A historical map of Nantwich, Cheshire, showing a network of roads. Several roads are highlighted in red, representing turnpike roads. The map includes various landmarks such as Dorfold Hall, Nantwich Willaston, and several bridges. The text 'The Turnpike Roads around Nantwich, Cheshire' is overlaid in large black font.

The Turnpike Roads around Nantwich, Cheshire

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Chapter 1. Introduction

The story of the turnpike roads around Nantwich starts in 1555 with an Act of Parliament from the reign of King Philip of Spain and Queen Mary. The legislation entitled "An Acte for the amendynge of hyghewayes" established that unless a particular individual was liable for the maintenance of stretch of road then the responsibility fell on the Parish. It also established the role of surveyor of the highway, who was to be elected from eligible parishioners on the Tuesday or Wednesday of Easter week. The surveyor was then to establish what work needed to be done in the parish, organise the materials needed for repair and then supervise the 'statutory labour'. As a parishioner you would be required to work, unpaid, for eight hours on each of five days agreed with the surveyor. Depending on the value of land you owned or rented you may also have to provide horses and a cart. In 1563 the statute labour was increased to six days per year. Over the years there were numerous changes in the law to allow for example the raising of a local rate to pay for additional labour if the roads proved difficult to maintain. However in essence the 1555 Act laid the responsibility of maintaining and repairing roads on the parish. This responsibility remained until it was abolished under the 1835 Highways Act¹.

If a parish failed to maintain a section of road it usually ended up with a report to the local Justices who could indict them. Alternatively if a parishioner damaged the road or would not undertake his statute labour the surveyor could present him to the Justices at the Quarter Sessions. John Lindopp the surveyor of highways for Wynbunbury did just this in 1630².

"Thomas Clayton of Nantwich for carrying with his team sand and clay out of divers places in the highways to the great danger of his majestys subjects. And for selling the sand and clay in Nantwich."

"Randle Hampton of Nantwich for that he has grounds in the Parish worth £18p ann (per annum) at least and keeps a team there winter and summer utterly refused to do any work at the highways: giving us ill language and bidding us to do the worst we can for he will neither work or pay."

"Richard Wright of Nantwich for not scouring the ditches of a close he holds in Staple adjoining the highway being 8 roods."

The Justices were responsible for supervising the local highways and when the repairs had been completed would issue a certificate stating that the road was in good and sufficient repair.

There was a problem with this whole approach to maintaining and repairing roads which was succinctly summarised by Thomas Wedge in his 1794 book 'A General View of Agriculture in Cheshire'³.

" The present mode of committing the care of the road to an office chosen annually, and by rotation, without regards for any abilities, etc., in each and every parish or township, seems to be one on the chief cause of the neglect and insufficiency of their repairs. Sometimes, though seldom, an active intelligent man is in that office; but no proper system of repairs being laid down, and pursued, an ignorant or indolent, office succeeding the former, suffers what has properly done to go to decay."

For the most part the parish based system of road repair was adequate for local needs. The real problems arose when a nationally or regionally important road ran through the parish. The damage from the traffic could just overwhelm the local resources available from statute labour and additional local rates.

This was particularly the case on the Great North Road out of London. In the Biggleswade area the parishes were unable to cope with their roads even after the Justices had used all their legal options. It is here that we see the first signs of a new approach – a private act of parliament. On the 24th February 1621 a bill was read in parliament that would have allowed for the Justices to take over the problem road and using not only the local resources but also a toll for repair and maintenance. The bill was rejected as a *"tax upon all passengers, thereby savouring of a Monopoly."* The bill may have died but the idea had been born – but it was not to be tried again for another 35 years. During this time we see other attempts to address the issue of being overwhelmed by the volume of traffic. It was well described by the parish of Radwell in Hertfordshire at the 1656 Quarter Sessions⁴.

"...such as winter devours whatsoever we are able to lay on in summer."

"The parish is so small that it hath in it all but two teams for statute labour on the highway, yet two miles of the Great North Road within our bounds."

The first 'Justice Trust' was finally authorised in 1663 to erect three toll-gates between Ware and Stamford, including the parish of Radwell. A 'Justice Trust' was seen as ex-

ceptional and of a limited life, initially 11 years, and to address a specific problem. Indeed over the next 40 years only another seven were created including the first trust in Cheshire from Hatton Heath to Barnhill nr Broxton on the modern 'Whitchurch Road'. The first Justice Trust in Cheshire could have been on the London Road via Nantwich. On the 26th January 1664 a House of Commons committee was appointed to bring in a Bill for the effective repair and maintenance of the Highways⁵. The members of the committee were drawn from interested individuals in the house and members from Essex, Hartford, Cambridge and Huntingdon – the route of the Great North Road. On the 5th December 1664 the committee was ordered to "*in particular consider the Highways from London to West Chester*"⁶. The committee reported back to the House on the 17th January 1665⁷. Two proposals were put to the vote:-

1. "*That this Committee can find no other expedient reasonably to mend the roads from London to Chester but a Toll.*"
2. "*The Committee humbly offer to continue the Charge of six-pence per Pound till the end of the next Session.*"

Both proposals were supported by the House of Commons and the committee was charged to "*bring in a Bill as they see Occasion, to put the same so forth in Execution*"⁸. By the 11th February 1664 the Bill had received its Second reading and then it disappears. There is no evidence that it was defeated, indeed there is no record in either the Journal of the House of Commons or House of Lords of any further legislative activity on this subject⁹. The Bill apparently dies and there are no other attempts until the 1695-1696 parliamentary session when two Justice Trusts were created.

