

TOLL ROADS, TURNPIKES AND THE A30

A brief look at Kempshott's road from
Basingstoke to Stockbridge

From a talk given in 2016 by Jane Hussey

Why were toll roads necessary and how did they come into being?

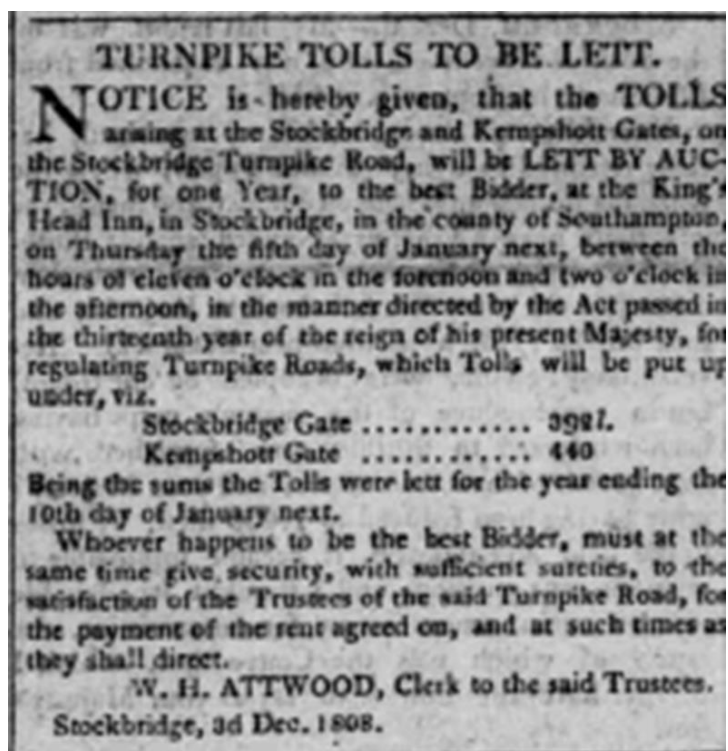
Up until the end of Tudor times parishes had been responsible for the maintenance of their roads and parishioners carried out the work. However this method did not cover all sections of highways across the country and waggoners and other transport had extreme difficulty crossing the terrain. There was no finance in place for the repair and maintenance of these routes and thus in 1621 a bill was presented to Parliament to rid the parishes of their responsibilities towards these roads and to introduce payments by users of the highways to provide for this.

The Act allowed for provision of Trusts to oversee sections of routes between towns and each Turnpike Trust was granted by an individual Act for a limited period which could be renewed. Parliament also agreed the initial choice of Trustees to ensure fair dealing. Many were prominent people living in the area, many landowners through whose lands the roads passed and therefore had a vested interest.

The aim of the trusts was to make money and so they sought sponsors to put money in to set up the Trust and who would receive dividends on the profits made. Many businessmen joined the schemes in the hope of making money, but overall these trusts were not so successful as the costs of road repairs in most cases exceeded their takings at the toll gates.

However the system did provide for better maintenance of these trunk routes, making travel generally much safer and faster.

The trust in turn would let the "gates" by newspaper advertisement for a price to the highest bidder who would then appoint a gatekeeper at a fixed weekly wage.



Hampshire Chronicle 6.12.1808

Whilst the Acts did not always stipulate the providing of a tollhouse, any house near to the proposed position of the gate could be provided. However one stipulation was made by the Acts and that was to have route-markers or milestones near the tollgates and these were to be painted white with black lettering, so that night travellers could shine a lantern on them to see where they were.

Existing milestone on the current Kempshott roundabout:



There is a second one showing 18 miles to Stockbridge and 49 to London one mile further up Kempshott Hill towards the motorway near the golf course.

Turnpikes in and around Basingstoke with dates Trusts established

Holy Ghost Hill est. 1772

Chapel Street

Eastrop St. Michael est. 1737

Hackwood Road (Alton Road) est. 1753

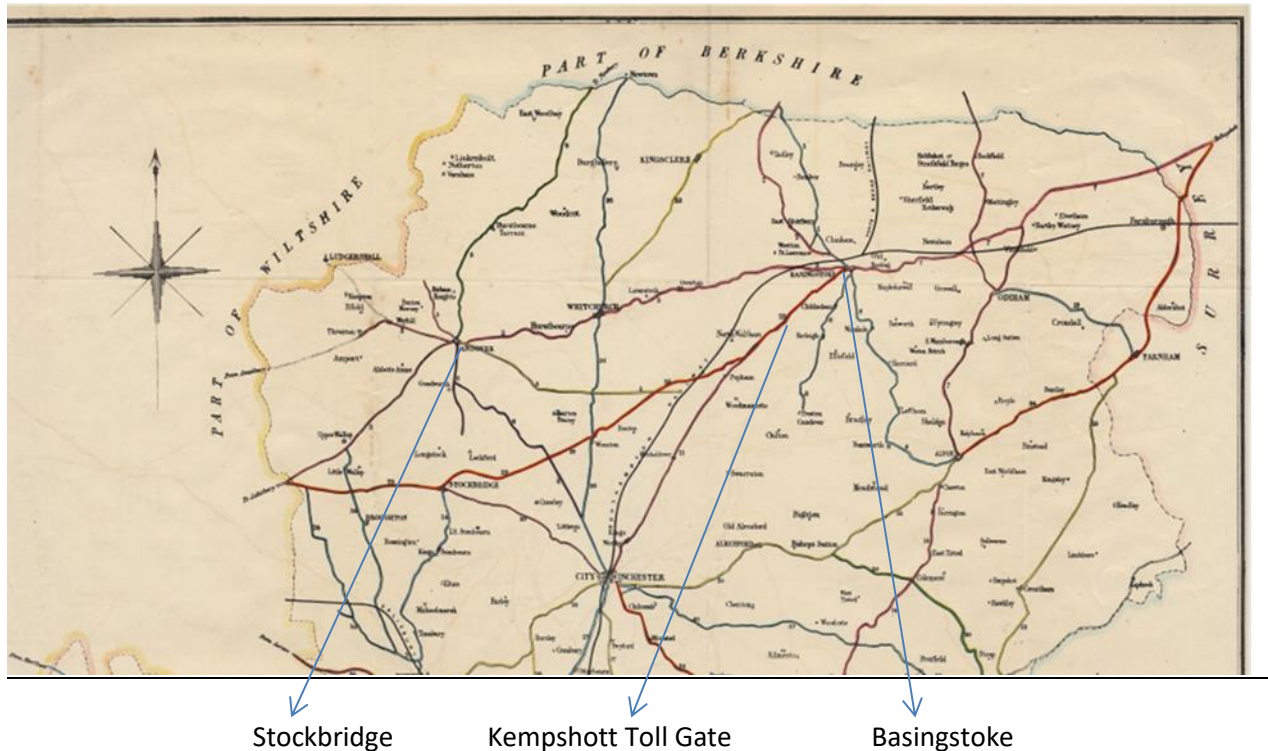
Worting Bottom (junction with B3400) est. 1755

