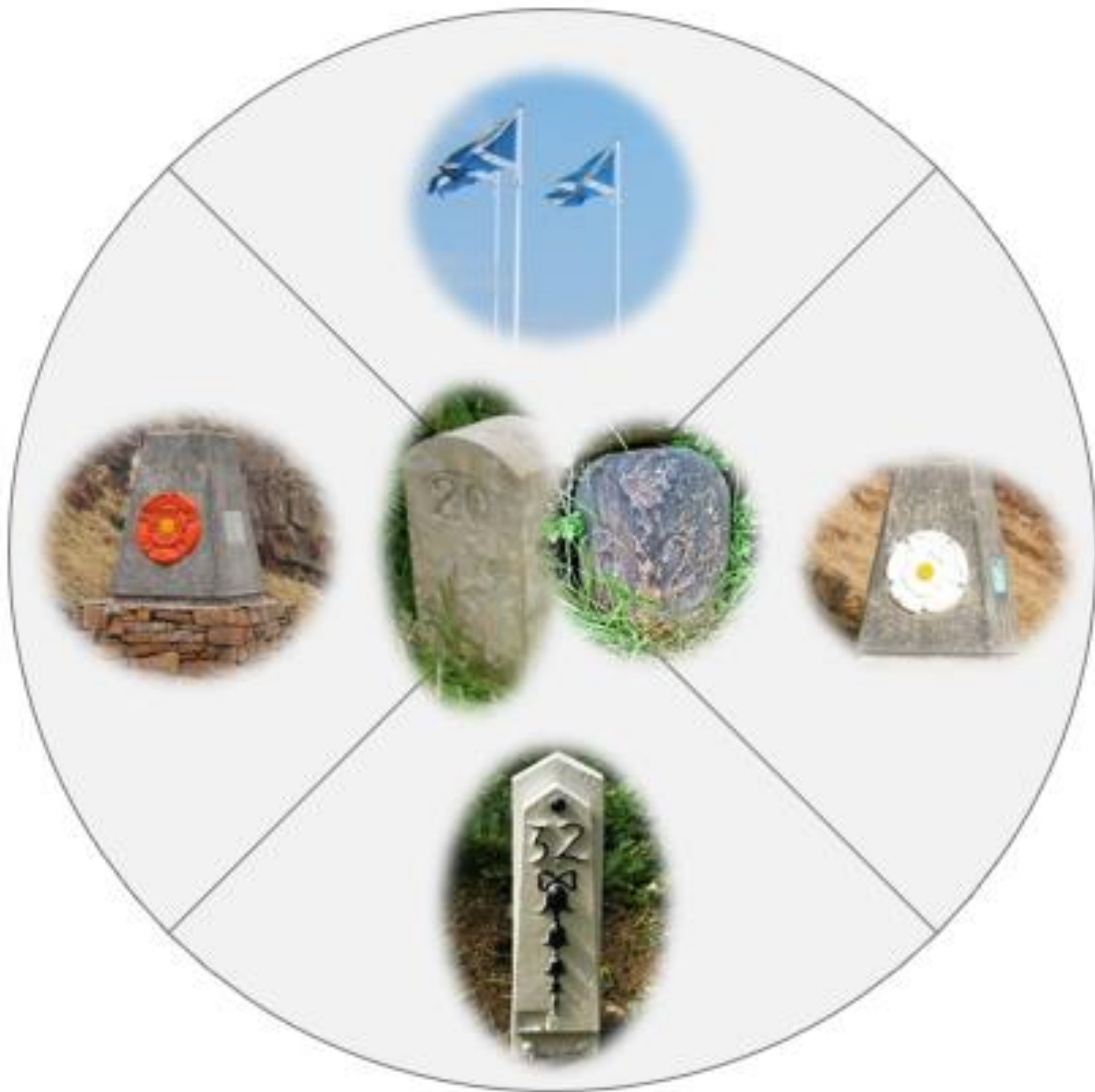


Milestones & Waymarkers

The Journal of the Milestone Society
Volume Sixteen 2024





MILESTONES & WAYMARKERS

The Journal of the Milestone Society

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Compiled, edited and produced by

Clare Curtis and Derek Turner

Supported by Mike Hallett, Carol Haines, Richard Raynsford and Ian Thompson

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Front Cover Pictures: ‘Waymarkers without words’

North: Saltire flags on the A1 at England/Scotland border.

South: Bow Bells milepost at Ashurstwood, East Sussex.

East and West: Yorkshire and Lancashire boundary markers on the M62.

Centre: Canal milestones 20 on Lancaster Canal and 24 on Coventry Canal.

Back Cover Pictures: ‘Idyll’ and ‘Stuck in the mud’

Idyll: Fair weather on the Lancaster Canal, Summer 2023 (photo Christopher Leather).

Mud: (i) Creating the Alaska Highway, 1942 (photo, Anchorage Daily News), (ii) Aftermath of rescuing a Lancaster Canal Milestone, 2023 (photo Christopher Leather).

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EDITORIAL: New Blood, New Award, Ancient and Modern

Clare Curtis and Derek Turner

As the proverb goes: ‘you can’t get blood out of a stone’ – but you can transfuse new blood into *Milestones & Waymarkers* to good effect on its present health and future prospects. Recent issues have relied heavily on long-term Society members and regular contributors, with the addition of one-off articles from non-members doing valuable work on milestones from countries as varied and distant as Corfu, South Africa and Hong Kong as well as in Britain. All good stuff but not really drawing on the collective expertise, experiences and enthusiasms of a wider range of members, something that has been much more evident in recent issues of the *Newsletter*. Happily, this issue marks a welcome inclusion of articles by more recently joined members who between them have added valuable new knowledge and insights alongside taking on important roles in the Society. Bruce Keith provides a lively and at times humorous overview of Scotland’s milestone history, a topic until now only thinly covered in M&W though fully documented in numerous mentions in the *Newsletter*. Hilary Jones reprises and extends for the *Journal’s* readers her well-received talk given at Long Compton at the autumn meeting 2022, again for an area that has received little attention in this journal, writing about an important turnpike road and its heritage assets that runs from Yorkshire into Lancashire, the title of which, ‘White Rose, Red Rose’, also featured on the front cover, reminds us that relations between those two counties during the ‘War of the Roses’ have not always been one of cooperation.

Three articles describe the projects that have gained the Society’s welcome new Award. Hilary Jones, in a second article, describes the first recipient of the award, the excellent Cliviger project. Christopher Leather recounts and records in detail his extensive and strenuous search for milestones along the Lancaster Canal. Never has historian R. H. Tawney’s exhortation to ‘get mud on your boots’ been more literally followed as illustrated on the back cover. But it is not all about the North; Peter Gillies has been equally active and diligent, if less muddy, in surveying, restoring and replacing the photogenic ‘Bow Bells’ mileposts along the A22 in East Sussex.

Articles by longer-serving members and former contributors are far from being wholly absent. Carol Haines contributes another in her series ‘Milestones in the News’ that includes stories of a Royal Walk and races along turnpike roads on horse and foot; also inevitably the deeds of dastardly but sometimes incompetent highwaymen. Incidences of vandalism are also included, a theme taken up by Robert Caldicott in his article on ‘Theft, Recovery and Protection’, detailing the legislation and procedures past and present that attempt to prevent theft and assist recovery, the ‘dark side’ of ‘milliarology’ (another term the editor is attempting to get into milestone-related vocabulary alongside last year’s ‘status’). No issue would be complete without a contribution by Ian Thompson, who on this occasion relates the eventful history of a Cornish milestone finally re-united with its – non-identical – twin.

Waymarkers on the other side of the world are not neglected. Derek Turner’s article relates the extraordinary construction and subsequent history of the 80-year-old but 1200 plus miles-long Alaska Highway and its waymarkers. New authors, new awarding-winning projects, highwaymen and roads galore; there should be something of interest to all members whatever their enthusiasms – and a record number of illustrations for those who prefer pictures to words.

NOTES ON CONTRIBUTORS

Robert Caldicott is a former member of the Oxfordshire group and committee member, now in Warwickshire, and the Society’s member with special responsibility for theft and recovery. **Peter Gillies** is a recently joined member of the Society, previously in turn a dairy farmer and a constructor of farm buildings, now running a print business in a converted cowshed, with an interest in milestones as historic items requiring attention. **Carol Haines** is a former editor of the *Newsletter*, currently a member of the Editorial Panel, Society Representative for Norfolk and a regular contributor to M&W. **Hilary Jones** is Vice-Chair of The Milestone Society and county contact for North Yorkshire and Lancashire. **Bruce Keith** is a Trustee, former Vice Chair of the Milestone Society and acts as its liaison with the Heritage Alliance. Since retiring as a chartered surveyor, he has written three books about Scotland’s heritage. **Chris Leather** is a member of the Lancaster Canal Trust, a keen photographer, a coastal and canal walker who likes to record man-made objects seen on his walks. **Ian Thompson** is Cornwall Representative, the Society’s advisor on restoration and a member of the Awards Committee and the Editorial Panel. **Derek Turner** is a former Chairman of the Society, former Representative Coordinator and Oxfordshire Representative, now co-editor of M&W.

“ARE WE NEARLY THERE YET?” - A JOURNEY CELEBRATING SCOTLAND’S MILESTONES

Bruce Keith

What have the Romans ever done for the Scots?

As we embark on our journey through Scotland’s milestone heritage, it is useful to recall that the northern boundary of the Roman Empire was not Hadrian’s Wall, not even the Antonine Wall – a trench and embankment with a wooden palisade on top, stretching 39 miles across central Scotland. Their conquering aspirations, in pursuit of Scotland’s mineral wealth, saw the Romans with a series of hillforts in Perthshire and extending up into Aberdeenshire, with the Battle of Mons Graupius in AD 83 in some, as yet undeterminable, field somewhere north of Forfar.

There were extensive forts and settlements, perhaps the grandest being Trimontium at Newstead in the Borders, *en route* to forts at Cramond (Edinburgh) and Camelon (Falkirk), on Dere Street – the undulating, long straight stretches still the hallmark of its 21st century legacy, the A68.

Whilst England has a significant heritage of Roman milestones, only one such relic of this occupation is extant in Scotland. And it wasn’t discovered until 1697, nearly one and a half millennia after the Romans retreated southwards to warmer climes. For the glass-encased red sandstone Roman milestone on display in the National Museum of Scotland in Edinburgh, we have to thank Sir Robert Sibbald.

Students of Scottish history will remember Sir Robert as the founding President of the Royal College of Physicians, the first Professor of Medicine at Edinburgh University and founder of the city’s Royal Botanic Garden. How many celebrate his finding the Roman milestone, quite literally tripping over it when visiting friends at Ingliston, the site of today’s Royal Highland Show?

That doyen of Roman academia, Rev. William Stukeley, visiting Scotland some 30 years after Sibbald’s find on the search for memorabilia, did unearth a stone inscribed “*Antonius Pious*” with some numerical markings, on the Antonine Wall. Meticulous in recording every last detail of the milestone, he was somewhat less careful with his possession, and managed to lose it!

Over in Lanarkshire, the Rev. John Wylie writing in the *New Statistical Account for Carlisle* (Vol VI, 1845) commented on a Roman milestone in the village of Braidwood, which is corroborated by the 1864 and 1890 editions of the Ordnance Survey maps. It is not there now.

On Islay, however, the legacy of Roman numerals is evidenced in the milestones on the road to Port Ellen.

However, the Military Way, the service road for the Antonine Wall, has yielded interesting distance markers, erected by the Roman legions to mark the lengths of the wall for which they were responsible for building or maintaining. The slabs to the east of Castlehill fort date from the first phase of construction and are shown in paces, whilst those lying to the west bear the mark in feet (of which there were 5,000 in a Roman mile). Fifteen of these distance markers have been recovered and are housed in the Hunterian Museum in Glasgow.



Figure 1: The Ingliston Roman milestone (photo by John Riddell).

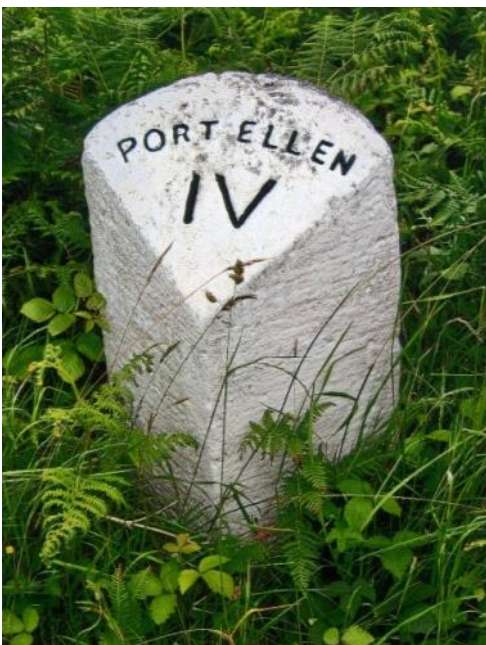


Figure 2: A traditional milestone 4 miles from Port Ellen (photo by Christine Minto).

“Gie him an inch an’ he’ll tak a mile”

Whilst the Romans may have given us the ‘mille passus’, the distance that translates into, varies considerably. The “English” statute mile, you’ll recall from schooldays, extends to 1,760 yards, but Robert Burns’ scholars will quote from ‘Tam O’ Shanter’:

*“While we sit bousing in the nappy,
An’ getting fou and unco’ happy,
We think na on the lang Scots miles....”*

So, how long was a “lang Scots mile”? In 2002, South Ayrshire Council erected posts at either end of a measured lang Scots mile along the seafront esplanade in Ayr – with its fitting connections with Burns and Tam O’ Shanter. The measurement has a strangely Orwellian ring to it – 1,984 yards. George Orwell lived on Jura whilst he wrote “1984”.

What the ‘ell...!

These differentials in measurements were confusing enough when it came to distances over land. Imagine the problems wrought by different interpretations of length in a commodity which was traded within and between countries? Take cloth, for example, measured in ells. On the side of a building in Dunkeld is an ell-stick, measuring 37 inches. In Easter Ross, however, an ell was 38 inches; it was 38 5/12ths of an inch in Aberdeen; 39 1/2 inches in Edinburgh and 41 inches in Wigtownshire. Imagine the confusion, not to mention opportunities for fraud, which arose when one crossed the border to England, with its ell of 45 inches. It took three attempts at legislation, culminating in the Uniform Weights and Measures Act of 1824, to get a semblance of conformity.

All at sea...

Measured miles have a somewhat different purpose offshore. Scotland is a great shipbuilding nation. In the early 1900s, a fifth of all ships in the world had been built on the Clyde. Before a ship is released to its owner, it requires to undergo sea trials and one of the critical tests is the maximum speed test. This necessitates measurement of time over a measured mile, and there are several off the Scottish coast. The first was at Gare Loch but the one at Skelmorlie in Ayrshire, where the distance between the steamer head pier and the former hydropathic hotel measured 6,080 imperial feet, was the most famous. This became the first international standard measurement for a nautical mile, notified to mariners in July 1866 and installed by the Father of Shipbuilding on the Clyde, Robert Napier.

The Turnpike era

Just as in England, it was the turnpike system of raising tolls for the road network which laid a statutory foundation to the requirement for milestones to be provided. The first Turnpike Act in Scotland was in 1713, for Edinburgh, to raise money from traders for the upkeep and improvement of the highways. The Scots have always displayed a reluctance to pay tolls. It took ‘Robbie the Pict’ to lead the protest to the tolls levied on Skye Bridge, after it opened in 1995, to bring the system to an end and with it the halt to any new Private Finance Initiative deals north of the border.



Figure 3: The distance marker from Auchendavy Fort in East Dunbartonshire (Source: The Hunterian Museum).



Figure 4: The halfway post on the Lang Scots Mile at Ayr (photo by Lindsay M. Keith).

Our 18th century compatriots were equally sceptical, and it was not until 1751 that the first of several radial routes from Edinburgh – the one from the city out to South Queensferry – was designated a turnpike road. A flourish of activity in the three years which followed witnessed turnpikes to Glasgow, one via Falkirk and the more southerly via Livingston, the route north to Perth and south to Dumfries via Carlols and twelve further turnpikes in west central Scotland.

There was a further lull of 11 years in any activity on turnpike designation, until the ‘boom’ years between 1764 and 1789. The Turnpike Act of 1766 was a critical milestone in our story, of course, because it saw the introduction of a statutory requirement to provide milestones as distance markers along the turnpike routes. This period brought a further 18 Turnpike Acts, many designating several roads within a county under a single statute. The counties of Ayrshire had turnpikes from 1767, Peebles (1771), Lanark (1772) and Dumfries (1777), with proposals for trusts in Perth, Stirling, Fife and Forfar between 1789 and 1790. Not that the roads all materialised - in Fife, for example, about 25% of the proposals fell ‘by the wayside’ so to speak.



Figure 5: John Loudon McAdam, from an engraving by Charles Turner (source: Wikimedia Commons).

Whilst Scotland may have been slightly reticent about the turnpike system of highway finance, it was a Scot who was inspirational in leading the cause, both north and south of the border. His name was John Loudon McAdam, an Ayrshire loon, famous for the one act he did not do - he did not invent ‘tarmacadam’.

The tenth son of minor nobility (his mother was the niece of the 7th Earl of Dundonald), he made his first fortune working for an uncle in New York in the army surplus market. Choosing the ‘wrong’ side in the American War of Independence, he found himself back in Ayrshire where his engineering prowess led him to develop a new system of road construction. This involved using small, often crushed, stones, very heavily compacted to form a camber for drainage, but without a surfacing material on top. ‘Tarmac’ was to come much later - developed by the county road surveyor of Nottinghamshire, a Mr Hooley, in 1902. So, what you see as a road surface today should really be called ‘tarhooley’ and not ‘tarmacadam’!

McAdam’s road construction techniques transformed the highways of Britain, but his other enterprising activity is of more direct interest to our milestones interest. For McAdam, and his family for at least two generations hence, became ambassadors for the turnpike trust movement. John’s initial foray into turnpikes was with the Carrick (Maybole) District Trust in Ayrshire, but he soon migrated south on

his appointment as surveyor to the Bristol Turnpike Trust in 1815. By 1823 the family had been appointed to 75 surveyorships across Britain – he won six commissions himself in the Perth area as late as 1833, when he was 77 years old and living in Moffat.

The history of road networks in Scotland merits a book in itself. From the late 17th century, the drove roads brought 150,000 head of cattle and sheep annually from the Highland glens and straths to the livestock markets, formerly at Crieff and from 1770 at Falkirk. Thence the livestock journeyed onwards across the Pentland Hills to feed the industrialised populations in the south. Post the second Jacobite Rebellion in 1719, the military roads and bridges constructed by Wade and his successor Caulfeild brought 1,150 miles of road and 640 bridges to the Highlands – the high ratio of bridges to miles of road reflecting the topography and river systems of the country. From 1804 Thomas Telford was building bridges, roads and canals, many, including what he described as his ‘finest bridge’ at Dunkeld, still carry the public highway today. For the main part, however, the story is one resonant of the 21st century – those responsible for our transport infrastructure failed to maintain it! Within 60 years of the military roads built to subjugate the Jacobites, it is reckoned that 50% of their length was impassable. McAdam’s intervention was timely. In 1859, the Report of the Commission on Public Roads in Scotland provided a detailed analysis, county by county, not only of the 21,318 miles of road [of which 5,637 miles (26%) were turnpiked] but of the average annual cost of each type. Turnpiked roads were the most expensive at £25 11s 0d per mile (that’s £25.55, for our readers who, unlike me, were educated in the post-decimalisation era). That cost excluded the expenses incurred in tollhouses and gates. For comparison, the military and Parliamentary (Telford) roads were £10 6s 2½d per mile and the statute labour roads a mere £6 3s 0d per mile.

The capital's milestones...

Edinburgh can, quite properly, claim a Royal Mile. It leads from the Castle down its volcanic crag to the Scottish Parliament building and Palace of Holyrood. And it's as near as damn it, one English mile in length. The city also has a wealth of milestone heritage, some 42 at the last count in 2020, and we know much about them due to the diligent research of Society member John Riddell. Each of the turnpike trusts operating in and around Edinburgh had its own distinctive style of milestone – John has recorded thirteen different designs, with the ten turnpike roads emanating from the city distinguished by a characteristic feature. The Cramond Trust sought inspiration from the Roman milestone, with a cylindrical pillar topped in a dome, and with a painted legend. The stones date from 1833, replacing and relocating the original milestones on the Queensferry Road which dated from 1766. Thomas Telford's magnificent Dean Bridge across the ravine channelling the Water of Leith had shortened the distance to the ferry across the Forth and reduced the number of milestones required by one.

The Corstorphine District Trust favoured a large quadrant-plan pillar with a pointed pseudo-pyramid top for its milestones. The lettering is typical of the 1760s, although this example in St John's Road was refurbished in 1985.

Building works at the former Caledonian Brewery on Slateford Road 'unearthed' a square-plan 'diamond' pillar with a cast iron plate – a style adopted by the Slateford, Dalkeith and Post Road Turnpike Trusts – built into a wall.



Figure 6: Type A 'Edinburgh cylinder' at Hillhouse (photo by John Riddell).



Figure 7: Type B-N set into the wall; there's a plaque above bearing the same inscription, but in a lettering style more prevalent in the early 19th century (photo by John Riddell).



Figure 8: Type E, showing as a triangular plan, post restoration, in Slateford Road (photo by Adrian Summer).



Figure 9: Victorian post box on what would have formed part of the Great North Road, east of Edinburgh (source: Ken Diamond Collection/The Milestone Society).

Ken Diamond, the Southampton funeral director, whose legacy of photographs of roadside heritage from the 1950s and 60s across the UK forms a highly valued part of the Society's archive, took this photograph of a Victorian Royal Mail pillar box in Portobello High Street. A dual-function object of considerable interest, it is no longer in-situ, lost to modernisation of our urban fabric.

And from all the airts.....

Scotland's milestone heritage is enriched by the quaint and the quirky amongst the downright functional. As well as giving the distance and pointing the direction, many also tell a fascinating story about the country's past. Let me try to capture some of that distinctive speciality here.

Before the Forth and Tay rivers were spanned by magnificent road and rail bridges, crossing the water was by ferry – from Edinburgh (Granton) to Pettycur - latterly Burntisland - in Fife, and from Dundee to Newport on Tay. The "Boat Road" through Fife measured 33 miles and was by way of Cupar. Having walked the 33 miles or crossed the Tay, you'd have thought you'd have known you had arrived in Newport. But the cast iron milepost advised it was "0" miles!

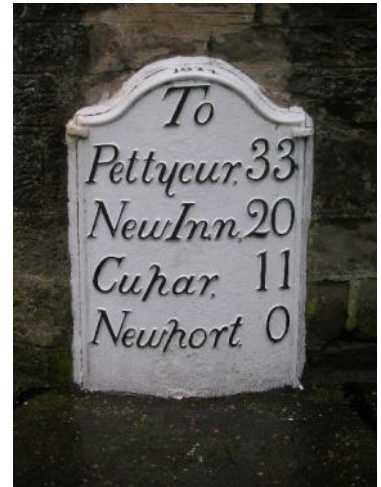


Figure 10: Newport on Tay – you've arrived! (photo by Christine Minto).

The red sandstone Midsteeple building in Dumfries carries a distance plaque cast in 1827 by the local foundry belonging to Mr J. Affleck. It gives distances to local towns - Annan (16), Castle Douglas (18) et al. "Huntingdon (272)" – only a short hop, skip and a jump from where I now live in Peterborough! Why on earth would someone in Dumfries,



Figure 11: Midsteeple, Dumfries and the accuracy of old-fashioned surveying methodologies (photo by John M. Riddell).

want to know how far it is to Huntingdon? Let me take you back to the Irish drovers, bringing cattle across to Portpatrick in Wigtownshire – they were headed to the meat markets at Smithfield in London. By the time the livestock reached their destination they would be 'gie scrawny beasts' and needed fattening up to achieve the best price at the market. Huntingdon provided the last major grazing land before they reached London, so they would stopover to 'refuel'. A drover enroute from the ferry at Portpatrick would want to know it was 272 miles before his cattle got a decent feed in Huntingdon.

But the amazing thing about the Midsteeple plaque is its accuracy. Go on the website 'UK Distance finder' and type in from 'Dumfries' to 'Huntingdon' – it's 272.2 miles! Mr Affleck knew that in 1827. (For those pedants amongst you, the additional 0.2 miles is that roundabout on the A1.)

But that is not the only mention of placenames in southern England. The AA, the RAC and the Royal Scottish Automobile Club produced metal signs showing distances to local settlements – they are relatively commonplace throughout the UK. However, no matter where the sign is located, it was clearly a condition of the licence granted to allow such signage that the information had to include the distance to London. London-centric, or what? Just who in Knowe in Wigtownshire would wish to know that they are 393 ¼ miles from London?



Figure 12: Knowe - and now you know how far from London (source: Newton Stewart Museum, photo by Christine Minto).

If you consider that is ‘too much information’ or simply bizarre, let me take you to Skye, where we find a milestone which used to stand on the roadside near Broadford, before road-widening resulted in its demise...

While we are in Skye, it is worth reflecting that despite the 2011 Census statistic that only 1.1% of the Scottish population over the age of three years old speaks Gaelic, the row over bilingual signage has raged since the 1960s. Lest any of you need a translator, road safety research dictates that the English names be spelt in white letters, with the Gaelic equivalent being yellow. Glad to clarify. A milestone was reached in 1970s when the last monolingual Gaelic speaker died, possibly because of boredom as he had no-one with whom to converse.



Figure 13: The Marble Arch milestone on Skye (source: Ken Diamond Collection/The Milestone Society).



Figure 14: The bilingual sign—now commonplace on Highland highways (source: Wikipedia Commons).

The Millennium generation

For those who think that the advances in sat-nav have relegated milestones and waymarkers as mere relics of our heritage, fret not. To mark the Millennium, the Royal Bank of Scotland commissioned 1,000 cast-iron mileposts along the National Cycle Network across the UK, with four designs, each by a sculptor from each of the four nations. Iain McColl produced “The Cockerill” as Scotland’s contribution.



Figure 15: The four millennium milepost designs; from left to right: at Findhorn Bay, at Coldstream, McColl’s design at Douglas, and Falkland Palace (photos by Cosmo Blake/Sustrans).

There are 175 such mileposts in Scotland, and it was heartening to learn that in 2022, as the world emerged from the Covid-19 pandemic restrictions, Sustrans engaged young community groups across Scotland to give the mileposts a needy ‘lick of paint’. Perhaps we’re learning the lesson about maintaining our heritage.

Hopefully, this article will have whetted your appetite to discover more about Scotland’s milestone and waymarker heritage. There are fascinating insights to be gleaned not only about our transport heritage, but also the legacy of our social and cultural history, perhaps with some pointers to the future way in which we can foster an understanding of what went before us.



Figure 16: ‘Dull’ - never! (photo by Christine Minto).

