

M. SPARKS

1960	Rigold	East of north Transept, north of Choir and Lady Chapel	(Sherlock and Woods forthcoming)
1960	Saunders	Kitchen and graves under kitchen	
1972	Sherlock	Two trenches on Hospital site	<i>Med. Arch.</i> , xvii, 144-5.
	Jenkins	Trench south of St. Pancras Chapel	<i>Med. Arch.</i> , xix, 235.
1974-75	Sherlock	Area along south side of church from Lady Chapel to beginning of Nave	<i>Med. Arch.</i> , xx, 790; C. Miscampbell, <i>Collectanea Historica</i> (1981), 63-5.
1974-75	Jenkins	St. Pancras Chapel	<i>Med. Arch.</i> , xx, 163-4.
1976	Woods	Area along south side of Nave	<i>Med. Arch.</i> , xxi, 225-6; <i>Arch. Cant.</i> , xcii, 228-9
1977-78	Woods	South Tower at west end of Nave	<i>Arch. Cant.</i> , xciii, 204-5 <i>Med. Arch.</i> , xxii, 158-9 B.A.A. <i>Canterbury</i> (1982), 120-4
1983	Bennett	(Report by Sherlock and Woods 1972-78, forthcoming) Base Court	<i>Arch. Cant.</i> , xcix, 247-51.
Unknown date	Potts?	Abbot's Lodging and Tudor Palace (before 1920)	

*Arch. Cant. C 1984*

KENTISH TURNPIKES

B. KEITH-LUCAS

The maintenance of the roads was, under the Statute of Highways of 1555, a function of each individual parish, acting through its Surveyor of Highways. He was a parishioner, commonly with no particular qualifications or desire for the job, chosen by the magistrates from a list prepared by the inhabitants in the vestry. He served for one year and was unpaid, though after 1773 the vestry could allow him a salary. The office was unwelcome, as he had to get the other parishioners out on the roads for six days each spring, to repair the surface after the winter rains. This annual duty was only reluctantly performed, but the surveyor could be presented and punished at the sessions if it were not done. Those parishioners who preferred to do so could pay a sum in lieu, in composition for their 'statute labour'.

By the end of the seventeenth century, with the increasing use of carts instead of pack horses, and carriages in place of riding horses, and with the growth of trade, the system became manifestly inadequate, at least for the major roads. So groups of landowners began to seek powers from Parliament to introduce a new and more effective machinery based, not on the parish surveyor and the reluctant parishioners doing their statute labour, but on a board of trustees, responsible for a length of road, usually running from one town to another, with power to levy tolls from the users of the road; the tolls to be used for employing competent surveyors and hiring contractors to repair the surface, and water it in summer to keep down the dust, and for the purchase of land where it seemed necessary to divert the way, or even to make completely new roads.

So there developed all over the kingdom a network of some 1100 turnpike trusts, each with its own Act of Parliament and its own board of trustees and administrative staff. Some of these covered a hundred miles or more; others, only a few hundred yards. In Kent, the average trust was responsible for only 13 miles.

By the end of the eighteenth century some 100 acts of Parliament had been passed relating to Kentish turnpikes.<sup>1</sup>

#### THE TURNPIKE BILLS

The turnpike bills would normally originate in a movement organised by a group of landowners who would benefit from improved roads in the neighbourhood of their estates, or by tradesmen who wanted better roads for the transport of their goods. Thus the demand for a turnpike from Heathfield to Brandbridges arose out of the need for improved facilities for transporting the iron goods from the foundries at Heathfield to the barges on the Medway, which would carry them to London.<sup>2</sup> The roads to the ports of Ramsgate, Deal, Dover and Sandwich served the interests of travellers and of merchants and fishermen. It was usual to obtain wide support for the proposed petition, and so advertisements might be published in the local papers; in 1768, the movement for a turnpike bill for the Canterbury–Sandwich–Deal road was supported by a letter in the *Kentish Gazette* drawing attention to the need for improvement of the road;<sup>3</sup> the petition for a bill to establish a turnpike trust on the road from Cranbrook to Mountfield, Benenden and Rolvenden was initiated at a public meeting held at the Angel Inn at Sandhurst, also advertised in the *Kentish Gazette*.<sup>4</sup>

Before the matter could proceed any further it was necessary to raise enough money to pay the considerable cost of obtaining the Act to establish the proposed trust. The common practice was for a few of the local squires to advance the money needed, which was later converted into a mortgage on the tolls authorised under the Act. Thus, when the Tonbridge – Maidstone Trust was floated in 1766 a number of the promoters advanced £50 each as 'subscription money', and one or two of them (including the Revd. John Whitaker, Rector

<sup>1</sup> The late Mr. F.C. Elliston Erwood enumerated 93 Kentish turnpike acts in the eighteenth century and another 121 in the nineteenth century. (M.S. notes of F.C. Elliston Erwood). These figures do not include the General Turnpike Acts of 1731, 1755, 1765, 1766, 1773, 1794, etc., nor the paving acts for the towns under which toll gates were put up, nor the acts for bridges (as at Sandwich and Fordwich) where tolls were charged. A Government Report (Parliamentary Reports, Vol. 48) in 1851 stated that there were 165 turnpike acts relating to Kentish roads. Thomas Horsfield, writing in 1834, stated that there were 152 turnpike acts relating to Sussex. (*History of Sussex*, i, 96).

<sup>2</sup> 7 Geo III c. 91.

<sup>3</sup> *Kentish Gazette*, 9 June, 1768.

<sup>4</sup> *Kentish Gazette*, 27–30 July, 1768.

of Pembury, William Woodgate of Tonbridge Castle and Somerhill, and Sir Philip Boteler of Teston) lent sums of up to £1,000.<sup>5</sup> The preliminary expenses of the Kipping's Cross Trust in 1765 were met mainly by contributions from John Austen of Horsmonden and Stephen Hooker of Brenchley, both apparently men of considerable wealth.<sup>6</sup>

Having decided to promote a bill, and collected the money needed, the promoters would draft a petition, and submit it to Parliament. This would usually follow a standard form, in the names of 'Several Justices of the Peace, Gentlemen, Clergy and Freeholders' or 'Gentry, Clergy, Freeholders, Tradesmen and Inhabitants',<sup>7</sup> of the parishes concerned. In at least one case there were rival petitions from different existing trusts, wishing to include the same road in their respective areas.<sup>8</sup>

The next stage was to employ an attorney to draft the bill and see it through the complicated procedures of Parliament. The promoters of the Kipping's Cross Turnpike in 1765 employed for this purpose Francis Austen of Sevenoaks, the Clerk of the Peace,<sup>9</sup> whose account for £157 4s. 8d. they subsequently paid. The bill for the Stocker's Head Trust cost £365 6s. 7d., and the promoters of the Tonbridge – Maidstone turnpike paid a solicitor, William Russell, £205 13s. 0d., for preparing and passing their bill.<sup>10</sup> There were, however, ambiguities in the wording, and Counsel's opinion was sought from Sir Fletcher Norton, the Attorney-General;<sup>11</sup> as a result of this Mr. Russell was instructed to consult one of the Clerks of the House of Commons on getting an amending bill to clarify the Act,<sup>12</sup> and this was duly done, at a further cost of £195 17s. 8d.

