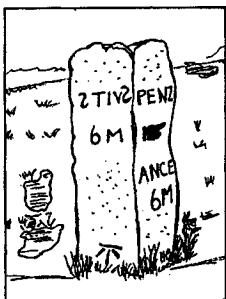
(in Stirlingshire) and Linlithgow (in West Lothian) lie almost in a straight line running from west to east, on the A803 road. There are indeed a number of mileposts along this stretch of road (though fewer are marked on the OS map than formerly). The one at Laurieston, a suburb of Falkirk (NS 912714) is a typical Stirlingshire cast iron post (see RH photo), and shows Linlithgow 6, Falkirk 1½, and Polmont 1½. A mile to the east is a badly eroded milestone set into a wall (NS 928790), and a mile further on is another cast iron post, with Linlithgow 4 and Falkirk 3½, but no reference to Polmont (NS 943787). None of these mileposts shows the distances indicated on the Corgi milestone, therefore.

A clue to the possible location of the Corgi milestone comes from the situation of Maddiston, which is south-east of Polmont Station. Close inspection of the map reveals a milepost in this area (marked 'MS' on the current 1:50,000 map, although correctly shown as 'MP' on older maps) on the B825 at NS 94614/75507, and careful measurement on the map indicated that it was indeed about 4 miles

from Linlithgow, 6 from Falkirk, and 2 from Polmont Station. (Note that Polmont Station refers to the community, distinct from Polmont itself, that grew up around the station after the railway was opened.) A visit to this milepost revealed that it was indeed 4 miles from Linlithgow, but it made no reference to either Falkirk or Polmont Station; instead, the other face is marked 'Slamannan 7 miles'. The post is a typical Stirlingshire cast iron one, as on the A803 and at many other locations. A quick look at other roads radiating from the adjacent roundabout did not disclose any other milestones, and so it appears that the Corgi milestone, 'a fairly typical V-cast post with rounded top', does not exist at this location, where it would not be authentic either in design or lettering.

Adrian T. Sumner (E. Lothian)

A CURIOUS CORNISH WAYMARKER



Hazel Perham (Cornwall) has made this drawing, based on a photograph in a local wildlife magazine, of a milestone along a road near Treen (OS SW 438374). It shows one of the errors sometimes found in the lettering of old milestones, the reversed 'S' probably the result of an unfortunate lack of formal education in those times. The curious inscription presumably indicates 'ST. IVES', the missing V resulting from a lack of space (or forethought!). (*Another milestone with a reversed 'S' is at Cartmel in Cumbria; do members know of other examples? Eds.*)

MEMBERS IN THE NEWS

One of our members, Stuart Wilson, was the subject of a large article in the *York Evening Press* on 16 Dec. 2002. Under the punning headline 'Mile mannered man' it details Stuart's long interest in local history which moved on to milestones a few years ago. He has plotted milestone locations from old OS maps and searches for the sites on his motorbike. He has now recorded and photographed about 500 milestones in Yorkshire and clears away the undergrowth to make them more visible. He considers the cast iron posts between York and Malton as being particularly at risk because they are only 18 ins high. He mentions, among others, three Roman milestones which are embedded in the back yard of the Ark in Tadcaster, and two more recent posts near York which have disappeared in recent years - one at Bilton in Ainsty, between York and Wetherby, the other near Fairfield Manor on the York to Easingwold road.

As well as detailing Stuart's sterling work and hopefully imparting some of his enthusiasm, the article gives excellent publicity to the Milestone Society, contains much historical background, and includes photographs of one of the large pillars at Ackworth, a mounting block with mileage plate on the A1035 near Beverley, a cast iron post from the Tadcaster & Hobmoor Road at Bilborough, and

the now-missing post 1½ miles from Pickering.

Graham Stanton (Worcs.) is featured in an article in *Best of British* (Jan. 2003) along with colourful photographs of some of his wonderful collection of road signs. It explains how his collection started 30 years ago when he noticed an old, discarded road sign in a hedgerow and asked the local council if he could have it. Appeals to local councils and companies who make road signs have resulted in over 700 historic signs, mostly stored in his house, garage and garden. He is now recognised as the leading authority on vintage British road signs and is consulted by film makers to ensure authenticity in period road scenes.