The objectives of The Milestone Society are as relevant today as they were when it was founded over twenty years ago. No one could knowingly describe the topic in the name of a Perthshire village, captured in the photograph by Christine Minto.

Even in its place names Scotland stands proud in the ‘League of Extraordinary Places’, alongside Boring in Oregon and Bland in New South Wales.

Copies of Bruce Keith’s book *Are we nearly there yet?* are available at £20, inclusive of postage and packing. For details, please contact Bruce on dunproductions@yahoo.co.uk

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WHITE ROSE, RED ROSE: THE RICHMOND TO LANCASTER TURNPIKE

Hilary Jones

This article is based on a talk given to the Milestone Society at the AGM in Long Compton in October 2022. It examines the development of the first planned east-west coast-to-coast trade route in the UK and investigates those who made it happen.

The impetus for the topic came from reading about the Grade 2 listing, for the Queen’s Platinum Jubilee in 2022, of the 50-year-old county boundary stones on the M62 at the Lancashire/Yorkshire border.



Figures 1 and 2: M62 boundary stones (SD 9806 1476). Copyright: National Highways.

Being Lancastrian by birth but moving to Yorkshire with my parents in the 1970's, the M62 was a frequent feature of our travels. Passing the distinctive county boundary stones always produced a partisan comment from my proudly Lancastrian parents!

The publicity about the M62 boundary stones led to interests in east-west routes and by coincidence to the discovery of a much earlier trans-Pennine road scheme that passes close to the author's current home in Wensleydale. The Richmond to Lancaster Turnpike Act 1751 in many ways reflects the same ambition as the M62, that is to improve trade by providing an effective coast-to-coast transport route across the north of England linking major ports.

The M62 (plus the dual carriageway A63) connects the ports of Kingston-upon-Hull on the Humber estuary in the East with Liverpool on the Mersey estuary in the West. A route of nearly 130 miles, primarily constructed in the 1970's, it links the major industrial areas of Greater Manchester and West Yorkshire to the coastal ports. The M62 has a summit in the Pennines at 372 m (1221 feet) above sea level at the aptly named Windy Hill.

In contrast, the Georgian-era Richmond-to-Lancaster route has a more northerly alignment through the Pennines with a shorter overall port-to-port distance of around 80 miles. With a summit at Wether Fell however at 614 m (2,014 feet) it followed a significantly higher-level route.

For many turnpike roads the accounts and meeting minutes of the Trusts are available in local archives. In the case of the Richmond to Lancaster Turnpike Trust there is the unusual benefit of also being able to read a diary written by the surveyor, Alexander Fothergill, appointed to deliver the road improvements¹. His diary from 1751 to 1775 provides a detailed insight into the work undertaken, the challenges he faced and the local people who carried out the work.

(A transcription of the diary is available for purchase at <http://archiveshop.northyorks.gov.uk/books/NYCROP37.html>).

Major coast-to-coast transport routes

Before looking at the details of the Richmond to Lancaster Turnpike it is useful to see how it fits into the context of other coast-to-coast routes in the UK.

As with a lot of things the Romans were ahead of the game. The 73-mile route of Hadrian's Wall, constructed in the 2nd century AD, links the east coast at Wallsend on the River Tyne with the west coast at Bowness on Solway. Although there was a road constructed parallel to the wall this was to facilitate defence rather than trade.

In response to the growing need created by the industrial revolution for improved transport infrastructure, main coast-to-coast trade routes start to appear in the 18th century with the advent of canal construction.

- Forth and Clyde canal (Start 1768, complete 1790) to link the Firth of Forth at Grangemouth to the River Clyde at Bowling. Effectively an Edinburgh to Glasgow connection.
- Leeds and Liverpool canal (Start 1770, complete 1816) to link to the Aire/Calder canal and the Humber east of Leeds to the port of Liverpool.
- Kennet and Avon canal (Start 1794, complete 1810) to link the River Thames to the River Avon providing a route from London to Bristol.

During the nineteenth century some of the canal routes were replicated by railway alternatives. In Scotland the Edinburgh and Glasgow Railway opened in 1842. In south-western England the Great Western Railway, opened in 1841, connected London with Bristol. In the north of England there was, and remains, no equivalent single long distance east-west rail route. The Lancashire and Yorkshire Railway, incorporated in 1847, was an amalgamation of several railway companies that provided the same coverage as the Leeds and Liverpool canal with Goole as the Humber port connection.

In the twentieth century, motorway projects reflected the same major east-west corridors:

- M8 – Edinburgh to Glasgow
- M62 – Hull to Liverpool
- M4 – London to Bristol

In the light of the growing realisation of the need to improve transport infrastructure, the proposal for the Richmond to Lancaster Turnpike of 1751 to link the River Tees at Stockton in the east with the River Lune at Lancaster in the west was innovatory in this key industrial area both in preceding the Leeds and Liverpool canal, and in providing a road rather than a waterway solution.

Overview of the Turnpike route

The name of the Turnpike Trust is slightly misleading as the road in fact commenced at Brompton-on-Swale three miles to the east of Richmond. This was to connect with three existing north-south turnpike roads that converged on the crossing of the River Swale at Catterick Bridge, subsequently part of the Great North Road and now the A1(M):

- Boroughbridge to Catterick and Piercebridge (1743)
- Boroughbridge to Durham via Northallerton (1745)
- Catterick Bridge to Durham via Yarm (1747)

Richmond was the main market town in the area and expanded during the Georgian period. Trade was derived from both local agricultural products and significantly also lead, coal and other mineral mining in Swaledale and Wensleydale. As it is located on the non-navigable River Swale it was reliant on overland transport for trade with the nearest available port for export being Yarm on the navigable River Tees. It had been a port since the 13th century with trade to Scotland, France and the Low Countries. It was a prosperous port in the 18th century but declined in the 19th century as ship sizes increased and docks were constructed at Stockton and Middlesbrough.

Lancaster was a rapidly growing west-coast port during the Georgian period with sea trade to Ireland, North America and the West Indies. The Lancaster Port Commission was established in 1750 to build a new quay at the town to cope with the growing trade². Lancaster was also the local commercial and judicial centre; the Assize Court was held at Lancaster Castle.

Between the two main towns the proposed route of the turnpike road followed pre-existing roads, some of Roman origin, through the Yorkshire Dales. The principal market town of Wensleydale in the 1750's was Askrigg, and it still retains many substantial Georgian buildings. Ingleton, on the south-western edge of the Dales, was a market town for an agricultural area with some small coal pits. It would become a junction point between the Richmond to Lancaster Road and the slightly later Keighley to Kendal Turnpike (1753) now the A65.

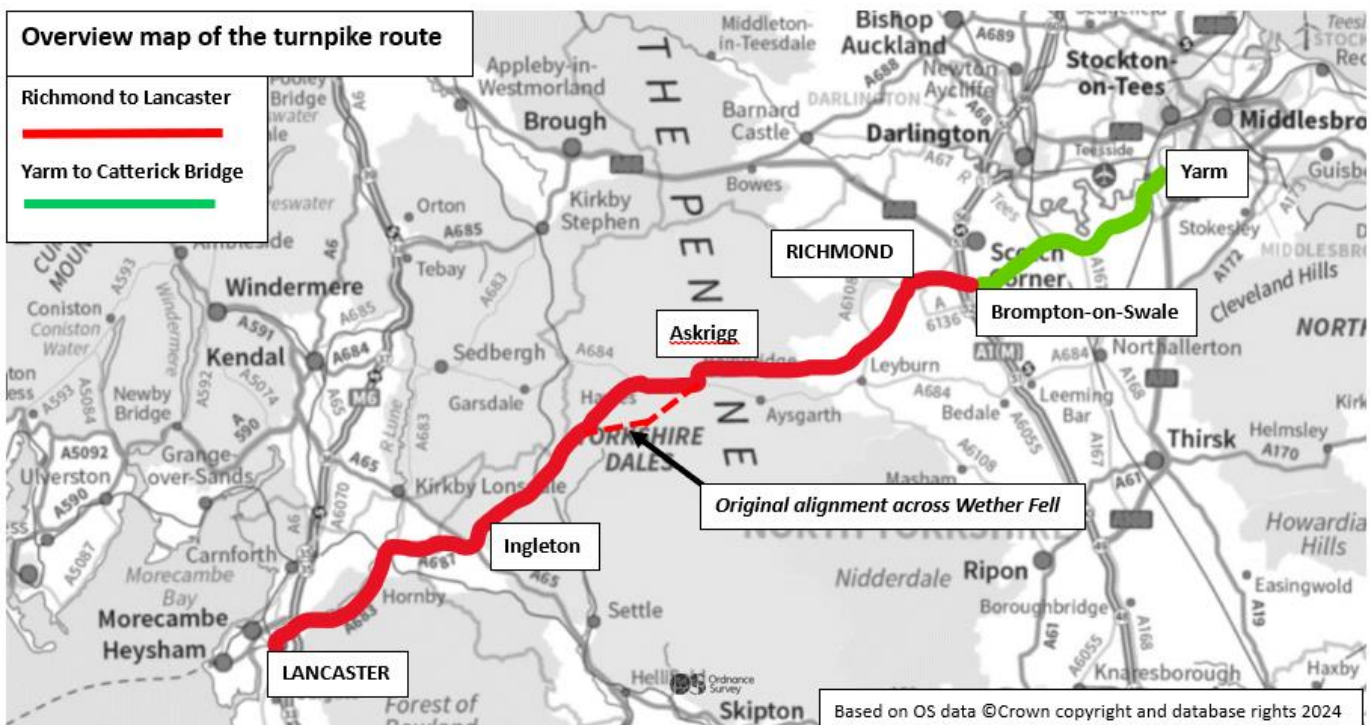


Figure 3: Overview map

From inception to delivery

In February 1751 a petition in favour of a Turnpike Road by the mayor, aldermen, freeholders, merchants, traders and inhabitants of Richmond and Lancaster was presented to the House of Commons³. It specifically mentions the benefit of continuing and extending the existing 1747 turnpike from Yarm to Catterick Bridge “...by opening a beneficial Commerce and Trade between the Eastern and Western Seas, by a much shorter and better Passage for all Sorts of Wheel and Horse Carriages than is now practicable...”.

The existing road is described as, “...for several Miles together, is so bad, ruinous, narrow and rocky that it is totally impassible at some Times of the Year for any kind of Wheel Carriages; ..the Road is now dangerous to all Persons travelling thereon..”. The petition also refers to the lack of maintenance, “...the Inhabitants of the several Parishes through which the said... Road doth lie, are not of Ability to repair the same, without some other Provision made for that Purpose”.

Clearly the Statute Labour provided by the parishes did not cover the upkeep of the road, and by becoming a turnpike it was intended that the availability of toll financing would provide a sufficient income to both improve and maintain the road.

The petition was passed to a committee of MPs for review and on 8th March 1751 they reported the new road; “...would be of great Utility, as the shortest Communication would be opened between the Two Seas, and the expense of conveying goods and Manufactures to and from the Counties of York and Lancaster much lessened...”

The bill then progressed quickly through the parliamentary process from a First reading on 20th March to a Third and final reading of the Bill on 19th April when it was passed to the Lords. It was agreed by the Lords on 27th April and within a month, on 22nd May, received Royal Assent and was enacted⁴.

The first diary entry of 1751 by Alexander Fothergill was on 19th June when he records, “...the first general meeting of the trustees...was at the Red Lyon in Askrigg...where I Alexander Fothergill was...appointed surveyor...for the East Division...and surveyor westwards from Greenside Gate to Ingleton bridge...”.

The delivery of the project thereafter is recorded in detail in his diaries, and these extracts from the first two weeks indicate clearly that his priority was setting up the toll-bar system to raise revenue for the Trustees. At this point there had been no improvement to the road, so not surprisingly there was significant resistance to paying the new tolls.

26 June “...by order fixed a toll bar at Richmond Bridge where Thomas Metcalfe was ordered to take tolls.”

27 June “I bought oak wood for the gates & posts of Sheldon Craddock esq. and deal for rails, and gate bars of Thomas Cowling and contracted with Henry Abdale for the ironwork and with Thomas Robinson for carpenter work, and with Thomas Mawer to bring the wood from Hartford to Richmond. Viewed the road at Brunton High Lane...for the most advantageous place for a toll house. This and reducing these contracts into writing employed me closely all day.”

28 June “Came to Halfpenny House and placed William Cass to take toll...and fixed bars. Thence to Askrigg where I prepared posts, rails, bars etc., and placed William Fowel to take tolls. I also contracted with John Stockdale to make a strong wall to contract the road to the toll bar there. Thence to Brackenber and placed John Fawcett to take tolls having fixed bars for that purpose. Thence to Bainbridge where I performed the same for Emanuel Fothergill at his own house.

I also instructed these bar keepers what tolls to take and gave them strict orders to give just accounts and behave with all possible civility to all passengers etc.”

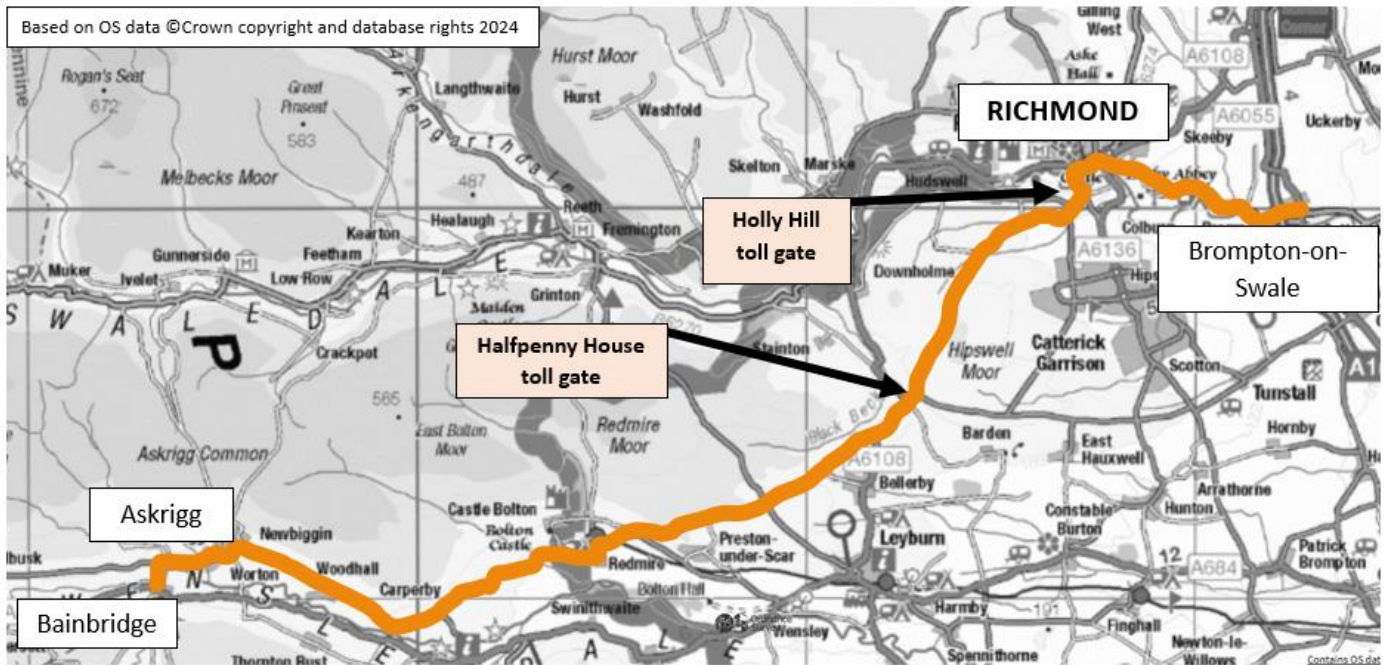
2 July “I rode to Bainbridge, Brackenber, Halfpenny House and to Richmond hastening the works at the several toll bars... instructing the collectors in their duties as passengers put all the difficulties upon them that ill nature could invent.”

5 July “I rode up with Daniel Rea and other undertakers (contractors) to show them Hudswell Moor, Scarth Nick and all the road to Askrigg and returned again to Richmond showing them how and where it must be widened and repaired and showing where stones may be gotten etc. This evening we fixed the posts and gate at Alcocks house in Slegill, but the posts being very difficult to fix it kept us very late and I was obliged to give the men in ale 2s 6d.”

6 July “In the morning I measured and calculated the expense of making a good easy road up Slegill to the top of Holly Hill...I then attended the turnpike meeting...I was directed to complete the fixing of the gates as soon as possible and to attend the meeting of the West Division trustees at Ingleton on the 8th July. They sat late but I rode home before midnight.”

10 July “To Bainbridge, Brackenber and Askrigg to hasten constructing the toll bars and inform and encourage the collectors in their duty, passengers being very riotous and unwilling to pay the tolls before road be repaired.”

Along the route – Richmond to Askrigg



Map A: Route from Brompton-on-Swale to Askrigg

Starting at Brompton-on-Swale the road continued through Richmond to cross the River Swale at Green Bridge where there is a milestone plaque (NZ 1698 0059, ref no YN_LARC56) stating “To Askrigg 18 miles, To Lancaster 56 miles”. Its date is uncertain, perhaps from early in the turnpike’s history, from 1788/9 when a new bridge replaced the previous one, or from the 19th century when the parapet was rebuilt, replicating the information on the original stone.



Figures 4a and 4b: Mile plaque on Green Bridge, close up and contextual (photo by Christine Minto).

The road then climbs steeply to the location of the first tollhouse at Holly Hill Gate. It then crosses what is now part of the Catterick Garrison military ranges to reach Halfpenny House Gate.

The latter only operated as a toll house until 1753. Its name might be assumed to have derived from the toll function, but it was already recorded as ‘Halfpenny House lodgings’ prior to the introduction of the turnpike, so simply a coincidence.

The route continues westward along the north side of Wensleydale through Redmire, Carperby and Woodhall to the market town of Askrigg.



Figure 5: Holly Hill toll cottage (NZ 1718 0029, ref. no. YN.HIP). Photo by Hilary Jones.



Figure 6: Halfpenny House (SE 1268 9504). Photo by Hilary Jones.



Figure 7: Askrigg Market Cross (SD 9480 9102, ref. no. YNRI_ASR). Photo: The Milestone Society.

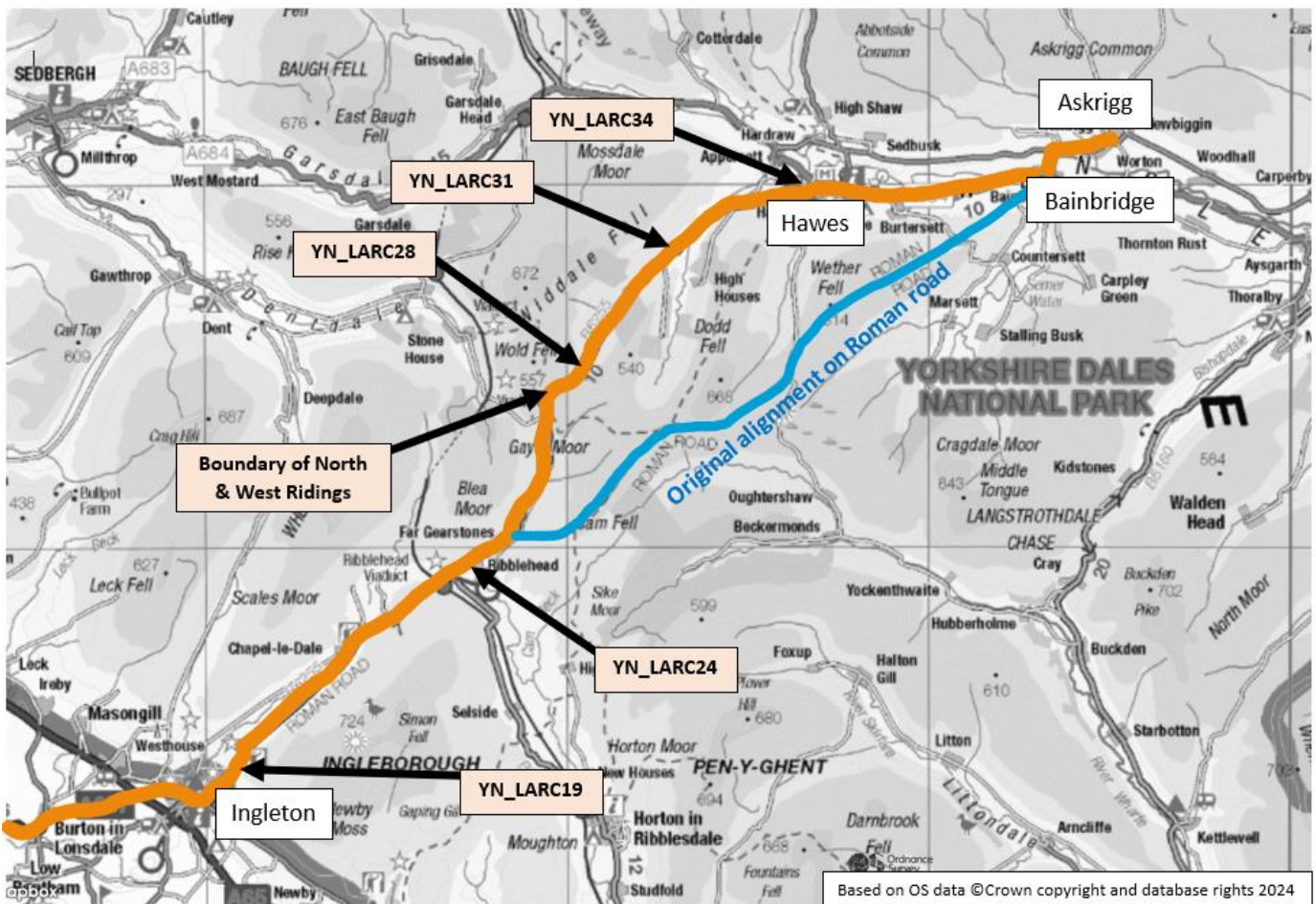
Along the route – Askrigg to Ingleton

After Askrigg the road then passed the toll house at Breconbar to turn south over the River Ure to Bainbridge. The remains of the Roman fort of Virosidum are still visible at Bainbridge and from here a Roman road headed southwest towards Lancashire. This route, still in use in the 18th century as the main road to Ingleton, was adopted by the Turnpike Trust.

The road reached the highest point on its route at Wether Fell south of Bainbridge and continued across open moorland to Gearstones near Ribblesdale. Now known as Cam High Road this remains as a classic green lane in the Yorkshire Dales and gives a good idea of what it would have been like travelling along the original turnpike.

The elevation of the road caused regular problems with snow and mist, so in 1795 a new lower route was adopted from Bainbridge to Hawes, now the A684, and along Widdale to meet the original route at Gearstones. This only reaches 438 m at Newby Head significantly lower than the 614 m of Wether Fell. It was the change of route that led to the growth of Hawes, previously a small village, as the main market town in upper Wensleydale at the expense of Askrigg.

From Gearstones the road remains the main route to Ingleton, and then on to Lancaster from the northern Yorkshire Dales as the B6255.



Map B: Askrigg to Ingleton



Figure 8: Cam High Road looking southwest from Bainbridge (SD 9254 8953). Photo by Hilary Jones.



Figure 9: Milestone at Hawes (SD 8686 8983, ref. no. YN_LARC34). Photo by Hilary Jones.

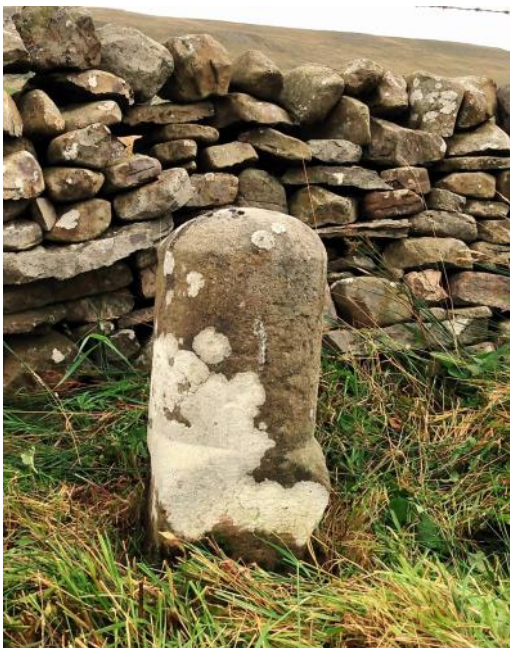


Figure 10: Milestone at Snaizeholme (SD 8310 8818, ref. no. YN_LARC31). Photo by Hilary Jones.



Figure 11: Milestone at Widdale Head (SD 7997 8452, ref. no. YN_LARC28). Photo by Hilary Jones.

Three turnpike era milestones remain on this later section of the route at Hawes (YN_LARC34), Snaizeholme Beck (YN_LARC31) and Widdale Head (YN_LARC28).

There is an interesting transition once the boundary between the North and West Ridings of Yorkshire is crossed at Newby Head. On the section of road transferred to the County Council of the West Riding a series of replacement mileposts, cast at the William Towler Globe Foundry in Leeds, were installed in the late 19th century. They are of the same design as those used for the 1893 Gill Stead contract, but the Lancaster-to-Richmond road is not listed in the original contract. This contract covered the supply and fixing of 615 milestones across the West Riding on 69 named roads with the number of milestones on each given. The design and dimensions of the milestones were detailed in the contract, including the letter size.

“The plates to be lettered and figured with raised block type 2 inches high for the name of the Town and Mileage....to stand up $\frac{3}{8}$ of an inch”. None of the original turnpike milestones remain on this section, mostly likely removed to make way for the new mileposts⁵.

Of the ten mileposts there would have been originally between the West Riding boundary and Ingleton, seven still remain on the eastern side of the road although most are in need of repainting as with these two examples at Ribblehead and a mile north of Ingleton.