As there was an assumption that once the road had been repaired there would be nothing more to be done, most of the Acts ran for only twenty-one years. This assumption proved to be mistaken; the surface needed constant maintenance, and interest had still to be paid on the capital which had been borrowed; so, every twenty-one years, another bill had to be promoted to continue the trust, and its power

<sup>5</sup> Kent County Archives T2/3 M.S. Minutes of Tonbridge Maidstone Turnpike Trust.

<sup>6</sup> Kent County Archives, T/3; M.S. Minutes of Kipping's Cross Turnpike Trust, 24 May, 1765.

<sup>7</sup> e.g. Mereworth – Wrotham Trust (21 November, 1768) and Watts Cross-Cowden Trust (26 January, 1769).

<sup>8</sup> Colford Green (Cranbrook) to Tanner's Vent (Benenden) (26 January, 1769).

<sup>9</sup> Kent County Archives, 7 June, 1765.

<sup>10</sup> Kent County Archives, T 2/3 1765.

<sup>11</sup> Later Speaker of the House of Commons, and Lord Grantley.

<sup>12</sup> M.S. Minutes, 27 November, 1765.



to charge tolls.<sup>13</sup> This would again involve substantial costs and fees, and became a major financial burden, until ultimately, after a report in 1827 by a Select Committee of the House of Commons, the need for separate renewal acts for each trust was abolished.<sup>14</sup>

The drafting of the bill followed a well-established pattern. First came the preamble to establish the need for legislation, describing both the present state of the road and the diligent but unavailing efforts of the parish authorities. Thus the bill for the Canterbury and Whitstable Turnpike (9 Geo III c.10) begins with the recital that

'the Road from Saint Dunstan's Cross near the City of Canterbury leading through the Parishes of Saint Dunstan's, Harbledown, Blean, Hearn-Hill, Sea Salter, and Whitstable) to the Water-side at Whitstable, in the County of Kent, is in many parts thereof very narrow and the said Road, by reason of many heavy Carriages and great number of Passengers passing through the same, is in the Winter Season become ruinous and unsafe for Travellers and Carriages, notwithstanding the Inhabitants of the several Parishes through which the said Road leads, have constantly every year performed their respective Works required by the Laws now in being, towards repairing the same; Wherefore, and to the Intent that the Road aforesaid from Saint Dunstan's Cross, near Canterbury, to the Waterside at Whitstable aforesaid, may, with all convenient Speed, be effectually amended and enlarged . . .'

and the preamble to the Act for the Chatham-Canterbury road (3 Geo II c. 10) recites that

'the said Highways and Roads being so bad and ruinous notwithstanding the several Parishes through which the said Road runs have constantly every year performed their respective Works required by the Law now in being, and raised a Sixpenny Cess at full Rents, and applied it towards repairing the same, and notwithstanding the Addition of the sum of One Hundred Pounds per Annum, granted towards Amendment of part of the said Roads (by an Act . . . made in the Tenth Year of her late Majesty Queen Anne . . .) hath been duly applied towards the Amendment of the said Road, the same cannot be effectually amended and repaired without some other Provision be made for raising money to be paid for that Purpose.'

Next would come the appointment of the trustees to carry out the provisions of the bill. These would normally include the magistrates living in the parishes affected, and commonly also the incumbents of the parishes. There might also be included the Members of Parliament for the County or the boroughs of Kent. Thus, Lord George Sackville (later Lord George Germain) who was engaged in many

<sup>13</sup> The term for the Northfleet, Gravesend and Rochester Trust was originally 13 years (10 Anne c. 16), then 15 years (II Geo I c. 5), and then 21 years (II Geo II c. 37).

<sup>14</sup> Select Committee on Turnpike Trust Renewal Bills, 1826-7 (383) VI, I, 1-2, and Turnpike Renewal Act, 1831 (1 and 2 Wm IV c. 6).

other matters as a soldier, Clerk of the Council, Secretary of State, and Member of Parliament,<sup>15</sup> was named as a trustee of the following trusts:

Brenchley – Cranbrook  
 Wrotham – Maidstone  
 Rochester – Maidstone  
 Wrotham Heath – Footscray  
 Faversham – Ashford – Canterbury  
 Cranbrook – Rolvenden  
 Goudhurst  
 Bromley – Beggar's Bush  
 Tenterden – Ashford  
 Mereworth – Wrotham Heath  
 Tonbridge – Maidstone

Sir Edward Dering, of Surrenden Dering near Ashford, M.P. for New Romney, was named as trustee of the following trusts:

Canterbury – Whitstable  
 Chatham – Canterbury  
 Faversham – Ashford – Canterbury  
 Cranbrook – Benenden  
 Goudhurst  
 Tenterden – Ashford  
 Cranbrook – Rolvenden  
 Maidstone – Ashford  
 Maidstone – Cranbrook  
 Ashford – Ham Street

In addition to these and other Members of Parliament some bills included the name of Francis Austen, the Clerk of the Peace for Kent, and agent for the Lord Lieutenant, the Duke of Dorset.<sup>16</sup> He was a member of the following trusts:

Mereworth – Wrotham Heath  
 Bromley – Beggar's Bush  
 Cranbrook – Rolvenden  
 Goudhurst

<sup>15</sup> For Dover, 1741-61, Hythe 1761-68 and East Grinstead 1768-82; subsequently Viscount Sackville.

<sup>16</sup> See (Eds.) Alec Detsicas and Nigel Yates, *Studies in modern Kentish History* (1983), 87-102.



Wadhurst – West Farleigh  
 Wrotham Heath – Godstone  
 Tonbridge – Maidstone  
 Tunbridge Wells – Maresfield  
 Mereworth – Seal  
 Sevenoaks – Kipping's Cross  
 Wilsley Green – Kipping's Cross  
 Brenchley – Cranbrook

Like the Members of Parliament, the Clerk of the Peace does not appear to have been in the habit of attending the meetings, though he was present at the inaugural meeting of the Wilsley Green – Kipping's Cross Trust, when authority was given for the payment of his account for drafting the bill and passing it through Parliament.

In some instances, such as the Cranbrook – Benenden, the Hythe and Folkestone, and the Maidstone – Rochester trusts, there were also some *ex officio* trustees – the mayors, recorders or other municipal officials for the time being of the towns served by the turnpike; the Maidstone – Cranbrook trust included the mayor and jurors of Maidstone, New Romney and Tenterden.<sup>17</sup> The Dean of Canterbury was *ex officio* a trustee of the Canterbury – Whitstable road.<sup>18</sup>

Having appointed the Trustees, the bill would deal with such matters as the appointment of officers and the election of new trustees. Provision was made for the qualifications which had to be fulfilled by trustees, such as the ownership of land worth £50 per annum or being heir to land worth £200 per annum.<sup>19</sup>

The bill would then provide for the erection of toll gates,<sup>20</sup> and authorise the charging of tolls on all cattle and vehicles passing, with some exceptions such as agricultural carts, people going to church, clergymen visiting the sick, mail carts, soldiers on duty, horses carrying fish to London,<sup>21</sup> patients coming and going to hospital,<sup>22</sup> or travelling to record their votes in parliamentary elections.<sup>23</sup> Powers of compulsory purchase of land were given; milestones were to be put

<sup>17</sup> 13 Geo II c. 57.

<sup>18</sup> 9 Geo II c. 10.

<sup>19</sup> Faversham – Ashford Trust. For the Canterbury – Whitstable Trust the qualification was the ownership of land worth £20 p.a. or heir to land worth £100. If no qualification was laid down, the provisions of the General Turnpike Act would apply.