Kempshott est. 1756

Four Lanes (Chineham) (Old Toll House at No. 80 Reading Road) est. 1718

This history will concern itself solely with the Kempshott Turnpike and the road from Stockbridge to Basingstoke on which it stood, part of which is now the A30.

Turnpike No.29 Stockbridge to Basingstoke 1756



Route: Basingstoke – Kempshott – Waltham - Popham – Northbrook – Weston – Hunton – Sutton – Barton Stacey – Chilbolton – Leckford – Kingsomborne - Stockbridge

Basingstoke to Stockbridge Turnpike Road facts:

The 1st Act was passed in 1755

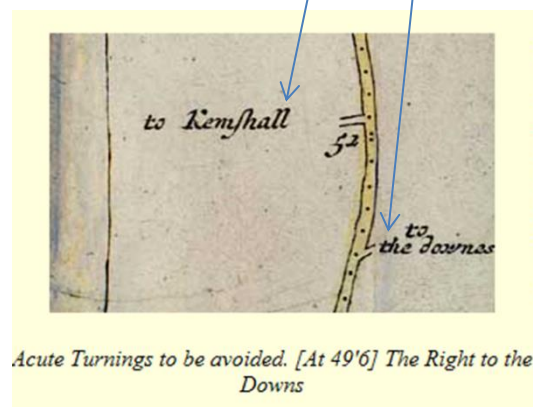
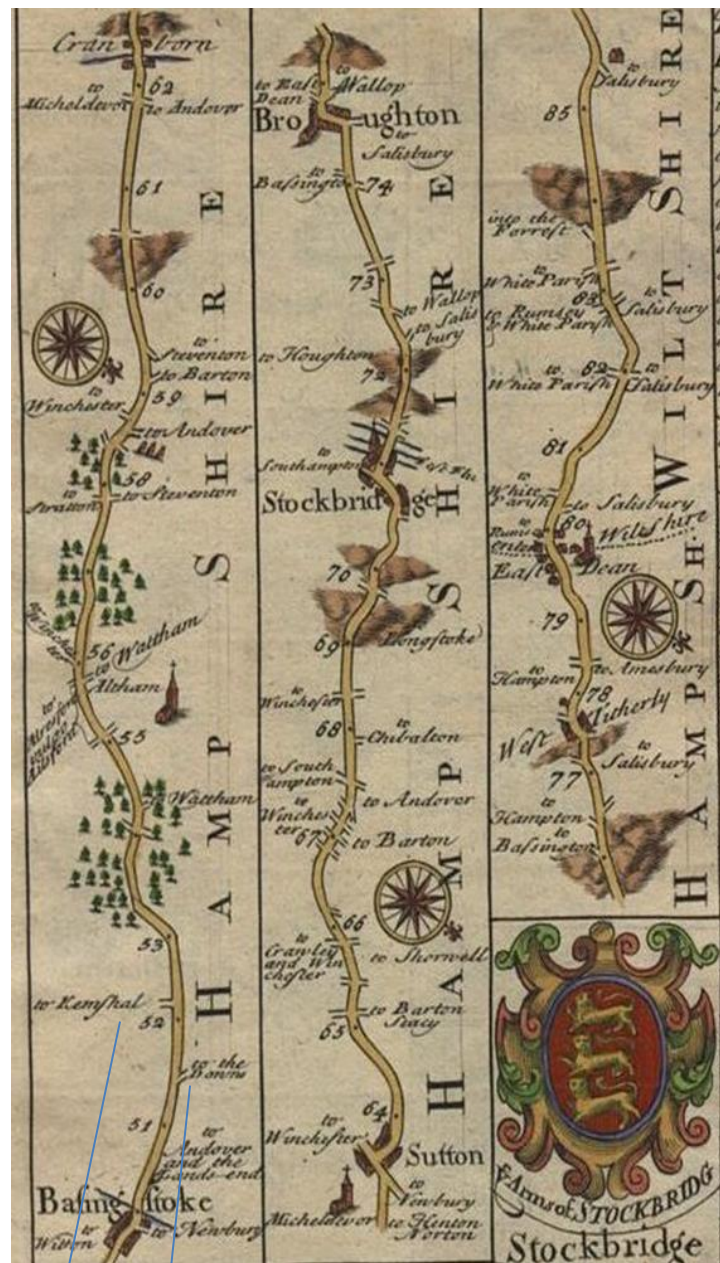
The distance covered was 27 miles 7 furlongs 200 yards

It contained 3 toll gates and bars

The continuity of the Trust was maintained by further Acts of Parliament until its demise in the late 1870's. The coming of the railways took over much of the freight traffic and thus the turnpike roads became less viable and eventually uneconomic, leaving the trusts with massive debts.