The next generation of trusts was approved in 1706 when 32 trustees were given the same rights as the Justices to repair roads and claim tolls on the road from Fornhill to Stony Stratford – part of the London to Chester road. Even with the development of the turnpike trust the parish remained responsible for the road and they would be indicted if the road was not up to standard, not the turnpike trust.

Returning to the 1705 Justice Trust in Cheshire. The preamble to the Hatton Heath – Barnhill turnpike act gives an insight into the reason for starting on such a major undertaking as obtaining a private act of parliament¹⁰. The road could not be kept in repair because of .."*the great and many loads and heavy carriages of cheese and other goods which are weekly drawn through and do relate not only to the trade of the city of Chester, and adjacent Counties but also of Ireland.*" Having established that this traffic was not only of local importance but also regionally and internationally the preamble went on to describe the state of the road ... "*very ruinous, and of times impass-*

able, in so much as it has become dangerous to all persons, horses & cattle that pass that way.” The preamble concludes with the key reason for applying for the act. “... for that the ordinary court appointed by the laws and statutes of this realm is not sufficient for the effectual repair and amending of the same. Neither are the inhabitants of the several townships ... able to repair the same without the provision of monies to be raised.”

Thus this piece of road is placed in a regional and national context with the repair in the hands of a few locals who derive little obvious benefit from their labours on the road.

Chapter 2. Nantwich

Nantwich has been an important town on the London to Chester road for at least 600 years. The Itinerary of Edward I shows him staying in Nantwich and Acton during his campaigns into North Wales during the 1300s¹¹. It was the significance of the communication with Chester, initially as a bastion against the Welsh and then as the port for Ireland, that made this an important route. The London to Chester Road is often described as a 'post road' and indeed there would have been numerous royal messengers travelling this route. However it wasn't until around 1512 that we see the appointment of the first Master of Posts – Brian Tuke. He ordered all towns to hold horses and guides in case they were needed by royal messengers or others authorised by the Council. This provided a series of fresh horses as they were only ridden from one post town to the next. The cost of these horses was to be met by the towns for the royal messengers but other users of the system may well have had to pay. The intention was that the messengers had a post horse available every 10-12 miles with a guide to show the way and return the horse. Responsible individuals in each town were called post masters and we have a number of records of those in Nantwich. In 1581, Walsingham recorded the details of the Holyhead Road and showed John Wright as the Nantwich Postmaster¹². By 1599 it was Hugh Rathbone¹³. His name is known because of a Privy Council case in which Robert Crockett had failed to deliver letters to Stoke at the request of Hugh. James Hicks claimed to have been "settling the conveyance of letters from Nantwich" until September 1640 when he was made the manager of the "whole road to Chester"¹⁴. During the Civil War, 1642, the Letter Office records that John Sears was owed £20.0s.0d¹⁵. In 1653 all the postmasters had to re-apply for their jobs and we have evidence that George Gleave petitioned for the Nantwich post¹⁶. The final record is of a dispute that is worth quoting in more details. On the 25th May 1670 Lord Cholmondley sent a letter to Mr Williamson (head of the Letter Office in London).

"Pray favour Mrs Deane, the postmaster's wife of Nantwich, that her husband may maintain his employment on giving good security, some neighbours have designed to thrust him out and put one Caper in his place."

Mr Ellis the manager of the Chester Road reported to Williamson on the 14th June 1670.

*“Mr Dean, postmaster of Nantwich, has not been deprived of any of the time for which he was deputed. He made no overtures to be continued and, as he parted with his own, wants horses and is not much esteemed; another person who is more competent and has the best inn in the town has, on the recommendation of Sir John Bennett, been appointed”*¹⁷.

Can we assume that Mr Caper took over as postmaster as well the landlord of the Crown Inn?

It was usual for the government letters to be signed off in the various post towns. The surviving Chester letters tend to be signed off in Stone, Lichfield & Coventry with no Nantwich signed letters. However this is the route through Nantwich and Woore – the modern A51. How fast did the messengers ride at post? Four letters from Nantwich to St Albans averaged just over 5 miles an hour.