<sup>20</sup> There were in all 291 toll gates in Kent.

<sup>21</sup> e.g. Stones End – Lewisham Act (6 Geo I c. 26).

<sup>22</sup> e.g. in the Canterbury – Whitstable Act of 1804 (44 Geo II c. 1).

<sup>23</sup> e.g. Northfleet, Gravesend and Rochester Trust (11 Geo II c. 37).

up, and provision was made for the parochial statute labour to be apportioned between the new turnpike road and the parish highways, or instead a money payment to be agreed. In many cases complicated rules were laid down about the width of the wheels of vehicles using the turnpike road, commonly providing for all the wheels to be at least 9 in. wide, except on passenger vehicles.<sup>24</sup>

It was usual to exclude from membership of the trust anyone holding a place of profit under the trust,<sup>25</sup> and to provide that at the meetings all the trustees should defray their own charges and expenses<sup>26</sup> (meetings were almost invariably held at inns). Such self-denying ordinances were balanced by provisions protecting the trustees from actions in the Courts; the Dartford and Strood Act<sup>27</sup> stated that no action would lie for damages more than 4 months after the fact complained of; the Dartford – Northfleet Act of 1801<sup>28</sup> provided that no conviction was to be vacated or quashed for want of form or removed by any writ or process whatsoever into any of His Majesty's Courts of Record at Westminster any law or statute to the contrary notwithstanding, and all cases and suits were to be tried in Kent and not elsewhere. (Many of the trustees were magistrates in the county, and after 1822 all the county magistrates were *ex officio* trustees of all turnpikes in the county).

The law of the turnpikes is complicated by the fact that each trust had not one, but a series of statutes, extending its powers and geographical area as well as the term of its existence.

Some of these acts are of great length; even a renewal act might cover forty or more foolscap pages of close print.<sup>29</sup> Superimposed upon these local acts referring only to individual roads in Kent there were numerous general acts, some of which were consolidated in a series of General Turnpike Acts of 1766, 1773 and 1822.<sup>30</sup> This last act repealed sixteen previous acts, and itself contained 152 sections and 24 schedules. It went into extreme detail in regulating the weights of vehicles, the structure of wheels, and even the minute glass to be used in timing the bidding when the tolls were put up to auction.

Even so the Act proved to be inadequate and an amending act of

<sup>24</sup> Such provisions for all carts, etc., were included in the General Turnpike Act (26 Geo II c. 30) and subsequent statutes.

<sup>25</sup> e.g. Wrotham Heath – Footscray and Maidstone Act (13 Geo III c. 98).

<sup>26</sup> e.g. Rochester to Maidstone Act, (22 Geo II c. 8); Southwark – East Grinstead Act, (10 Geo. I).

<sup>27</sup> 30 Geo III c. 19.

<sup>28</sup> 41 Geo III c. 11.

<sup>29</sup> e.g. 44 Geo III c. 1, (Canterbury – Whitstable)

<sup>30</sup> 7 Geo III c. 42; 13 Geo III c. 78; 3 Geo IV c. 126.



94 sections had to be passed next year<sup>31</sup> covering many matters, such as the countersinking of the nails of the tyres of the wheels, and the nature of the tickets denoting payment of tolls. Further amending acts were passed in 1824, 1828 and 1829.<sup>32</sup> None but the most diligent of lawyers could keep abreast of this constant flow of legislation, including both public and private acts.

#### THE MEETINGS OF THE TRUSTEES

The lists of trustees were sometimes very long – 270 were named in the Act for the Flimwell–Tubbs Lake Road<sup>33</sup> – 250 for the New Cross Act<sup>34</sup> – but the meetings were often sparsely attended. There was, however, usually a good attendance at the first, inaugural, meeting. For example, at the first meeting of the New Cross Trust, on 29th March, 1718, there were 54 trustees present; at the first meeting of the Kipping's Cross – Wilsley Green Trust, on 24 May, 1765, at the Gun Inn at Horsmonden, there were 20 trustees including three parsons and Francis Austen, the Clerk of the Peace; at the first meeting of the Tonbridge – Maidstone Trust held at the Buffalo Inn at Mereworth, on 22 May, 1765, there were 41 trustees present, including three important local baronets, Sir William Twysden, Sir Roger Twisden, and Sir Philip Boteler, the squire of Teston, and seven parsons. There was much to be done at these inaugural meetings; the appointment of a clerk, a treasurer and a surveyor; decisions to be reached about where to put up the toll gates; arrangements to be made for raising the capital sum which was needed for repairing the road, building houses for the toll collectors, and getting the whole project under way. Most of this would be lent by the trustees themselves, at 4 per cent or 5 per cent per annum, charged by way of mortgage on the tolls.

The meetings would at first be held frequently – perhaps once a fortnight – but the numbers attending dropped rapidly; at the second meeting of the Tonbridge – Maidstone Trust there were twelve present, including both the Twisdens and three parsons; at the third meeting only seven came, including again the two Twisden baronets.<sup>35</sup>

<sup>31</sup> 4 Geo IV c. 95.

<sup>32</sup> 5 Geo IV c. 69; 9 Geo IV c. 77 and 10 Geo IV c. 13.

<sup>33</sup> 2 Geo III c. 72.

<sup>34</sup> 4 Geo I c. 5.

<sup>35</sup> The meetings of the New Cross Trust were held more frequently and the numbers attending soon dropped to about a dozen, sometimes only 4 or 5.

After a year or two the numbers of trustees attending the meetings dropped until, on many occasions, there were not enough to form a quorum. Between 20 April, 1817, and 20 November, 1818, the Brenchley–Wilsley Green Trust met five times, but on no occasion raised a quorum. The Kippings Cross – Cranbrook Minute Book discloses that on 13 July, 1808, 3 members attended; on 12 October only two; the meeting was adjourned to 2 January, 1809, when again only two were there; on 22 March there were five present, but then on May 2nd the number fell again to two; three on 28 June, two on 28 August and four on 4 October. So also the Kipping's Cross Trust, in its meetings from June 1810 to January 1812 had attendances of 2, 2, 4, 4, 2, 3, 3, 3, 3. It appears, however, that, at least in the early years of a trust, the meetings might go on until late in the evening – in March 1767, the Kipping's Cross Trustees resolved 'that Future Meetings shall be held on every Tuesday nearest the full Moon after every Quarter day at 11 o'clock'.

There was no accepted practice of appointing a chairman to hold office for a period, but at each meeting one of the trustees present would be voted into the chair. In an age of deference it was usual to choose a man of rank. The Kentish peers might lend their name by appearing in the list of Trustees, but they went no further. Almost never did they attend the meetings. No doubt they were too busy at Court or in Parliament, or, like the greatest magnifico of all, the Duke of Dorset, as Ambassador to France or Lord Lieutenant of Ireland. It was the squires that ruled, and among these, the baronets took pride of place. In the words of the eccentric Sir Samuel Egerton Brydges, one of the magistrates for east Kent, 'We had rarely much nobility, but the squires ruled the day'.<sup>36</sup>

The trustees of a number of turnpike roads developed a system of committees, usually at first of a temporary nature to deal with a specific problem; the trustees of the Tonbridge – Maidstone trust on 12 July, 1779, 'ordered that the Revd. Mr Style (rector of Mereworth and Vicar of Wateringbury; son of Sir Thomas Style, Bart.), Mr. Daniel Masters (of Yokes Place, Mereworth), Mr. John Amherst and Mr. Henry Hossmer or any three or two of them be a committee to direct and order the repair of the Turnpike House of Mereworth'.