A report in the Hampshire Chronicle of 28.4.1866 showed debts owed to the Basingstoke and Stockbridge Trust and how they would try and offset them. The actual accounts have however, not survived.

Mr. Ogilby's Actual Survey of all ye Direct and Principal Cross Roads in England and Wales 1675:



Winchester Road A30; turning left to Kempshall (Kempshott House, in Kempshott Park) is Hatchwarren Lane; turning now blocked. 52'0 mile number . Turning right to the downes (Basingstoke Down) is Pack Lane; the Harroway. Winchester Road (A30).

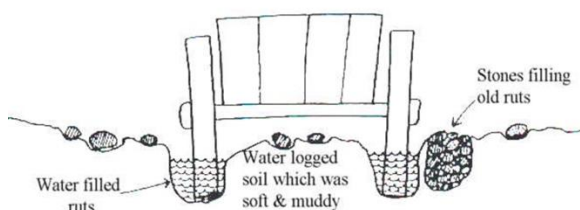
Damage to the original road surface on Kempshott Hill found during excavations for the Hatch Warrens Estate (view towards the flowers Estate, Kempshott).



Pairs of parallel ruts



Detail of the above showing depth of ruts caused by carts and coaches in the soft mud before solid road surfacing became the norm.



Cross sectional diagram of waterlogged road ruts and their “repairs”

The operation of the Stockbridge to Basingstoke Turnpike Trust

The first Trustees appointed in 1756 by Act of Parliament were:

Robert M. Thistlewaite, chairman of Broughton, Reverend
Henry Harwood, gent. Clerk and Treasurer
Richard Cotton, Apothecary of Stockbridge
Thomas Gauntlett of Stockbridge, Draper
Richard Beaumont of Stockbridge, Brewer

At the inaugural meeting on 1.6.1756 at the Swan Inn were:

Richard Pyle (possibly of Wallop)
Richard Hinckesman, gent. of Houghton
Charles Mill, rector of Kingsomborne
William Hawkins of Stockbridge or of Basingstoke gent., mercer
Robert Edmonds of Broughton
Frances Swanton (possibly of Over Wallop)
John Gatehouse of the Swan, Stockbridge
Sir Denys Rolle, landowner, of East Tytherley Manor and lands in other counties.

They either met at the Kings Head or The Swan in Stockbridge sometimes weekly often monthly, but some meetings were cancelled through lack of attendance.

1756 The trustees met to agree the section of gates “at or near a certain place called Shipton Fields near Basingstoke Down” and tolls were to be taken immediately after their erection. The gate itself was not to exceed £120. They agreed with the farmers to plough up the grass and to put sand and flints and cover this with chalk and gravel. Work began in 1757 and the gate was erected by George Weekes.

Position of the first turnpike



1757 John Sabine, surveyor was paid 10s.6sd. per day! The early surveyors had no official training. His deputies were John Joliffe and John Windover who were paid 15s. + expenses to attend meetings. Sabine was ordered to purchase land along the whole route and submit a list of parishioners, whose properties bordered the road, to be submitted to the Trust for the purpose of ordering them to carry out repair work on the road.

1757 William Stevens, the first gatekeeper at Kempshott was allowed 40s. for the building of a well next to the Turnpike House. Gatekeepers obviously had to be literate and numerate.

1757 repairs were carried out from Kempshott to the Wheatsheaf.

1758 Kempshott High Road was widened from Basingstoke to Popham Lane. Landowners were compensated for loss or damage to their lands.

Thomas Gatehouse of Kingssomborne, Sheriff of Hampshire in 1762 and Knight Bachelor and then John Gatehouse were 2 of the trustees. Henry Pincke of Kempshott House was also a trustee and sometime chairman around 1757. Popham Lane commenced at the far end of the Down and Henry Pincke's land bordered the southern part of this lane.

1761 The trustees moved that the upper Turnpike gate be removed to the end of Basingstoke town near the chalk pit and a house to be built for the gatekeeper William Stephens to live in. Ann his wife was allowed to take toll money in his absence and they ordered that a gate be erected at the end of Basingstoke Town close by the House with the sign of the Plow and William Stephens to keep the gate and take the tolls.

Days of labour on the roads were laid down by the Trustees. For Basingstoke it was 1 day a year, but for Kempshott 2 days. In 1762 the farmers of Basingstoke refused to do their statutory labour and the Clerk to the Trustees was asked to apply to the Mayor of the town to execute the Law against them.

1762 The Trustees ordered that the floor of the Turnpike House near Basingstoke "be new laid with bricks". Col. Broccas was asked to give up part of his garden in Basingstoke for the widening of the road in the town.

1765 There was a violent assault on the gatekeeper at Popham by a person unknown driving a waggon loaded with hops and refusing to pay. He forced a passage through and afterwards struck the gatekeeper several times. The Clerks offered a reward of 20 guineas for the discovery of this man.

1773 Weighing engines were introduced to "carefully" weigh all loaded carriages for the purpose of extracting extra tolls if overweight. There was one positioned at Basingstoke and one at Stockbridge.

1775 The Turnpike Trust applied to Parliament for Continuance of the Turnpike and to allow them to widen the road.

1778 The treasurer was ordered to contract for a cottage situated at the entrance to Basingstoke Town to interrupt the road, late the property of George Cleeve for any sum not exceeding 7 guineas.