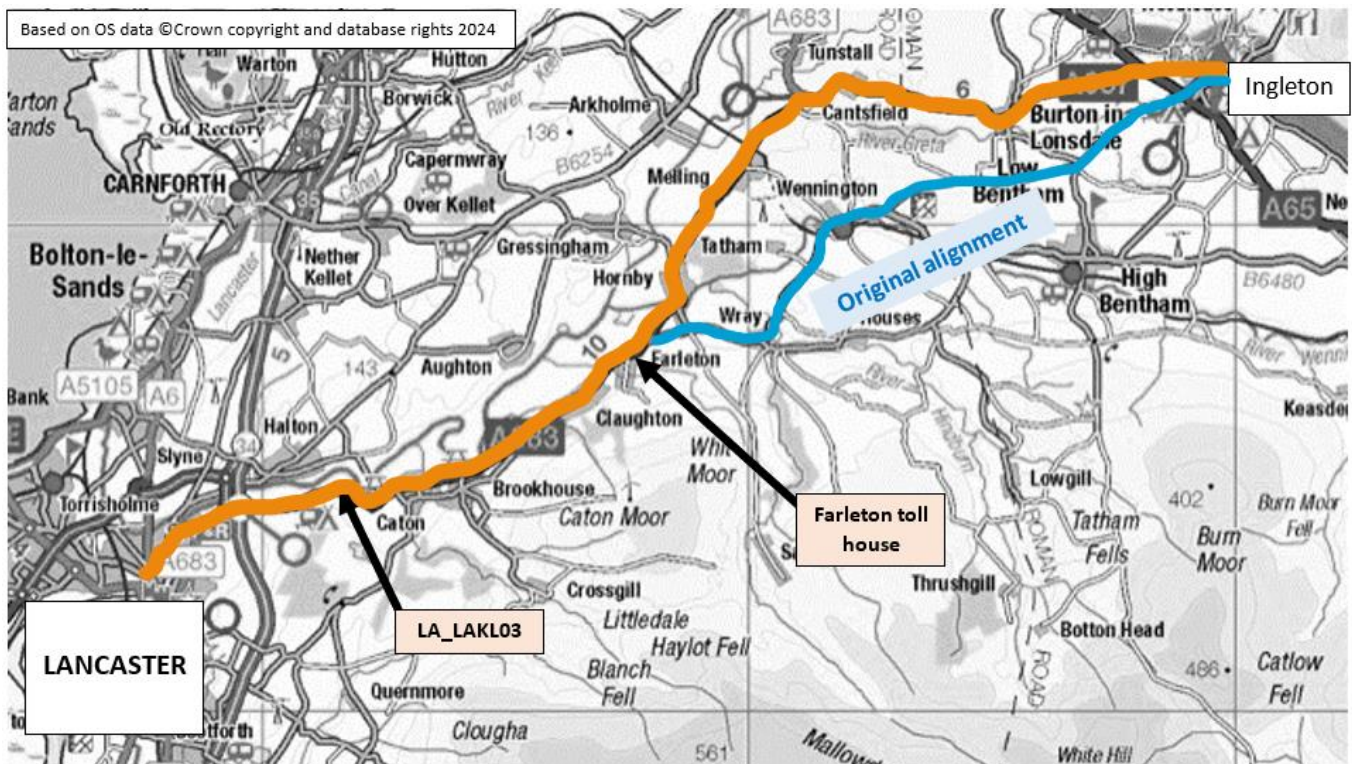


Figure 12: Ribblehead milepost (SD 7693 7951, ref. no. YN_LARC24). Photo by Hilary Jones.



Figure 13: White Scar milepost (SD 7098 7426, ref. no. YN_LARC19). Photo by Hilary Jones.

Mileposts were not installed by the North Riding of Yorkshire County Council between Hawes and Newby Head, presumably as the original milestones were still in a useable condition.



Map C: Ingleton to Lancaster

The current A687 and A683 follow the turnpike alignment from Ingleton to Lancaster. Initially the route heads westwards along the north side of the River Greta through Burton in Lonsdale to Cantsfield before turning south along the east side of the River Lune.

The original proposed alignment for the turnpike in 1751 however took a different route from Ingleton along the south side of the River Greta to serve some local coal pits. There is an inscription, dated 1774, with names Michael Armistead and Wm Gadd Builders on Parkfoot Bridge (SD 6727 7180) that could indicate it was built as part of the turnpike road. This earlier route continued to Wennington and Wray,

now the B6480, before joining the later route between Hornby and Farleton. There may be documents in the archives that could shed more light, but at the moment it is unclear when this route was altered in favour of the Burton in Lonsdale option.

One turnpike era milestone remains on this section of the route on the A683 west of Caton. It is Grade 2 listed and has the same shape as the



Figure 14: Farleton toll house (SD 5761 6738, ref. no. LA.HOR). Photo by Hilary Jones.

ones on the B6255 but is smaller.

Statute labour and contract labour

The Highways Act of 1555 gave each parish responsibility for repairing its own roads. This was done with Statute Labour at a rate of four-days' work each year for each adult male, increased to six days in 1563. The local Justices assessed parishes for the amount they should provide and could impose fines if the work was evaded. Alternatively, people could pay "composition money" in lieu of doing the work.

In 1768 an Askrigg Statute List assessed 115 persons liable to pay sums from 8d to 5s 4d. Twenty-four of them were additionally expected to supply a horse and cart.

The 1751 Turnpike Act gave the Surveyor the power to utilise this "free" labour through the authority of the Quarter Sessions "...the several Inhabitants of the several Townships Parishes Places and Divisions through which the said road led (betwixt the East End of Brompton High Lane...and Greenside Gate upon the Mountain Cam)...perform two days Statute Work upon the said road or compound for the same..."

It was difficult to get people to attend for their Statute Labour and, although used by the Turnpike Trust, it created a lot of headaches for the surveyor as recorded in his diary. Contractors were preferred to undertake the work.

These diary extracts from 1754 give a flavour of the challenges:

10 June "I attended the township of Askrigg...to their first common day's work; they appeared and wrought midleing well save Francis Robinson who was very saucy & went from work at 3 o'clock although he began after nine and was above one hour away at noon."

11 June "I attended the East half of Askrigg to their first statute day's work. They appeared pretty generally but wrought very idly...I provided skuttles to place in their carts at which they were so greeved that often threw them away over in to the fields".



Figure 15: Milestone west of Caton on the A683 (SD 5150 6461, ref. no. LA_LAKL03). Photo by Hilary Jones.

7 Nov "Rain & snow in the morning but several came & leading gravel into the Bellhorsegate etc. Wanting labourers to fill the carts. I hired John Carr, paid 1s. I could no longer wait on 2 or 3 carts a day...the defaulters might send me their fines that night. In the evening several came and paid."

8 Nov "Several more came & paid for their defaults. Those marked on the list came with carts just as I was going away at 10 o'clock. Refused to pay. Told them the day was over...I could not stay...to wait for 2 or 3 carts. John Redmain gave me very abusive language & some others. I had fixed to meet persons on the road and could not stay. Ordered Christopher Holm to serve summons upon George Smith if he came home in time..."

Conclusion

This article can only scratch the surface of the fascinating contents of Alexander Fothergill's diary which provides an evocative insight into a period often overlooked. We are familiar with the great engineers of the canal and railway age such as James Brindley, Thomas Telford and Isambard Kingdom Brunel, but little is known of the earlier turnpike surveyors. Alexander Fothergill did not build major engineering structures in creating the Richmond to Lancaster Turnpike Road, but he was as much the multi-tasking project manager as his well-known successors. In addition to surveying the route, he was required to appoint contractors, supervise the workforce, keep the accounts and draft the legal procedures for both fines and amendments to the original Act. All of this he achieved while running a farm and being a Quaker preacher.

References

¹Marie Hartley, Joan Ingleby, David S Hall & Leslie P Wenham; Alexander Fothergill and the Richmond to Lancaster Turnpike Road; North Yorkshire County Record Office Publications No.37, March 1985

²River Lune Navigation Act 1749 (23 Geo. 2, Cap. 12)

³Journals of the House of Commons, 1750 -1754, Volume XXVI

⁴House of Lords Journal Volume 27: May 1751, 21-30

⁵Christine Minto, The Brayshaw and Booth Story, Saddleworth Historical Society Bulletin, 2015, vol 45 (1), pp 1-17

LANCASTER CANAL MILESTONES

Christopher Leather

Construction of the Lancaster Canal began in 1792 but it was not opened to traffic until 1819, transporting both goods and people. The history of the construction of the canal is a complex affair that required numerous Acts of Parliament and various ways of raising the funds. Several companies and committees were formed; many buyouts and take-overs took place. Local railway companies were also keen to get involved, probably to protect their own interests. A very good book by Robert Swain called *Exploring the Lancaster Canal* contains as much information as the reader could want.

The canal was constructed between Preston and Tewitfield between 1793 and 1797, with the remaining northern section to Kendal completed by 1819. The section to Glasson Dock was completed in 1826. Short sections of the canal were contracted out to local construction firms. The architect/engineer for the canal was John Rennie. The Lune Aqueduct is the main aqueduct on the canal and was designed by him, as were the Brock Aqueduct, the Keer Aqueduct and several more, plus something like 150 bridges that follow his design. Rennie is also famous for the Skerton Aqueduct in Lancaster and the old Waterloo Bridge in London. Most of the bridges over the canal are still intact; however, many have been modified and/or widened and one or two have been demolished. One or two in the dry section are now disused.

Two letters that survive from August 1819 show that the milestones were erected shortly after the completion of the canal; these give a valuable insight into the logistics involved in placing milestones on canal banks. Even in the middle of the canal age, a crane on a boat would no doubt have been sufficiently unusual to have attracted a crowd of onlookers.

The writer of the first letter was Thomas Fletcher, canal engineer responsible for building the canal from Tewitfield to Hincaster. The recipient was William Crosley Jr, canal engineer for Hincaster to Kendal and the responder is Brian Padgett Gregson, son of Samuel Gregson, clerk to the committee of the canal company. (Undecipherable words are placed in square brackets) Crow Park is at Natland, near Kendal.

To:

Mr Fletcher, Engineer 10 August 1819

Heversham

Sir

The Crane Boat will leave this early on Thurs morning with the Milestones and will take on board the Crane at Tewitfield and proceed to Kendal. I should expect the Crane will be loaded [] on Friday.

Wm Dickenson is going to Tewit and will afterwards proceed to Holme to assist your men to take down the House [] etc, which may be put into the Boat as she returns along with any materials etc which you may have to send down. Will you direct some person who knows where the stakes are set to go along with the Boat and assist to discharge the Milestones carefully and at the proper places.

BPG

To:

Mr Crosley 10 Aug 1819

Crow Park

Sir

In reply to your letter today my Father went from home this Evening and will not return before the end of this week. I think he proposes going Northwards as soon as he comes home and will no doubt write you when he fixes. It will be rather uncertain whether the Boat with the Crane and Milestones can reach your end on Friday but the Master must send word by the Packet.

BPG

Since writing the above I have considered that the Crane at Tewitfield cannot be put on board before Friday or perhaps Saturday morning as the Boat will have all kinds of suitable tackle on board, it would be very desirable that you should have the hole ready sunk and you can keep the Boat to assist you to place the Crane, say on Monday next.

BPG

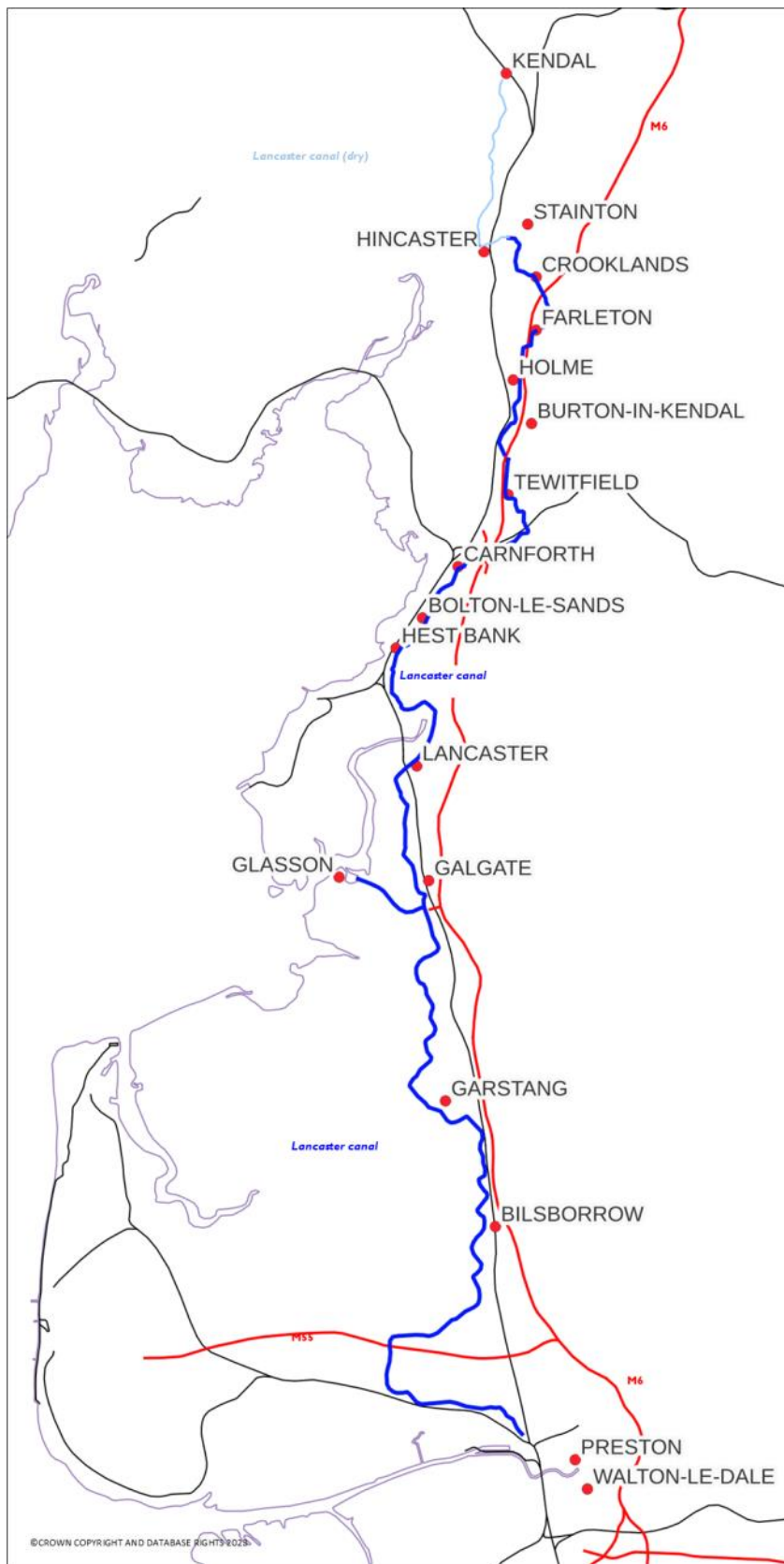
[Source: Lancaster Canal Navigation Company correspondence book 1819-1822 held by the National Archive ref RAIL 844/267.]

Postal services were clearly swifter and more frequent in the early 19th century than today!

Between 1801 and 1846 packet boats carrying passengers plied the canal between Preston and Lancaster, and later all the way to Kendal, the entire journey taking around seven hours. The canal would have also been used to transport goods and materials, in particular coal and limestone, earning the canal the nickname ‘the black and white canal’. For most of the 19th century the canal company prospered despite the increasing competition of the railways but was wound up in 1885. Commercial traffic, however, continued into the 20th century but ceased between 1944 and 1947, the last shipment being coal taken to Lancaster.

After 1885, the canal was owned successively by the railway companies ‘London and Northwestern’ and ‘London, Midland and Scottish’, then the British Transport Commission and the British Waterways Board. In 1963 a voluntary organisation, the ‘Association for The Restoration of the Lancaster Canal’ was founded with its aim of reopening the canal from Tewitfield locks to Kendal. Finally, in 2012, the Association became a charity ‘The Lancaster Canal Trust.’ Members include anglers, boaters, naturalists and walkers. During the winter months, active members participate in Working Parties to help the restoration and/or maintenance of the canal. During the summer months, they crew the Trip Boat NB Waterwitch from Crooklands near Bridge 166 up to the end of the watered section at Stainton Crossing (Bridge 172). The Trust publishes a bi-annual magazine, *Waterwitch*.

The canal has a total length of 57 miles, all of which can be walked. However, only the section below Tewitfield is open for privately owned boats. It starts at the Ashton Basin in Preston and ends by the side of the Household Recycling Centre in Kendal, the last five or so miles being dry. The canal first heads west out of Preston before swinging north and then east and then north again to Garstang. From Garstang the canal broadly heads north through Galgate and Lancaster before weaving through Bolton-le-Sands and Carnforth. North of Carnforth the canal is broken in two places by the M6 motorway, and footpath diversions bridge the gaps (just beyond bridges 141, Saltermire and 154, Garths). The canal no longer contains water beyond bridge 173 (Sellet Hall) but the route of the canal can still be traced and followed all the way to Kendal via the Hincaster Tunnel (the path goes round it) and by passing over the Sedgwick Aqueduct along the way.



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Many of the 200 plus bridges are inaccessible to traffic and/or pedestrians. The recommended access points are bridges 17, 26, 36, 50, 64, 75, 88, 108, 117, 129, 148, 155, 172, 178. These provide a four-mile walk (eight if walking out and back) in most cases. A guidebook is available for purchase from the Lancaster Canal Trust, or the author can be contacted via the editor of M&W for more details. All of the route is flat except for a small section near the Tewitfield Locks. However, access points do sometimes involve steep, narrow steps (108, 148, 178). Most of the towpath is clean and dry in summer, but some sections get muddy after heavy rain in the winter months.

Milestones were placed along the whole stretch of the canal, in some sections interspersed with half-milestones. Some 'standing stones' at the bottom of the canal steps or near bridges look like half-milestones. They are probably 'newel posts' without the steps, some kind of cattle deflector or for holding stop planks in place when not in use, but several of them appear to be close to a set number of miles apart.

Recording and photographing all the Lancaster canal milestones became an accidental extra project after the completion of a coastal walk between Lytham and Arnsdale, having used the canal to get from Hest Bank to Carnforth. The milestones were an obvious and welcome feature to record, having seen one or two on Anglesey previously.

The canal was split into 14 sections (including the Glasson Spur) of roughly four miles each, walked in both directions. The distances to accessible bridges were calculated using GPS data input into the mapping utility GPSVisualiser www.gpsvisualizer.com. Bridges, milestones and other interesting features were then logged on Garmin BaseCamp software along with the GPS tracks and links to photographs of the Points of Interest.

There were no major problems finding the milestones apart from some parts of the towpath being very muddy. However, a little extra knowledge in advance and more careful planning would have helped reduce the number of repeat trips to pick up previously missed bridges and milestones.

Several milestones were stubborn to find: one was laid flat on the ground, LAN-05, and two are in heavy undergrowth on the off-bank of the dry section, LAN-52 and LAN-53. The one at Saltermire, LAN-43, only came to light after repeated searches and was finally spotted peeping above the dead grass in the depths of winter. A visit to the off-bank site with Bill Froggatt, winner of the Milestone Society's Terry Keegan Memorial Award in 2014, and James Ormrod, both of the Canal and River Trust (C&RT) revealed that it has either become somewhat buried in silt or soil or has sunk into the ground. Efforts may be made to raise it, but it is unlikely to be moved to the towpath side due to the nature of the location. Weed suppressant fabric may also be considered to help keep it visible in summer. LAN-19 was also a late find when undertaking one final search. It too is hidden by tall grass in the summer months. LAN-31 also eventually turned up after the author was contacted by John Jones who had spotted it on a walk in the depths of winter and was responding to an article about the milestones in the LCT newsletter. This milestone is partly down a bank and set very low in the ground. The National Library of Scotland website set of old OS maps displayed side by side with modern maps and grid reference/coordinate data was an invaluable aid in finding them.

Whilst it is known that the milestones on the upper reaches were installed in August 1819 it isn't known when those on the lower reaches were installed. Fifteen modern replacement milestones were installed as part of the canal's bi-centenary celebrations in 2019. Two more have recently been installed (LAN-09R and LAN-30R). Of the 56 original milestones, 40 have been found, that along with the 17 replacements, gives a total of 57 recorded so far.



Figure 1: Half-mile stone LAN-45.5, Holme Hill.

Some half-mile milestones (Figure 1), small plain stones, have also been recorded on the northern section of the canal beyond Lancaster. According to a Lancaster Canal Trust (LCT) source, half-mile milestones were only erected on this section of the canal. There appear to be 12 stones in total. These have all been searched for and found. The other half mile locations have been checked and nothing has been found.

Just two milestone locations have no milestone there at all (LAN-38 and LAN-55) and 14 of the replacement locations no longer have the original milestone there, the exceptions being LAN-02 near Preston, LAN-09 near Bell Fold Bridge and LAN-19 near Bells Bridge. It is unlikely that the missing milestones will be found unless the

LCT or the Canal & Rivers Trust have more information about them. Numerous site searches at the suspected locations have proved fruitless. The author has been given an old scanned photograph of the missing LAN-50 by Bill Froggatt which shows the milestone standing on a small raised bank on the off-side leaning towards the canal at a precarious angle. Bill stated that it is most likely to have fallen into the canal and that Richard Trevitt of the LCT has probed the canal but failed to find it. It is unlikely to have been stolen as it is located 1 km from the nearest road; it is also unlikely to have been removed and stored by the landowner, though that is a slim possibility if it has been found to be uprooted.

Full records of all the milestones found so far, mile and half-mile markers, have been provided for updating the Milestone Society's canal milestones database. Photographs of all the milestones have also been added to Geograph www.geograph.org.uk (See Table for details).

ID	From Kendal	From Preston	near/off	Nearest Bridge	Number	Logged	GPS location	GPS covention to OS Grid (inc HE)	Inscription (= number only)	Displayed distance	Inscription (= number only)	Displayed distance	https://www.geograph.org.uk/photos/	Note
LAN-56	1	56	off	Highgate Settings	185	found	N54° 18.888' W2° 44.247'	SD 52069 91293	(Lancaster)	26	:: (Kendal)	1	7293940	1
LAN-55	2	55	near	Natland Hall	182	can't find	N54° 18.113' W2° 44.731'	SD 51583 89643	(Lancaster)	25	:: (Kendal)	2	7296661	2
LAN-54	3	54	off	Larrigg Hall	180	found	N54° 17.291' W2° 44.811'	SD 51472 87618	(Lancaster)	24	:: (Kendal)	3	7294284	3
LAN-53	4	53	off	Sedgwick Hill	177	found	N54° 16.495' W2° 45.009'	SD 51249 86947	(Lancaster)	23	:: (Kendal)	4	7294337	4
LAN-52	5	52	off	Hincaster Tunnel	175	found	N54° 15.700' W2° 45.361'	SD 50851 85375	(Lancaster)	22	:: (Kendal)	5	7294493	5
LAN-51	6	51	near	Stalton Crossing	172	found	N54° 15.729' W2° 44.253'	SD 52055 85416	(Lancaster)	21	:: (Kendal)	6	7294494	
LAN-50	7	50	off	Mattinsons	168	can't find	N54° 15.123' W2° 43.895'	SD 52432 84287	(Lancaster)	20	:: (Kendal)	7	7565654	
LAN-50R	7	50	near	Mattinsons	168	found	N54° 15.108' W2° 43.910'	SD 52432 84286	(Lancaster)	20	:: (Kendal)	7	7294508	6
LAN-49B	8	49	near	Crooklands Aqueduct	165	found	N54° 14.572' W2° 42.863'	SD 52528 83277	(Lancaster)	19	:: (Kendal)	8	7294811	7
LAN-48	9	48	near	Dovehouses	160	found	N54° 13.774' W2° 42.543'	SD 52872 81774	(Lancaster)	18	:: (Kendal)	9	7294997	
LAN-47	10	47	near	Splintey Corner	154a	found	N54° 13.075' W2° 43.179'	SD 52168 80483	(Lancaster)	17	:: (Kendal)	10	7296308	8
LAN-46	11	46	near	Jamons	150	found	N54° 12.313' W2° 43.675'	SD 52615 79064	(Lancaster)	16	:: (Kendal)	11	7296315	9
LAN-45	12	45	near	Braithwaites	146	found	N54° 11.507' W2° 43.953'	SD 52300 77562	(Lancaster)	15	:: (Kendal)	12	7296324	
LAN-44	13	44	near	Yaland Road	142	found	N54° 10.790' W2° 44.462'	SD 51730 76259	(Lancaster)	14	:: (Kendal)	13	7296333	
LAN-43	14	43	off	Saltmine	141	found	N54° 09.981' W2° 44.252'	SD 51945 74757	(Lancaster)	13	:: (Kendal)	14	7438930	10
LAN-42	15	42	near	Twitfield Tumpike	138	found	N54° 09.240' W2° 44.002'	SD 52203 73378	(Lancaster)	12	:: (Kendal)	15	7296338	
LAN-41	16	41	near	Hodgson's	134	found	N54° 08.687' W2° 43.462'	SD 52779 72438	(Lancaster)	11	:: (Kendal)	16	7296347	
LAN-40	17	40	near	Kellet Lane	130	found	N54° 08.152' W2° 44.019'	SD 52163 71363	(Lancaster)	10	:: (Kendal)	17	7296351	
LAN-39	18	39	near	Brewers Farm	129a	found	N54° 07.720' W2° 45.248'	SD 50816 70587	(Lancaster)	9	:: (Kendal)	18	7296357	
LAN-38	19	38	near	Camforth	128	can't find	N54° 07.433' W2° 46.360'	SD 49599 70056	(Lancaster)	8	:: (Kendal)	19	7564663	
LAN-37	20	37	near	Barkers	126	found	N54° 06.851' W2° 47.309'	SD 48554 68968	(Lancaster)	7	:: (Kendal)	20	7296364	
LAN-36	21	36	near	Bolton Church	122	found	N54° 06.142' W2° 47.630'	SD 48189 67678	(Lancaster)	6	:: (Kendal)	21	7296367	
LAN-35	22	35	near	Hatlex Lane	119	found	N54° 05.570' W2° 48.368'	SD 47373 66626	(Lancaster)	5	:: (Kendal)	22	7296373	
LAN-34	23	34	off	Bakes Head	116	can't find	N54° 04.920' W2° 48.869'	SD 46813 65437	(Lancaster)	4	:: (Kendal)	23	7565660	
LAN-34R	23	34	near	Bakes Head	116	found	N54° 04.910' W2° 48.852'	SD 46831 65408	(Lancaster)	4	:: (Kendal)	23	7296379	11
LAN-33	24	33	near	Hammerton Hall	111	found	N54° 04.156' W2° 48.627'	SD 47060 64007	(Lancaster)	3	:: (Kendal)	24	7296385	
LAN-32	25	32	off	Lune Aqueduct	107	found	N54° 04.140' W2° 47.435'	SD 48360 63974	(Lancaster)	2	:: (Kendal)	25	7296392	12
LAN-31	26	31	near	Ridge Lane	104	found	N54° 03.397' W2° 47.298'	SD 48494 62984	(Lancaster)	1	:: (Kendal)	26	7514494	
LAN-30R	27	30	near	Lancaster Basin	98	found	N54° 02.663' W2° 48.001'	SD 47712 61231	Gartang/Preston	13/30	:: Kendal	27	7296486	
LAN-29R	28	29	near	Haverbreaks	95	found	N54° 02.020' W2° 48.603'	SD 47041 60057	Gartang	12	:: Lancaster	1	7296494	
LAN-28R	29	28	near	Carr Lane	93	found	N54° 01.223' W2° 48.515'	SD 47120 58567	Gartang	11	:: Lancaster	2	7296500	
LAN-27	30	27	off	Ashton Park	90	can't find	N54° 00.405' W2° 48.375'	SD 47256 57049	Gartang	10	:: Lancaster	3	7297191	13
LAN-27R	30	27	near	Ashton Park	90	found	N54° 00.400' W2° 48.393'	SD 47236 57051	Gartang	10	:: Lancaster	3	7564649	
LAN-26	31	26	off	Ellel Hall	88	can't find	N53° 59.659' W2° 47.948'	SD 47708 55659	Gartang	9	:: Lancaster	4	7565666	14
LAN-26R	31	26	near	Ellel Hall	88	found	N53° 59.667' W2° 47.967'	SD 47686 55675	Gartang	9	:: Lancaster	4	7296505	
LAN-25	32	25	near	The Double	85	found	N53° 59.017' W2° 47.520'	SD 48154 54465	Gartang	8	:: Lancaster	5 (missing)	7296567	
LAN-24	33	24	off	Hay Carr	83	found	N53° 58.207' W2° 47.071'	SD 48635 52957	Gartang	7	:: Lancaster	6	7296572	15
LAN-23R	34	23	near	Cockham Road	79	found	N53° 57.657' W2° 47.753'	SD 47878 51945	Gartang	6	:: Lancaster	7	7296578	
LAN-22	35	22	near	Corley	76	found	N53° 56.921' W2° 47.459'	SD 48184 50576	Gartang	5 (missing)	:: Lancaster	8 (missing)	7296581	
LAN-21R	36	21	near	Cabus Nook	73	found	N53° 56.150' W2° 47.156'	SD 48500 49143	Gartang	4	:: Lancaster	9	7296583	
LAN-20R	37	20	near	Davis	70	found	N53° 55.505' W2° 47.398'	SD 48222 47950	Gartang	3	:: Lancaster	10	7296589	
LAN-19	38	19	off	Bells	68	found	N53° 54.821' W2° 47.773'	SD 47796 46687	Gartang	2 (missing)	:: Lancaster	11 (missing)	7298883	16
LAN-19R	38	19	near	Bells	68	found	N53° 54.825' W2° 47.790'	SD 47778 46694	Gartang	2	:: Lancaster	11	7296596	
LAN-18R	39	18	near	Demolished	65	found	N53° 54.198' W2° 47.507'	SD 48075 45528	Gartang	1	:: Lancaster	12	7296599	
LAN-17	40	17	near	Byeworth	60	found	N53° 53.676' W2° 46.478'	SD 49192 44548	Preston	17	:: Lancaster	13	7296601	
LAN-16	41	16	near	Dobsons	55	found	N53° 53.657' W2° 45.320'	SD 50460 44498	Preston	16	:: Gartang	1	7296603	
LAN-15	42	15	near	Stubbins	51	found	N53° 52.960' W2° 44.982'	SD 50816 43203	Preston	15	:: Gartang	2	7296605	
LAN-14	43	14	near	Town Croft	50	found	N53° 52.219' W2° 45.101'	SD 50671 41830	Preston	14	:: Gartang	3 (missing)	7296606	
LAN-13	44	13	near	Greenman	47	found	N53° 51.504' W2° 45.147'	SD 50607 40504	Preston	13 (missing)	:: Gartang	4 (missing)	7296610	
LAN-12	45	12	near	Rowbuck	44	found	N53° 50.885' W2° 45.178'	SD 50560 39357	Preston	12	:: Gartang	5	7296613	
LAN-11R	46	11	near	White Horse	42	found	N53° 50.161' W2° 44.951'	SD 50795 38012	Preston	11	:: Gartang	6	7296623	
LAN-10	47	10	near	Heggrasse	39	found	N53° 49.443' W2° 45.076'	SD 50644 36682	Preston	10 (missing)	:: Gartang	7	7296626	
LAN-09	48	9	near	Bell Fold	35	found	N53° 48.873' W2° 45.882'	SD 49748 35634	Preston	9 (missing)	:: Gartang	8 (missing)	7296631	
LAN-09R	48	9	near	Bell Fold	36	found	N53° 48.873' W2° 45.882'	SD 49748 35635	Preston	9	:: Gartang	8	7514510	
LAN-08	49	8	near	Swilbrook	32	found	N53° 48.390' W2° 47.094'	SD 48408 34753	Preston	8 (missing)	:: Gartang	9 (missing)	7296635	
LAN-07	50	7	near	Fleethen	29	found	N53° 48.396' W2° 48.549'	SD 46812 34782	Preston	7	:: Gartang	10	7296638	
LAN-06	51	6	near	Kirkham	26	found	N53° 47.634' W2° 48.890'	SD 46418 33373	Preston	6	:: Gartang	11	7296642	
LAN-05	52	5	near	Saleick Hall	24	found	N53° 46.960' W2° 48.376'	SD 46971 32118	Preston	5	:: Gartang	12	7438938	
LAN-04	53	4	near	Briers	21	found	N53° 46.667' W2° 47.129'	SD 48325 31558	Preston	4	:: Gartang	13	7296647	
LAN-03	54	3	near	Lea Mill Kiln	18	found	N53° 46.672' W2° 45.655'	SD 49953 31551	Preston	3	:: Gartang	14	7296650	
LAN-02	55	2	off	Hollinghead Fold	14	found	N53° 46.617' W2° 44.296'	SD 51445 31433	Preston	2	:: Gartang	15 (missing)	7296651	17
LAN-02R	55	2	near	Hollinghead Fold	14	found	N53° 46.610' W2° 44.290'	SD 51451 31419	Preston	2	:: Gartang	15	7296653	
LAN-01R	56	1	near	Ashton Basin	10	found	N53° 46.073' W2° 43.400'	SD 52419 30413	Preston	1	:: Gartang	16	7296654	