A larger trust was likely to use a system of committees more extensively. The New Cross trustees evolved in the 1720s a pattern under which the road was apportioned in three parts between three committees, who each took over almost complete control of their length of the road. In addition, *ad hoc* committees were appointed

<sup>36</sup> *Autobiography*, i, 95.



for such purposes as widening Deptford Bridge. There appears to have been no specific statutory authority for such delegation to committees, but later – in the mid-nineteenth century – clauses were included in turnpike bills to authorise it.<sup>37</sup>

#### ADMINISTRATIVE PROBLEMS

The passing of a turnpike act did not relieve the parishioners through whose parish the road ran from their liability to maintain it. The Act usually specifically provided that the trustees should agree with the parochial surveyors how to apportion this 'statute labour', with a right of appeal, if agreement were not reached, to the magistrates (who were by and large the same people as the trustees). In practice, the matter was usually settled by the parish paying, out of its highway rate, a composition in lieu of the statute labour. Thus at the second meeting of the Tonbridge – Maidstone trust on 10 June, 1765, it was decided to serve notice on the parish surveyors to attend the next meeting to settle the amount of the composition due from each parish. This was apparently satisfactorily agreed, but in later years there was difficulty with the parish of Mereworth, which failed to pay its share. The parish surveyor was summoned to appear before the magistrates, but they were impressed by the plea that the parish was at great expense in keeping in good repair the road leading through Mereworth, linking the Tonbridge – Maidstone road with the London road. So, on the recommendation of the magistrates, the trustees agreed to compromise their claim.<sup>38</sup>

The sums paid in lieu of statute labour were often substantial; the small trust responsible for the road from Charing Hill to Chilham received in 1809 the sum of £97 4s. 7½d. from the six parishes through which the road ran,<sup>39</sup> though in later years the amount was reduced.

In 1835, the total amount received by the Kentish trusts in lieu of statute labour was £3,148 3s. 3d., while the actual statute labour performed on the turnpike roads was valued at £345 10s. 7d., only 4 of the 50 trusts still employing such labour.<sup>40</sup>

The trustees would also enter into arrangements with local land-owners, selling them, in effect, 'season tickets' to cover all their cattle

<sup>37</sup> e.g. Horsmonden and Marden Act, 18 Vic. c. XLVIII.

<sup>38</sup> M.S. Minutes, Tonbridge – Maidstone Trust, 19 March, 1 May, 1830, 18 November, 1831.

<sup>39</sup> M.S. Minutes of Stockershead – Chilham Trust.

<sup>40</sup> Abstract of the General Statements of the Turnpike Trusts, 1837.

and vehicles that would come and go on the road.<sup>41</sup> In 1779, the trustees of the Tonbridge – Maidstone Trust agreed with Lord le Despencer (owner of Mereworth Castle) for passing his cattle and carriages through the turnpike in exchange for materials from a house which was being demolished – provided that these were carried in a wagon with wheels of 6 in. width.<sup>42</sup>

This involved another problem – the extent to which heavy vehicles with narrow wheels cut up the roads, particularly in winter time.

There appeared to be two possible remedies; the first was to insist that all carts should have wheels so wide that they would serve as rollers, thus consolidating rather than breaking the surface of the road. The alternative policy was to charge higher tolls on carts which used narrow wheels, or wheels with protruding nails. By an act of 1753<sup>43</sup> it was provided that any 'waggon, wain, car or wheel carriage', with wheels not less than 9 in. wide, and with the front and back wheels so aligned as to roll at least 16 in. between them, should pay half tolls.

The General Turnpike Act of 1773 introduced an elaborate scale of additional tolls according to the width of the fellies or rollers of the wheels (up to 16 in.) and the weight of the cart and its load.<sup>44</sup>

Any limitation of the weight of vehicles was in vain without some method of weighing them. However, John Wyatt of Birmingham<sup>45</sup> had invented in 1744 a compound lever weighing machine, which was adopted by many turnpike trusts up and down the country. In Kent, the New Cross Trust appears to have been the first to adopt it, but in 1750 there were complaints of the inaccuracy of the machines. Even more inconvenient was the dishonesty of the men in charge. Many of the trusts, instead of managing the weighing machines themselves, let them out to contractors, much as they let out the collecting of tolls at the turnpike gates. This system had the advantage of bringing in some revenue, but did nothing to reduce the abuses practised by the contractors. In 1796, a Select Committee of the House of Commons, under Alderman Lushington, reported that trustees should be restrained from letting the weighing machines, and that the machines should be inspected by officials appointed by Quarter Sessions.<sup>46</sup>

The Committee considered evidence from a succession of witnesses from Kent and other counties near London, of the great inconveni-

<sup>41</sup> e.g. M.S. Minutes, Tonbridge – Maidstone Trust, 10 July, 1766.

<sup>42</sup> M.S. Minutes, 3 May, 1779.

<sup>43</sup> General Turnpike Act 1753; 26 Geo II c. 30.

<sup>44</sup> 13 Geo III, c. 84.

<sup>45</sup> 1700–66. He worked with Boulton and Watt in Soho.

<sup>46</sup> Report from the Committee on the General Turnpike Acts.



ence caused to tradesmen by the weighing machines and the conduct of their operators. Particular complaints were made of a weighing machine between Lewisham and London, operated by lessees on behalf of the New Cross Trust.

The rules and regulations to prevent damage to the roads and to control the weights carried were of extreme complication, and apparently of little effect. Section 18 of the General Turnpike Act of 1773 provided that the trustees could in respect of any hill, which rose more than 4 in. in a yard, allow ten horses to draw a waggon with 9 in. wheels, or six horses for a cart with 9 in. wheels; seven horses for waggons with 6 in. wheels, five horses for carts with 6 in. wheels five horses for waggons with wheels of less than 6 in. or four horses for carts with wheels of less than 6 in. The enforcement of such detailed rules, in the absence of any sort of police force, proved to be impossible.<sup>47</sup>

There was also a constant problem of people avoiding the tolls; some would make a detour over neighbouring fields, or along the lanes; others would just refuse to pay; some pretended to be carrying mail, or on some errand, such as going to church, which exempted them from tolls. All these, and other devices, had to be prevented by amendments to the acts, or by General Turnpike Acts, but though statutes might forbid such practices, they failed to provide any machinery for enforcement.

#### OPPOSITION TO THE TURNPIKES

It was inevitable that there should be resistance by local farmers and others to schemes that meant that roads and lanes, which had always been open and free to all comers, should henceforth be open only to those who could pay the tolls, even though many of the acts contained specific exemptions from tolls for carts carrying hay, straw, manure, etc. In some parts of the country opposition was violent and long-lasting.

In the early years of the eighteenth century, when the turnpike movement was only just beginning, troubles broke out in parts of England and Wales; at Ledbury in Herefordshire, according to the *Gentleman's Magazine*<sup>48</sup> 'Turnpikes were pulled down by a large Body of People notwithstanding Justice Skip defended them with a

<sup>47</sup> An exception was made for Hythe Hill, where, under the Act 2. Geo III c. 76, any number of horses could be used.