1793 It having been represented to this meeting that in consequence of the Basingstoke inclosure a road has been opened which gives an opportunity for many people to avoid paying the tolls. A committee was formed to find a proper spot to which the present Turnpike House be removed.

1795 Basingstoke Down Gate to be let by auction to the highest bidder for 1 year. The gate collected £251.10.3d. during the year Sept. 1794 - Sep. 1795. William Hillier was the highest bidder for the Basingstoke Gate and was declared the renter for the yearly sum of £366.

1796 A clause was inserted into the Turnpike Act: all horses, mares, geldings and mules drawing through the turnpike be charge 3d. and half again if drawing waggons, carts, etc with narrow wheels.

1797 William Hillier was replaced by Thomas Elmes Basingstoke Down Gate was re-lett to John Parrett formerly of the Stockbridge gate as gatekeeper.

1798 Basingstoke Down Gate re-lett for 3 years this time to William Hillier @ £362 p.a. for 3 yrs. Every drove of oxen or other neat cattle was to be 5d. a score
Every drove of calves, sheep, lambs or swine was to be 3d a score

1801 Mr Robert Stride the Elder took over Basingstoke Gate for 3 years @ £366 p.a.

Nov. 1801 the Trust ordered that a surveyor make an estimate of expense of the Basingstoke Toll Gate and House to be moved to Kempshott Hill from its present location, as the travellers had been avoiding the Kempshott Turnpike by riding over the Down.

1801 James Blunt, Esq., trustee, appointed a blacksmith, Richard Hulbert, to the repair team. He would have the job of repairing the iron lettering on the milestones and in 1802 the direction post at Basingstoke Turnpike Road was ordered to be repaired and newly painted.

1803 William Cosier took over renting the Stockbridge gate @ £320 AND the Basingstoke gate @ £375 for 1 year. April: £15 was due from Robert Stride of the Basingstoke Gate so legal steps were taken to procure payment. By July they were going to sue him for the amount. Robert Stride produced a bill for £7.5.4d. for a stop gate which he had paid for and asked for the amount to be deducted from the £15 owing to the trust.

1804 The trustees ordered that the Surveyor have the milestone repaired and that iron plates be inserted in them instead of re-cutting. [This proved cheaper to maintain].

William Cosier was again the highest bidder for Stockbridge £346 and Kempshott £392.

1805 Kempshott Turnpike was let to Mr. Thomas Hellier of Lockerley at £411 for 1 year.

1806 It was let to Thomas Mabblerly of Stockbridge and he was appointed temporary gatekeeper to collect the Tolls as no-one else had come forward to rent the gate.

1807 Both tolls given to Mr Joseph Blandry of Andover – Kempshott costing £412 p.a.
Repairs were carried out from Kempshott to Popham Lane.

Thomas Gatehouse was one of the founder Trustees in 1756 and remained one until his death in 1795. The Trust borrowed £800 from 3 worthies to widen and repair the road (Richard Cotton, Thomas Gauntlett and Richard Beaumont, plus other donations including one from Winton College. 3 Indentures 1756-58.

Payment of tolls by the travelling public

Payment of tolls only had to be made once a day at any one Turnpike or Toll Gate from 12 midnight to 12 midnight on production of a note or ticket. The toll rates for Kempshott have not survived but many are still seen either on the toll house fronts or on walls. Here is an example of charges during the Victorian era, where it is clearly seen that the trusts were concerned not only about the weight of vehicles cutting into the road surfaces but the width of the iron wheel rims enlarging the ruts.

For every Horse or Mule drawing any Vehicle <small>whatsoever, (except a Waggon, Wain, Cart, or other such Carriage)</small>	D. 3
For a single Horse or two Oxen only, drawing any <small>Waggon, Wain, Cart, or other such Carriage, without limitation as to the breadth of the wheels</small>	3
For every Horse or Mule, and for every two Oxen <small>or neat Cattle drawing any Waggon, Wain, Cart, or other such Carriage, if drawn by more than one horse or two Oxen the several sums following, according to the breadth of the wheels thereof, viz.---</small>	
Having the Felloes of the Wheels of less breadth than Four Inches and a half	4¹/₂
Having the Felloes of the Wheels of the breadth of Four Inches and a half, and less than Six Inches	3³/₄
And having the Felloes of the Wheels of the breadth of Six Inches or more	3
For every Ox, Steer, Gale, or Bull drawing any <small>Waggon, Wain, Cart, or other such Carriage</small>	3
For every Ass drawing any Vehicle whatsoever	2
For every Dog drawing any Vehicle whatsoever	1
For every Horse or Mule not drawing	1
For every Ass not drawing	¹/₂
For every Drove of Oxen, Cows, or neat Cattle, per score	10
For every Drove of Swine, Calves, Sheep, or Lambs, per Score <small>And so in proportion for a greater or less number.</small>	5
For every Carriage propelled by Steam or Machinery, or other <small>than Human or Animal power</small>	2s. 6d.
<small>An additional Half Toll is payable in respect of all Carriages drawn by two or more Horses or other Beasts, employed in hauling Timber or Trees, between the 1st day of November and the last day of February.</small>	
By the General Turnpike Act, 3 Geo. 4, c. 126.	
<small>Empty Carriages of every description attached to any Waggon or Cart, are to be charged as follows, viz.---</small>	
<small>Every such Carriage with Four Wheels, the same as if drawn by two Horses.</small>	
<small>Every such Carriage with Two Wheels, the same as if drawn by one Horse.</small>	
<small>And if any such Carriage shall have any Goods conveyed therein, other than fire, Hay, or any other such necessary Packages for the security of the Carriage, double the above Toll.</small>	
Payment of Toll at this Gate clears all the other Tolls in the Tenth District.	