Biff Vernon (Lincs.) has done an enormous amount of research into the history of the Great North Road, the results of which can be seen on his website <http://www.biffvernon.freemove.co.uk/contents.htm>. At the end of 2002 Anglia Television broadcast a series of six programmes entitled 'Riddles on the Road' and Biff appeared in one of them, this time talking about John Ogilby's maps. Walking around Whittlesford (Cambs.) he tried to compare the route and buildings on Ogilby's map with what could be seen today.

Our Treasurer, **Jan Scrine**, appeared in an article in the *Huddersfield Examiner* last December giving a great deal of publicity about the Society. The reporter noted Jan's efforts to locate milestones in West Yorkshire, about 40 having been recorded by then. In Calderdale there is an agreement with the local council for the Society to restore and care for milestones, and similar arrangements are hoping to be set up with Kirklees Council. Kirklees has about 100 listed milestones, but the council spends little on them as they are not regarded as being very useful to modern travellers. Jan is pictured beside a direction stone at Salendine Nook.

Another committee member, **Mervyn Benford**, wrote an article which was published in a history supplement of the *Oxford Times* in December 2002. He has traced the sites of many Oxfordshire milestones with the help of Alan Rosevear's studies of Thames Valley Roads, and by examining maps and searching undergrowth has located a good number of survivors. Not all were hidden; one old stone, probably passed many times without him noticing it, stands in the central reservation of the Oxford to Lewknor road just before the traffic lights at the Sandhills park and ride turn. An amusing example that is also illustrated is the stone at Bladon on the Witney to Woodstock road. The only other survivor in this series has an original plate with antique script using the upright s. The Bladon stone had had its plate replaced, obviously by someone who did not understand the old script and has translated it as Woodflock!

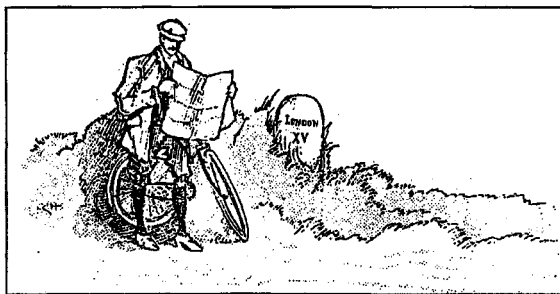
Soon after adding to the Society's website before-and-after photos of a local milestone that had probably been deliberately smashed and its plate removed, this was spotted by a researcher at BBC Radio Norfolk, and Norfolk coordinator, **Carol Haines**, was summoned for an interview on the breakfast programme. This involved a dash into Norwich at 6.30 a.m. for a very brief spot sandwiched between the war reports on 25 March. Having watched 'Alan Partridge' on TV the previous evening, the experience was not too unfamiliar, especially when the presenter got his words tangled at the end! A few hours later there was a request to appear on Look East on BBC1 that evening. Although the resulting film only lasted a few

minutes, it managed to give a very good over-view of milestones in East Anglia, the danger they are in, and the need for preservation. Some of the coordinator's photographs of Norfolk and Northamptonshire stones were shown, along with film of a guidestone near Eye and a pub called The Milestone in Ipswich (found via Richard Mudhar's website), and some of the Trinity Hall milestones south of Cambridge. The Norfolk WTs milestone project got a mention, along with the Milestone Society, and it ended with the coordinator cleaning a milestone with a tissue!

JOKER'S CORNER!