<sup>48</sup> iv, (September 1735)

good number of Armed Men, who killed two and took two others of the Rioters. Only two of his Party were slightly wounded, but the Populace threatened to burn his House and kill him whenever they meet him.'<sup>49</sup>

Even before that there had been outbreaks of rioting, which had led to a penal act in 1727<sup>50</sup> inflicting penalties of whipping and transportation on anyone destroying turnpike gates.

In Kent, there is no record of such violent opposition, but the turnpike system was not introduced without protest. The minutes of the trustees of a number of trusts disclose discussion about travellers who refused to pay the tolls, either threatening the gatekeepers or driving across the open fields to avoid the gate and the toll collector. There was constant conflict about the regulations on the width of wheels and the weight of vehicles; the *Kentish Gazette* of 25–29 June, 1768, records a meeting of the New Cross Trustees at the Green Man at Blackheath to fine and punish several waggoners who had been driving waggons of more than the permitted weight; some were fined considerable sums for this offence, and others for insulting the gatekeepers.<sup>51</sup> In other cases, trustees had to take action against parish surveyors of highways who failed to produce the villagers to do their statute labour, or to pay the composition in lieu.

The trustees might also come into conflict with the magistrates, although many of them served in both capacities. In 1772, the General Sessions for West Kent, sitting at Maidstone, ordered the sheriff of the county to remove the toll gate at Penenden Heath which had been put up by the trustees of the Maidstone to Rochester road, and which the magistrates considered to be illegal. There was apparently considerable ill-feeling about this gate, perhaps because Penenden Heath was the traditional seat of county government, and many of the magistrates would have to pass that way on their journey to Court. The sheriff did as he was told, but a year later it was reported to the Sessions that the gate had been reinstated, and the sheriff was ordered to remove it again, and to do so whenever it might be restored.<sup>52</sup>

The trustees of the Tonbridge – Maidstone road had considerable

<sup>49</sup> This is more than a century before the more famous 'Rebecca Riots'. As then, some of the rioters were dressed as women.

<sup>50</sup> 1 Geo II c. 19.

<sup>51</sup> Sometimes the case was reversed. At 3 a.m. on 18 March, 1809, John Kitto the gate-keeper at Hythe on the Ashford road was called out by Joshua Horton to ask the way to Ashford. He was so annoyed at being called out at this hour that he assaulted Horton with a stick, and beat him very much when he was on the ground. (Deposition sworn before the Mayor of Hythe, 18 March, 1809).

<sup>52</sup> West Kent General Sessions Book, Michaelmas 1770 and Michaelmas 1771.



difficulty with farmers and others owning land near the road, who resented having to pay tolls to use roads on which they had previously travelled free. In May 1766, the trustees ordered that 'if all such Persons who are particularly affected and aggrieved by the Situation of the Turnpike Gates on the said Road will attend us at our next Meeting we will hear what they have to alledge and compound with them on reasonable terms.'<sup>53</sup> At that meeting some of the complainants were threatened with distraint, if they did not pay what was due; some agreed to compound for the tolls, and the trustees agreed to remove the gate at Mill Lane, Tonbridge.

There was more serious trouble at the other end of the road. The people of Maidstone resented the establishment of the turnpike, and threatened to go to Parliament to obtain an Act to regulate the trust; they demanded that the list of trustees should include some of the inhabitants of the borough; that no gate should be put up within half a mile of the town, or alternatively that the townsmen should be exempt from the tolls, and that all matters arising within their jurisdiction should be settled only by the Maidstone corporate magistrates. To these demands the trustees declined to answer.<sup>54</sup>

A few years later, in 1791, when Maidstone Corporation was promoting a Paving Bill which included provision for a turnpike gate on the London Road, the country gentlemen and farmers, who would have to pay tolls on the produce they sent to market, organised opposition to the bill, and got the obnoxious clauses struck out.<sup>55</sup> Similar conflicts arose in relation to the paving bills promoted for Sandwich and Canterbury in 1787, and petitions against the bills were submitted to Parliament.

#### THE OFFICERS OF THE TRUSTS

The turnpike acts normally provided for the appointment of four essential officers – the clerk, the treasurer, the surveyor and the collector of tolls. These officials could be paid salaries, and the treasurer would be required to enter into a bond for the due execution of his office.

<sup>53</sup> Kent Archives, M.S. Minutes, 19 May, 1766.

<sup>54</sup> *Ibid.*, 7 April, 1766. The Corporation had got a clause included in the bill for the Rochester and Maidstone Act preventing the erection of a gate near the borough boundary.

<sup>55</sup> J.M. Russell, *History of Maidstone* (1881), 238–9. A provision was written into the Act for the Ashford – Maidstone road (33 Geo III c. 173) preventing the erection of gates on the road to Maidstone nearer to the town than the Mote.

#### THE CLERK

It was common practice for the trustees to appoint a local attorney as clerk, and pay him a small salary. The main source of his remuneration would, however, be, not the salary, but the accounts he submitted for seeing the bills through Parliament (including the renewal bills every 21 years), the fees for conveyancing when land was bought for widening or diverting the road, and the various other legal costs. Francis Austen, the Clerk of the Peace, was appointed clerk of several trusts, and after his death his firm continued to act in these.<sup>56</sup>

Not all the clerks, however, were lawyers; the Kipping's Cross Trust, at its first meeting in 1765 appointed Joseph Williams, the schoolmaster of Marden, at a salary of £5 a year.<sup>57</sup> The first clerk of the Tonbridge – Maidstone Trust was Thomas Swayne, who was appointed also as Treasurer,<sup>58</sup> a practice later prohibited by the General Turnpike Act of 1822, on pain of a penalty of £50.

By 1835, all the turnpike trusts had solicitors as their clerks,<sup>59</sup> with the exception of the Ashford and Ham Street Trust, where the clerk was Henry C. Thurston, of Ashford, brother of Thomas Thurston, the surveyor.

#### THE SURVEYOR

In many ways the most important of the officers of the trust was the surveyor. In the smaller trusts he might be a local builder or land agent; in the larger trusts he might be a professional surveyor, serving simultaneously four or five trusts, and also carrying on a private practice. Thus, there grew up family businesses involved in the work – the Thurstons of Ashford and the Collises of Canterbury, for example. Members of the Collis family served as surveyors for the Canterbury and Barham, the Canterbury and Ramsgate (first and second division), the Canterbury and Sandwich, the Dartford and Strood, the Gravesend and Wrotham, the Herne Bay, the Ightham, the Sandwich, Margate and Ramsgate, the Whitstable, the Wrotham and Maidstone, the Maidstone and Tonbridge, the Malling and Strood, and the Stocker's Head to Chilham Trusts. The Minutes of

<sup>56</sup> In 1835 the firm, Austen and Claridge, were clerks for the Wrotham Heath, the Westerham and Edenbridge and the Sevenoaks trusts.

<sup>57</sup> M.S. Minutes, Kent Archives Office.

<sup>58</sup> M.S. Minutes, 22 May, 1765; Kent Archives Office.