In order for this to function, there had to be exemptions from tolls and these were:

- Road repair vehicles
- Soldiers on the march
- Mail
- Cattle or sheep being driven from one field to another
- Persons going to church on Sundays or to a funeral
- Going to and from an election

Fine 40s. for abuse of exemptions.

However there were often disputes, such as where farmers had to pass through the gate with a cart to collect hay etc. from their fields.

Tollkeepers of the Kempshott Turnpike

Collectors of Tolls:

- 1757 William Stevens (wife Ann to collect tolls)
- 1795 William Hillier
- 1797 Thomas Elmes
- 1798 William Hillier
- 1801 Robert Stride the Elder (defaulted)
- 1803 William Cosier (Stockbridge & Kempshott)
- 1805 Peter Forsbury
- 1806 Thomas Mabblerly of Stockbridge
- 1841 James Smith
- 1851 Charles Goodall
- 1861 Charles Goodall
- 1871 Charles Goodall
- 1878 Charles Goodall (woodman and gatekeeper)

1864 Appointment of a district surveyor of the highways

Basingstoke Highway District.

THE Highway Board for the Basingstoke District, in the county of Southampton, will, on the 15th day May next, proceed to Elect a competent Person to discharge the Duties of DISTRICT SURVEYOR, required by the Act of the 25th and 26th Vic. c. 61, intituled "An Act for the better Management of Highways in England."

The District comprises the several parishes and places of Andwell, Basing, Bramley, Bradley, Cliddesden, Church Oakley, Dean, Dummer, Eastrop, Farley Wallop, Hartley Westpall, Herriard, Illsfield, Mappledurwell, Mortimer West, Nately Scures, Nownham, North Waltham, Nutley, Preston Candover, Pamber, Popham, Sherborne St. John, Silchester, Stratfield Turgiss, Stratfield Saye, Sherfield upon Loddon, Tunworth, Up Nately, Upton Gray, Winslade and Kempshott, Weston Patrick, Weston Corbett, West Sherborne, Worthing, Woodmancott, and Wootton St. Lawrence.

The estimated extent of the Public Highways (exclusive of Footways) within the District, is 236 miles. The Public Footways within the District, which will also be under the care and supervision of the Surveyor, are estimated at 200 miles, and the area of the whole District is estimated at 64,000 acres.

It is desirable the Surveyor should reside either at Basingstoke or some convenient place within the District.

Salary, including all travelling and personal expenses, at the rate of £150 per annum, payable quarterly.

Candidates to forward testimonials to my office on or before Thursday the 30th of April now instant. Subsequent notice will be given to all whose attendance may be required on the day of election. The candidate elected will be required to enter into a Bond, himself in £150, and two approved sureties in £75 each, for due performance of his duties.

By order of the Board,

Basingstoke, April 17, 1863. **W. CHALLIS, Clerk.**

His salary was to be £150 p.a. payable quarterly. He had to put up a bond of £150 and provide 2 sureties of £75.00 each; he had to reside at a suitable place within the Basingstoke district, which encompassed 236 miles of roads (64,000 acres).

Basingstoke, Stockbridge, & Lobcombe Corner Turnpike Road.

NOTICE IS HEREBY GIVEN,—That the General Annual Meeting of the Trustees of the above Road will be held at the White Hart Inn Stockbridge, on Thursday the 13th day of March next, at one o'clock in the afternoon, for the purpose of auditing the Accounts, and on general business relating to the Trust.

Dated this 12th day of February, 1856.

THOMAS LAMB,
H. LINTOTT FOOTNER, } Clerks.

Regular meetings were held to audit the Trust's accounts at the Trust's usual meeting place.

Stockbridge & Basingstoke Turnpike Road.

NOTICE IS HEREBY GIVEN,—That there is now a sum of £100 applicable to the discharge of the principal monies due and owing on the credit of the Tolls of the above Road, and that the Trustees of the said Road will hold a meeting at the White Hart Inn, in Stockbridge, on Thursday, the 31st day of May next, at one o'clock in the afternoon, to apply such sum in the payment of a proportionate part of the said principal monies. And all creditors to whom such principal monies are due are hereby requested to transmit to the Clerks to the Trustees on or before Tuesday, the 29th of May next, sealed proposals in writing, specifying the lowest composition they are willing to accept in respect of the moneys due to them respectively, or such part thereof, as the Trustees shall determine to discharge. — *Andover, April 19, 1860.*

THOS. LAMB,
H. L. FOOTNER, } Clerks.

From the Hampshire Chronicle 28.4.1860:

A meeting of the Trustees in April 1860 confirms the ailing state of funds and asks the creditors to state the minimum amount of money they would accept out of their dues.

The demise of the toll roads in Britain

As canals took over shipments of heavy loads and, the railways took over from them, toll roads became less and less profitable; trusts only being able to pay off the interest on their loans let alone pay their creditors. Three of the toll roads which shut Basingstoke in had already been disbanded before 1868 as stores which delivered to nearby villages felt the pinch of having to pay the various tolls purely to exit the town.

At a meeting of the Hampshire Chamber of agriculture at Basingstoke the Turnpike debt situation was discussed and reported in depth in the Hampshire Chronicle of 23.5.1868: Whereas the Basingstoke to Stockbridge Turnpike Trust had in earlier times applied for a rate aid from the county magistrates to assist with the repairs of the stretch of road from the town to the Kempshott Gate, latterly it was arranged that Basingstoke should bear the whole expense of these repairs which meant that the ratepayers were not only saddled with the expense of these works but also had to pay the tolls. The trust survived until 1878 but finished with great losses.