Paddy, Sean and Seamus were stumbling home one night with a few Guinneses inside them. Their road led past the old village graveyard. 'Come and look over here', says Paddy. It's Michael O'Grady's grave. God bless his soul. He lived to the ripe old age of 87.' That's nothing', said Sean. 'Here's one to Patrick O'Toole. Says he was 95 when he died.' Just then Seamus yelled out: 'But here's a fella that died when he was 145!' 'What was his name?' asked Paddy. Seamus lit a match to read the headstone to see what else was written. 'It's a chap called Miles from Dublin' [*You can blame Derek Bissell for this one, and apologies to Terry Keegan and other MS Society members from the Emerald Isle!*]

CYCLING MATTERS



Publications from the Golden Age of cycling in the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries are a rich source of information for milestone hunters and road historians. The road books of Charles Harper and the county Highways and Byways series chronicle cycle journeys in most parts of Britain, and

although some of the routes are now too busy and dangerous to follow on a bike, the books contain a wealth of history and detail that modern car travellers easily miss. Details of several lesser-known publications have been received which might give members other fruitful lines of research, and accounts of cycle journeys might encourage members to get pedalling.

CTC Road Book

Lionel Joseph (Surrey) has drawn our attention to the Cyclists' Touring Club *British Road Book* which was published in several volumes in the 1890s. It gives routes to most towns in the country and describes many features along the roads. Milestones are occasionally referred to, for instance, for the route from King's

Lynn to Norwich it notes that: The m.s.'s refer to the South Gate of Lynn ...', but some of the main landmarks are 'tel. poles' (not something we would notice today). The contours are also considered important: '... keep straight forward up a short stiff slope; thence easy running with sharp dip and rise at ½m. on, after which almost level' Road surfaces are also noted: 'inferior wood paving', 'granite sets', 'uneven macadam surface', or 'surface loose and sandy'.

Land's End to John O'Groats

Between 5 and 8 June 1882, Keith Falconer cycled from Land's End to John O'Groats. He wrote an account of his journey in a letter to the president of the Cambridge University Bicycle Club. He only made one mention of milestones: There are no sign-boards in Scotland. I only saw two near JOG, put up at the repeated request of Mr Blackwell a London bicyclist. Sometimes however you see sign-stones ... but very few. I can remember two near Edinboro.' Mr Falconer gives a tiny drawing of a triangular stone with TO/PERTH on one side. For half his journey he seemed to be pedalling into a strong NW wind, so perhaps he had his head well down. He was enthusiastic about Scottish road building and rather scathing about the 'fair-weather' roads of England. 'The road thro Redruth to Truro & someway past is one brilliant exception, but I was informed that this bit was done by a wily Scot who got a prize for it... The Scotch understand how to get long gentle gradients instead of taking you up the side of a house.' Thanks to Michael Knight (Beds.) for sending this.

The 'contour' road books

I have recently been made aware that the series of small books with titles such as *The 'contour' road book of Scotland* and *The 'contour' road book of England*, published by Gall & Inglis might well be of use in milestone studies. I have not had time to research the bibliographical history of the series, but the Scottish volume was the first to be issued, in 1896, followed by three regional ones for England and Wales (*Northern Division* 1897, *South East Division* 1898, and *Western Division* 1900) with *Ireland* following in 1905.¹ All had subsequent reprints. Although other publishers produced similar publications, I have not seen others with milestone details. The books are essentially 'A series of elevation plans of the roads, with measurements and descriptive letterpress.' So, we have a diagram of the road in profile, a description of the route, a list of gradients, and details of where the milestones are measured from. The introduction reads 'The exact points from where these are measured are named.' The article states that Harry Inglis cycled all the Scottish routes and a high standard of accuracy is assumed, which might have declined in areas further afield. Again, future research will tell.

Using the 1902 edition for England and Wales, entry 498 reads:

498 Oxford to Buckingham. Description —Class II. This road is almost dead level as far as Bicester, and the surface is very good; thereafter splendid surface and very slightly undulating to Tingewick, whence slightly hilly to Buckingham. Gradients.—At 22¾ m. 1 in 23; 23¼m. 1 in 24. Milestones — From London as far as Bicester; thereafter from the fork at north end of Bicester. ... followed by

various measurements and objects of interest.

Or, noting only the milestone details ...