The earliest English road book – *The Post of the World by Richard Rowlands 1576*¹⁸ – does not include the Chester road. However in the *Chronicles of England, Scotland & Ireland by Holinshead & Harrison 1577*¹⁹ we see the first written itinerary recording the Carnarvon Chester London road through Nantwich. This same road is also in the manuscript entitled *The Particular Description of England with Portraitures of Certain cheiffest Citties and Towns by William Smith 1588*²⁰ with the journey from London to Carnarvon via Chester being listed in 17 stages. The best known road book *Britannia Atlas by John Ogilby 1675*²¹ introduced strip maps. The Holyhead road is spread over four plates (plates 21-24) and we have Woore, Bridgemore, Stapleley, Namptwich, Acton & Hurlstone shown along with the bridges at Howbeck Brook, the River Weaver in Namptwich and at Bar Bridge on the Tarporley Road.

The River Weaver was originally forded just south of the current Nantwich Bridge. The first reference to a bridge was in 1398-1399 when the Wich Bridge was described as a timber structure with shops and a chapel²². However there is evidence that as early as 1282 tolls were being levied on carts passing through Nantwich for pontage (bridge) and pavage (road). This implies the possible existence of the bridge some 100 years before the earliest written evidence. A description of the bridge by William Webb is quoted in Hall’s *“History of the Town and Parish of Nantwich”*²³.

“A strong timber bridge over the stream of the Weever is maintained by the town, which requires no little care and cost, by reason of the monstrous carriages of wood in carts which is brought thither for the boiling of the salt.”

The bridge was adopted as a county bridge in April 1652 and Nantwich was no longer responsible for the maintenance. The first stone bridge was built in 1664 at the county's expense thanks to the efforts of Roger Wilbraham of Townsend House, Welch Row petitioning the local Justices of the Peace²⁴. The bridge had become dilapidated by 1742 and in spite of further money being spent on repairs it had to be rebuilt in 1803²⁵.

Having set the scene, are there any other descriptions of the pre-turnpike roads around Nantwich? In the 1574 Quarter Sessions at Knutsford the condition of many of the roads that will later be described in this book were revealed. There were nineteen complaints about the chronically bad condition of the roads.

Between Chester and Hickenhull (nr Tarvin) the Cotton road was bad with Hockenhull parish having not mended the section from Cotton towards Duddon. From Duddon to Tarporley Clotton was at fault. The occupiers of 'Hyneley' Lane and the gutter or drain called Salter syche (Willaston) were blamed for not doing their statutory duties. Willaston had neglected the road from Nantwich to 'Choir Brook' (Cheerbrook) and on the Nantwich to Middlewich road Warmingham township had not mended the road from Coppenhall Moss to Newton and Newton had not bothered with the road between Warmingham and Middlewich. In addition the road to the crossing of the River Weaver at Beam bridge was in a state of neglect as well as that running through Acton. Effectively the whole of the central Cheshire had unsatisfactory roads. This state of affairs was found in report after report from the Quarter sessions in the late 1500s and early 1600s.

There was better news in 1675 when Ogilby comment on the condition of the roads...

"The first 30 Miles very good Way, whence 'tis indifferent through Buckinghamshire and Northamptonshire; Dunchurch Lane gives you 2 Miles of bad Way, but Staffordshire and Cheshire no ill Road."

We have the classic quotation from Celia Fiennes from her journeys around Britain on a side-saddle after she passed through Nantwich in 1698²⁶.

"Thence I went to Nantwich 5 long miles; Nantwich is a pretty large town and well built, here are the salt springs of which they make salt and many salterns which were a boyling the salt; this is a pretty rich land; you must travel on a Causey, I went 3 miles on a Causey through much wood; its from Nantwich to Chester town 14 long miles

the wayes being deep; its much on enclosures and I passed by several large pooles of water..."

She writes about the Causey a narrow paved path to the side of the unmade road for packhorse and riding horse usage. However the paving was often field or marl pit cobbles not a flat paving stone so the horses would often move off the causey in to the mud of winter and the dust of summer.

The best description of the local roads before the turnpike comes from the petition to parliament to support the first turnpike act to affect Nantwich²⁷.

"A Petition of the Inhabitants, Gentlemen and Freeholders, in and around the ancient Market Town of Nantwich in the County Palatine of Chester. That the said town of Nantwich is a very ancient populous town, and lies in the Post Road between Chester and London, through which the Irish Mail, Expresses, and persons riding Post to and from Ireland daily pass and repass; and though the Road through this Town is, as the Petitioners apprehend, the nighest Way from Chester to London, yet the Coaches and heavy Carriages are obliged to go another Road; because good Part of the Roads from the City of Chester to the Borders of Stafford are very founderaus and out of Repair; great Part thereof lying upon a dead Flat, and other Parts being worn into deep Hollows; so that the Wheel-carriages cannot, without great Difficulty, get through them; and, in Snows, the hollow Ways are rendered impassable; and that the Petitioners, and all the Parishes through which the said Road lies (over and above the Statute Duty, which hath constantly been performed), have yearly, for many Years last past, raised very large Sums upon their Estates, by way of Levy, and laid out the same in repairing the said Road; but the Materials being scarce, and lying at great Distance, they find themselves incapable, according to the Laws in being, of completing the repairs thereof."