EVENTS AT THE KEMPSHOTT TURNPIKE

Complaint against the tollkeeper 1805

A warrant was issued to summons Peter Forsbury, keeper of the turnpike gate near Kempshott Lodge to answer the complaint of John Hanson, Esquire and William Bowtle his servant of neglect of duty on 26 April 1805, and refusal to open the gate for them.

Text of Warrant:

"To all Constables, Tythingmen and others His Majesty's Officers for the Keeper in the Peace in the said County and to William Bowtle for this Purpose specially appointed. You are hereby in His Majesty's Name, required to summon and warn Peter Forsbury, Keeper of the Turnpike Gate near Kempshott Lodge in the Road leading from Stockbridge to Basingstoke within the said County personally to appear before me or other of his Majesty's Justices of the Peace as shall be present at the Town Hall at Basingstoke on 1.8.1805 at 11.00 in the Forenoon of that Day to answer the Complaint of John Hanson Esq. and William Bowtle his servant charging the said Peter Forsbury with Neglect of Duty and Refusal to open the Gate on being required so to do about 11.00 in the Night of Thursday the 26th of April in breach of the statute in such case ordered and provided. And you are to make due return of this warrant. Hereof fail not."

Accidents on Kempshott Hill

From the Reading Mercury 26.5.1834

"The following inquest has been taken by Mr Shebbeare on 23rd inst. At Kempshott on the body of Charlotte Milford, a child about 9 years of age: the deceased with a younger child were travelling in the Salisbury road waggon to London with a woman to whose care they had been entrusted and who had just turned her back to make a resting place for the younger child when the deceased fell from the waggon and the near wheels passed over her legs and groin before the waggoner who was steadily driving his horses could stop them The legs of the poor child were dreadfully fractured and

lacerated and after being examined by a surgeon, she was put into a spring cart and taken to Winchester Hospital, but died just as she reached the gates. Verdict: Accidental Death.”

From the Sunderland Echo 16.9.1932

“Fatality in Mist

William Herbert Adams of Tudor House, Wilton was found dead beside his motor cycle at Kempshott Hill near Basingstoke early today. He had received severe injuries to the head, arm and leg. It appeared from marks on the road that Adams had been struck by a vehicle travelling towards Winchester. There was a heavy mist in the district last night. Adams had been in Dorchester on a visit to his fiancée and left at 11 o’clock last night for Sevenoaks.”

From the Gloucestershire Citizen 20.1. 1939

“Crash victim left to die – Theory advanced at inquest.

The theory that a road crash victim was dragged to the side of the road and left there to die, was advanced at an inquest at Basingstoke.

After alluding to the “reprehensible conduct of some driver”, the coroner adjourned the inquest on James Clarke (53) a native of Plymouth, for the police to continue investigations. Superintendent L. Feilder said that Scotland Yard had identified Clarke, a tramp by his fingerprints. These were taken as Clarke lay dying in hospital after he had been found injured on the main road at Kempshott Hill, near Basingstoke on Monday night.

Clarke was found on the roadside by Henry William Stent, a Metropolitan Police pensioner, of Balham High Road, who was travelling on a lorry from Winchester to London.

Stent told the coroner: “Clarke was lying on the grass verge with his feet projecting towards the road. The road was strewn with glass, probably from the damaged headlight of a car.

“I am convinced that from the comfortable way he was lying he had been placed there. The damaged leg was crossed over the sound leg.

He was lying on the side of the road on which we were travelling, but his cap and boot were on the other side of the road. It is my opinion he had been placed on that side to lead the police to believe that the vehicle which knocked him down was travelling towards London and not towards Winchester.

The Lorry Driver, George Thomas Earl, of Cavendish Road, Balham said that Clarke was lying on his back with his arms folded. It would have been impossible for him to have lifted the injured leg over the other.”

SOME CRIME ON KEMPSHOTT HILL

From the Reading Mercury 25.2.1811

“Assault and robbery, February 1811

Thursday night a most daring assault and robbery was committed on Kempshott Hill, near Basingstoke, Hants.

As Mr. Thomas Rogers, saddler of that Town was returning from Winchester, where he had been receiving a considerable sum, he was stopped by 2 footpads, who demanded his money with

dreadful imprecations, which he spiritedly refused to deliver, and defending himself with a large pocket knife, desperately wounded one of the ruffians: the other with a large bludgeon immediately knocked him down, and cut his head in a shocking manner, depriving him of his senses. They then stripped him stark naked, and left him in a ditch, in which situation he was heard groaning by a postboy on his return from Winchester to the Crown Inn, Basingstoke, who took him into his chaise and conveyed him home, where he now lies in a dangerous state, from loss of blood and the wounds he receive. Several volunteers of the town went immediately in search of the villains, but no tidings could be heard of them."

From the Reading Mercury 15.2.1868

"Tollkeeper Charles Goodall is assaulted at the gate

County Bench, Town Hall, Wednesday Feb 12th before W.L. Sclater, Esq. and Sir N. Rycroft, Bart. Assault: James and William Richards 2 brothers were brought up in custody of Supt. Kelleway, charged with committing a grievous assault upon Charles Goodall, keeper of the Kempshott tollgate, on the 6th inst. Complainant deposed that on the evening of the day in question, the prisoners arrived at his gate with 2 horses and carts and he demanded the usual toll 3 1/2d. from each. The first one said that his brother who was a little behind, would pay for both, but upon his coming up he tendered payment for only one. Complainant refused to let him proceed, and the other returned and after some abusive language, the prisoner James, struck him a severe blow on the head, knocked him down and ill used him severely. The other man, William Richards, was looking on the whole time and took off his coat and offered to fight complainant, but did not actually assault him. Complainant had suffered much since from the injuries he received. Superintendant Kelleway deposed that complainant had received considerable injuries about the head, but had been able to track the men with him to Shirley, near Southampton where he apprehended them. Prisoners pleaded drunkenness as an extenuation, but the magistrates considering it a very serious case, sentenced the prisoner James Richards to 2 months' imprisonment with hard labour and William Richards to a fine of 24s., including costs."