499 Oxford to Aylesbury. Milestones —From London as far as Wheatley Bridge; thereafter from Carfax, Oxford to Thame; then from County Hall, Aylesbury.

856 Bristol to Newport. Milestones —Measured from top of Park Street, Bristol.

A lot of routes have no milestone details, I assume because they did not exist, but could well be proven wrong. Town Halls and bridges appear to be popular starting points for measuring distances, although many routes just give a town. At times, it is not perfectly clear what is meant:

1002 Chester to Newtown. Milestones —Measured from Oswestry & from Welshpool.

1089 Carmarthen to Lampeter. Milestones —Measured from Carmarthen Bri.,—irregular.

But be careful, some towns have more than one starting point:

225 Bolton to Blackburn. Milestones —Measured from Bow Street, Bolton.

and

226 Bolton to Newton-le-Willows, &c. Milestones —Measured from Town Hall, Bolton.

The 'contour' road book of Scotland for 1897 even comments upon the accuracy of the milestones thus:

118 Glasgow to Irvine. Milestones —Measured from the commencement of the Pollockshaws road,—correct.

120 Glasgow to Strathavon. Milestones —Measured from Glasgow Cross—fairly correct.

Sometimes things get rather complicated:

99 Ayr to Carstairs. Milestones—Measured from Ayr Town Hall to Cumnock, then from Cumnock Church to Wellwood. Here those from Ayr *via* Mauchline continue to the County Boundary, when the numbers and positions of those from Cumnock are resumed. After Douglas they are irregular.

9 Edinburgh to Moffat. Milestones —To Leadburn as previous route, thence deficient until Rommano Bridge, after which they are correct. This set, however, is measured from Grassmarket, Edinburgh, *via* Howgate. The 20th and onwards is 207/8 from G.P.O.

And occasionally, even the author Harry R.G. Inglis is not sure:

62 Dumfries to Carlisle. Milestones —Measured from Greyfriars Church Dumfries, to Collin; thereafter to the Border (where the milestones measured from Glasgow are met) they are seemingly measured from Carlisle, Market Place.

¹ See Nicholas Oddy, Harry R.G. Inglis and the Contour Road Books, *Cycle History 9: Proceedings, 9th International Cycling History Conference, Ottawa, Canada, 19-21 August 1998*, 79-92. Thanks to George Jasieniecki and John Liffen for bringing this article to my attention.

David Archer (Montgomerys.)

CYCLING AND MILESTONE HUNTING DO GO TOGETHER

By their nature many milestones are on busy roads and it is not always easy to stop in a car near to them. And, after stopping it is sometimes dangerous to walk along the road to reach the stone. On a bike you can stop immediately, move onto the verge and get the camera and tape measure out. The only problem is that on some roads the stones are on the 'wrong' side. But with care and patience the inscription and centimetres are recorded.

The Keighley to Kendal road is a good example of this. Twenty-two stones in 36 miles from Keighley to the Yorkshire/Westmorland border on a sometimes narrow and twisting carriageway. We have travelled westwards on this road both on bikes and in car yet when riding eastwards recently three more stones appeared. We have 'Cateye' odometers on our bikes that record accurately to two decimal places so within yards of a mile coming up, a search of verge or ditch is often successful.

Were these stones hidden in ditches? One, without attachment, is flush with a garden wall at the western end of Settle. Another is in Kildwick, now by-passed, but not checked when going west. The third stone, Keighley 1, is on the pavement, in clear view but on the opposite side to most of the others.

With judicious route planning it is possible to record quite a few stones on one journey, over twenty on some rides. On the OS maps milestones are usually only marked on A roads. The Cateyes have found ones that are not marked and confirmed those which have disappeared. On B and unclassified roads they really come into their own and of course, on the bike we can often follow an original route when by-passes and new roads have been constructed. Just one problem though. The best time for hunting is in the winter when the vegetation is bare and it can be pretty cold!

Christine Minto (Yorks.)

PUBLICATIONS - BOOK REVIEWS

Stuart Hands: *Road Signs* (Shire Album 402, Shire Publications Ltd., Princes Risborough; 2002); 32pp, ISBN 0 7478 0531 8. Price £3.50.