Half Milestones

ID	From Kendal	From Preston	near/off	Nearest Bridge	Number	Logged	GPS location	GPS conversion to OS Grid (inc HE)	Inscription (= number only)	Displayed distance	Inscription (= number only)	Displayed distance	http://www.geograph.org.uk/photo/	Notes
LAN-34.5	2.5	34.5	near	Crow Park	181	found	N54° 17.716' W2° 44.930'	SD 51359 89109					7297199	
LAN-48.5	8.5	48.5	near	Seven Mile	163	found	N54° 14.198' W2° 42.567'	SD 53857 82538					7564639	18
LAN-47.5	9.5	47.5	near	Hodgson	157	found	N54° 13.427' W2° 42.835'	SD 53551 81131					7297201	
LAN-43.5	11.5	43.5	near	Holme Mill	147	found	N54° 11.878' W2° 43.632'	SD 52656 78268					7297205	
LAN-44.5	12.5	44.5	near	Burton Aqueduct	144	found	N54° 11.099' W2° 43.975'	SD 52268 76827					7297206	
LAN-42.5	14.5	42.5	near	Tewitfield Culvert	140	found	N54° 09.550' W2° 44.258'	SD 51930 73858					7390926	
LAN-41.5	15.5	41.5	near	Borwick Hall	135	found	N54° 08.932' W2° 43.715'	SD 52509 72806					7297208	
LAN-40.5	16.5	40.5	near	Capemuiry	131	found	N54° 08.365' W2° 43.462'	SD 52774 71751					7297209	
LAN-38.5	18.5	38.5	near	Carnforth	128	found	N54° 07.670' W2° 45.905'	SD 50100 70491					7313109	
LAN-37.5	19.5	37.5	near	Barkers	126	found	N54° 07.128' W2° 46.797'	SD 49117 69496					7313113	
LAN-32.5	24.5	32.5	near	Besumont Tumpile	110	found	N54° 03.988' W2° 48.120'	SD 47610 63690					7313116	
LAN-31.5	25.5	31.5	near	Dolphin Lee	105	found	N54° 03.847' W2° 47.180'	SD 48632 63417					7313119	

Notes for table:

General notes – square brackets indicate missing stones or numbers; R = replacement stone.

1. Originally off-bank milestone (still there).
2. Location is in a ploughed field.
3. Originally off-bank milestone (still there).
4. Originally off-bank milestone (still there).
5. Originally off-bank milestone (still there).
6. Listed position is on the off-bank.
7. Both on towpath side, offset.
8. Further north than listed position.
9. Both on towpath side.
10. Hidden in very deep grass, may not be visible in summer.
11. Originally off-bank milestone (very overgrown).
12. Originally off-bank milestone (still there).
13. Originally off-bank milestone (no evidence at the location site; edge of a farmer's field on off-side).
14. Originally off-bank milestone (canal widened at place where milestone was marked).
15. Originally off-bank milestone (still there).
16. Originally off-bank milestone (still there), can only be seen in winter.
17. Originally off-bank milestone (still there).
18. Reset into the ground by James and the C&RT, 1 June 2023.

Milestones are referenced by their allocated Milestone Society National ID number, which has the form LAN-XX(½) where XX is a two-digit number indicating the miles from Preston, the fraction ½ being added for the half-mile milestones. Replacement milestones are distinguished by the addition of the suffix R.

Nine of the original milestones are Grade II listed: LAN-06, LAN-42, LAN-44, LAN-45, LAN-46, LAN-47, LAN-48, LAN-49 and LAN-50. The original LAN-49 and LAN-50 are missing; both have been replaced with replicas (LAN-49R and LAN-50R).

The other 15 replacement milestones are LAN-01R, LAN-02R, LAN-09R, LAN-11R, LAN-18R, LAN-19R, LAN-20R, LAN-21R, LAN-23R, LAN-26R, LAN-27R, LAN-28R, LAN-29R, LAN-30R and LAN-34R. They are made of Longridge sandstone, quarried at Stonyhurst and cut by Cumbrian Stone (Penrith), with the carving done by Alan Ward. It may also be possible that a replacement milestone will be installed at Canal Head in Kendal which would be LAN-57R.

All the milestones are in good condition except LAN-09, LAN-10 and LAN-13 which are badly damaged; several more have chips missing: LAN-02, LAN-10, LAN-14 and LAN-25 are missing one plate and LAN-08, LAN-09, LAN-13, LAN-19 and LAN-22 are missing both plates.

The majority of the milestones are accessible, being on the towpath side of the canal. Nine of the milestones, however, are on the opposite side of the canal: LAN-02, LAN-19, LAN-24, LAN-32, LAN-43, LAN-52, LAN-53, LAN-54 and LAN-56. LAN-52 and LAN-53 are on the dry section and visible from the towpath side, but inaccessible. LAN-54 and LAN-56 are also on the dry section but are accessible. LAN-43 is only accessible with C&RT permission, the rest are inaccessible.

LAN-26R, LAN-27R, LAN-34R and LAN-50R replace milestones that were originally on the off-side. The originals have not been found, and it is unclear if they are still on the offside hidden in undergrowth. LAN-38 and LAN-55 do not have any milestone at all.

The milestones south of Lancaster are of a tombstone design and feature ceramic plates except two which are metal plates. An example of one with ceramic plates is LAN-07 (Figure 2).

The milestones north of Lancaster are all simple stone pillars featuring only the distance numbers. Some of these milestones are taller than others and the rectangular cross section is not uniform



Figure 2: Milestone LAN-07, Fletchers.



Figure 3: LAN-46, Jansons.

across the full set. An example of this type is LAN-46 (Figure 3).

The bicentennial replacements feature both names (if south of Lancaster) and numbers only (if north of Lancaster), examples are LAN-23R (Figure 4) and LAN-50R (Figure 5).

Ten original milestones acted as benchmarks which are located on either the top or the side. Seven of these are still *in situ*, namely LAN-33, LAN-39, LAN-40 (Figure 6), LAN-41, LAN-42, LAN-44 and LAN-47. LAN-01R, LAN-29R and LAN-49R also may have had a benchmark on the original milestone. Also, whilst not a milestone or half-mile stone, a further stone has been noted that contains a bench mark and there is the possibility of more being *in situ* on the upper reaches of the canal.



Figure 4: LAN-23R, Cockerham Road.



Figure 5: LAN-50R, Mattinsons.



Figure 6: Benchmark on milestone LAN-40, Kellet Lane.



Figure 7: LAN-05, Salwick Hall.

All milestones show distance measured in the reverse direction to the direction of travel. However, LAN-54 was re-set the wrong way round during a volunteer working party.

LAN-05 (Figure 7) was discovered flat on the ground when recording the milestones and was re-erected on the 21st March 2023 during a C&RT volunteer session run by James Ormrod. Hilary Jones and the author attended, took photos and helped with the task. Grateful thanks are here recorded for enabling this to happen.

Acknowledgments and thanks to John Armstrong, Mike Hallett, Hilary Jones and Phil Johnstone, John Jones, Bill Froggatt and James Ormrod, and Richard Trevitt.

References:

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THE MILESTONE SOCIETY AWARD

At our 2023 AGM the tenth and last presentation of the Terry Keegan Memorial Award was made to our Chair of Trustees, Alan Reade. In its place a new award scheme was launched to recognise and support the outstanding work of individuals, groups and organisations who pursue and promote the ideas of the Milestone Society by their deeds.

The Cliviger Parish Project and St John's Primary school were each nominated by our Lancashire County Representative to receive an award. They exemplify the type of local initiative successfully delivered that the Society is to encourage. The awards sub-committee wholeheartedly supported the nomination and in Autumn 2023 certificates were presented for display in Cliviger Village Hall and St John's School.

In January 2024 two more awards were made as mentioned in the editorial and described in the articles on the Bow Bells mileposts and Lancaster Canal milestones. Several other projects are currently under consideration for awards.

**BOW BELLS MILEPOSTS IN EAST SUSSEX:
EASTBOURNE TO EAST GRINSTEAD**

Peter Gillies

Editor's Preface

In Milestones & Waymarkers volume 10 (2017) J. V. Nicholls included the following as a 'footnote' in an article about a different series of East Sussex mileposts that had touched briefly on Bow Bells:

"I have left out the recovered Bow Bells 34 in this piece but there is certainly a need for a complete resurvey of the Bow Bells series. How many Bow Bells (original or replacements) are missing? How many are in need of urgent restoration, with special attention to the timber backing posts? One such loss appears to be the 56-mile Bow Bells continuation (the type with just a mileage on them) one south of Hailsham. With identification SX_LLE56, it was reported as 'missing' in June 2015. This was the last surviving original of the Hailsham to Eastbourne continuation series. 57 to 61 were replacements made by Foundry and Engineering Ltd of Lewes and erected in 1973. Regretfully the past 45 years have been unkind to them and only the 59 (SX_LLE59) at Westham has survived." [now also lost]

Peter Gillies has taken up the challenge, not only of a resurvey, but recovering missing Bow Bells stones and replacing those that remain lost on the road from Eastbourne to East Grinstead. The other set of Bow Bells mileposts on the A26 from Lewes to Uckfield is not included. In the course of editing this article it has become clear that the history of the Bow Bells posts is complex. An article 'East Sussex Milestones, A Survey' was published in Sussex Industrial History by Brian Austin and John Upton in Winter 1972/3. This provides a great deal of useful historical information but, as Peter Gillies's article reveals, much has happened since then and many issues remain as yet unresolved. These are indicated where relevant but have not been fully investigated for this article which focuses on the present situation and recent developments rather than the earlier history. The article reveals that some of the information currently in the Society database is not entirely accurate; this includes the Grid References of the posts and their location on the map which are taken from the database. The precise location of the present-day posts remains to be checked.

The series of mileposts that run northwards along the former turnpike road through East Sussex from Eastbourne on the coast of East Sussex to East Grinstead, and then on towards the East End of London, are remarkable in many ways, most obviously for lacking any placenames. For various reasons, including their attractive and unusual design, several of the posts have had chequered careers. This article first describes the route in Sussex, the posts as they now are, and then provides an account of their recent history, their conservation and replication.

The road and its mileposts

As in other areas of the country, those who created the posts in Sussex used the two most commonly found local materials: Wealden Iron, cast iron mounted on oak backing boards. The area is famous for both resources. Very few mileposts with wooden backing boards, if any, have survived elsewhere for the obvious reason that wood degenerates far more quickly than stone or metal. This feature of the Bow Bells stones is one of the several reasons why the posts are of special interest and importance.

Today the road has mainly become the A22, but from the early 18th to the late 19th century, the turnpike roads from Eastbourne to London were created or maintained by four different turnpike trusts established at different dates. What eventually became the A22 started as a series of winding roads. There were two alternative turnpike roads between Eastbourne and Hailsham. The posts on the more westerly route were erected by a different turnpike trust. Though none has survived it is almost certain that they were not Bow Bells posts. The other route seemingly originated with Post No. 63 on Seaside Road in Eastbourne close to the Coastguard Station. It followed North along the 'Old London Road' passing through several villages on the way. When the road was improved, many of the posts remained in their original position, leaving several marooned in the villages. No. 56, still exists today on the bank outside the town's cemetery just north of the former junction of the two routes.

Little for certain is known of this section of the road's history. Posts 56 to 61 are known to have been erected in the 1970s as described by J.V. Nicholls above. They replaced the presumably lost originals that may have been Bow Bells posts; a 2007 photo of the now lost No. 59 shows it attached to a wooden backing board of Bow Bells shape. The present No. 56 is probably the 1970s post restored, but as No. 56 was reported missing in 2017, it may be a replica.

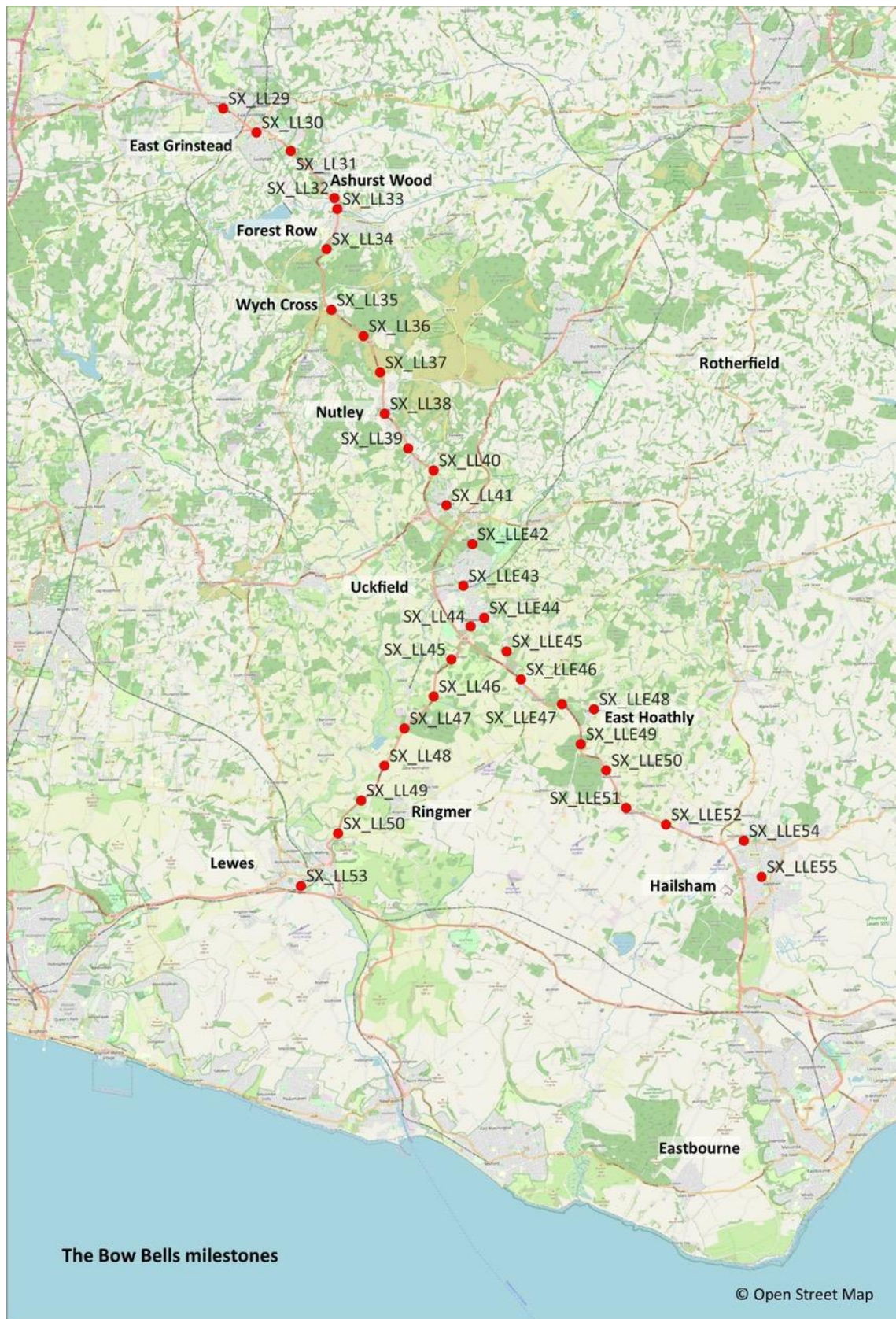


Figure 1: All surviving bow bells mileposts from Eastbourne and from Lewes to London, locations are as recorded in the Society database at the time of drafting. The text below only describes mileposts of particular interest on the A22. The anomalous location of stone No. 32 is explained in the text below. Only one of the two posts No.35 is shown as 35A is not strictly a Bow Bells post. No. 56, with a different design, is excluded from the map. No. 53 was moved to the Anne of Cleves House in Lewes. Whether it is still there and is the original rather than a copy has not been established. A replica now stands in its original location.



Figure 2: Bow Bells 56, Hailsham Cemetery, SX_LLE56 TQ 5864906421.

The design of Post No 56 looks more as though it might be someone's attempt to list and identify every cemetery in the South of England but may well have been that adopted for the westerly route mileposts. Certainly there is nothing to suggest you might reach London. Even though the first surviving Bow Bells design only appears, having traversed the town of Hailsham, at Post No. 55, the route from here is always known as the Bow Bells road, reinforcing the supposition that the original posts No. 57 to 63 may have featured the Bow Bells design.

The rare design, generally referred to as a rebus, meaning only a puzzle picture, is provided to indicate where your destination might be. Starting at the top is a depiction of the Pelham Buckle. This was awarded by King John II of France to John de Pelham for his part at the battle of Poitiers in 1356. The Pelham estate was huge, and the family was very influential in the area. Below the buckle is the mileage and then the clue, a bow with four gradually reducing bells hanging from it with a twist below, possibly signifying a rope, providing, of course, an absolute guarantee and confirmation that you were heading for the door of St Mary-le-Bow in the East End of London famous for its 'Great Bell Of Bow' accompanied by

up to 11 other bells at one time.

Many questions remain to be answered: would the route and details of the turnpike have been laid out by the authorities or just worked out as the process evolved by each set of new owners? Who decided on the design and materials used?

The route continues along The Old London Road before changing its name to the A22 along which replicas of both No. 53 and No. 49 are now in place, two of several that were previously missing.

The A22, improved about 20 years ago, provided a bypass for the much-beleaguered village of East Hoathly. Post No. 48 therefore requires a brief detour from the modern road and is situated in the centre of the village on the edge of the playing field. Back on the A22, Post No. 47 and 46 also fell victim to 'removal in the night'.

After No. 46, the next posts on the A22, the Eastbourne Road, are all in place up to Post No. 43 in the centre of Uckfield. Here it is quite safe, but suddenly the Pelham Buckle has disappeared, replaced by a hemisphere; this design continues until the restoration's project limit. Just what the sphere is intended to symbolise is not known. Presumably the Pelham influence is now lost, geographically at least. (Beyond East Grinstead, in Surrey where the waymarkers still survive, mileposts change to milestones of a fairly common style, containing placenames and naming Cornhill rather than St Mary-le-Bow as the terminus.)



Figure 3: Bow Bells 55, SX_LLE55 TQ58582 09949.



Figure 4: Bow Bells 43, Uckfield, SX_LL43 TQ47258 21000.

The lack of continuity is further demonstrated on the A22 in the village of Nutley. The author was once asked why the posts used to be painted black and had to confess to not knowing anything about it but was sent a picture. Today it is painted in the regulation black on white but what went on during the 1920s when the photo below was taken is a mystery.

Post No. 40 demonstrates a replacement without care as the typeface of the numbers and lack of the sphere must surely be due to either carelessness or expediency.



Figure 5: Bow Bells 40, SX_LL40 TQ 46123 25379.



Figure 6: Bow Bells 38 in the 1920s, SX_LL38 TQ 44274 27527.

re-siting the posts. This idea was not met with any favour, so now there are two No. 35 posts half a mile apart.

Further north along the A22 the road enters Ashdown Forest where Post No. 37 is not in its original position as later described.

Post No. 35, outside the Llama Farm, Wych Cross is followed, half a mile further on by a second No. 35! The reason for this is a further warning to take nothing for granted. After the road finally leaves East Sussex, it eventually reaches Godstone. There was a very steep hill here, and the horses with wagons had to negotiate both up and down, making life very difficult. The road was altered to circumvent this obstacle making the journey half a mile longer. The powers that be then moved all the posts to new 'one mile' distances. When they reached the limit of their responsibility, they transferred the task to the next authority and told them to continue



Figure 7A: Bow Bells 35, SX_LL35 TQ 42249 31479.



Figure 7B: Anthemian 35, SX_LL35A TQ 41967 32449.

The next post along, No. 34. was another recently missing post, whose rediscovery and return required considerable detective work described later, as is the remarkable and complicated story of the various versions of No.32.



Figure 8: Bow Bells 34, SX_LL34 TQ 42056 33778.



Figure 9A: Bow Bells 32 at Forest Row, photo Keith Sharp c.2007. SX_LL32 TQ 42361 35713.



Figure 9B: Bow Bells 32 replica at Ashurst Wood. SX_LL32 TQ 4186 3638.

The final post in the stretch from Hailsham No. 56 to East Grinstead is No. 29. This fantasy was initiated by East Grinstead Town Council and, whilst it may leave a lot to be desired as to how historic monuments are treated, it probably gives potential thieves something to think about. Twenty-seven posts plus one duplicate equals 28, but still much to learn.

The Restoration Project

To sum up the story so far: had this article been written five years ago, seven of the mileposts between Hailsham and East Grinstead would have been missing, and others would have been in poorer condition than they are now. The starting point of what developed into a considerable restoration project was the author's move to a new house in a hamlet near Uckfield, close by a milepost that was in a rather decrepit state, needed straightening and a coat of paint. This provided the incentive for taking more notice of these mileposts. It transpired that there were several other mileposts that were either in as bad condition or had recently gone missing, quite likely stolen.

To find out more about this fascinating but much overlooked world and to gain support to restore more of the mileposts, the local Eastbourne Historic Vehicle Club (E.H.V.C.), of which the author is a member, was approached to provide support. It did this in several ways, firstly by the Secretary helping with the approach to East Sussex Highways. After much talking, Highways gave us permission to deal with the posts and work on the side of the road. A colleague, Dave Taylor, was keen to help and the process of restoration began: painting, renewing the oak backing boards, and cutting back the vegetation when time permitted. Undertaking the work on the roadside resulted in making many friends and contacts. The E.H.V.C. became a useful avenue for publicising the posts, both in articles within the club and as a display at the three-day show that the club stages each year. Finally, on one occasion when finances were getting stretched, they helped with a donation.



Figure 10: Bow Bells 29, SX_LL29 TQ 38151 39083.



Figure 11: Template created from Bow Bells 50.