<sup>59</sup> Abstract of Statements of the Turnpike Trusts, 1837, and Law Lists, 1835.



the New Cross Trust show that James Collis was surveyor of the road between 1778 and 1797, when he fell out of favour with the trustees because he refused to give up his private practice or to reside on or near the road. He was succeeded by his elder son, Thomas, for part of the road. Thomas acted also as contractor for some of the work done on the road; this led to a conflict of interests, and his final dismissal in 1813.<sup>60</sup>

The most widely employed of the Kentish surveyors in the nineteenth century was Thomas Thurston of Ashford, responsible for a dozen roads, including the Ashford – Maidstone, Ashford – Tenterden, Maidstone – Biddenden, Biddenden to Boundgate and Stocker's Head to Chilham turnpikes. In many of his appointments he was later succeeded by his son, also called Thomas, who undertook also a number of other duties, including making chain surveys of a large number of Kentish parishes under the Tithe Act of 1836,<sup>61</sup> and a number of estate maps.

The greatest name in the history of turnpikes is that of McAdam. The most eminent of the family was John Loudon McAdam (1756–1836). He it was that evolved the principles of 'Macadamising' – constructing the roads of small pieces of broken stone rolled tightly into a nearly impervious platform. His son, Sir James Nicoll McAdam (1786–1852) became the General Superintendent of the Metropolitan Roads, as well as surveyor for some 40 turnpikes outside London, including four in Kent – the Kipping's Cross, the Sevenoaks, the Tonbridge and the Wrotham Heath Trusts – four of the largest trusts in the county.<sup>62</sup> The largest of all the Kentish Trusts – the New Cross Trust – did not employ McAdam as their regular surveyor, but did engage him in 1846 to write a detailed report on the state of the road and the effectiveness of the administration. He found considerable cause for criticism.<sup>63</sup>

The usual practice where the McAdams were employed was to appoint a local man of less qualification to carry out the routine work, while the McAdams paid occasional visits to see that the work was being done in a satisfactory way.

The supervision of the work of the surveyors was a constant

<sup>60</sup> James Collis also acted as both surveyor and contractor for the Tonbridge–Mereworth Trust – M.S. Minutes, 22 May, 1766. The General Turnpike Act of 1773 (13 Geo III c. 84) forbade the surveyor to be interested in contracts.

<sup>61</sup> Thomas Thurston junior died in 1881. The firm founded by the Thurstons is still in practice at Ashford, under the name of Burrows and Day.

<sup>62</sup> Abstract of General Statements of the Turnpikes, 1835. Sir James McAdam was appointed Surveyor of the last three trusts in December 1827 – R. Devereux, *John Loudon McAdam*, 181.

<sup>63</sup> Report by Sir James McAdam, 14 March, 1846.

problem. Some of the acts<sup>64</sup> provided for the county magistrates to appoint a Surveyor to supervise the work of the Trust. In other cases, there were men of experience on the board, who could supervise the work, such as Col. Pilkington and General Davis, both Royal Engineers from Woolwich, who served on the New Cross Trust. In its earlier days this trust employed Charles Sloane of Gravesend, the architect of Maidstone gaol, and of alterations to Rochester Cathedral.

The surveyors were usually the most highly paid of the officers, with salaries in the early nineteenth century ranging from £7 to £450.

#### THE TREASURER

In the earlier years, it was common for one of the trustees to be appointed as treasurer. Thus, John Austen of Horsmonden<sup>65</sup> was appointed Chairman and Treasurer of the Kipping's Cross Trust, and also lent substantial sums to the trust at interest. So, too, Charles Brett was both Chairman and Treasurer of the New Cross Trust; he was succeeded as Treasurer by Sir Gregory Page, Bt., of Westcombe Manor, and, after his death in 1775, his nephew Sir Gregory Turner, Bt., served as treasurer of the trust.

By the nineteenth century, however, the majority of the treasurers were bankers.<sup>66</sup> The Abstract of General Statements of 1835 shows, among the treasurers of Kentish trusts, such well known local bankers as Hammond and Co., of Canterbury, and Beechings of Tonbridge. Some of these held considerable balances – £4,943 12s. 2d. in the case of the Wrotham and Maidstone Trust; others were owed substantial sums, on which interest would be payable; Edward Manclark, treasurer of the Dartford and Strood Trust, for example, had lent the trust £506 2s. 10d., on which no doubt interest was charged. It was from these transactions that the treasurers made their profit; only a few of them were paid a salary.

#### THE COLLECTOR OF TOLLS

In the early days of the trusts the usual practice was for the trustees to appoint a collector of the tolls, who dealt direct with the gate-

<sup>64</sup> e.g. 10 Geo I, Southwark–Ashdown Forest, 1723.

<sup>65</sup> Nephew of Francis Austen, the Clerk of the Peace.

<sup>66</sup> L.S. Pressnell, *Country Banking in the Industrial Revolution*, 270.



keepers.<sup>67</sup> The system was always open to abuse, and called for constant supervision; the travellers cheated the gate-keepers, the gate-keepers cheated the collector, and the collector cheated the trustees.

Later in the eighteenth century there grew up a new practice – the tolls were put up to auction once a year, and the successful bidder became responsible for the working of the gatekeepers and for the payment of an agreed sum to the trustees. Over and above that he might make a considerable profit, or none.

The arrangements for auctioning the tolls varied from trust to trust,<sup>68</sup> and some, like the New Cross trustees in 1776,<sup>69</sup> and the Biddenden and Boundgate Trustees in 1846, found that the bids were too low, and took the management of the gates back into their own hands. The men who bid at the auctions might be in a small way of business, bidding for the tolls from a single gate; sometimes, the gatekeeper himself might bid for the tolls, or perhaps a local publican. Alternatively, the bids might come from a large-scale entrepreneur, who would aim to get under his control all the gates on a turnpike, and himself appoint the gate-keepers, who acted as collectors on his behalf.

Outstanding among these farmers of the tolls in the kingdom was Lewis Levy. He used to bid for the farm of the tolls at many of the auctions, up and down the country. At the height of his business he was committed to payments to turnpike trusts of £400,000 or £500,000 a year, in addition to some £300,000 for the post-horse duties.<sup>70</sup> He then controlled about one third of the business of this nature in the country. In Kent, he was the collector of tolls for a number of trusts, including the Canterbury Improvement Commissioners, where he held the rights at the gate on the London Road.<sup>71</sup> Much his largest commitment in the county was with the New Cross Trust, for whom he acted for over 20 years; in 1830, the trustees let the tolls to him at £17,040 a year,<sup>72</sup> and also contracted with him for watering the road in dry weather.<sup>73</sup>

Lewis Levy was commonly known as 'Turnpike Levy'; in evidence

<sup>67</sup> e.g. M.S. Minutes New Cross Trust, 16 October, 1736.

<sup>68</sup> The General Turnpike Act of 1773 (13 Geo III c. 84) provided that the auction was to be regulated by a sand-glass, taking one minute to run through, turned three times after each bid.

<sup>69</sup> M.S. Minutes, 13 July, 1776.

<sup>70</sup> Select Committee on Turnpikes 1839, 13.

<sup>71</sup> M.S. Minutes, Canterbury Improvement Commissioners, 12 January, 1831.

<sup>72</sup> M.S. Minutes, New Cross Trust, 8 and 31 July, 1830.