For someone unacquainted with Shire publications, books which are by and large 'tasters' rather than authoritative reference works, the range of subjects covered can come as something of a shock. Perusal of their catalogue indicates that it is possible to gain leading information on such diverse subjects as hat pins, post-medieval pottery 1650-1800, duck decoys, portable writing desks, and ceramic water closets. Therefore, Stuart Hands' book in the series on road signs does not seem an unreasonable subject for examination and it contains much of interest for members of the Milestone Society.

The book is conveniently divided into four main sections *Beginnings*, *Warning, mandatory, regulatory and prohibition signs*, *Direction signs*, and

Boundary and other location signs, and a final page lists further reading and places to visit. Inside the attractive cover in colour, photographs in black and white form a major part of the contents and the subject is developed historically - the earliest known piece of legislation was passed in 1697 and, interestingly, signs of the present era were installed to help cyclists and only later the motorist. The important group of warning, mandatory signs, etc., are erected to help road safety whereas, clearly, direction signs help travellers to find their way - location signs tell them where they are!

There is much of interest here for the observant traveller and occasionally the reviewer's memory was jogged by a picture of a previously familiar sign which has slipped almost unnoticeably into history. The means by which information has been visually depicted over the years - a torch of learning for a school superseded by outlines of children, steam locomotives (!) (apparently an 0-6-0 up to 1964 and a 4-6-0 thereafter) for a level crossing with no gates, and a Maltese cross for a hospital (but no longer) is fascinating and may reflect innermost associations of ideas in our subconscious mind. One wonders how many modern drivers have ever seen a steam train. Road signs evolve over the years - dual language (English and Welsh) or dual measurement (imperial and metric for vehicle heights) - and new ones arise, for example for elderly people.

Finger posts with finials allowed local authorities considerable latitude for distinctive designs, making a study of those remaining after introduction of advanced direction signing an absorbing pastime. The variety of boundary makers - national, county, town, and parish - add to the diversity of signs for the traveller and are well illustrated by the author, who is to be congratulated on bringing together information on such a diverse range of objects into a compact and interesting publication.

Alan Haines

L. A. Clarke: *The Minehead United Turnpike Trust*. S.I.A.S. Survey No. 16. 72pp, ISBN 0 9533 5396 6. Price £4.95. Available from The Publications Officer, S.I.A.S., 52 Stoke Road, Taunton, Somerset TA1 3EJ. Tel: 01823 286957.

Somerset Industrial Archaeological Society recently produced their S.I.A.S. Survey No. 16 - *The Minehead United Turnpike Trust; the story of the Minehead Toll Roads in the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries*. The author's aim in this is to cover not only the history of the Minehead Trust but to put it into its historical context and to offer an explanation of its policies.

It is an interesting and detailed account. The introduction - Poor roads and the turnpike system - gives an historical background from the late sixteenth century onwards, mentioning alternatives to road transport such as the sea, rivers and canals, the early history of roads, and the very first turnpike Acts. The text then goes on to detail the origins of the Minehead Trust itself, existing road networks from Minehead outwards, the funding from principal landowners, to the actual passing of the necessary Act.

Further chapters detail the raising of subscriptions to capitalise the Trust, the

setting up of the necessary toll gates and milestones in each of the districts within the Trust e.g. Dunster District and Watchet District, statute labour in the parishes through which the turnpikes ran, and the practice of farming the tolls. Renewal Acts were eventually required e.g. in 1807, plus the setting up of a new District - Crowcombe; new gates had to be erected, diversions made, and links made to other turnpike systems e.g. Bridgwater and Taunton. Finally the decline of the Minehead Trust is detailed, the opposition to the tolls, the accounts of the Trust and its Districts, and the auctioning of its assets.

This little book is well illustrated with copies of documents such as a Sale Poster, maintenance summons, old transport pictures, maps, photos of three toll houses still in existence and a typical milestone of the Trust.