Many County Councils are initially very keen to have their posts looked after but, as the economic reality sinks in, their enthusiasm wanes. The interest in East Sussex tends now to be with the Parish Councils, who adopt a rather possessive attitude within their own boundaries whilst the Highway Authorities have given up completely. In response to a local Parish Council (East Hoathly and Halland P.C.) who wanted to replace two missing posts within their boundary, a template was made which could then be used for both posts and still be of assistance elsewhere in the future. The Council agreed to pay for it. Fortunately there was one post, No. 50, which was almost due to have the backing board renewed and also desperately crying out for paint. It was duly removed from the road in order to create the template.

A Foundry close by in Hastings used iron Post No. 50 to create the template in aluminium (cheaper). The pattern had to be multi-purpose, so both the mileage and the motif on top was ground off. Two different motifs were created as other trusts took charge of their section of road. Back in the workshop and with a band saw and some scraps of plywood the required numbers and motifs were cut out and superglued on. The pattern was now ready for the foundry to cast a proper plate in cast iron.

One problem was selecting the correct font for the numbers. Several posts have been renewed over the years, and some enthusiasts have not done very well at reproducing the correct font for the mileage. First deciding which examples were the oldest and then choosing and copying the numbers with tracing paper enabled the creation of font and dimensions for authentic looking patterns.

Five posts were replaced and reset on the roadside with new oak backing boards: 53, 49, 47, 46 and 32.

For No. 47, the exact night on which the post removed was known; the Police were notified but were unable to do anything except help with a £500 grant towards replacement. They did request that some method was devised to prevent further thefts.

The solution was to add the date of manufacture which, though certainly not fool proof, must be good if it deters one scallywag.

Involving much less work, two posts were found stashed away. One, No. 34, was eventually found in the Highways depot at Ringmer. In his article in *Me&W*, vol. 10, J. V. Nicholls mentioned that in May 2016 Richard Raynsford had discovered a Bow Bells milestone in an antique shop in Rotherfield. This turned out to be Post No.34. (The full story can be found on pp. 32-34 of that issue.) It was eventually recovered by E.S.C.C. and stored, but no further action was taken. After much asking for over a year, the depot where it was languishing was finally discovered – in Ringmer! – don't take no for an answer. The post was removed from there, and No. 34 is now back on the road where it should be.



Figure 12: Ownership mark designed to deter thieves.

The second missing post, No. 44, had been found, backing board rotted through, and rescued from the carriageway by a local man who put it in his shed for safe keeping but neglected to tell anyone in spite of the fact that the local Council and newspapers were red hot reporting the theft.

Numbers 37 and 39 have been recently discovered, also safely stored in a shed for several years (safe but nobody knew) and have been positioned where they belong in the Forest. Before the restoration project began, Post No. 37 suffered an incident when a policeman riding down the hill managed to drop his motorbike, resulting in a long slide for both parties. The bike hit the post and demolished the backing board which had to be replaced. The restored new post was re-sited much further back from the road almost hidden by the trees and undergrowth and very difficult to see. The wisdom of this move is best decided by others.

Post No. 32, now situated within the confines of Ashurst Wood but on the side of the A22, was the final missing post problem. It is thought to have been removed by the Highway Authority, presumably because the backing board was deteriorating badly, and removal was cheaper than repair or renewal. It finally qualifies as our last brand-new renewed post from Harling Foundry in Hastings. But that is only a small part of No. 32's remarkable story, which amongst other things illustrates the importance of using fieldwork to verify information even from 'a usually reliable source'. Anyone interested in Stone No. 32 might well begin their research by consulting the Society's Google Earth maps in its on-line Database (formerly the Repository) and the link to photos on Geograph. From these they would learn that the post illustrated is an 'out of position' 19th century post on the wall of a private bungalow, Owls Nest, at Forest Row, Sussex, moved from its previous correct position on the roadside at Ashurst Wood, some half-mile further north, as indicated by a pin on the Google Earth map.

SX_LL32

Old County:	Sussex
District:	Wealden
Record Origin:	MSSp
Status:	Out of Place- in public view
Listed:	
Last Record:	2005
OS Grid Reference:	TQ 42361 35713
Road:	A22
Civil Parish:	Forest Row
General Location:	was Lewes Road, Ashurstwood, by the roadside
Position:	now against front wall of The Owlsnest, Lewes Rd, visible from road
Feature Type:	Milestone
Design:	Bow Bells iron plate
Photograph:	link

Figure 13: Google Earth map information.

Figure 14: Google Earth map extract.



However, much of the information there stated is incorrect. The Owls Nest post is actually a copy made of the post by the present owner of Owls Nest, Fred Bishop, now 92, when it was still at Ashurst Wood because the original was in poor condition. Fred's 'insurance policy' was wise, as some time after he made his copy, and a spare, the Ashurst Wood post was removed. If it was the Highways Authority that removed it, it was not E.S.C.C but its West Sussex equivalent, for the final stretch of the A22 before it passes into Surrey heads northwest, crosses the boundary between the two Sussexes. 'Sussex' has never existed as an administrative area, having been divided into two from the establishment of County Councils in 1888. Post No. 32, along with 31 to 29, is therefore in West Sussex. It is possible that the remains of the original 32 may be hidden away rotting in a West Sussex depot; or perhaps it was not the original as there are stylistic differences from the genuine originals. Fred Bishop may have made copies of a copy! The replica stone, financed by Ashurst Wood Parish Council and based on the original design, is now back at Ashurst Wood but on the opposite side of the road in a safer position.

The original partnership has broken because Dave Taylor spent a year in hospital and although he is now much better, sadly mileposts have slipped off his radar. He has been replaced by a younger, very fit and enthusiastic colleague Neil Kerridge.

The present position is that the posts stretch from Hailsham (No. 56) in the South to East Grinstead (No. 29) in the North, 28 mileposts along 28 miles, actually 29 mileposts as there are two No. 35s, even perhaps 30, counting the out-of-position duplicate replica stone No. 32, plus the original No. 53, way out of position probably in Lewes. Periodically it is stated that this is the longest continuous run in Britain; perhaps one of the readers could confirm whether or not this is so and whether there are any other stretches where there are more milemarkers than there are miles.

CLIVIGER PARISH AND PRIMARY SCHOOL PROJECTS

Hilary Jones

In 2023 a couple of exciting community projects came to fruition in the parish of Cliviger in east Lancashire. The principal project was the restoration of the historic milestones in the parish plus three more recent boundary stones. In addition, as part of an outreach community heritage project, the local school in Cliviger [St John's C.E. (VA) Primary School] created and installed a brand-new milestone.

This article explains the background to the projects, recipients of the inaugural Milestone Society Awards in November 2023, and describes the works completed.

Where is Cliviger?

Cliviger is a semi-rural parish comprising several small hamlets in the Pennine hills to the south of Burnley. Spread along a narrow, winding valley linking Lancashire and Yorkshire, it has long been an important trade route. Now the A646 from Burnley to Todmorden, it was formerly the Union Branch of the Rochdale and Burnley Turnpike Trust. The same valley is also used by the railway, via several tunnels and viaducts, to connect Burnley with both Manchester and West Yorkshire

A higher-level route through Cliviger into Burnley, now known as Red Lees Road, was formerly The Todmorden Turnpike Trust (The Burnley Road). Preceding both these routes there was a packhorse route through the parish from Hebden Bridge across the moors known as The Long Causeway.

The A671 Bacup Road, formerly the Rochdale and Burnley Turnpike Trust, also runs through the western side of Cliviger parish.

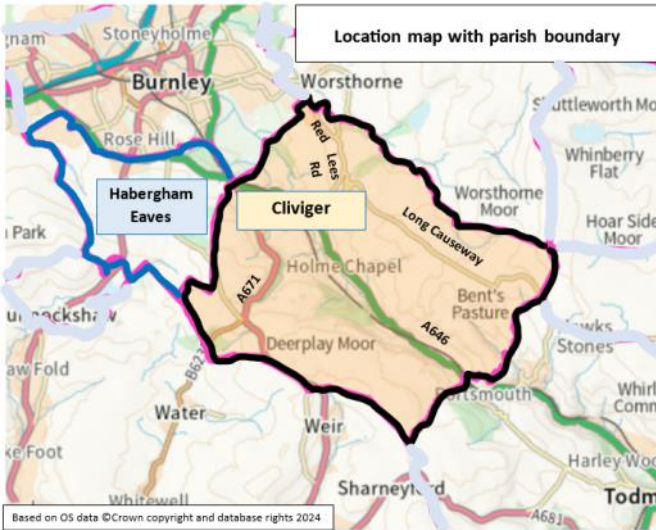


Figure 1: Location map with parish boundary.

Why were the restoration projects started?

Following the upgrading in 2015 of a large windfarm in Cliviger parish (Coal Clough), a community benefit fund was established by Scottish Power Renewables with up to £40,000 per annum being available for projects that directly benefit the parish residents. The parish council surveyed residents for ideas on projects to spend the windfarm money; one of the ideas put forward was the restoration of the parish milestones and boundary stones. This was agreed in September 2021 with funding of £12,000 allocated.

The work was commissioned from a sculptor and signwriter, Shane Johnstone, who was already working in the parish with the local primary school on a project to mark the Queen’s Platinum Jubilee in 2022. Shane apprenticed as a signwriter and used to help his father, who was a stonemason, so he certainly has a strong background in heritage skills.

The restoration project

The project covered the turnpike era milestones on the A646, A671 and Red Lees Road. The milestones on the Todmorden route have a distinctive roll-top design while those on the Bacup road have a semi-circular top. They were all in reasonable condition but needed some tidying up of the lettering and repainting. Perhaps surprisingly, none of the milestones is listed.

Six milestones located as shown in Figure 2 were identified for restoration, two on each of the three former turnpike roads – see Figures 3 to 8.

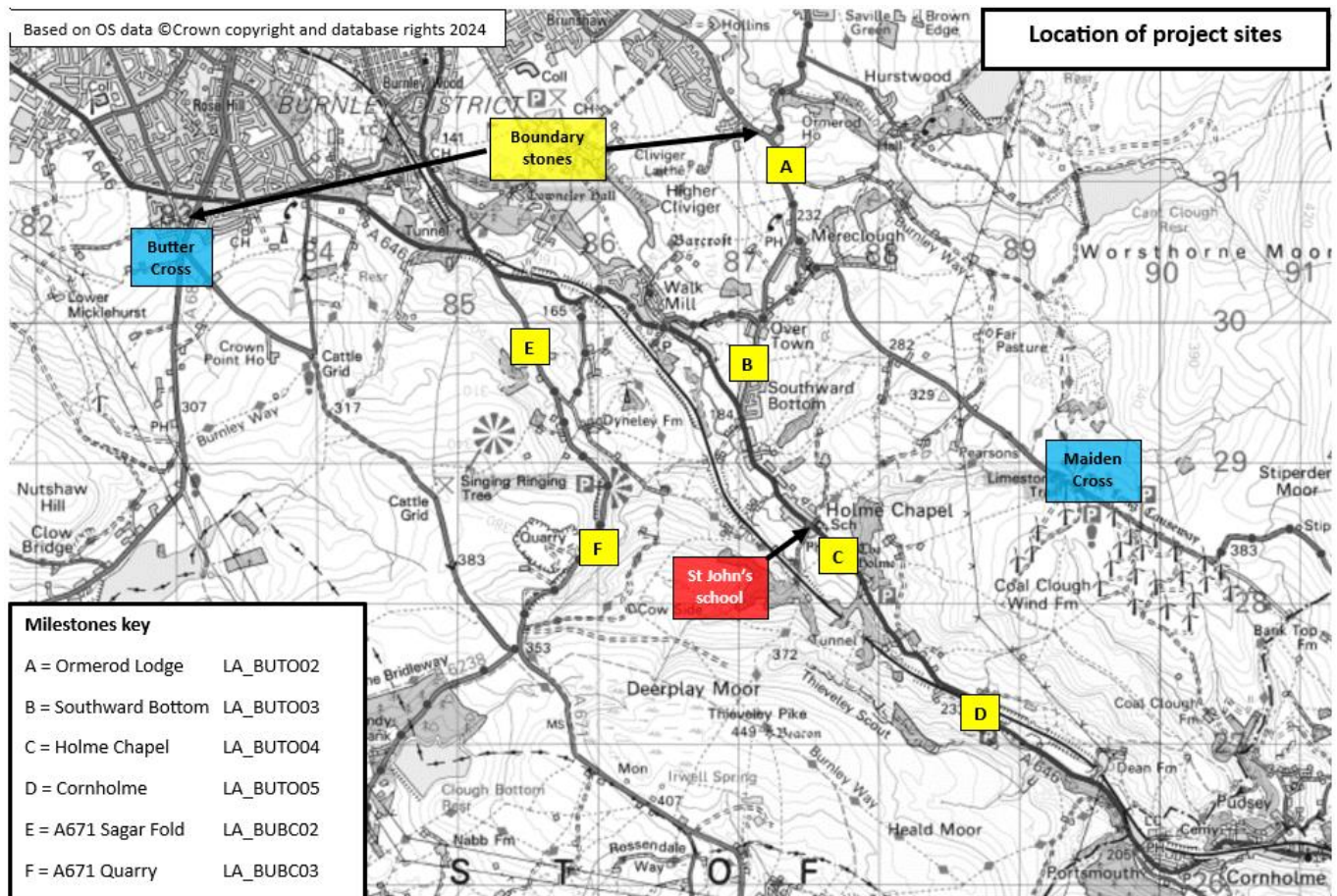


Figure 2: Locations of restored milestones and boundary stones

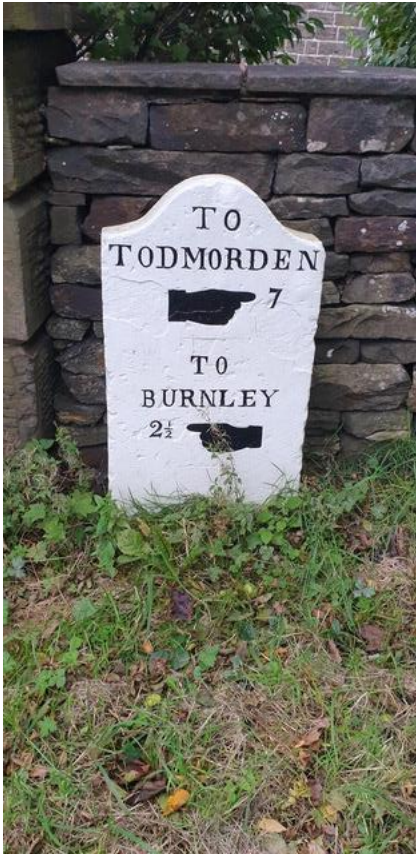


Figure 3: LA_BUTO02 on Red Lees Road at Ormerod Lodge, SD 87335 31193.



Figure 4: LA_BUTO03 on Red Lees Road at Southward Bottom, SD 87084 29656.

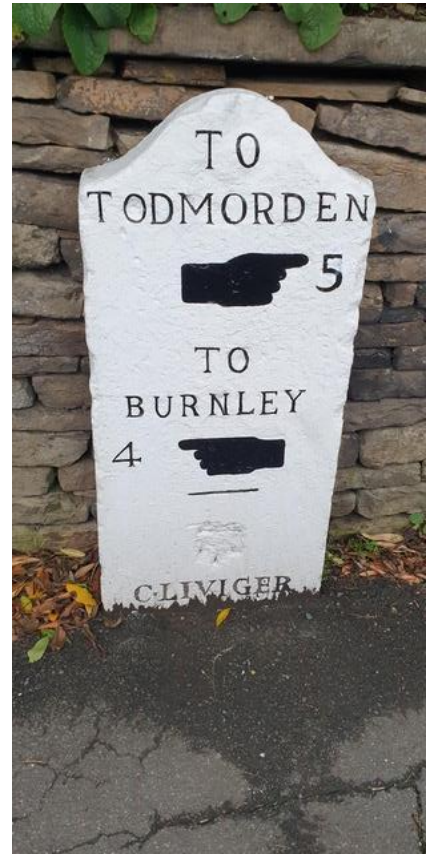


Figure 5: LA_BUTO04 on the A646 at Holme Chapel, SD 88778 27208.

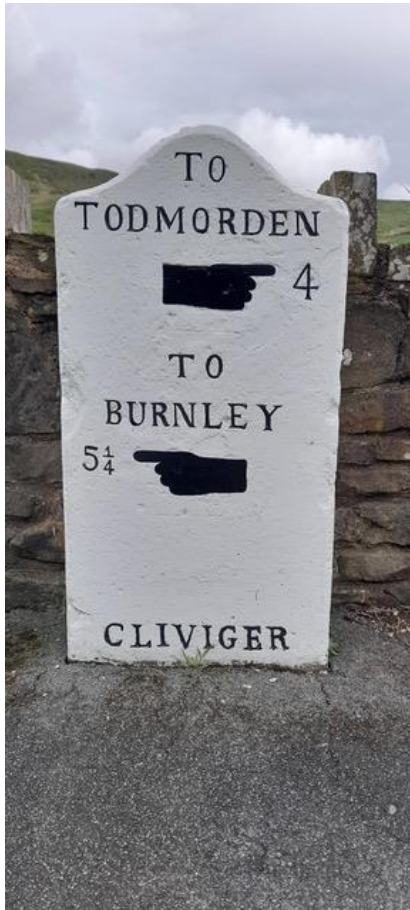


Figure 6: LA_BUT005 on the A646 at Cornholme, SD 88778 27208.



Figure 7: LA_BUBC02 on the A671 at Sagar Fold, SD 85559 29768.



Figure 8: LA_BUBC03 on the A671 at Quarry, SD 85915 28397.



Figure 9: Maiden Cross

In addition to the milestones, three 20th century stones marking the boundary of the South Pennines Park area were refurbished. The historic Maiden Cross on The Long Causeway is adjacent to the windfarm site. The top 40+ cm with the original cross carving was lost and the original lettering had been very badly restored using an angle grinder. Shane re-carved new lettering on the reverse side to the original, and to reclaim some lost height raised the stone so the previously buried foot section was revealed, and a new concrete foundation/base anchor section was fabricated. The reinforcing bars anchor the old stone onto the new foundation block. The top was left flat where it had been sheared off so people would be aware of the previous deliberate damage of this ancient stone.



Figure 10a: Modern boundary stone on Red Lees Road.



Figure 10b: Modern boundary stone at Salterford Lane junction.



Figure 10c: Boundary Stone at the Habergham Eaves boundary with Burnley near the new Butter Cross.

The school project

Shane had been running heritage signwriting workshops in conjunction with the Burnley Council/Historic England Heritage Action Zone project. Contact with the primary school in Cliviger was a spin-off from that, and he was interested in how a public art project could be linked into the school curriculum. The Year 6 pupils had been doing a project on volcanoes and, by a roundabout route as these things do, this led to a discussion about the Moon and how far away it was from Earth.

Working with Shane, the children came up with the idea of a milestone for the moon and also a local favourite, Burnley Football Club at Turf Moor! The new milestone matches the exact dimensions of the local Todmorden roll-top design. It shows the distances from the village to the centre spot at Turf Moor and to the moon and back. The project spanned several subjects for the school curriculum including Art, Geography, History, Mathematics and Science.

Although it appears very much the same as its 19th century predecessors, it is in fact very 21st century. The budget would not cover the cost of the milestone being made from real stone so it was created by Shane from modern composite materials. Seven sheets of a waterproof 12 mm cement board (Aqua panel) were initially laminated together. These were then cut to shape with a water jet cutter, rendered and painted.



Figure 11: Newly created milestone outside St John's C.E. (VA) Primary School, Cliviger for the Queen's Platinum Jubilee, 2022.



Figure 12: Newly created Butter Cross in Habergham Eaves for the Queen's Platinum Jubilee, 2022.

Other work

Shane has also created an interpretation of the Butter Cross in Habergham Eaves parish for another Queen's Platinum Jubilee commemoration. The original Grade 2 listed wayside cross is now only a shaft base located in the middle of the field. The new cross is a lot more accessible being positioned on the parish green and it is hoped it will encourage interest in the story of the original.

Like the school milestone, this cross is also an intriguing composite again driven by the limited available budget. The core of the cross was created using a seven-foot concrete fence post which was then built up using a stone resin substitute called Jesmonite.



Figure 13: Presentation of award to Cliviger Primary School by Rob Westlake, November 2023.

Acknowledgements:

Rebecca Hay, Clerk to Cliviger and Habergham Eaves Parish Councils
 Shane Johnstone, Artist, Sculptor and Educator, based in Morecambe

AN INTRODUCTION TO THE ALASKA HIGHWAY: ITS WAYMARKERS AND THE MILEPOST

Derek Turner

Today, the Alaska Highway is a very long road, and very busy in the summer, that runs from Dawson Creek in British Columbia in northern Canada to Delta Junction in Alaska, with a spur running further north to Fairbanks.



Figure 1: A contemporary view of a typical stretch of the highway, at least a less hazardous section. Road maintenance and improvement is almost continuous in the summer months. Credit: Vince Fedoroff.

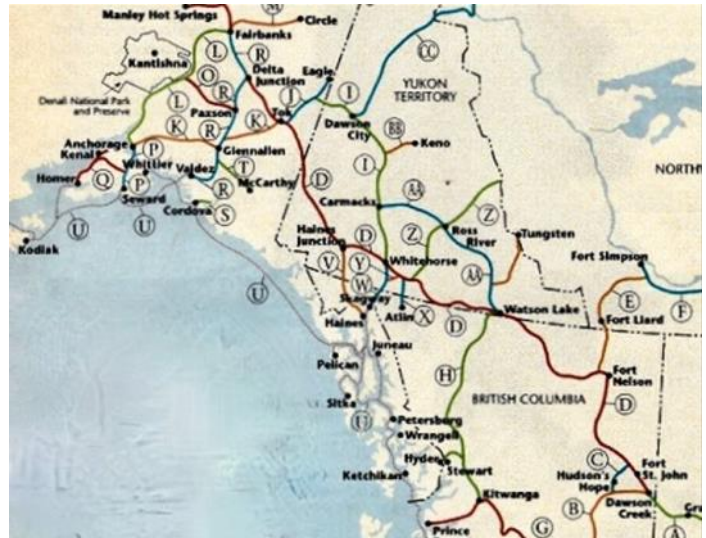
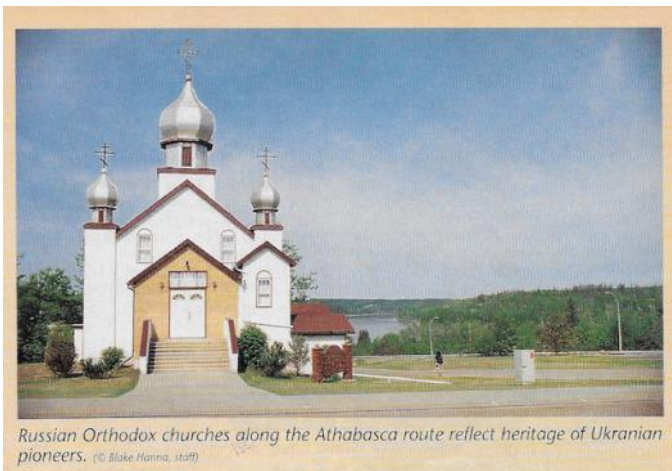


Figure 2: Overview highway map. Credit TMP 2003.



Russian Orthodox churches along the Athabasca route reflect heritage of Ukrainian pioneers. (© Blake Hanna, staff)

Figure 3: Russian Orthodox church. These mainly survive near the West Coast. Credit: Blake Hanna TMP 2003. (See bibliography for full citations of all images).

In 1940 it did not exist. At that time, Alaska, a detached state bought from the Russians, was vast in size and tiny in population.

Regarded by many Americans originally as a giant white elephant of little value, that view changed when oil was discovered. The oil travelled by pipeline to a seaport in the south. People travelled mainly by ship along the Inside Passage on the west coast, or by plane as there was a string of airfields. Such roads as there were ran between the coastal towns. Inland, the population was sparse and the landscape a mixture of mountains, dense woodland and bogs, covered with snow for much of the year and swarming with infectious insects in the summer. Extreme climate ranged from -50°C to $+30^{\circ}\text{C}$.

The landscape and climate of British Columbia was much the same and the Canadians were not keen to have a road joining Alaska to the rest of the United States running through their sovereign territory. In 1940 any proposal to build such a road would have been universally regarded as madness.

Yet just two years later the Alaska Highway had been completed. War changes everything. The USA needed to get troops and equipment to Alaska fast. Planes could only carry limited loads; a road was essential. Thus began one of the most remarkable engineering projects in history. This article describes how the road was built and its later history. It also attempts to determine the length of the road. Finally, and most relevantly to this journal, it describes the various mile markers and other waymarkers along the road, a topic that proves a considerable challenge. A detailed travel guide, published annually, *The MILEPOST* provides much of the information and many of the images.



In the winter, much of the landscape along the Alaska Highway turns monochromatic (Credit: Diane Selkirk)

Figure 4: The two ubiquitous features of the highway in winter: snow and mountains. Credit: Diane Selkirk, BBC.



Figure 5: Spring comes late in Alaska and Summer follows soon after, thanks to up to twenty or more hours of sunshine per day. Credit: Mike Criss, Fine Art America.



Figure 6: Husky team mushed (owned and trained) by 'Klondike Mike'. Teams could number anything from four to fourteen, average at least 8 miles an hour and cover 120 miles in a 16-hour day, with only brief stops. Credit: Michael M Anderson in KMA.

Building the Alaska Highway

Given that long history of obstacles to internal roadbuilding, why did the United States suddenly devote vast resources to building an enormously long road to join its main territory to its distant outlying state? And what caused the Canadian government to change its mind? The short answer lies in one date: 7th December 1941.

After the surprise attack by Japanese planes on Pearl Harbor, the United States feared that it

might be followed up by an invasion of Alaska. Their fears increased when on 4th June 1942 the Japanese bombed Dutch Harbor on the Alaskan island of Unalaska. One month later, Japanese forces invaded two of the Aleutian Islands, Kiska and Attu.

There were fears that their presence on the islands could provide bases for a full-scale invasion of the U.S. mainland. Alaska's potential as a source of oil, though yet to be fully realised, was also of strategic importance. Remarkably quickly, plans were drawn up and preparations made for infrastructure that would make it possible to move troops and military equipment by road to defend Alaska from Japanese incursion. In retrospect, in view of how the war in the Pacific developed, this might now seem like over-reaction, but at the time the threat of invasion was taken very seriously as the vast resources devoted to the project set out in Figure 7 testify. The Alaska Highway project was to be, at that time, the world's largest road engineering project.