This petition dates from 1742 and the description of the roads differs little to that from Celia Fiennes from some 50 years earlier. We have in this petition the essential problem with the Parish being responsible for the roads – if a major highway passes through you have a major headache for the local Justices as the local resources are swamped. However we can read a little more in to this petition as much of the traffic was heading south out of Chester via Whitchurch because of the state of the Nantwich Road. This was obviously of financial consequence to the town of Nantwich. It had been a bone of contention since 1657 when the first London to Chester coaches ran via Whitchurch²⁸. Also bear in mind that the Irish Mail referred to in the petition was

not a mail coach it was a rider with saddlebags – the first mail coach did not pass through Nantwich until October 3rd 1785²⁹.

There was a more general concern about the condition of the roads in England and in 1694 the Gentry, Freeholders, Tradesmen, Salters and Carriers of Nantwich sent a petition to Parliament in support of the development of the Derwent Navigation in Derbyshire. In the petition they cited the damage done to roads by the “land carriage of Iron, Lead, Millstones and other ponderous commodities”³⁰.

Chapter 3. Turnpike Roads

Between 1743 and 1835 a total of six turnpike trusts were created around Nantwich.

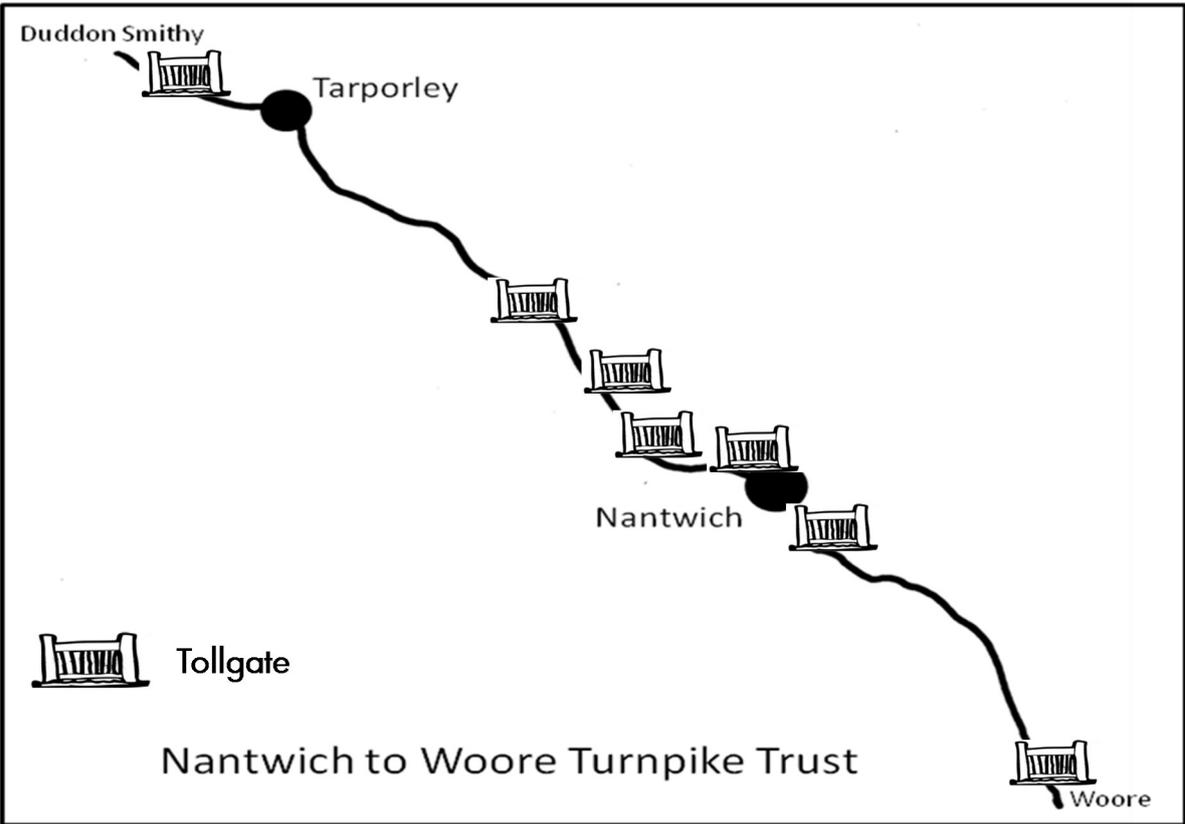
1. Lichfield Roads – Nantwich and Woore Trust. 1744 to 1875.
2. Newcastle-under-Lyme and Nantwich Trust. 1767 to 1877.
3. Whitchurch and Madeley Trust. 1767 to 1875.
4. Nantwich and Wheelock Trust. 1816 to 1875.
5. Tarporley and Whitchurch Trust. 1829 to 1876.
6. Nantwich and Congleton Trust. 1835 to 1880.

The information available about each trust derived from papers in the County Records Offices, Contemporary Newspapers, Maps, Published sources and extant remains such as tollhouses and milestones will be summarised. The sometimes patchy early financial information will be used to examine the profitability of the trusts. However, the Government started to systematically collect financial information about all turnpike trusts in 1821 but it was not until 1835 that it was collected yearly, until the termination date of each trust. This information has been used to provide a picture of each trust during that 40 or so years for which detailed income and expenditure is available.