Janet Dowding (Somerset)

MILESTONE SOCIETY WEBSITE - The Milestone Society website <http://www.milestone-society.co.uk> contains basic information (objectives, Society officers, application forms for membership and meetings, links to related websites, etc.) and some details of more topical matters (brief synopsis of meetings, photographs of speakers, information and pictures of recently missing milestones, etc.). By 'clicking' on one of the coloured, underlined pieces of text on the Society's web page (a web-link or e-mail address) then the web page or blank addressed e-mail will open automatically. If anyone feels that other information should be posted on the website, please forward suggestions to the Newsletter Editors.

PUBLICITY - The Society has prepared sets of postcards, notelets and posters for use by members. Supplies will be available at cost from County Coordinators (see Newsletter 4, pp. 27-28, those without Coordinators contact the Editors). The postcard design is based on the cover of Mervyn Benford's book *Milestones* (Shire).

YORKSHIRE GROUP - The Autumn meeting is provisionally scheduled for 27 or 28 September 2003 - please contact Jan Scrine with suggestions for venue, speakers and preferences for date.

DEADLINE FOR THE NEWSLETTER FOR JANUARY 2004 -

Contributions for inclusion in the January 2004 Newsletter should reach the Editors by Friday 19 December 2003. 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, save in RTF (Rich Text Format), Word 6.0/97, or Wordperfect 5.x for Windows format. We have difficulty with other formats.

FINANCIAL UPDATE - At the end of the financial year, 31st May 2003, the Treasurer reported a balance of £7102. This includes a large number of

membership renewals for the current year, but the majority of the liabilities noted at the AGM, particularly the Journal and publicity material, are still outstanding. A full set of annual accounts will be available from the Treasurer on application. *Would all County Co-ordinators please ensure that they have sent a note of their balances at 1st June 2003 to the Treasurer for the record.*

MEMBERSHIP RENEWAL - Subscriptions for 2003-2004 fell due on 1 June 2003; any renewals still outstanding (£10 single or £12 for a couple at the same address, £15 for group membership) should be sent to: Brian Barrow.

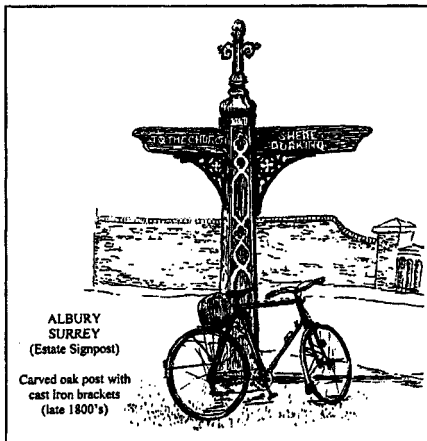
Clearly, the next Newsletter can only be sent to those people on the membership list current at the time of its circulation. (*Note: a form for use with renewals was enclosed with the AGM agenda.*)

AUTUMN MEETING OF THE SOCIETY - SATURDAY 1 NOVEMBER

2003 - This meeting will be held at Quarry Bank Mill, Styal, Wilmslow, Cheshire SK9 4LA. This Georgian, working water-powered mill belongs to the National Trust and still spins and weaves cotton to be sold in the shop.

Styal (SJ 835 835) is approximately 10 miles due south of Manchester. It is 1½ miles north of Wilmslow off the B5166 and 2½ miles from the M56 (exit 5). Car parking (for which there is a charge) is 200 yards distant and the rail station is ½ mile away. The meeting will start at around 10.30 and finish at 16.00.

The cost will be £5 per person. Please complete the booking form enclosed with this Newsletter.



Albury, Surrey (TQ 048479)

The drawing shows an estate signpost in the village of Albury which was formerly known as Weston. The Duke at Albury Park did not like the village of Albury so close to his mansion, so he removed the whole lot down the road to Weston. The name Albury was then substituted for the former place name of Weston. All that remains of the old village of Albury is its church and pub, the latter long since made into an estate cottage.

(Lionel Joseph of Dorking Surrey has provided this drawing and information)