The army's original name for the road was the *Alcan Highway*, a more accurate description of the route of the road, but it soon became known as the *Alaska Highway* as most of it is *in* Canada. Its routing had to meet unusual requirements. Whereas most major roads run close to the coast where the settlements are most numerous, the new highway had to be well inland through barely inhabited and inhospitable areas to protect it from foreign invasion. Given its remote location, local guides were needed to show engineers passable trails through barren and mountainous terrain. Most remarkably, in a remarkable reversal of the normal chronology of transport development, it needed to be routed close to pre-existing airbases following the line of the North-West Staging Route, a chain of airfields stretching from Edmonton in Alberta, Canada to Fairbanks in central Alaska. Given the current geopolitical environment, it seems ironic that the airfields had been built so that the United States could transport military equipment to Russia in its fight against Nazi Germany. With Japan as the main focus in the war, the airfields could be used for its own protection as well as transporting road building machinery. The chain of airfields allowed the route to be surveyed and overseen in separate sections by multiple contractors with construction bases located out along the route.

Length	About 1420 miles originally; see the text for more details
Highway construction cost	\$138 million (\$255 billion in today's money)
Price paid for Alaska (1867)	\$7.2 million (\$110 million in today's money)
Pearl Harbour attack	7 December 1941
Japan occupies Attu Island	June 1942
Road agreed	March 1942
Construction begins	April 1942
Miles completed in July 1942	400
Rivers crossed	129
Mountain streams crossed	8,000
Number of contractors	77
Workforce of soldiers	10,000-16,000 American and Canadian soldiers – estimates vary
Items of equipment	11,000
Trucks + tractors	5,000
Tractors	304
Road finished	28 October 1942
Road opened	20 November 1942
Road opened to public	1948
Number of vehicles in first year	2,000
Number of vehicles today	300,000

Figure 7: Facts and figures.



Figure 8: “Although paved, this is an original stretch of the old Alaska Highway near Champagne, Yukon. Typical summer view, straight roads wherever possible, but mountains always looming”. Credit: photo and original caption, Clark Jillson.

The actual building was undertaken by The Army Corps of Engineers and manual labour performed by three regiments of African American soldiers. (Discrimination within the U.S. armed forces ran high and people of colour were often assigned to projects and tasks that were labour intensive.) Hard labour it certainly was, with deep snow and sub-zero temperatures to contend with in the winter and a plague of mosquitoes and other infectious insects in the summer. The landscape was also a challenge with unavoidably steep gradients, thick vegetation, boggy ground, and the possibility of work being brought to a standstill by frequent earthquakes that affected that

region. The photographs taken at the time give some idea of what the military navy had to contend with.

Completing the highway as quickly as possible was paramount and often it dictated how and where the highway would be built. A former WWII veteran, a Canadian mechanic who later set up a road heritage museum at Fort Nelson, reported seeing in the 1950s the rusting hulks of the construction machinery discarded along the highway: 174 steam shovels, 374 blade graders, 904 tractors, and 5,000 trucks. “They were working so fast that when a bulldozer, grader or truck broke it was pushed out of the way and they kept going.” Some of these are now featured in his museum.



Figure 9: Though not so named in this very early photo, this is the notorious 'Suicide Hill'. The road sign announcing it was followed by another: "Prepare to meet thy maker". Photos in Figures 9-11 and original captions taken from DoT, 75th Anniversary.

Upgrading the Pioneer Road



Muskegs are like a muddy version of quicksand. A vehicle would pass through a muskeg once, but within a short time, the area would turn into liquid mud, losing strength. Once caught, a vehicle had to be pulled out. (Photo and caption courtesy of Missouri University of Science and Technology 2014.)

Figure 10: The problems on level ground could be just as challenging as steep gradients.



Figure 11: Some stretches combined both problems.



Figure 12: The owner, old timer Marl Brown, could be regarded as one of the exhibits. Credit: Diane Selkirk, BBC Travel.



Figure 13: The Alcan Highway in the 1980's. "Dirt 80% of the way to Alaska. Now it all paved." Photo and original caption, credit: Carla Flynn Weems.

Initially, the road had a gravel surface, and it was many decades before it was fully metalled (*paved* in U.S. terminology).

The Canadian government provided assistance and waived all formalities in return for a promise that the Americans would hand over the road within Canada at the end of the war. Some two millennia earlier, the Romans had distinguished between *via militaria* and *via publica*, though over the course of time the two increasingly became the same. This is what happened to the Alaska Highway. Canadian civilians had limited access to

the road during the war, but it became a fully public road in 1948.

After 1945 when there was no longer any military need for road maintenance one might have expected the Alaska Highway and the other 26 highways in Alaska to have fallen into disrepair – the same fate as the construction equipment. There was little trading incentive to maintain the roads. As already described, oil travelled by pipeline, and humans by plane or by rail to and from the port of Seward on the south coast to Anchorage and Fairbanks, the only population centres of any size.

With the Alaska Highway and the other intrastate roads facing possible neglect, it was saved by a new phenomenon: mass tourism. The combination of the abundance of inexpensive oil in the United States after WWII coupled with rising prosperity literally fuelled this.

For most Americans, travel to Alaska most likely appealed to their deeply entrenched pioneering spirit and yearning for the wilderness. The words *Pioneer*, *Wilderness*, and *The Last Frontier* featured prominently in travel advertisements for Alaska. Mountaineers too were keen to conquer ‘America’s Everest’. Beyond the industrial and agricultural area, the tourist areas of America were becoming little more than theme parks but Alaska was the last wilderness, the final frontier. (The state even used that slogan on its license plates.) But it was the migratory habits of an ever-growing group of well-off pensioners for whom life was one long vacation that fuelled the long trek to Alaska. Unlike migratory birds and whales, pensioners needed transport and this gave birth to the recreational vehicle (RV), some of them larger than many immobile apartments while others were basic in the extreme. To make the 4000-mile plus trip from their winter habitats in Florida or California to their summer retreats in Alaska, they also required frequent temporary resting places, services where they could refuel their vehicles and their stomachs, and sites for their daily stopovers. These needs led to the establishment of a host of many consumer services, including RV parks and campsites, not only for the year-round migrants but the ever-increasing number of shorter-term vacationers using all kinds of road transport.



Figures 14 and 15: Summer luxury +30°C and winter -70°C basic quarters. Only a handful of dedicated eccentrics commit to winter living in the wilderness. Credit: C Blake Hanna, TMP, 2003 and Mike Cranford, (KM).

TUBBY'S RV PARK
 ... on Hwy. 97 South (Hart Hwy.) toward Prince George
 1 1/2 blocks from the junction with Alaska Highway
CARAVANS & TOUR GROUPS WELCOME!
97 FULL HOOKUPS
 30 Amp Service • Easy Entry • Level Sites • Pull-Throughs
 Security Fence • Picnic Tables • Ice • Free Hot Showers
 Large Laundromat • Clean, Modern Restrooms
 3 Bay Car & RV Wash • Dump Station
 24 Hour E-mail / Internet Access.
 Adjacent to Swimming Pool and The Pioneer Village
 Walking Distance to Restaurants on City Bus Route
 1913 - 96 Ave., Dawson Creek, BC V1G 1M2
 Your Hosts: George & Florence Streeper
• PHONE & FAX (250) 782-2584 •

AAA VISA MasterCard

Figure 16: Advert for Tubby's RV park, one of literally hundreds of similar advertisements. At least one on nearly all the 600+ pages of TMP 2003.

To answer the questions about length of the Alaska Highway and whether it has milestones requires detailed information about the highway, something that all the mass tourists from the late 1940s also needed – enter *The MILEPOST*.

The MILEPOST

As soon as the road was open to the public in 1948, an enterprising publisher quickly recognised a golden opportunity. The new travellers would need a periodic publication that provided RV migrants, car drivers, motorcyclists, cyclists, and railroad and seaway travellers with information about the nascent highway. His creation, *The MILEPOST*, appeared in 1949, less than a year after the opening of the highway. It has been updated annually ever since. The guidebook's introduction explains its purpose:

The MILEPOST provides a mile-by-mile description of all the major highways and roads in Alaska and northwestern Canada; detailed information on all major destinations (cities, communities, national parks and other attractions)... The backbone of The MILEPOST is the highway logs... In these mile-by-mile descriptions of the highways and byways of the North, you will find campgrounds, businesses offering food, lodging, gas and other services; attractions; fishing spots; road conditions, descriptions of the geography and history of the land and communities, and much more.

The 'much more' includes hundreds of colour photos, relevant adverts, distance tables, rail and ferry information, and travel advice. The guidebook currently provides details for 30 major and 28 minor highways. Over the past 75 years it has grown. The 1949 edition, for example, spanned 72 half-sized pages and covered about 1,000 miles of roadway.

Its price was \$1. The current 75th anniversary edition (2023) covers 15,000 miles of roadway across 704 pages and has a list price of \$39.95 (£32). Moreover, the publisher also maintains a website that provides much of the same information. For anyone travelling to and within Alaska, the cost is worth every penny or cent. The illustrations in this article provide some idea of its rich content.

The MILEPOST's British antecedent is John Ogilby's 1697 book of road maps, but a better and much earlier comparison is the Roman *Itinerarium* – a must-have for Roman commanders. The *Itinerarium* provided detailed information about all the settlements *en route* and the distance between them. The non-military needs of the tourist hordes two millennia later are essentially the same. For Roman commanders and American tourists alike, one book provides all the information that they need to wage a successful journey or expedition.

As *The MILEPOST*'s introduction states, the most essential features of the book are the highway logs and accompanying road maps. Every place, attraction, etc. is referenced by its distance in miles to the start and end of the highway in both miles and kilometres.

For every notable feature along the way *The MILEPOST* provides basic information. The first is the distance from the beginning and end of the highway, respectively DC and DJ. DC is Dawson Creek, British Columbia (not to be confused with the District of Columbia). DJ stands for Delta Junction in Alaska. Physical mile markers are not routinely included as notable features in the guidebook for the obvious reason that there is nothing special about them. Still, most of the location information references them.

Milestones and other waymarkers

There is not much that can be said for certain about the Alaska Highway waymarkers, but it is certain that mileposts were erected along the highway in the 1940s soon after it was completed; the later history of these and other waymarkers is complex. Early in the 19th century the modification and shortening of turnpike roads by the likes of Telford, McAdam and other engineers affected Britain, affected the accuracy of the information shown in the milestones and sometimes caused them to be relocated. Much the same happened to the Alaska Highway in the 20th and 21st centuries, with the added complication of a change in unit of measurement for part of the highway. The original road was built in a great hurry suitable only for powerful and rugged military vehicles. Since becoming a tourist road, the process of improving and shortening has been almost continuous, affecting both the location of the waymarkers and the accuracy of the distances shown.

At the present time, literally hundreds of waymarkers erected at various dates exist alongside the road but, as there is no equivalent of the Milestone Society in either Canada or the United State, the actual number of original, 1940s, mileposts is unknown. *The MILEPOST* states: "Today, those original mileposts remain a tradition with the communities on the highway and are still used as mailing addresses."

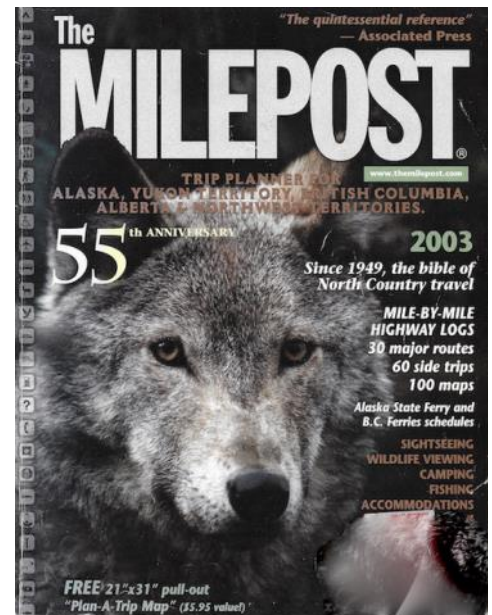


Figure 17A: Cover of The MILEPOST 2023. Credit: Barbara Willard.

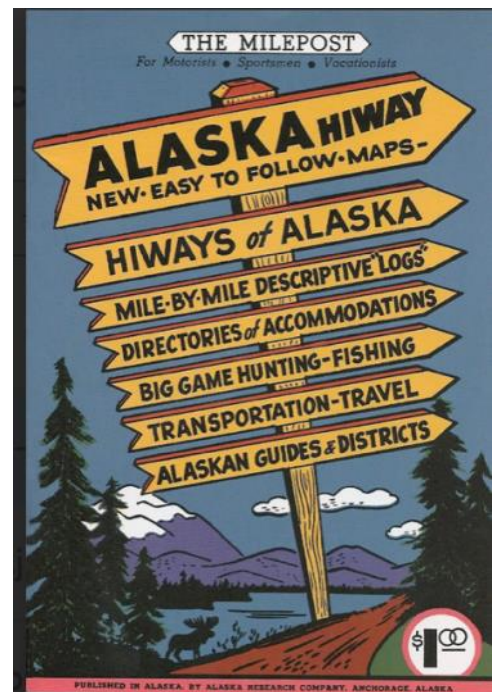


Figure 17B: Cover 1951. Note the difference in price compared with the latest issue!

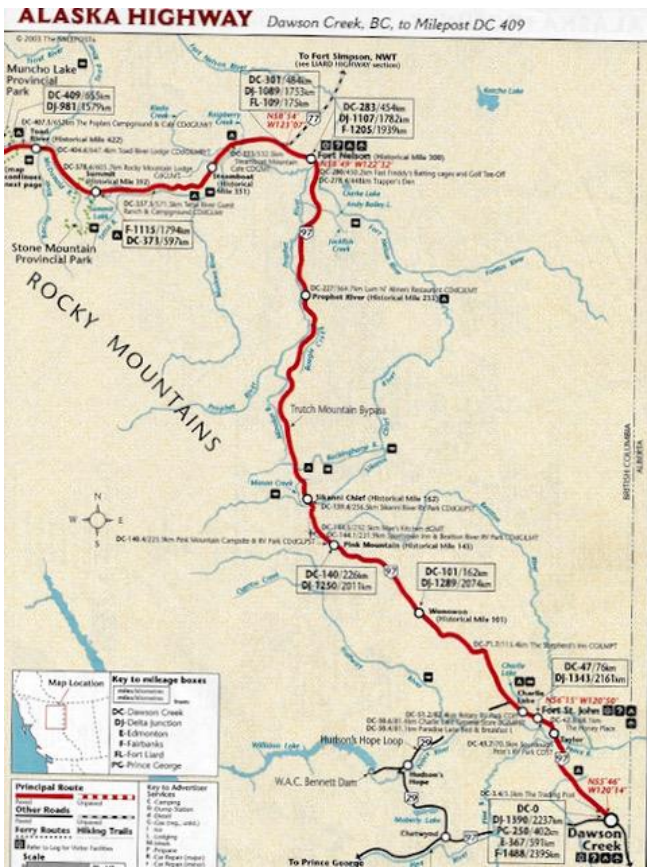


Figure 18: 'Alaska Highway, Dawson Creek BC to Milepost DC409'. The whole length of the Highway requires five full-page maps, each covering between 350 and 400 miles, the last of which also includes 96 miles of the Richardson Highway to Fairbanks. Credit: TMP 2003.

both British Columbia and Yukon Provinces, about 40 waymarkers, variously described as historic, or historical mileposts or miles, were erected to mark the highway's 50th anniversary. These 40 mainly describe the history of the highway's construction. The information provided, both in *The MILEPOST* and on roadside interpretive boards, provides a great deal of interesting information, especially about the highway's history. They are more like numbered stops along history trails than a regular series of milemarkers. For the first 150 miles, for example, 14 are unevenly spread as shown in Figure 21. Because



Figure 20: 50th anniversary post at Beaver Creek, Canada, about 30 miles before the border with Alaska. Credit: TMP 2003.

Though this seems to imply that they still physically exist, not a single photo of an original milestone is featured in *The MILEPOST*. Despite extensive research, the only photographs of original mileposts are found in George R. Stewart's 1957 book, *N.A. 1 – Looking North*.

The United States has retained the mile as the standard unit of road measurement and all its later mileposts are "based on historical miles." These historical miles in the words of *The MILEPOST* (2003): "reflect historical driving distances. The highway is shorter today than it was in the 1940s. Reconstruction and rerouting have shaved 30-40 miles off the length of the highway."

In Canada, the original mileposts erected in the 1940s and so named in *The MILEPOST* were superseded by kilometre posts in 1978. Subsequently, in Yukon Province in 2002, the kilometre posts were moved or replaced because of improvements and rerouting, creating a difference of up to 36 km between the two sets of kilometres stones. In the 2003 edition of *The MILEPOST*, the DC 945.8 red warning notice, normally used to alert drivers to dangerous sections or to watch out for moose or livestock on the road, reads:

"recalibrated kilometreposts end with kmpost 1,518. The next post northbound is kmpost 1,576, 1.5 miles/2.4 kms from kmpost 1,518, resulting in a 56-kilometre discrepancy in the signage."

To add to the travellers' confusion, in some sections where new kilometre posts were installed the older ones have been left in place.

In 1992, in both the 'historic milepost' and historical miles are supposedly based on the original mileage - not the actual mileage shown-in brackets - it is baffling to discover that. *Historical Mile*

233 (227 km from Dawson Creek) is a much nearer neighbour to *Historic Milepost* 234 (227.6 km). It appears that those who erected these various waymarkers were not too worried by these anomalies, understandably so perhaps. In a road some 1200 miles long, a discrepancy of about thousand yards in one location is no big deal.



Figure 19: Early photo of original milepost near Eagle Summit. Credit: George R Stewart.

Two waymarkers, the Zero Milepost at Dawson Creek and the terminus milepost at Delta Junction record the length of the road but might better be classified as *boundary posts* rather than *mile markers* or, as Frank Brusca described them in *M&W15*, zero milestones and endpoints.

Any attempt to classify this variety of waymarkers is bound to be controversial. Some, obviously, are not mile markers as they record distances in kilometres. The Milestone Society recognises all waymarkers that are no longer functional, predominantly milestones and mileposts, as heritage assets, ignoring modern road signs, so at least the older Canadian kilometre posts qualify as waymarkers. However, The Society does also take an interest in preserving fingerposts - waymarkers that are still in use. None of the Alaska Highway mile markers of whatever date are functional in terms of describing present distances accurately, but they do remain functional as part of addresses, both private and public, such as the location of RV parks and tourist attractions along the way or close to it. In that sense they resemble fingerposts in providing useful information for travellers and are therefore also 'of interest'. The historical mileposts are also functional but as their function is to provide and record information about the road's history, they too might reasonably be included as 'of interest'. Arguably, exact classification of these various waymarkers is unimportant.

Historic(al) milepost number	Actual distance	Location (population)	Feature
0		Dawson Creek (21,800)	Mile 0 marker
2	1.7		Sign about Cantel Repeater station
3	3.3		Sign about U.S. Construction camp
35	35	Taylor (1,300)	Information Centre
41	40		Post Office
42	40.9		Turn to St John airport
47	45.7		Sign about Camp Alcan engineering base 1942
49	48.6		Camp Alcan memorial
52	51.2		Turn for Rotary RV Park
73	72.8		Beatton River Flight Strip Commemoration
101	101	Wonowon (150)	WW2 Blueberry traffic control gate
104	103.5		Start of Adolphson, Layer & Welch contract during construction
143	140.4	Pink Mountain (99)	Home of Canadian champion bullfighter
148	144.7		Suicide Hill commemoration

Figure 21: 'Historic mileposts' on the Alaska highway for the first 150 miles.



The World Famous sign for the World Famous Alaska Highway, taken on MotoQuest's North to Alaska Adventure

Figure 22: Start of the Alaska Highway at Dawson Creek. Credit: Brenden Anders.



Visitor Center and End of the Alaska Highway display in Delta Junction.

Figure 23: End of the Alaska Highway Display at Delta Junction. Credit: Earl L Brown, TMP 2003.

The important thing about the Alaska Highway waymarkers, however one chooses to name and classify them, is that many still exist. They make a unique contribution to the Highway's history and are as much deserving of identification, recording, conservation and explanation as any other markers, not least for pointing up the irony that though the United States left the British Empire almost 250 years ago, it still uses imperial measures and maintains its mile markers whilst Canada, still within the Commonwealth, has gone metric – though not for its railway mile markers. Both countries muddle along with two systems. Alaska Highway waymarkers may not yet all be heritage assets, but assets they certainly are and, despite their modernity, a proper part of milestone and waymarker history.

How long?

From all that has already been written it is apparent that there is no simple or single answer to this apparently simple question. The reasons why the figures have changed over time due to rerouting have already been discussed. Those provided by the various sources are set out in Figure 24.

Source	Length	Date
Google Maps	1,365	2022
Apple Maps	1,366	2022
The Milepost	1,387	2022
Wikipedia	1,387	2012
Dawson Creek Zero marker	1,390	Unknown
The Milepost	1,422	2003
Rikka's Roadhouse (Seattle Times)	1,488	2003
Last milepost at Fairbanks	1,520	2003*
Britannica	1,523	2022*
Wikipedia	'About 1,700'	1942

Figure 24: The length of the Alaska Highway. Distances in ascending order, Dawson Creek to Delta Junction/Fairbanks*

The claim in Wikipedia that in the 1940s the

highway was about 1,700 miles can be disregarded. There is no doubt that the road has shrunk over time and the consensus suggests it has done so by about 30 miles. One example how this came about can be found in *The MILEPOST's* log (2003). Historical milepost 234 states that for the next 40 miles 132 curves were removed from the course of the road but it does not specify by what length the highway was shortened. The reason for the asterisked 'long roads' in *Britannica* and at Fairbanks, is that these include the additional 96 miles (98 in 2003) further north to the unofficial terminus at Fairbanks as part of the Alaska Highway.

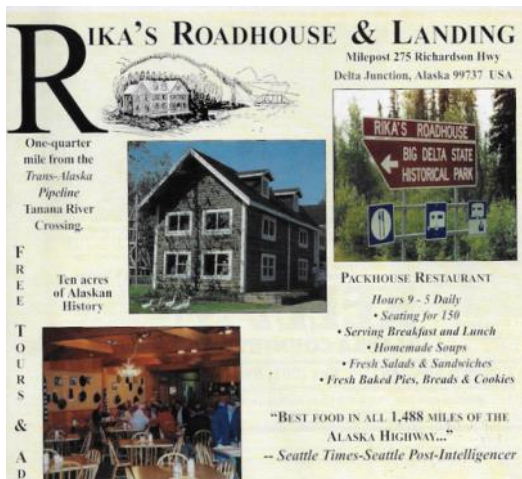


Figure 25: Rikka's Roadhouse at Delta Junction. The fact that there is 'seating for 150' indicates the size of the tourist tsunami in the high season.

Strictly speaking, this last section beyond Delta Junction is part of the Richardson Highway. (It was this road along which the author travelled rather than the proper Alaska Highway.) The figure of 1448 that appears in the advertisement for Rikka's Roadhouse, near Delta Junction but actually on the Richardson Highway, is part of a quote from *The Seattle Times*: "Best food in all 1,488 miles of the Alaska Highway."

Conclusion

Two findings have emerged during what has proved at times baffling research for this article, one positive, one negative. The wealth of information available in books, articles, blogs and many websites reveal that, despite being only three quarters of a century old, the Alaska Highway has a rich and fascinating history, far more than can be encompassed in a single article, which readers may by this stage feel is excessively long as an 'introduction'. Much more is already there and more still to be found and written including the history of the 21 other Highways in Alaska, which promise to pose similar challenges. For example, *The MILEPOST's* log (2003) at the start of the Highway at Valdez, the southern end of the oil pipeline states:

"Mileposts on the Richardson Highway were erected before the 1964 Good Friday earthquake four miles from present day downtown Valdez near Old Valdez (destroyed in the earthquake)."

The number of road historians in the USA is relatively small and, so far as is known at least on this side of the Atlantic, none has tackled Alaska's Highways in any detail.

The downside of having access to a wealth of information is that some of it is disinformation; it is not always easy to distinguish facts from alternative facts. For example, some readers may be surprised by the amount of construction equipment left rusting by the roadside at Fort Nelson and suspicious of the apparent accuracy of the figures. If so, their suspicions are well founded. For example, these figures are included in a travel blog written by a BBC journalist. As an organisation which makes bold claims about its reliable reporting, it seemed reasonable to accept them at face value. Further research, however, suggested that the journalist's figures were unreliable. The *Alaska on-line* article quotes the identical numbers of equipment, not as discarded by the roadside, but as the total number employed constructing the highway. This would appear to be the more accurate fact as the Department of Transportation would presumably retain or have access to the original records.

But sorting the wheat from the chaff is the essence of research. As Mary Gage showed in her work on milestones in New England, myths about roads are easily created yet hard to erase. Straightforward answers to simple questions are rendered difficult by the complexity of the highway's history and conflicting evidence, which is why this article has only scratched the surface of the Alaska Highway's history. Much more remains to be investigated, but finding most of the answers requires fieldwork beyond the normal range of Milestone Society members, unless of course they were to celebrate their retirement, foregoing the typical 'world cruise' in favour of travelling for a few months from Dawson Creek to Delta Junction in a hired RV and noting what they find every mile – or kilometre. Even fit and enthusiastic cyclists might be tempted, provided they were willing to tackle some punishing inclines. Suicide Hill has long been reconstructed but much of the terrain along the highway remains unavoidably challenging. At Pink Mountain the road rises to 3,600 feet, about the same height as the summit of Snowdon and about 1,400 feet higher than the highest road in Britain. Perhaps it could become the Ultimate Milestone Society Challenge.

Endnote:

¹The issue of whether Ukrainians are Russians is being aggressively disputed. The ethnic and political history of the Ukraine is complex. In 1867 Alaska belonged to Russia.

²www.themilepost.com.

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The only English reference found. An entertaining, up-to-date, personal travelogue but factually unreliable.

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THEFT, RECOVERY AND PROTECTION

Robert Caldicott

When at the end of the 19th century the system of highways management by Turnpike Trusts came to an end, the responsibility for upkeep passed to local highways authorities and all modern legislation relates to the highway authorities.

Under Section 263 of the Highways Act 1980 every highway maintainable at the public expense, “together with the materials and scrapings of it” vests in the local Highway Authority, and it seems to follow that its milestones and direction posts are part of the highway and belong to the Highway Authority, arguably even if no longer in position.

Removal of a milestone, milepost, direction post or parts of the same without explicit consent from that authority amounts to theft and, under the Theft Act 1968, handling stolen property is an indictable offence. There is no time limit for prosecuting an indictable offence.

Under Section 131(2) of the 1980 Act it is an offence to pull down a milestone or direction post. The offence under section 131 is a summary offence and can only be prosecuted within six months of the offence taking place. So, both removal and handling are criminal offences.

The event which most often occupies the Theft Officer of the Milestone Society is a milestone or milepost turning up at a public auction or on eBay. They are usually easy to trace to their original site but may have gone missing many decades ago. They may have been removed without consent but are in that grey area where the actual circumstances of their removal are not known. They may have changed hands several times, and it is fairly certain that the ‘owner’ will have no evidence to show that he is in possession of the object with ‘explicit consent’ from its highway authority. The next time anyone sees a milepost being auctioned they can suggest to the auctioneer and the vendor that the vendor may be in difficulty unless such consent can be shown.