From the Reading Mercury 15.12.1888

"Serious Assault

Alfred Rowell, carter, was charged with assaulting George Powell, also a carter on 30th inst, in the Winchester Road. It appeared that plaintiff was returning home to Dummer Grange with a wagon and team of horses, having his wife and a young man named George Kerchel with him. They stopped at the Stag & Hounds and had some beer. While there defendant came up with another team of horses and soon began to find fault with the plaintiff's team which defendant formerly had charge of. Soon after plaintiff had started again defendant came funning after him and overtook him at the bottom of Kempshott Hill, and after continuing his remarks about the horses struck plaintiff in the face and knocked him down in front of his horses so that he was in danger of being trodden on. He also assaulted plaintiff's wife when she interfered to defend her husband. Defendant was not drunk but was excited from drinking.

In reply to the Bench, plaintiff declared he had given no cause of offence to defendant.

George Kerchel gave corroborative evidence, and stated that plaintiff's eye was black next day from the blow he had received.

Defendant admitted he had a few words with plaintiff about his horses, but pleaded that he had been provoked.

The Bench considered it was a cowardly assault upon a man much older than the defendant and fined him 15s.6d. including costs, or in default 14 days' hard labour. The money was paid."

From the Berkshire Chronicle 7.7.1866

"Counterfeit coin

At the Hampshire Quarter Sessions [court sessions] –

Henry Mills, a gipsy, for uttering a counterfeit half crown at Kempshott Turnpike Gate on the night of the Odiham Races, but after a trial lasting some four hours the prisoner was acquitted."

From the Reading Mercury 23.5.1914

"Excessive Speed

Henry Clayton of 45 Clarence Road, Spark Hill Birmingham, was charged with driving a motor car on Kempshott Hill on June 2nd at a speed of 30 mph. Fined £1 and costs 13s."

NB Speed limit at this time was 14mph.

From the Gloucester Citizen 7.10.1936

"Police chase of Army Ambulance Car – Driver fined on drink charge

Wild driving by 2 motorists – one of whom was in charge of an ambulance in which beer bottles were found, two of them full- was revealed yesterday. The ambulance driver, George Edward Hanson, 24th Company RASC, Aldershot denied a charge of driving while under the influence of drink, but was fined £3.10s. and his licence was suspended for 12 months. He was said to have driven between 55 and 60 miles an hour.

Police Sergeant Crockford, of Basingstoke said that at 11 o'clock at night he followed the ambulance in a police car from Kempshott Hill to Basingstoke. The ambulance was swaying and zigzagging from one side of the road to the other, and he overtook it only after a police constable had signalled it to stop.

Dr. Hugh Bethel of Basingstoke who examined Hanson, said he was unsteady, his speed was thick and his writing shaky."

THE CONDITION AND SURFACING OF THE ROAD

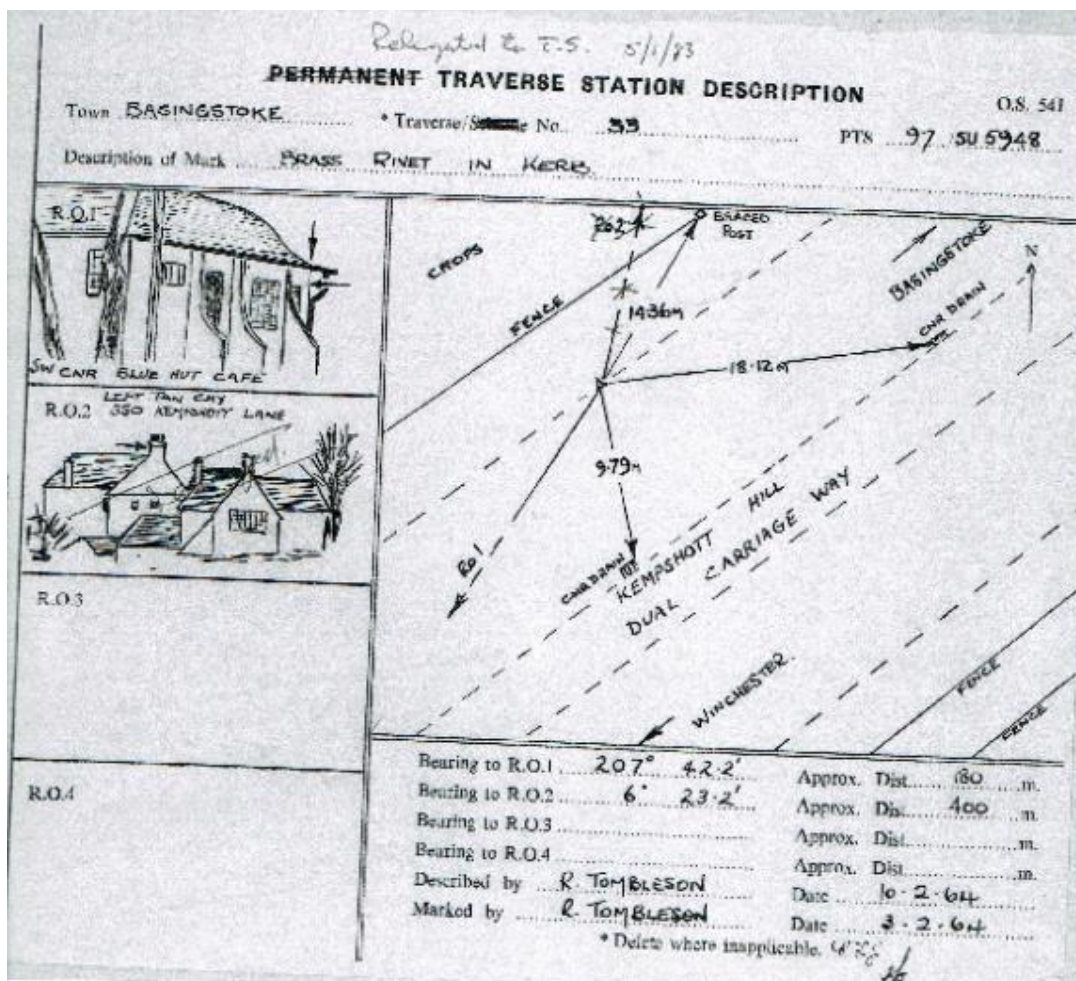
The current A30 had always been a major coaching road linking London to the South West of England since the 17th century but nevertheless succumbed to the vagaries of use and adverse weather, which combined to destroy any soft surface travelled on. It had always been difficult to climb the slope of Kempshott Hill before the road was surfaced and accidents to vehicles and their passengers would occur as some of the newspaper reports show.