Lichfield Roads – Nantwich and Woore Trust.

By 1729 the road from London to Chester had, except for nine miles, been turnpiked as far as Lichfield. The 1729 act (2 Geo II c.5) covered the roads from Lichfield to Stone and *“thence to the End of the County of Stafford in the Post Road to Chester”*. In 1742 the Trustees of the Lichfield Roads applied for an extension to cover the road to Burton-on-Trent and the Post Road from the Staffordshire County Boundary through Woore and Nantwich to Chester. This act was passed in 1744 (17 Geo II c.24) setting up a trust that covered nearly 100 miles of roads from Coleshill to Chester and Lichfield to Burton-on-Trent. This act was renewed in 1761 but by 1769 there had been an application for an additional Act to allow the collection of tolls north of Nantwich. Under the 1744 & 1761 Acts ... *“the Trustees were restrained from erecting any Turnpike between Nantwich and the City of Chester, which is about Twenty miles”*. As would be expected no income so no expenditure on *“repair, widening and supporting*

Figure 1. Map of the Nantwich to Woore Turnpike Trust indicating tollgates.



the said road: And that the Road is very deep and narrow in many Places". Under the 1789 renewal this extensive trust was broken up in to a series of more workable districts. The roads to the north of Longdon were detached from Lichfield. The original Lichfield Trust was then divided in to three Districts:- District 1 was the London Road from Coleshill to Longdon (just north of Lichfield); District 2. Burton-on-Trent Road; District 3. Lichfield local roads. In Cheshire the 1769 Act had re-routed the turnpike through Tarvin rather than via Stapleford and this had in addition covered the road to Northwich through Delamere Forest. In the 1789 act these roads were also divided into Districts:- District 1. Woore to Tarporley (in the Act Duddon Smithy). District 2. Tarporley to Chester and Tarvin Cross to Northwich. District 3. Vicars Cross to Frodsham. These subsequently became known as the Nantwich to Woore, Chester to Tarvin and the Kelsall & Northwich Trusts.

The Nantwich and Woore Trust covered 23 miles from Pipe Gate, just south of the town of Woore in Shropshire to Duddon Smithy some three miles beyond Tarporley. There were tollgates at Pipe Gate (SJ 735 413), near Flash Farm, Woore (SJ 725 434), near the Newcastle Road rail crossing, Stapeley (SJ 665 518)³¹, Acton Gate at the aqueduct end of Welsh Row (SJ 643 526)³², Wardle Gate near the King's Arms Inn, Barbridge (SJ 616 567)³³ and at Clotton (SJ 522 641) – see Figure 1. Not all the gates were functioning at the same time with the Woore Gate probably dating from the original 1744 Act, as one of the changes proposed to the 1729 Lichfield Roads Act, was the moving of a gate to Woore to collect a higher toll for use in repairing the Nantwich Road. When the tolls were auctioned in 1815 only three gates were on offer – Woore, Barbridge and Duddon³⁴. The Acton gate was erected in early 1841 and was still there in 1861 as the tollgate keeper, Ann Welch was recorded in that year's census. The Acton gate proved to be an excellent source of income, providing at least a third of the Trusts income. In a letter dated November 1852 the Stapeley gate is referred to as being built last year³⁵. This is not a complete set of gates as in an 1824 government report there are three gates, which had risen to four by 1840. An 1853 report on the road advises that there are ... *"5 toll gates and 2 side bars on the Tarporley side of Nantwich and three toll gates on the Woore side of Nantwich"*³⁶. The maximum of gates offered at the auction of the tolls was seven in November 1851 with an apparently new gate—Highwayside included on the list. The subsequent history of the gates was summarised in a Chester Chronicle article on the 12th October 1867 ... *"The Woore and Nantwich Turnpike Trust - Some 15 to 20 years ago three additional tollgates were placed on this turnpike at Nantwich, Calveley and Alpraham. More than a year ago these additional tollgates were removed, only leaving the original Barbridge gate standing. During this interim, through some cause or other, this turn-*

pike road has been permitted to become very badly cut up and worn, through Alpraham, Tilstone Fearnall, &c. The deterioration has been attributed by some to the death of the late surveyor and collector Mr. John Warburton. It was thought high time to place it under the supervision of the respective highway surveyors of the different divisions through which it runs, but the rumours regarding the matter are at an end this week, two of the tollbars (Nantwich and Calveley) being again put up. Half the former tolls for carriages, vehicles, and one penny per saddle horse, are to be charged; one such half-payment only to be made between Nantwich and Clotton-Hoofield, to commence on Monday next"

In the initial turnpike act of 1743 and the renewal act of 1755 there was a specific clause preventing the trustees building a tollhouse between Nantwich and Chester. With no income from that section of road little improvement work was undertaken. The state of this section of road was used in the preamble to the 1769 renewal to have this restriction removed. So the earliest date for any of the tollhouses north of Nantwich is probably 1770³⁷.