A key question to ask in the event of a milestone or milepost appearing for sale is “Is it Listed?” Listing by English Heritage (devolved to the new body Historic England in 2015) was granted to historic markers in good condition, and it gives them better protection from being damaged or discarded. Technically they are Listed Buildings, and damage, theft or removal without Listed Building Consent is a criminal offence for which:

“The maximum penalty is two years' imprisonment or an unlimited fine. In determining the fine a judge must have regard to any financial benefit which has accrued or appears likely to accrue to the wrongdoer so as to deny them any benefits”

It is not a defence to claim ignorance of the fact of Listing.

The process of recovery becomes a great deal easier if the marker is Listed. Since removal without consent is automatically a criminal offence, the Police will record it as such and take an interest in it. Furthermore, if a Listed marker appears at auction or on an auction website such as eBay, it becomes much easier to have the auctioneer remove the item before sale takes place. eBay in particular is not easy to deal with, which is understandable. They must get all kinds of allegations or complaints from individuals, but if the Police are involved they will take down the item immediately; the Milestone Society has a number of examples of this being the case. The Society’s database records just under 13,000 mile markers in England, Scotland and Wales, of which 4,128 are recorded as Listed. This is about 32% overall, although Scotland’s tally is only 60 out of over 2,000 (according to the database).

A recent example turned up at a well-known auctioneer’s house specialising in old cars. It was part of a milepost and its original site in Gwynedd was easily established. It turned out that it was one of very few missing from a series otherwise all still *in situ*, in good condition and Listed by CADW (the Welsh equivalent of Historic England). When the local highways officer was told of its discovery, he was very keen to get it back. He took advice from his legal department who informed him that it was still Highways property. Armed with this story, we were able to get it withdrawn from auction, and the auctioneer put us in touch with the vendor. He turned out to be a scrap metal dealer who said that it had come to him in the stock of a metal business he had taken over some years before and he thought it had been there for thirty years. He eventually agreed to hand it over, and a local Milestone Society member picked it up for return to its original owners. It has now been returned to its original site (see below) after restoration by highways engineers. Investigating reports of mileposts or parts of them disappearing is a time-consuming business, but a successful recovery makes it worthwhile.



Figure 1: Restored milestone near Tywyn, Gwynedd, MER TWDG01 SH 6001 0194 Photo by Robert Caldicott.

An actual theft is relatively rare and is usually best dealt with by local Society members if available. They will know the item concerned and will be fired up and keen to pursue the matter with the Police and encourage the local Press to take an interest. The County Highways officer will probably be keen to support efforts to recover it, as will the Historic Environment Record officer.

The Milestone Society has an arrangement with SALVO (<https://www.salvoweb.com/>) to carry a report of milestones and related items which have gone missing. It is a useful resource for architectural salvage dealers and others to check whether an item offered for sale is known to have been removed illicitly.

During the turnpike era when milestones were first erected as part of the responsibilities of Turnpike Trusts, laws were passed to discourage theft. Below is a typical example of the provisions in an Act of 1818, whereby Trustees had to place Stones or Posts marked with Places and Distances along the roads in their charge. The Act also sets out penalties for removing or damaging them. The penalty, £5, is around £300 in today's money.

Roads may
be measured
and Mile
Stones, &c.
erected.

Penalty on
defacing
Mile Stones,
&c.

LXXVII. And be it further enacted, That the said Trustees may cause the said Roads to be measured, and Stones or Posts to be continued or placed in or near the same, with Inscriptions thereon, denoting the Number of Miles and Distances from Places, if they shall think fit; and also may continue or cause to be set up on or near the said Roads such and so many Direction Posts as they may think necessary; and if any Person or Persons shall wilfully break, damage, or pull up any of such Stones or Posts; or shall obliterate or deface any Inscription thereon, or cause or procure the same to be done;

wherein such Mischief or Offence shall be done or committed, either on the Confession of the Party, or by the Oath of One or more credible Witnesses or Witnesses, every such Offender or Offenders shall forfeit and pay any Sum not exceeding Five Pounds for every such Offence; and every such Offender may by the Authority of this Act, and without any other Warrant, be apprehended by any Person who shall see any such Offence committed, and shall be delivered to a Constable or other Peace Officer, who shall convey such Offender before such Justice of the Peace to be dealt with according to Law.

It was not only Turnpike Trusts who erected milestones. The Highways Act 1835 section 24 empowered the Surveyor of Highways for each parish to erect milestones. Pulling down a milestone or direction post was also an offence under the Highways Act 1835 section 72.

In the 20th century a factor which had a serious effect on the survival or loss of mile markers and their possible appearance on the "grey market" more generally was the wartime drive to remove or deface roadside signs and markers which might help an invading enemy.

Great numbers of milestones and direction posts were removed as part of the war effort. In early 1940, as the struggle to evacuate troops from Dunkirk was coming to an end, attention turned to the possibility that enemy forces would follow the rout with an invasion. Among the steps being taken to build covert gun emplacements, tank traps and other means of slowing down an invading army, worries arose about the help to an enemy presented by informative road signs of various sorts.

Having left his creation, the BBC, two years before, Sir John (later Lord) Reith was appointed Minister of Information in January 1940 in Chamberlain's wartime government, and it fell to him to issue the order to remove milestones, mileposts, fingerposts and the like. The defacement by chiselling described below was, in the words of Lord Reith, "in direct conflict with instructions".

Even at a time of national emergency there were those who regretted the loss of historical and irreplaceable roadside artefacts. Others pointed out that roadside advertising often carried information useful to an enemy, as the cuttings below from the Yorkshire Post and Leeds Mercury of June 1940 testify.



Figure 2: Defaced milestone near Charlbury, Oxon, OX STW05 SP 3426 1937, photo by Derek Turner.

Milestones Without a Message

THE West Riding authorities have been remarkably efficient in dealing with the sign-posts. They are to be congratulated. Two friends who went walking the other day near Wetherby very soon lost themselves, and all because the fingers had been riven from the sign-posts.

But the efficiency went much further than the obliteration of the sign-posts. Well-known milestones this week-end were chipped with a chisel, and the milestones now are dumb. Never since milestones were first put up on the rolling English road have the milestones lost face—except when old age has made them speechless. Their gashed faces now have brought the war to the quietest of country lanes.

Danger to Ancient Monuments

THIS defacement of ancient milestones in the interests of national security is distressing antiquaries. Mr. F. Victor Gill, of Bradford, writes:—

Sir John Reith has ordered the removal of all road signs which would be of value to the enemy. What does this order really mean?

I know the result of the order as far as Bradford is concerned. In Bradford all the old road signs which have existed for more than a hundred years, and have been carefully preserved and watched by the various antiquarian societies, have had their wording removed by the chisel. This makes these stones simply pieces of stone which have no value either practical or antiquarian.

A stone which has been at the junction of Haworth Road and Bingley Road from time immemorial has had the wording entirely removed by chiselling, and is finished for ever as a memorial of bygone days or as a milestone.

Surely we have not got into such a panic as this indicates. I understand that an Admiral is going about the country speeding up this destruction. It is a great pity that things like this can happen.

All with any reverence for the past will sympathise with Mr. Gill's regret, while eager to hamper the enemy to the utmost. Would it be possible to save milestones of special antiquarian interest by digging them up and storing them?

Figure 3: Yorkshire Post, June 1940.

What About Advertisement Signs?

THE removal of signposts and milestones is not enough in itself—as any observant person will see. For many roads are liberally supplied with hotel, golf and spa advertisements.

It is little use to remove all the signposts and still to leave on the main road an announcement, "Bathgate, England's Premier Spa 45 miles," or "Bridborough, Queen of Watering Places 30 miles."

A sign obliterating a large area of the traveller's vision and proclaiming that "The Olde George Hotel at ——— only 12 miles ahead" is just as useful as the more modest milestone.

These large signs will plainly have to be removed for the duration of the war. And, if owners take a patriotic view and hand them over to the authorities as scrap, the salvage collection campaign should benefit by a substantial tonnage of metal. Many of these signs have steel struts holding them aloft. Some of them consist of sheet steel bases or have steel frames. They could all usefully go into the melting pot.

Figure 4: Leeds Mercury, June 1940

In the aftermath of the war, even though legally removed in 1940, failure to return or restore milestones was in principle an illegal act. Until The Milestone Society came on the scene in the early 2000s many ordinary milestones and other roadside mile markers installed by Turnpike Trusts from the mid 18th century onwards may have been regarded as obsolete by their owners, the local highway authority. They were at risk of being discarded during road improvements, although they were installed originally by an Act of Parliament under the terms of the relevant Turnpike Act. Sometimes major works rendered it impracticable to retain them at or close to their original positions.

In Warwickshire, for example, surviving mile markers from the Turnpike era are thin on the ground. Many that do survive are lacking inscriptions or have had their cast iron plates removed. It is probable that the county, being a likely target for its industry and wartime manufacturing, had many markers removed or defaced at this time. The surviving stone, carved information chiselled away or shorn of its plate is unlikely to qualify for protection by Listing, and remains by the hedgerow, vulnerable to damage from errant vehicles or carelessly operated hedge-cutting flails. The nationally unique Stratford-upon-Avon to Long Compton mileposts may well have lost any surviving wooden signboards at the same time.

Reports of disappeared milestones are still frequent; constant vigilance on the ground as well as eBay and auction sites remains important, as does quick action by Society members and others to increase the chance of successful recovery.

MORE MILESTONES IN THE NEWS

Carol Haines

It is often very difficult to find out when milestones first appeared on a particular road, and it was therefore thought that looking for references in 18th century newspapers¹ would give evidence of when a milestone was actually in place. It is possible that some of these stones are still *in situ*, but more probably they have been replaced or have not survived. Often not enough information is given in the reports to identify the exact location, and place names have changed their spelling or are not found on more modern maps. The illustrations included here are of milestones that could well have been beside the roads when some of these occurrences took place. As has been found from previous research², newspapers of the time provide a good example of how milestones played a part in pinpointing the scene of an incident, showing their usefulness to previous generations, and in these examples giving an insight into life and events along the roads in the 1700s.

An early mention of milestones was found in the *Kentish Weekly Post* of 3 May 1746, where Matthew Elliot of the Water-Lock in Sold was advertising the sale of many types of stones and monuments, including marble chimney pieces, gravestones, paving Portland slabs, vases for piers, and milestones. It is not clear whether he was making these goods or selling them second-hand. If he was making them, was he hoping for trade from turnpike trusts (before the Act of Parliament of 1766 made them compulsory), or from estate owners wanting to publicise their presence?

Notices of meetings of turnpike trustees sometimes mention milestones that must already have been in place. Proposed alterations to the road from Spalding High Bridge to Donington Market Place in Lincolnshire mentions the tenth milestone in Gosberton and the eighth in Wigtoft (*Stamford Mercury* 28 August 1783). In the *Oxford Journal* (2 September 1786) the trustees of a complex network of roads from Reading (Berks) through Henley (Oxon), Great Marlow (Bucks) and St Albans (Herts) include the road from Marlow to Bysham (modern Bisham) “to or near the thirty Mile-Stone, in the Turnpike Road leading from Maidenhead to Reading”. Another proposed continuation Act was for repairing and widening the road from the 48th milestone in Cardington on the Hitchin and Bedford road and for continuing the turnpike to the Great North Road near Tensford Bridge (*Northampton Mercury* 1 September 1792).

Accidents

Several gruesome accidents were noted in the press, and a common cause of death was of horses taking fright, the driver being thrown off his vehicle and then being crushed under the wheels. This happened near the three-mile stone on the Prescott road to James Kilshaw, “a farmer, near Derby”, when returning home with an empty coal cart (*Newcastle Chronicle* 13 April 1765). He left 12 small children and a pregnant widow. The location is almost certainly West Derby east of Liverpool. The milestone referred to may have been similar to a surviving example at Huyton (LA_WALV11, see Figure 1).



Figure 1: LA_WALV11, Huyton, SJ 4492 9232, Photo: Milestone Society.

Mr Warwick, returning to Bath in a phaeton, met with the same “melancholy catastrophe near the 20th milestone on the London Road” (*Northampton Mercury* 26 November 1785). There were several reports of mail coaches being overturned. The coach through Stamford to York, the Bath mail coming down Marlborough Hill and the Dover mail between Sittingbourne and Canterbury were all mentioned. The Holyhead and Chester mail coach overturned near the 40-mile stone, killing one horse and badly injuring two others. The same coach overturned again on another occasion and was damaged too much to continue. An injured passenger was conveyed, along with the bags, in a chaise to Stoney Stratford. On the same night another coach overturned near Coleshill (*Oxford Journal* 28 October 1786).

Other incidents included an inquest on William Stone, a basket maker of Cuddesden, who dropped dead near the milestone at Bullington Green. The Oxford coroner’s verdict was that he died by the visitation of God (*Northampton Mercury* 11 November 1786).

A pair of horseman’s bags were lost near the house of Mr John Parish at the Black Swan, Sparrows End, near the 40-mile stone on the Newmarket Road. They contained some clothing and assorted papers. A maximum reward of three guineas was offered if the bags and their contents were delivered to various people in Bishops Stortford, Saffron Walden or Holborn Hill, London (*Ipswich Journal* 2 May 1767).

Runners and riders

Roads provided convenient tracks for races and feats of endurance, with considerable betting taking place. A contest between two Galloways³ owned by the masters of the Spring Garden in Stepney and the Rose and Crown at Mile End was reported in the *Stamford Mercury* on 10 July 1746. They had to go between the one-mile stone in Whitechapel Road and the 11-mile stone “this side Rumford [sic], backwards and forwards, which is compleat 20 miles”. The Rose and Crown’s horse won easily in one hour and eleven minutes. The same stretch of road was used for another contest reported in the *Northampton Mercury* on 11 April 1785 this time with a horse belonging to an Essex gentleman. There were considerable bets that he could go between 20 and 22 miles in an hour. The horse was within two seconds of going the 22 miles. The article then told its readers that the poor animal died a few hours after this experiment. There is no indication as to the fate of a “pony” carrying its 15-stone owner in a contest to go 100 miles against a man on foot for a prize of £20 (*Derby Mercury* 1 March 1787). They started at a milestone near Rosington Bridge and went 52 miles to Grantham and back. They reached Grantham in just over 12 hours, but the pedestrian gave up soon afterwards. The rider completed the course in 27 hours. Rossington (the modern spelling) is just west of the Great North Road, and it is therefore probable that this highway provided the course for the contest.



Figure 2: Derbyshire OS 6” sheet 45 NW 1887.

Runners and walkers also competed along the highways. A butcher from Bonsal ran 16 miles from Chesterfield to the sixteenth milestone near Derby in one hour 51 minutes “without making any stop or taking any refreshment, and performed the whole with ease” (*Northampton Chronicle* 7 April 1787). The Derbyshire OS 6” sheet 45 NW printed in 1887 shows the position of the milestone (Figure 2).

“The famous Pedestrian, Powell, undertook to go one Hundred Miles in the Space of twenty-two Hours, for a very considerable Wager. He set off on Sunday Night, at Ten o’Clock, from Hyde-Park Corner, and went to the fifty Mile-Stone on the Bath Road, and returned last Night at twenty Minutes after Seven, which was forty Minutes within the Time. He appeared to perform it with very great Ease” (*Northampton Mercury* 19 July 1788). Figure 3 shows a milestone on the A4 giving a distance of 19 miles to Hyde Park Corner and dated 1741.

Another contest for a large wager was performed by an elderly gentleman to go from the 1-mile stone in Blackman Street in the Borough to the 16-mile stone on the Guildford road and back in eight hours, which he accomplished with great difficulty with a few minutes to spare (*Derby Mercury* 31 December 1774). Blackman Street does not feature in a modern London A-Z but is shown on Cary’s map of 1787. It is now Borough High Street. The contestant would almost certainly have passed the White Lady milestone in Esher (SY_LP13a) which was erected in 1767 and which is 15 miles from Southwark and 14 from Guildford (Figure 4).



Figure 3: BU_LB19, Slough, TQ 0000 7881. Photo: A. Rosevear and J. Higgins/Geograph).



Figure 4: TQ 1473 6564, White Lady milestone, Esher. Photo: L. Joseph/Geograph.

“A singular Wager is reported to have taken Place between a certain Duke and a sporting Baronet” reported the *Northampton Mercury* on 3 November 1787. The Duke had to provide a man “who shall walk from his Grace’s House in Piccadilly to the ten Mile-Stone beyond Hounslow, in the Space of three Hours, advancing four Steps, and at every fourth Step retiring one Step backwards”. The stake was one thousand guineas. It was thought by the “literati” that the idea stemmed from one of the probable myths about Catherine de Medici who had vowed to send someone on a pilgrimage to Jerusalem in this manner on the successful completion of a project. She found a man from Verbier who successfully undertook this task, but the outcome of the wager in 1787 is not known. Another unusual pedestrian was King George III, who was reported to have walked thirteen miles on his way from Windsor to St. James’s. He had two attendants, and carriages were ordered to follow and stop at the nine-mile stone near

Hounslow, from where his majesty was then driven to his destination. “He was four hours in his walk, and seemed very much pleased with the novelty of it” reported *Aris’s Birmingham Gazette* (21 January 1788). There are several old milestones in the Hounslow area and, although their inscriptions look as though they have been recut in more recent times, they are probably the original stones that were there in the late 1700s (see Figure 5).



Figure 5: MX_IWTW02a, Hounslow, TQ 1656 7659.
Photo: Milestone Society.

Publications

Assorted publications, some of which included detailed maps, were advertised in the press. *The Universal Museum, Or Polite Magazine of History, Politics, and Literature* included “Kitchin’s most accurate Map of England and Wales, with the Roads, and Distances by the Mile-Stones”. Among other assorted items was “an exact Representation of the Rhubarb Plant”, all for the price of 6d (*Aris’s Birmingham Gazette* 7 February 1763). Another sixpenny offering was *The Universal Magazine*, with a new and accurate map of the post roads in England and Wales with distances by the milestones, observations upon roads in general and the manner of constructing these highways. Readers also got a fairy tale, and a heroic letter to a gentleman in the army (*Aris’s Birmingham Gazette* 9 September 1765). In the same newspaper three years later (8 June 1767) were details of another volume of *The Universal Magazine*, this time with an “elegantly engraved” map of the road from London through Staines, Basingstoke, Salisbury and Exeter to the 204th milestone on the way to Land’s End. Readers were also treated to observations on madness cured by bleeding, a method to make fruit and flowers grow in winter, and a description and cure for the quartan ague.

More detailed maps and guides were also produced and were advertised in the press. One of Derbyshire, 1 inch to 1 mile, from a survey by P. P. Burdett was published in 1766, price one and a half guineas. It contained many county features such as gentlemen’s seats, bridges, fords, watermills, all main crossroads with their measure by the perambulator, milestones, toll bars, petrifying springs, and plans of market towns (*Derby Mercury* 4 July 1766). With a price of 1s 6d *The Traveller’s Pocket-Book; or, Ogilby and Morgan’s Book of the Roads* “Improved and amended, in a method never before attempted” contained a long list of features such as “the distances, in measured miles, from London, to all the cities, towns and remarkable villages in England and Wales, according to the new-erected mile-stones”, Scottish roads measured from Edinburgh, houses of the gentry, circuits of the judges, and “The Postmaster-General’s Account of the Nights that Post-Letters are dispatched to the several Trading Towns, and the Expences [sic] of sending a Packet or Letter by Express to any Part of the Kingdom” (*Northampton Mercury* 22 May 1775). The eighteenth edition “Neatly printed in a small Pocket Volume” was issued two years later (*Oxford Journal* 9 August 1777). These would have been used by some of the gentlemen travellers in the eighteenth century. John Byng wrote “we are tolerably well accompanied with touring, road books, maps, etc.” when setting out on his excursion to Wales in 1781, and this explains how he knew about the country estates that he was passing.⁴

Highway robbery

By far the majority of mentions of milestones in newspapers were to pinpoint the scene of robberies, making travel in the eighteenth century sound fraught with danger, particularly in the London area. A Mr Sparks and his servant were robbed of £50 near the eight-mile stone between Edmonton and Enfield by two footpads who jumped out of a holly bush (*Aris’s Birmingham Gazette* 27 November 1752). In the same area, but near the 7-mile stone Mr Fellows was knocked off his horse by two footpads, who beat him but fled without robbing him when other people came in sight (*Derby Mercury* 26 October 1753). As Mr Allen and his friend were coming to town from Harrow, they were stopped by two highwaymen near the four-mile stone. When they refused to hand over their money one of the highwaymen fired his pistol, the ball of which passed through Mr Allen’s hat. Mr Allen then fired a small pocket pistol and wounded one of the robbers, who both fled (*Northampton Mercury* 14 March 1785). At a trial at the Old Bailey, William White was convicted of “feloniously assaulting Mr Abraham Dyson on the Highway, near the six Mile-Stone on the Edgware Road, and robbing him of a Metal Watch, a Seal, and other Things”. White was sentenced to death (*Derby Mercury* 31 August 1786).

Commons and heaths were particularly dangerous areas. Mr Hawes of Highgate, coming over Finchley Common in his coach with his wife and two daughters, was attacked near the seven-mile stone by two highwaymen, who demanded their money, rings and watches. Mr Hawes gave them ten guineas, and when another carriage came in sight the robbers rode off at high speed (*Derby Mercury* 26 October 1753). Another highwayman robbed a gentleman by the 12-mile stone on Hounslow Heath and took his watch. The victim offered a £10 note in exchange for the watch, which had sentimental value. The robber took the note and rode off with that and the watch (*Northampton Mercury* 22 November 1784). On Blackheath, near the six-mile stone, a traveller shot at footpads masquerading as soldiers and killed one of them (*Northampton Mercury* 5 April 1773). Coaches were not immune from robbery, and one coming from Leeds to London was stopped by a highwayman on Finchley Common near the eight-mile stone. The passengers were robbed of about 3s. The highwayman then stopped the Derby stage, but the guard fired his blunderbuss and hit him in the arm. The robber ended up at St Bartholomew's Hospital where his arm was amputated (*Chester Courant* 1 December 1778).

The Uxbridge road was also a hot spot for robberies. A lengthy article in the *Northampton Mercury* (7 July 1777) recounts the hold-up of the coach of Solomon Fell, his wife and daughter near the 8-mile stone. After taking their watches and purses he demanded their money, but a servant who had been behind the coach wrenched the highwayman's pistol from his hand and pointed it at the robber's head. The robber took fright and rode off, but the coachman saw that the highwayman's horse was far inferior to his own two "spirited and powerful geldings", and set off at full gallop in pursuit, much to the alarm of the ladies in the coach. Near Brent bridge the coach overtook the highwayman, whose mount stopped at the water's edge and refused to go further. The coachman and footman seized the man, took him to the magistrate and he was then committed to prison. He was "a good looking young man, named Buxton, well dressed, and scarce twenty, but appears to be an old offender, and is well known in Bow-Street." He had once been a footman and could neither read nor write. Near the 7-mile stone on the Uxbridge road three footpads armed with pistols robbed a gentleman of his gold watch and money (*Northampton Mercury* 19 May 1783), and later that year the Old Bailey trial of William Sharman was reported. He had robbed "Thomas Fellows, Esq; a Gentleman in the Commission of the Peace for the County of Middlesex" between the eight- and nine-mile stones on the Uxbridge road. Sharman was described as "a young Man of genteel Figure and Appearance, who was formerly a Waiter at Wood's Hotel, and other reputable Taverns and Inns". He was found guilty (*Derby Mercury* 11 September 1783).

Robberies took place further afield but were not so widely reported. A footpad, described as a young man with long black hair, held up a clergyman whose wife was riding behind him near the six-mile stone on Egginton Heath between Derby and Burton and robbed him of five guineas (*Derby Mercury* 1 June 1764). Thomas Tranter of Northfield, who was returning from Derby market, was stopped by a man and a woman near the first milestone on the Bromsgrove road. He told them he had no money, but they knocked him down, rifled his pockets of a few halfpence and took a quantity of sugar and soap (*Derby Mercury* 4 March 1784). "Two stout Fellows, with Crape over their Faces" attempted to rob Captain Brown of the 25th Regiment at the nine-mile stone between Gloucester and Frogmill. The Captain fired at them, and they ran off into a wood (*Oxford Journal* 27 April 1782). A highwayman stopped Mr Palmer, the driver of a "caravan" from Harlow, near the 12-mile stone in Epping Forest and stole a small amount of money and a watch. When he demanded money from Mr Palmer's servant, who said he only had sixpence, the highwayman would not give in, whereupon the servant knocked the man down, they tied him up, put him in the cart and took him to the magistrate in Epping to be put in the county gaol to await trial at the Lent Assizes (*Northampton Mercury* 20 December 1788). Figure 6 shows the site of the 12-mile stone in the forest. During a robbery between the two-mile stone on the Oldham road and Miles Platting, Mr Worthington, the York carrier was shot dead as he was returning from Manchester. His watch and purse were taken (*Northampton Mercury* 5 April 1788).

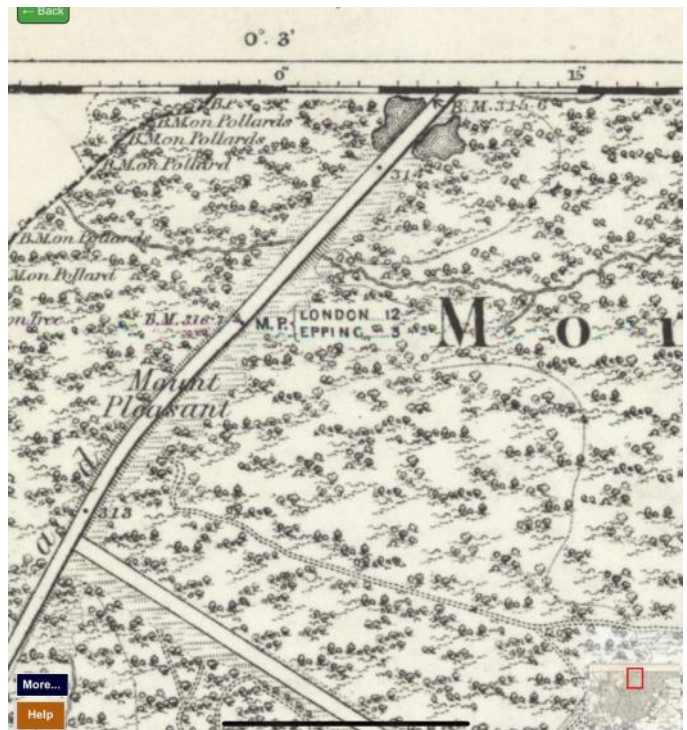


Figure 6: 12-mile stone in Epping Forest, OS 6" map 1868.