The writer has not yet found information on the hard surfacing of this road, but during the 18th century methods were being devised by "road engineers" for better drainage of important routes. John Metcalf 1717-1810 was the first northern turnpike road builder (blind Jack), Thomas Telford 1757-1834 (nickname Colossus of Roads) surfaced the London-Holyhead route (A5), John Loudon

Macadam 1756-1836 was involved in Bristol Turnpike Trust. All three advocated a cambered surface with drainage channels at either edge, all recognised the need for small stones to be packed tightly together above the subsoil, but whereas Metcalf working in Yorkshire advocated a base of heather to assist bog drainage, especially where it was plentiful on the moors, the other two based their ideas on different sizes of stones to achieve this result. Macadam's use of smaller stone particles and gravel appeared to be the firm and enduring favourite. It is therefore presumed that the A30 at Kempshott would have received this treatment sometime thereafter. However the stones did not stick so constant repairs to the roads were needed. As tarmac was not invented until the very early 1900's by Hooley, it is also assumed that the surfacing of the road did not commence until sometime after that time.

Road numbering only began after WW1 when the Ministry of Transport was formed in 1918. It was done piecemeal but to a system which meant that this part of the country/county received the prefix A for main trunk routes radiating from London and a number beginning with 3. As roads diminished in size and importance or commenced further away from London joining their main arterial feeder road, so they received a higher number e.g. A34, A303 etc. And thus the former part of the Harrow Way through Basingstoke, Andover and Salisbury became the A30.

As motorised traffic increased during the 20th century, the A30 at Kempshott was further and further widened until the top part was eventually made into a dual carriageway leading to what is now the M3 motorway. Below is an example of part of the survey relating to this from 1983 and relating to the original carried out in 1964, showing measurements taken from the Blue Hut transport café to No. 350 Kempshott Lane:



The Blue Hut Transport Café

A famous all-night café at the top of Kempshott Hill on the A30, built before 1935 and sold for development in 1985. This photo was taken shortly before it was demolished to make way for the Beggarwood Estate.



AA Road Information

In its early days the AA constantly published local updates on repairs to roads and for the A30 the Surrey Mirror carried these reports during the 1920s and 1930s:

ROAD INFORMATION.

Supplied by the Automobile Association, September 11th, 1929.

Lighting-up time, London, Saturday, September 14th, 7.46 p.m.; Sunday, 15th, 7.44 p.m.

Motorists are advised by the A.A. to beware of skidding, particularly on wet fallen leaves.

Newbury - Basingstoke - Alton - Gosport.—Good to Basingstoke, then Caution between Droxford and Meon.

Bagshot - Farnham - Petersfield.—except Bucks Horn Oak to Wreccles poor.

London - Basingstoke - Southampton

Repairs between Bedford and St. one-way traffic only, loopway signs erected, diversion at junction of Great West-road—by-pass road, Bedford, via Clock House-lane, Ashford, and Ford Bridge-road into Kingston-road, Staines. kerb-laying between Sunningdale and Bagshot, widening and repairs between Dunmer cross-roads and Kempshott-hill and entering Basingstoke. Special caution through Sunningdale, Hartford Bridge, Mapledurwell, Kingsworthy, and Chandlersford.

Basingstoke - Salisbury.—Oakley Station to Overton. poor. Repairs at Little Dean.

Bagshot, widening and repairs between Dunmer cross-roads and Kempshott-hill and entering Basingstoke. Special cau-

Shock Horror!

A Report from the Portsmouth Evening News 14.12.1954:

A statistical analysis of road accidents prepared by the Hampshire Police... for referral to the Ministry of Transport and the Home Office.....

.....Other stretches:

Kempshott Hill to Basingstoke 40 accidents per mile per annum

(whereas Black Dam to the Dorchester Arms, Hook only 33).

Sources:

Q26/1 Book of Trustees accounts and minutes 1756-1807 for the Basingstoke to Stockbridge Turnpike Trust held at the Hampshire Record Office

Newspapers on line

Photographs of excavated ruts courtesy of Bob Applin, Basingstoke Archaeological and Historical Society.

Blue Hut Café building application BDB/18896 Basingstoke & Deane Borough Council 5.7.1985

Photograph of milestone taken by the author

Maps courtesy of the Hampshire Record Office and on line