<sup>73</sup> *Ibid.*, 12 February, 1830.

to the Select Committee on Turnpikes in 1839 he gave a graphic account of how the revenue from the turnpikes was falling as a result of the competition from the railways; the return from the tolls was not even a quarter of what it had been a few years before.<sup>74</sup>

As collector of the tolls, Levy had to appoint the gate-keepers, who were in effect his agents. The General Turnpike Act forbade the appointment as a gate-keeper of anyone who kept a victualling house, ale house, or other house of public entertainment. The office gave great opportunities for cheating, and Levy found that the safest course was to appoint women, gentlemen's servants, or others recommended to him personally.<sup>75</sup>

#### THE ROADS

The first turnpike road in Kent was the Sevenoaks and Tunbridge Wells road, under an act of 1709; this was followed two years later by a section of the Dover Road, from Northfleet to Rochester. Thereafter one road after another was brought within the system, starting with the main roads from London to the Channel ports; later in the century the 'cross-roads' were turnpiked, and a very complicated network grew up over the whole county, involving fifty separate trusts, each with their own acts of Parliament, and their separate clerks, treasurers, and surveyors. In all they covered 656 miles of road.

In general, the practice was for the trusts to take over the responsibility for the existing roads, and improve them, so far as the application of the surveyors and the income from the tolls would allow. In some cases however completely new roads were made. The Stocker's Head to Chilham Turnpike Act<sup>76</sup> provided for a new road from the top of Charing Hill to the cross-roads at Challock Lees, running through Longbeach Wood, owned in part by the Dering family, and in part by the archbishop, who had to be placated. Later, by virtue of a subsequent Act, they made a 'by-pass' to the west of Chilham, avoiding the need to go up into the village centre, and down on the other side.<sup>77</sup>

The trustees of the Tonbridge – Maidstone turnpike made a new road in 1766, at Teston, and surrendered the land of the old road to

<sup>74</sup> Levy died in 1856, worth £250,000.

<sup>75</sup> Albert, *The Turnpike Road System in England*, 84.

<sup>76</sup> 49 Geo III c. 92. Some of the route followed an existing lane.

<sup>77</sup> 10 Geo IV c. 23.



the landowner, Sir Philip Boteler (one of the trustees).<sup>78</sup> Other roads which were new-made, and not merely improved, by the trusts included the road at Crown Point near Ightham (1765), from Boughton Aluph to Challock, from Shalmsford to Thanington and that between Chilham and Bilting on the road to Ashford, which followed for much of the way the east bank of the Stour, instead of the old route from Chilham Square, along Mountain Street and thence through the park at Godmersham and past the church.

Like the improved roads, the new roads had to be provided with toll gates as specified in the Acts, and also with mile-stones and sign-posts, which were required by the General Turnpike Acts.<sup>79</sup> Thus, the presence of mile-stones is still today a common indication of a former turnpike road, as is also the presence of gate-houses, built close up to the highway, often with a projecting porch from which the gate-keeper could watch the road in both directions.

The larger turnpike trusts, employing such professional officials as Sir James McAdam or Thomas Thurston, often raised the standard of their roads to a very high level. The effect of this can be seen in the contrast between the dashing chariots and curricles of Jane Austen's time and the lumbering coaches of Sir Roger de Coverley's period.

Much depended on the competence of the surveyors, and much on the nature of the soil. There was comparatively little difficulty in maintaining a good surface on a substratum of chalk on the Downs, but the clay of the Weald presented a very different problem. Hasted records of the turnpike near Marden that

'The turnpike road, which leads over Cocksheath to Style-bridge, separates there at the 44th mile-stone from London, the left branch passing to Cranbrook, and the right through this parish (Marden) to Goudhurst, the only parts of it which may be said to be above ground, the rest of it being so deep and miry as to be nearly impassable in wet weather'.<sup>80</sup>

Some of these roads were so bad that magistrates or constables presented the trustees before the Grand Jury for default in their duties.

The most common cause of neglect by the turnpike trusts was lack of money. If the tolls did not bring in enough to pay the interest on the money borrowed, to pay the officers, and also to pay for labour

<sup>78</sup> M.S. Minutes, Tonbridge – Maidstone Turnpike Trust, 30 June, 1766.

<sup>79</sup> E.g. 13 Geo III, c. 84 s41 (General Turnpike Act, 1773); 17 Geo II c. 4 (Chatham–Canterbury Act); 44 Geo III c. 1 (Canterbury–Whitstable Act, 1804). Also M.S. minutes, Kipping's Cross Trust, 28 March, 1769 – order for making milestones and pinnocks.

<sup>80</sup> vii, 52. See also 91 and 173.

and material for the road, the sole resource was the statute labour of the villagers, and this was abolished by the Highways Act of 1835.

Much of the highway labour had in fact been supplied by an arrangement between the parish surveyor, who wanted the labour, and the parish overseers, who wanted work for unemployed parishioners. Many of the villagers preferred to pay a modest sum rather than give their time to work on the roads, and this made the arrangement possible.

In the period of depression after Waterloo the distress of the unemployed was particularly severe. Many landowners did what they could to give employment by initiating such projects as building brick walls round their parks (as at Eastwell and Surrenden Dering). The New Cross Turnpike Trust in 1816 set aside £1,000 for employing the poor of the parishes through which their road ran, and appealed to neighbouring landlords to help by donations and by the loan of carts and horses.<sup>81</sup> The scheme was only moderately successful, the parish overseers showing little enthusiasm.

The principal trusts aimed at creating highways of considerable size. The road at Bromley Common, on the Tonbridge turnpike was 60 ft. wide;<sup>82</sup> the New Cross Road was required by statute to be not less than 80 ft. nor more than 100 ft. wide, '42 whereof shall be for wheel carriages, and 8 feet for a way path on one of the sides'<sup>83</sup> – the rest being presumably wayside waste.

These wide roads, running in more or less straight lines across the countryside, like the motor-ways of today, were disliked by the more romantically minded travellers. John Byng (afterwards Lord Torrington) returning to his family home near Wrotham in 1790, recorded in his diary his thoughts on the road from Blackheath:<sup>84</sup>

'Instead of these cool, overshadowed Lanes, there now runs a wide exposed Road over the Hill, and dale; which, no doubt, meets universal approbation; but I look back with Pleasure to the shaded Lanes, twining around the Cherry Gardens.'

#### THE DECLINE OF THE TURNPIKES

By the early nineteenth century many of the turnpikes were in serious financial difficulties. When the trusts were established it had com-

<sup>81</sup> Minutes of General Meeting of Trustees, held at the Green Man, Blackheath, 30 November, 1816, *et seq.*

<sup>82</sup> *Arch. Cant.*, xxxiii (1918), 115.

<sup>83</sup> 24 Geo II c. 58. See *Gentleman's Magazine*, May 1753.

<sup>84</sup> *The Torrington Diaries*, iv, 152.



mony been assumed that once the road had been widened, straightened and resurfaced there would be little more to be done, and that the tolls collected in the first 21 years or so would be enough to pay off the debt that had been incurred in the initial work, and in the legal costs. It soon became apparent that this was not so, and the trusts found themselves burdened with heavy liability for interest on the capital outlay, and so having to ask Parliament from time to time to renew their powers of collecting tolls, at a cost of two or three hundred pounds. They found also that other new statutory powers were needed from time to time, and these involved recourse to Parliament, with the appropriate fees.