The schedules of tolls in these early turnpike acts are relatively uncomplicated. In a simplified form:-

- Coach pulled by a single horse 3d
- Coach pulled by a pair of horses ... 6d
- Coach pulled by four horses 9d
- Coach pulled by six horses 1s
- Cart pulled by a single horse 3d
- Cart pulled by more than one horse abreast 8d
- Cart pulled by more than one horse at length ... 6d
- Cart pulled by three or more horses 9d
- Cart not drawing ... 1d
- Cattle per score ... 10d
- Sheep, calves and swine per score ... 5d.

The Chester Canal was an obvious potential competitor for traffic. The Canal was given Royal Assent on the 1st April 1772 and Chester and Nantwich were joined by 1779. In an article in the Cheshire Courant of the 26th November 1771 there was a discussion on the advantages of moving freight between Chester and Nantwich by the

By Road			By Canal		
Miles	Hours	Cost (£.s.d.)	Miles	Hours	Cost (£.s.d.)
20	11	1-0-0	18	8	0-3-0

pro-

posed canal rather than the turnpike road. The journey on the Chester Canal was shorter by two miles and quicker by 3 hours but importantly less than one-sixth the price. This should have produced a wholesale movement of freight to the Canal to the detriment of the turnpike road. However even transshipping goods from the Trent and Mersey Canal at Wheelock in to road wagons for forwarding to the canal basin at Nantwich failed to generate sufficient freight traffic on the Chester Canal, even when this carriage was subsidised³⁸. The Chester Canal also tried to attract passengers but this was also unsuccessful with the company boats being sold off in 1783. All canal traffic to Nantwich stopped in November 1787 with the collapse of the Beeston Lock pound and so it remained for a decade³⁹.

An anonymous traveller from Holyhead to London commented on the Chester Canal in 1793⁴⁰.

“an expensive undertaking, which either through ignorance or bad management of the persons employed, remains without trade; we were informed, that it was rashly begun, and carried on without any probability of advantage to the proprietors.”

“The wreck of the unfortunate canal accompanies us to Acton.”

John Cary in his book on Inland Navigation summed up the position of the Chester Canal in 1795⁴¹.

“For the want of coal and lime-stone on the line of this navigation, and owing to a heavy mortgage, this canal has hitherto remained in a dormant state”.

Figure 2. Summary of the Successful Auction Bids from 1806 to 1836. Extracted from the Cheshire Chronicle.