Carriers of the mail and other officials were also vulnerable. The post boy with the mail from Whitby was robbed near the 16-mile stone from Whitby (*Derby Mercury* 21 January 1774), while the mail from Bristol to London was robbed in the early hours of the morning between the 11- and 12-mile stones near Cranford Bridge. The highwayman made the post boy get down then drove the horse and cart away. These were found later in a field at Twyford, minus most of the letters. A note at the end of the report reads: “The late Robbery of our Mail should be a fresh Warning to all Persons to cut the Bank-Notes they remit *in two*, and to send the Halve [sic] by the Post on different Days. – We learn with Pleasure that the Remittances from our Banks were either the Halves of Bank-Notes, or Drafts indorsed payable to the Order of their Correspondents. Several Remittances by the above Mail got to Hand, though the Letters that contained them were broken open” (*Oxford Journal* 3 February 1781). A particularly nasty hold-up was reported in the *Northampton Mercury* (11 April 1785): “On Friday Evening, about Eight o’Clock, the Purser of the Atlas East-Indiaman, carrying the Company’s Dispatches to Deal, was attacked and robbed of a considerable Sum of Money, by three Footpads, near the seven Mile-Stone, at the Bottom of Shooter’s Hill. One of the Villains stood at the Horses’ Heads with a Cutlass, and threatened to cut the Post Boy’s Arm off if he stirred, whilst the other two, armed with Pistols, robbed Mr Parry, and rifled the Chaise. The Company’s Dispatches, with other valuable Effects, being put into a strong Box were saved”.

Some highwaymen did fail, as evidenced in a report of an attempted hold-up of the Manchester Diligence one evening between the seven- and eight-mile stones from Leicester to Loughborough. The single passenger refused to hand over his money or watch, and the robber rode away empty-handed (*Northampton Mercury* 28 April 1777). Another failed attempt occurred at “the Mile-Stone, on this Side Kingsthorp” when two butchers of Guilsborough were returning from Northampton market. Two footpads with pistols emerged from a hedge, but the intended victims spurred on their horses and escaped (*Northampton Mercury* 2 August 1784).

Disrepair and Vandalism

Road users valued their milestones and wrote to the newspapers to complain when inscriptions could not be read. A very barbed letter, signed The Traveller, is quoted in full as it shows one person’s anger: “Sirs, One may suppose that Mile-Stones were originally intended to give the Traveller Information of the Distance he is at from London, or some other Place on the Road; but from the Want of keeping the Figures new painted, the only Purpose of erecting them is lost on many Roads. It is particularly so on the Coventry Road. I dare say your Paper is read by very many of the Commissioners, who knowing the Country themselves, have no Need of the Information which the Mile-Stone would give them; but who, perhaps, on seeing this Hint, may have the good Nature to order a few Shillings from the Tolls to be expended on gratifying” (*Northampton Mercury* 5 August 1786). This letter may have had the desired effect because the following year a letter from a Mr Winslow was published in the same newspaper on 24 February 1787 noting that the Commissioners had now attended to the marking of figures on the milestones. However, this writer was now complaining about the absence of guideposts which he urged villagers to erect at the intersection of parish roads for the benefit of strangers to an area. He suggested some sort of parish levy to pay for them so that a traveller was not obliged to ask “some clown he may chance to meet” who will give him “awkward directions” and might laugh at him because he does not know the way.

The *Derby Mercury* (1 October 1762) reported that the trustees of the Chesterfield to Hernstone Lane Head turnpike were trying to “put a stop (as far as in them lies) to the several evils and abuses”, and would impose a five-pound fine on owners of wagons travelling for hire “who shall not have his Christian and surname in large letters set upon the tilt, or other conspicuous part of his carriage”. Other travellers in disfavour with the trustees were “all Persons riding in their Carriages, in Streets and Highways, not having some other Person on Foot, or on Horseback to guide the same, forfeit Ten Shillings, or are to be committed to the House of Correction for One Month”. They would also levy a penalty of forty shillings on “every person who shall injure or destroy any mile-stones, or deface the inscriptions thereon”. The trustees of the roads belonging to the Wolverhampton Old District reported that milestones had been “defaced and much damaged by some mischievous and evil-minded persons”. For the benefit of the public, the trustees had erected posts with cast metal plates laid in them, specifying the distances between Wolverhampton and Shiffnal. Some of these plates were already damaged, the trustees implying that it was the drivers of teams that had caused this. The trustees announced that anyone caught damaging the milestones would “be prosecuted to the utmost rigour of the law” and anyone giving information leading to the conviction of an offender would receive a reward of two guineas (*Aris’s Birmingham Gazette* 29 January 1776). The trustees of the Harborough and Welford Roads were aggravated that people had been removing materials such as sand and mortar from the roads and intended to prosecute anyone caught doing this.

They also noted that “several of the Mile-Stones (lately new cut and numbered) have wilfully and maliciously been defaced and obliterated” and anyone giving information leading to the conviction of offenders would receive a reward of £1 (*Northampton Mercury* 20 October 1787).

Sometimes the public took matters into their own hands. The following account appeared in the *Derby Mercury* on 6 September 1754: “A few Days since, as a Gentleman and his Servant were travelling between Bromsgrove and Birmingham, they observed a mischievous Fellow *amusing* himself in erasing the Figures out of one of the Mile-Stones, and they reprimanding him for it, he gave them very saucy Language; whereupon they seized him, and taking him to a House near the Place, borrow’d some strong Cording, with which they bound him Hand and Foot, and then carried him back to the Stone, to which they fasten’d him, with a Label pinn’d to his Skirts, denoting the Crime he had been guilty of, and desiring the first Person that should happen to come by, to horse-whip him, and set him at Liberty; soon after another Gentleman came by, who released the Fellow, after disciplining him, according to the Request of the other Gentleman.”

Conclusion

Most of the milestone references can be traced to main highways that would have been turnpiked in the 18th century, especially those leading out of London. With some places, such as Bullington Green in Oxfordshire, it is not clear which road the traveller was on. Some place names are now spelt differently, or have not been found on more recent maps (e.g. Sold and Frogmill). The most disturbing entry found in the archives is from the *Royal Gazette of Jamaica* (19 July 1794) advertising a sale between the 7- and 8-mile stone at Cane River Pen on the Windward Road. There were “good-sized Spanish steers, for immediate work” but also 439 Choice Young Congo Negroes, 237 Choice Young Slaves imported in the ship *Jemmy*, and 181 Choice Young Congo Slaves, imported in the brig *Ranger* from Angola.

Editor’s Note

Bullington Green, the correct spelling, is best known as an 18th century cricket field and a very unlikely place to find a milestone, which was probably OX_LW 51, located in what is now Shotover Country park on the pre-1793 Oxford-London turnpike before the route was changed to run through Headington. Its original location was about 1500 yards north of Bullington Green and a stiff climb; this might explain William Stone’s sudden death – through a heart attack rather than a ‘Visitation of God’.



Figure 7: OX_LW51 now at Headington, Oxford, SP 5646 0742.
Photo: Derek Turner.

References

1. Research from The British Newspaper Archive – www.britishnewspaperarchive.co.uk
2. Haines, Carol: “It Happened at the Milestone” *Milestones & Waymarkers* Vol.7 (2014), and “Milestones in the News” Vol.14 (2022).
3. A Galloway is a small, hardy horse native to Scotland and northern England.
4. Souden, David (ed.): *Byng’s Tours. The Journals of The Hon. John Byng 1781-1792* (1991).

DEEP HATCHES, BOLVENTOR: ONE LOCATION, TWO MILESTONES

Ian Thompson

The main road through Cornwall today is without doubt the A30, entering the county at Launceston, racing across Bodmin Moor as a dual carriageway and running all the way to Land's End. This was not always the case. When the first Cornish turnpike trust was set up in 1754 to 'improve several roads leading from the Borough of Truro', the route across Bodmin Moor was 'a mere halter path' and not suited to wheeled traffic. In 1760 the Launceston Trust and the Haleworthy Trust turnpiked a route from the end of the Okehampton Trust in Devon to link with the Truro Trust at the rotten borough of Mitchell by going along the northern edge of Bodmin Moor through Camelford, Wadebridge and St Columb Major.



Figure 1: Original 18th century milestone with single inscription on one face giving distance to B for Bodmin. SW925595 Indian Queens.

Nine years later in 1769, the Bodmin Trust established a direct road across Bodmin Moor, from Kennard's House on the Launceston turnpike, through Altarnun, Bolventor and Temple at the heart of the Moor to Bodmin town, then on again over Goss Moor to meet the Haleworthy turnpike at Fraddon. The Bodmin Turnpike Trust was a success. It took most of the traffic, leaving the Haleworthy Trust, with its longer, more northern route, in the shade.

In 1829 the Bodmin Trust made some important road improvements. It by-passed Altarnun and Temple, giving easier gradients on firmer ground, but making the route longer. A new line of road was built into Bodmin, again easing the gradient but increasing the distance. The milestones had to be repositioned and some new milestones were required.

The Bodmin Trust was wound up in 1874 and its main road across the Moor became a County Road. When the Cornwall County Council was set up in 1889, it erected new milestones on many of its roads where there were gaps in the run of milestones.

In the 20th century the main road over the Moor became the A30. To cope with increasing motor traffic, new dual carriageway by-passes were built for Launceston, Bodmin and Fraddon, until today the whole of the road across Bodmin Moor is a dual carriageway.



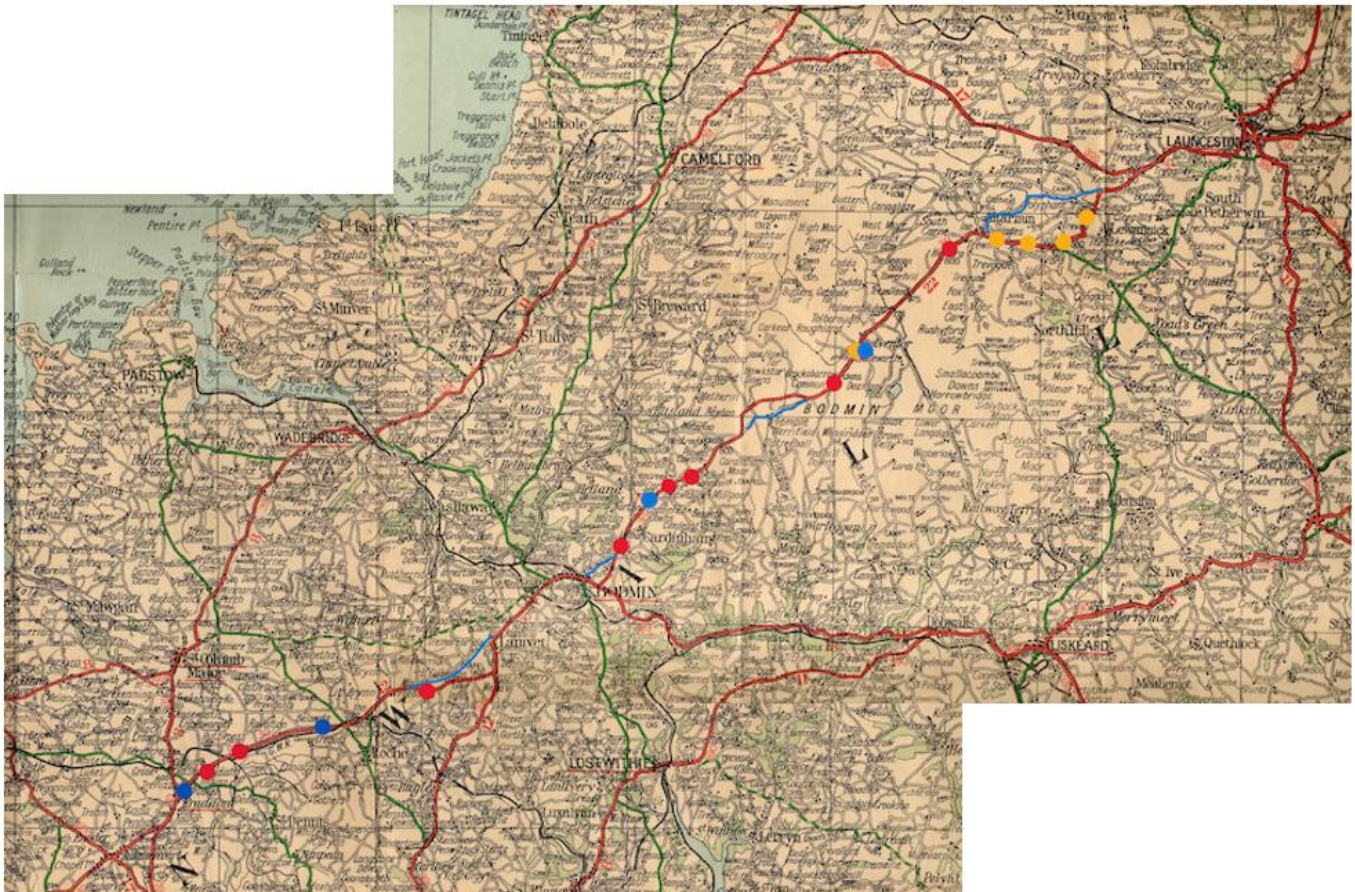
Figure 2: Replacement 1830s triangular milestone with distances on two faces. SW970611 Goss Moor.



Figure 3: Replacement 1890s milestone with pointed top and destination names in full.

The milestones suffered several losses, especially during the late 20th century road improvements, when little thought was given to their historic importance. However, many have survived.

If one looks at an early road map (based on the *Geographia* two miles to one inch map published in 1921) without the 20th century by-passes and dual carriageways, one can see the original sections of the turnpike road which were by-passed by improvements in the 1820s (shown in blue). The surviving milestones are marked. The original round-topped milestones showing the distance to B for Bodmin are marked in red. The triangular milestones from the 1820s and 1830s are marked in blue. The milestones with pointed tops with names of destinations inscribed in full erected after 1889 are marked in yellow.



Starting from the west end of the Bodmin Trust's road at Fraddon, there is a triangular milestone inscribed B12, which was needed because the road to Bodmin after 1829 was longer, requiring an extra milestone. B11 and B10 are original round-topped milestones. B9 is missing. B8 is a triangular replacement, because the original is probably lost in the bog on this section of the road across Goss Moor. The next surviving stone is B5, round-topped and therefore early. The milestones around Bodmin have nearly all disappeared. The round-topped B2 survives on Racecourse Downs, heading towards Launceston. Triangular B3 is a replacement, where the road was made longer. But the original milestone could not be moved because it gave directions at the turning to Blisland. This is the next round-topped milestone. Round-topped B4 survives beside the modern dual carriageway, as do B9 and B13, but the other surviving milestones as the road approaches Launceston are stones with pointed tops erected in the 1890s. There is one place on the route where two milestones have been found with the same distance. This is at Deep Hatches Farm, Bolventor.

In 2006, when Richard and Julie Pearson bought Deep Hatches Farm on Bodmin Moor, they found a milestone in a pile of rubble during building work. They set it up on the lawn behind the farmhouse. It looked splendid.

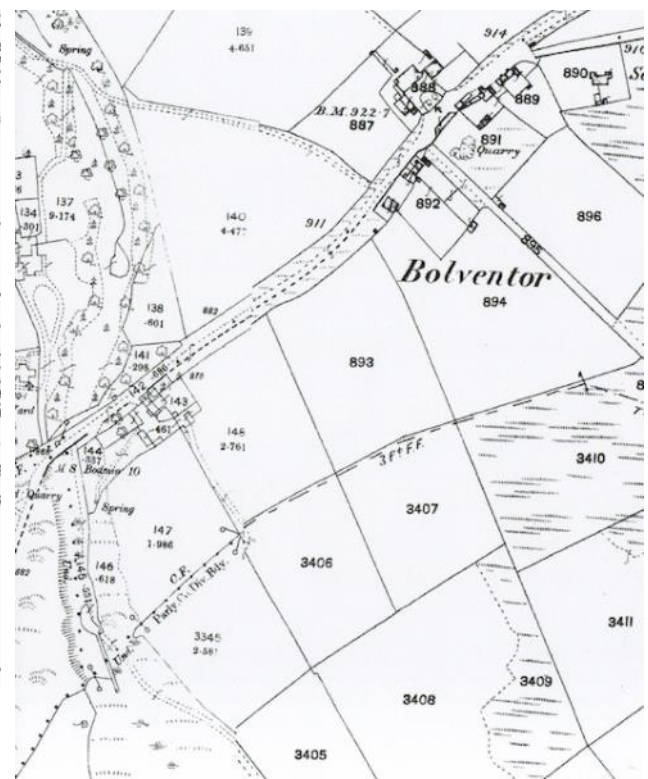
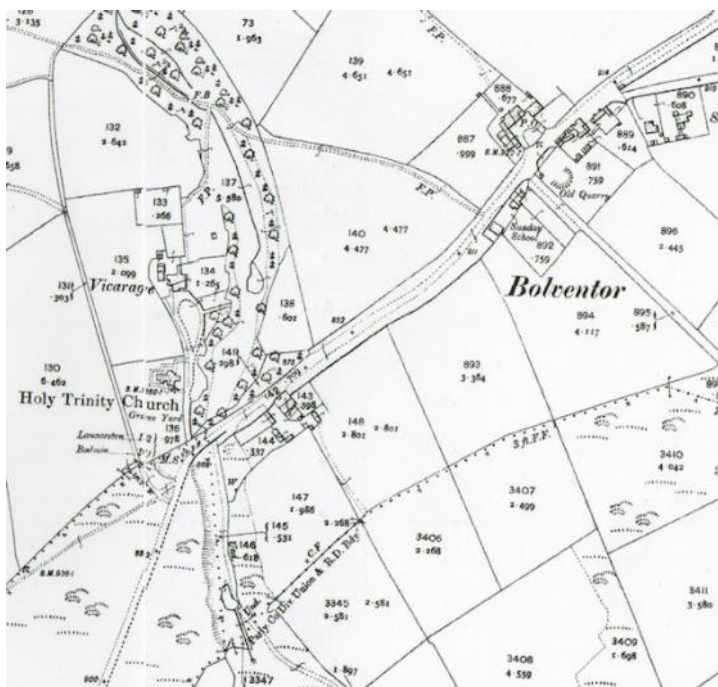
In 2018, Peter Moore spotted the milestone when walking on the Moor behind the farm. After discussion with Richard, Peter reported his find to Rosy Hanns of the Cornwall Archaeological Society, who recorded the milestone for the Historic Environment Record (MCO64176). Peter measured the stone which was triangular in cross section with faces 14” wide and stood 39” above the ground. The left face was inscribed L for Launceston above 12. The right face was inscribed B for Bodmin above 10. Letters were 7” high and numbers were 6½” high. The rough back was curved and the top of the stone was flat. Rosy was a member of the Milestone Society and contacted county representative Ian Thompson who went to have a look.

There is another milestone just across the road from Deep Hatches Farm (at grid reference SX1801 7645). This is Grade II listed, number 68301 on the Historic Environment Record (172524) where it is described as ‘a painted granite post, rectangular-on-plan with a pointed top and inscribed, in upper case lettering, LAUNCESTON / 12 / BODMIN / 10’ – a very different shape of milestone and style of inscription to the milestone on the farm lawn, but with the same distances to Launceston and Bodmin. Two milestones with the same distances at the same location. What was going on?

Cornwall is fortunate to have two editions of the Ordnance Survey 25” map. The first of these, published in 1880, shows a milestone (M.S.) on the south side of the road, just west of Deep Hatches. The second map, published in 1906, shows a milestone (M.S.) on the north side of the road, just west of Deep Hatches.



Figure 4: Triangular milestone in the lawn at Deep Hatches Farm in 2018, inscribed B 10 and L 12.



The two marked milestones, at the bottom left corner of the maps

It seems most likely that the milestone on the 1880 map was the triangular milestone, a replacement milestone from the 1820s or 1830s, which somehow became dislodged from its position and ended up in a pile of rubble at Deep Hatches Farm. The milestone on the 1906 map on the north side of the road is the replacement milestone erected by the then new Cornwall County Council between 1890 and 1900. Comparing these two maps with the modern map, both milestones would now be beneath the tarmac. The later milestone was moved to its current position as a result of the major A30 road improvements in the 1990s when a dual carriageway by-pass was built for Bolventor.



Figure 5: Triangular milestone at Deep Hatches Farm in May 2023, moved from the lawn to make way for a training area for horses.

At a site meeting and discussion between Richard and both the county’s highways engineer and other interested individuals it was agreed that the triangular milestone now in Richard’s lawn would be better placed beside the highway where all could enjoy it. Rather than put it beside the later pointed-top milestone where it might be regarded as a new and unwelcome traffic hazard on the dual carriageway, it was agreed that it could be re-erected on the much quieter old road opposite the entrance to Deep Hatches Farm.

However, things did not go smoothly. There were more important things than moving a milestone. Richard became very ill. Then Covid brought the country to a standstill. Richard and Julie sold the farm and moved away.

Simon Clay bought Deep Hatches Farm in 2021 to move with his three grown up children from London. Peter Moore learned of the change of ownership and contacted Ian Thompson. In May 2023 Ian met the new owner at Deep Hatches Farm. Simon had been working to convert part of the farm to a riding stable and had moved the milestone to make space for a training arena for horses. The milestone was a prominent feature, but still behind the farm away from the highway.

suitable. A route was explored for a JCB to bring the milestone from among the farm buildings to the roadside. It just remained for the highways team to pick up the milestone and place it in a new hole beside the road.

In July 2023 the work was completed.

Acknowledgements:

Photos, Ian Thompson

Maps, courtesy Geographia, Ordnance Survey, National Library of Scotland

Image, courtesy Google Earth

Ian told Simon the story of the milestone and Simon agreed that it would be great to have the milestone beside the public road once more. A further site meeting with the county’s highways engineer was arranged to confirm that the spot chosen to re-erect the milestone was still



Figure 6: Triangular milestone at Deep Hatches Farm in July 2023 re-erected beside the turnpike road opposite

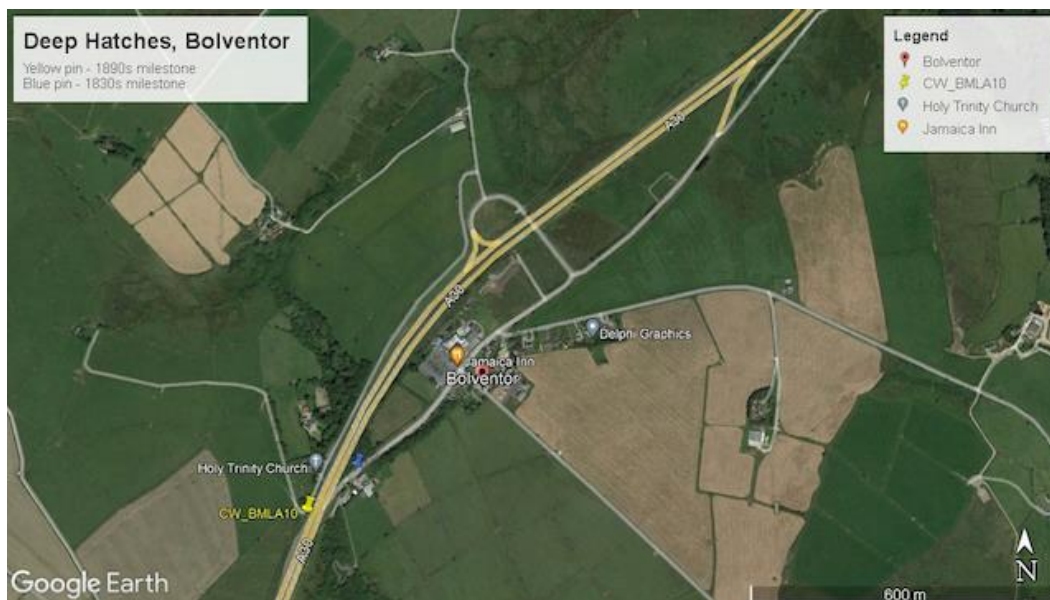


Figure 7: Annotated Google Earth extract, 2023, showing the position of the two milestones.

THE MILESTONE SOCIETY

AIM

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

OBJECTIVES

- To publicise and promote public awareness of milestones and other waymarkers and the need for identification, recording, research and conservation, for the general benefit and education of the community at large
- To enhance public awareness and enjoyment of milestones and other waymarkers and to inform and inspire the community at large of their distinctive contribution to both the local scene and to the historic landscape in general
- To represent the historical significance and national importance of milestones and waymarkers in appropriate forums and through relevant national organisations
- To organise and co-ordinate relevant practical projects at both national and regional/local levels, thereby enhancing public access
- To protect, preserve and restore milestones and other waymarkers through the planning process, representing their significance to appropriate authorities locally and nationally
- To manage the Society's affairs in ways which maintain effective administration and appropriate activity, including the establishment of regional groupings through which to delegate and devolve the Society's business.

NOTES FOR AUTHORS

Milestones & Waymarkers (M&W) records the work of the Society, its members and others with shared interests. It complements the Society's *Newsletter*.

Submissions of material are welcomed and should be sent in digital form to the commissioning editor, Derek Turner, dt@milestonesociety.co.uk, together with the author's contact details. Contributions in non-digital form are acceptable by special arrangement. All contributions are accepted on the understanding that the editor reserves the right to modify the material to make it consistent with the general content and style of the publication.

Content and style:

The content should be clearly related to the title of the publication and to one or more of the Society's aims or objectives. It can be related to identifying, recording, conserving and interpreting for the public benefit, milestones and waymarkers. Interpretation can be taken to include explanation of how other highway heritage organisations and wayside furniture help to explain the nature and the history of milestones and waymarkers. Although the terms of the Society's aims restrict its practical activities to the British Isles, contributions about milestones and waymarkers elsewhere in the world are very welcome.

M&W contains two kinds of articles: those primarily describing the results of research into waymaker history, and those mainly describing significant recent conservation projects. The former tend to be longer and more formal in style, the latter shorter and less formal. Both are equally welcome.

No maximum or minimum length is laid down. Shorter articles with limited coverage may be considered for inclusion in the *Newsletter* rather than M&W. Wherever relevant, photographs should be included; also maps,

diagrams and tables to supplement and illustrate the text.

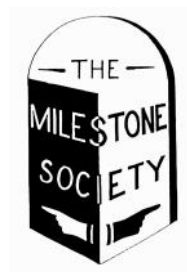
The Milestone Society does not have a published and required house style. The editors will adjust the text to be consistent with current practice. Authors should, however, consult this or recent issues of the publication and follow the layout and conventions used for references and identifying waymarkers. English rather than American spelling should be used.

Most readers will have a general interest in the subject but will not usually be specialists so avoid technical terms or explain them at the first mention. Please avoid using the first person ('I'). Abbreviations should be given in full the first time they are used. The first mention of any British waymarker should be followed by a grid reference in the form SU 123 456 using an eight- or ten-figure reference where known, then by its Milestone Society ID in the form EX BSGC30. Milemarkers overseas should be followed, where known, by their Northings and Eastings in as much detail as available in the form N 39° 38' 58.96", W 78° 45' 53.24". When referencing Grade II listed milestones, including their numbers is not essential but may be helpful in the form 'List Entry Number xxxxxx', as given in Historic England's records (not the earlier numbers).

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