Their financial stability was also threatened from another quarter—the competition of the railways. The stage-coaches and posting system came to an end, and the turnpike trustees found their revenues from tolls falling disastrously. There was a glimmer of hope when a strange adventurer, Count Maceroni,<sup>85</sup> developed a steam-car to run on the turnpike roads in competition with the railways, but he was soon forced out of business by the combined power of the railway companies.<sup>86</sup>

The growth of railway travel was the major cause of the financial troubles of the turnpikes, but a substantial loss arose from another cause—the abolition by the Highways Act of 1835 of the obligation of parishioners to perform their 'statute labour' on the roads, or to pay a fee in lieu. From then on the trustees had to pay in full for all their labour; the loss from this source in Kent was almost £4,000 a year.<sup>87</sup>

The result of these developments was that the trustees found themselves unable to pay the interest on their mortgages, and at the same time to maintain the roads. Some of them, like the Stocker's Head to Bagham's Cross, and the Rolvenden trusts, cut back their expenditure on the road to a minimum; others, such as the Westham and Edenbridge Trust, defaulted on the interest, accumulating debts on a scale which they could never meet. By 1835, this trust had unpaid interest of £10,976, on top of a mortgage debt of £5,820, borrowed at 4 per cent. To meet the annual interest on this they needed £673 but the tolls brought in only £563 a year, so there was no prospect of solvency. According to Sir James McAdam, in 1835 there was, over the whole country, over a million pounds of unpaid interest; in Kent, the figure was £58,000; by 1849, it was £77,815. Thus, inevitably, the turnpike system came to an end.

<sup>85</sup> Colonel in the Neapolitan Army, A.D.C. to Murat; General in the Colombian Army and the Spanish Army; later in the Turkish Army.

<sup>86</sup> Report of Select Committee on Turnpike Trusts, 1839, D.N.B.

<sup>87</sup> Evidence of Sir James McAdam to Select Committee on Turnpikes, 30 April, 1839; Abstract of the General Statements of Turnpike Trusts 1837.

Map of  
THE COUNTY OF KENT,  
SHOWING THE TURNPIKE ROADS.  
1851.

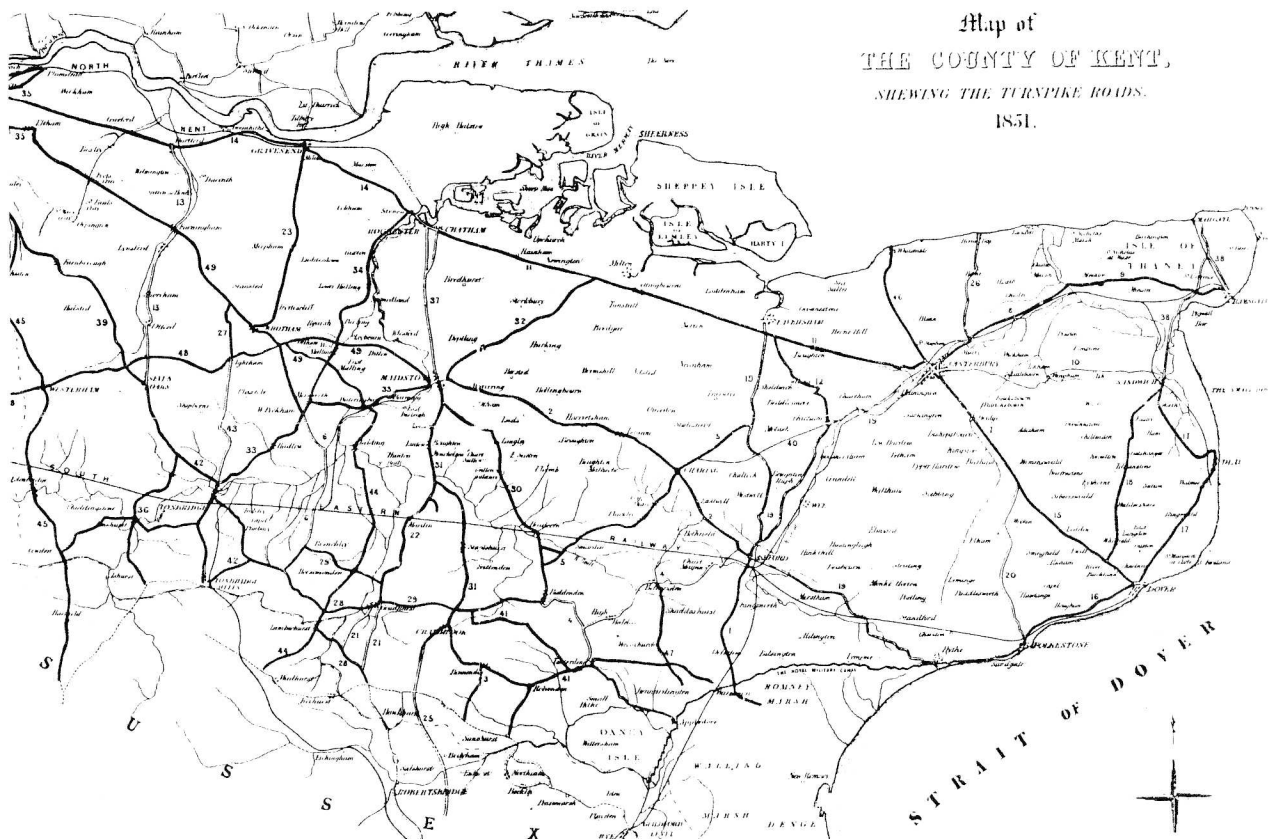


Fig. 1. Kentish Turnpikes in 1851.



## APPENDIX

*Kentish Turnpikes, with the date of the first Act of Parliament*

(the numbers on this list correspond with the numbers on the map on page 367)

1.	Ashford and Ham Street	1793
2.	Ashford and Maidstone	1793
3.	Benenden	1769
4.	Bethersden	1767
5.	Biddenden to Boundgate	1766
6.	Brandbridges	1767
7.	Canterbury and Barham	1791
8.	Canterbury and Ramsgate	
	First Division	1787
9.	Second Division	1787
10.	Canterbury and Sandwich	1802
11.	Chatham and Canterbury	1780
12.	Chatham and Canterbury, Macknade and Chilham Branch	1780
13.	Dartford and Sevenoaks	1766
14.	Dartford and Strood	1711
15.	Dover to Barham Downs	1753
16.	Dover and Sandgate	1753
17.	Dover to Sandwich, through Deal	1797
18.	Dover to Sandwich, through Waldershare	1801
19.	Faversham, Hythe and Canterbury	1762
20.	Folkestone and Barham	1792
21.	Goudhurst	1768
22.	Goudhurst, Gore and Stilebridge	1765
23.	Gravesend and Wrotham	1825
24.	Greenwich and Woolwich Lower Road	1818
25.	Hawkhurst Junction	1841
26.	Herne Bay	1814
27.	Ightham	1811
28.	Kipping's Cross and Flimwell	1862
29.	Kipping's Cross and Wilsley Green	1765
30.	Maidstone and Biddenden	1805
31.	Maidstone and Cranbrook	1760
32.	Maidstone to Key Street	1768
33.	Maidstone and Tonbridge	1765
34.	Malling and Strood	1825
35.	New Cross	1781

36.	Penshurst, Watt's Cross and Cowden	1765
37.	Rochester and Maidstone	1727
38.	Sandwich, Margate and Ramsgate	1788
39.	Sevenoaks	1749
40.	Stocker's Head to Bagham's Cross	1809
41.	Tenterden	1762
42.	Tonbridge	1709
43.	Tonbridge and Ightham	1809
44.	Wadhurst and West Farleigh	1765
45.	Westerham and Edenbridge	1767
46.	Whitstable	1736
47.	Woodchurch	1820
48.	Wrotham Heath	1765
49.	Wrotham and Maidstone	1773