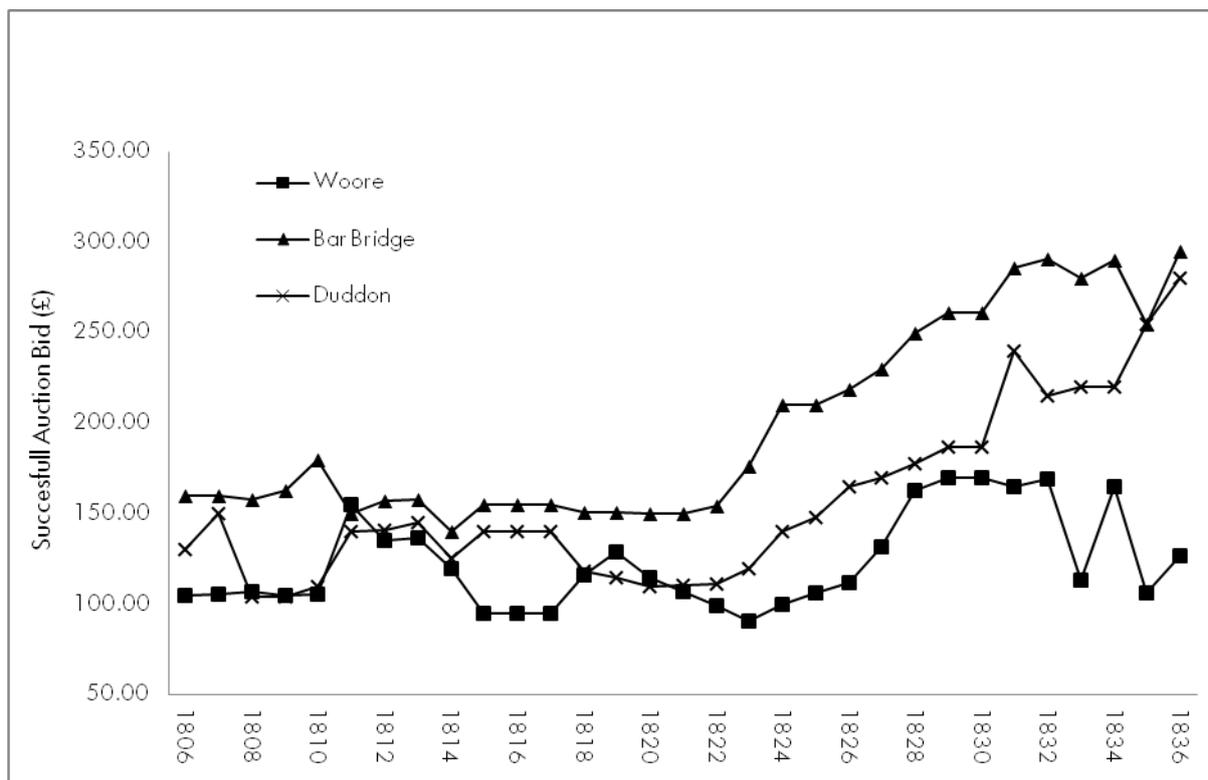
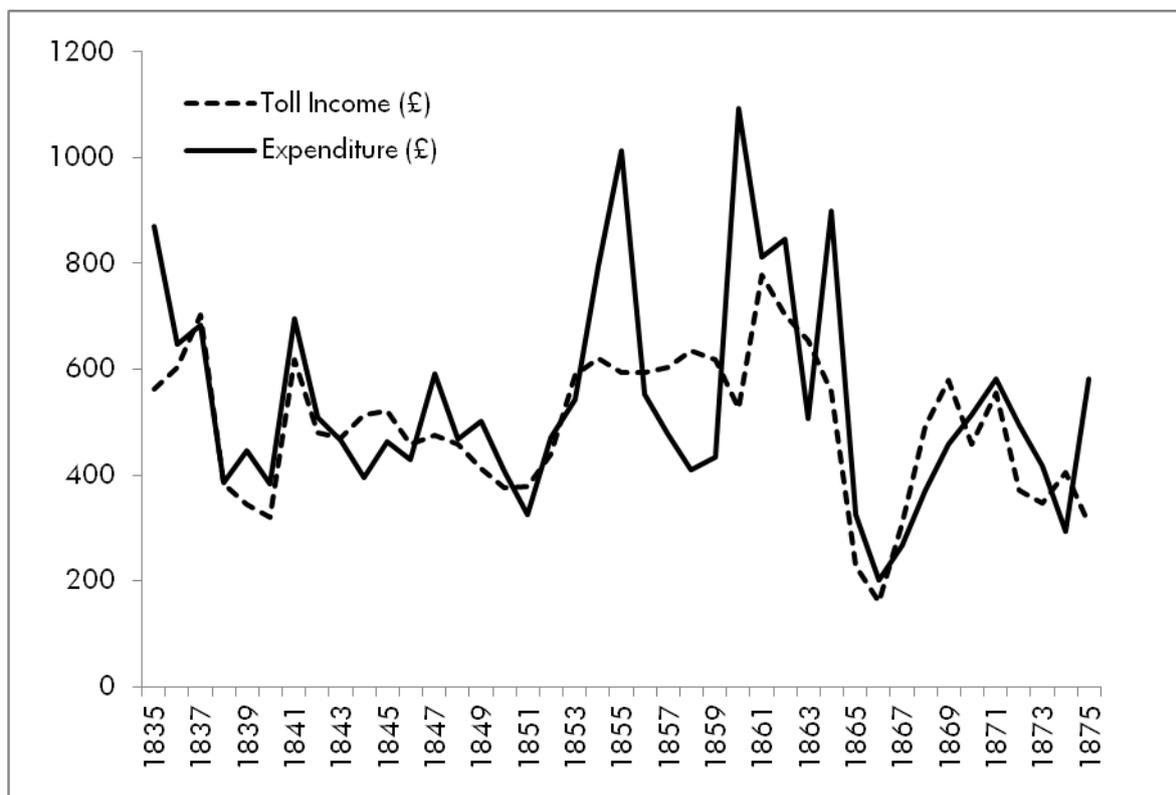


Figure 3. Toll Income & Expenditure Reported to the Government between 1835 and 1876. Nantwich and Woore Trust.



There is no evidence that the Chester Canal was an effective competitor to the Nantwich and Woore Turnpike. Henry Holland suggested that the Chester Canal only became successful after it had joined to the Ellesmere Canal which “*communicated with many extensive collieries and with valuable quarries of slate and limestone...., with several ironworks and lead mines in Shropshire and Denbighshire*”⁴². The Chester Canal was essentially an ‘agricultural canal’ and as was seen with other such canals, for example the Basingstoke Canal, farming alone produces little traffic⁴³. Indeed Nantwich at this time was summed up as having a dead salt industry with a main export of shoes and cheese. The shoes were mainly for local sale and the small export of cheese and shoes to Chester could easily be carried on the toll road⁴⁴. The Ellesmere Canal brought increased traffic but it was long-distance bulk cargoes passing through the area. This did not pull significant amounts of freight from the turnpike.

The first indications of the trust income come from the returns from the auction of tolls published in the local newspapers such as the Chester Chronicle⁴⁵. The results from the 1814 and 1815 auctions can act as an illustration⁴⁶.

Year	1814	1815
Woore Gate	£120.0.0	£95.0.0
Bar Bridge Gate	£140.0.0	£155.0.0
Duddon Gate	£125.0.0	£140.0.0
Total Income from auction of tolls	£385.0.0	£390.0.0

Using the adverts in the local newspapers the income stream, by gate, was constructed from 1806 to 1836 – See Figure 2 While the value of the Woore Gate grew little over the period of 32 years, both the Bar Bridge and Duddon Gates doubled in value from some £150 to £300. However there is no indication of expenditure until the full financial affairs of the trust were reported in 1821 when it had been in operation for nearly 80 years and had accumulated debts of £960. In that year the trust was shown as having 20 trustees, an annual income of £394 and income exceeding expenditure by £100 per year. By 1824 the debt remained unchanged and the three gates had been leased for a total of £352.5s.0d. In the first of the yearly updates on the financial situation of turnpike trusts in 1835 the trust had been operating an additional 11 years and the accumulated debts had risen to £2004; secured with a mortgage at 3%. The toll income & expenditure are presented in Figure 3 and show a very erratic picture of income with the peak year being 1861; however the tolls had nearly doubled since 1824. There were peaks of expenditure in the 1850s and 1860s that were associated

with major spending on road materials and workmen. The earliest obvious sign of a fall in income is from a peak in 1837 of £702.11s.10d to £321.17s.4d in 1840. There appeared to be a number of events contributing to this fall. Firstly, the completion of Telford's Holyhead road with the first coach running the full length on the 30th January 1836⁴⁷, which diverted the Irish road traffic via Shrewsbury rather than Chester and secondly the opening of the Chester and Crewe Railway in 1837 which took away local traffic from the northern end of the road⁴⁸. Lastly, there was the opening of the Liverpool and Birmingham Railway in 1838, which took a lot of long-distance traffic off the road including the Mail Coaches⁴⁹. Indeed as early as December 1837 Lieutenant-Colonel Maberley, Secretary of the Post Office, reported to a Select Committee of the House of Commons that Mr Horne, the contractor of the Chester Mail, had given notice that he no longer wished to continue the service⁵⁰.

An 1840 Royal Commission on the State of the Roads in England & Wales asked a specific question about the effect of railways on the finances of turnpike trusts⁵¹. The reply from George Taylor the clerk to the Nantwich and Woore Trust is quoted.

"Greatly. Before that period the trust was paying off mortgages at £100 to £150 a year. Since 1838 the income is now probably £3 per mile less than sufficient for its proper maintenance and the discharge of interest."

In the 'any other matters you would like to comment on' section he has added to his remarks on the railways.

"The powers of trustees of turnpike roads to prevent damage to roads by the railway companies appear extremely defective, and the security and interests of the public do not seem to be adequately protected in the Railway Acts. The depression of the income by railways and by taking away statute duty will require either that interest payments be reduced, that less material be used or that the time or wages of workers be curtailed, in order to enable the trustees with the income to meet expenses."

The tolls rarely covered the cost of running the turnpike and while the outstanding debt had fallen to £1740 in 1840, £1494 in 1850 and was as low as £750 in 1860 it had increased to £2241 in 1870. The final sum is perhaps a surprise as in 1870 the Nantwich and Woore Trust was also listed as being out of debt⁵². The Act expired on the 1st November 1875.

In 1853 the Home Department investigated the Nantwich and Woore Trust as a consequence of an attempt to remove clause 14⁵³. This clause had allowed the inhabitants of the parish of Wybunbury to avoid the payment of a toll ...

"on that part of the road lying betwixt the end of the township, of Bridgemere within the said parish and the town of Nantwich."

The clause had been included during the previous renewal bill of 1824 as it was stated as having been the case for the last 28 years. The problem was related to an issue between Wybunbury parish and the Newcastle and Nantwich Turnpike but the financial consequence was felt by the Nantwich and Woore Trust. Just prior to the 1824 renewal bill the Wybunbury parish had been indicted over the condition of the Newcastle and Nantwich road and the repairs had cost over six thousand pounds (£6000). This was an enormous amount of money for an, admittedly large, parish to find and this specific clause explaining both the exception from toll and reasoning was included in the Act. The clause went unchallenged through both the House of Commons and Lords⁵⁴.

The public were charged two tolls within 8 miles on the Nantwich and Woore road and the Trustees wanted to equalise the tolls, especially as this exemption was not evident on the other turnpike road running through the parish – the Newcastle-under-Lyme to Nantwich road. The surveyor undertook a traffic census between the 10th September and the 26th November 1851 and estimated that the toll-free traffic from the Wybunbury parish was costing the Trust at least £135 on the *"most expensive to maintain section of the road"*, the last half mile in to Nantwich. This section of road carried the combined traffic of both the Woore & Newcastle roads. The Wybunbury parishioners submitted a petition to Parliament in support of the continuation of the exemption and stated that the ...

"Bill is all together unnecessary and inexpedient and the only objective was to deprive your petitioners and other inhabitants aforesaid of the exemption deliberately conferred upon them by the legislature in the said Act."

They also raised the very obvious point that if the turnpike road was not considered to be in good repair then the burden could be passed on to the parish ...

"your petitioners ... are at all times liable to be called to contribute towards the repair of the said road whenever the funds of the Trust be insufficient for such repairs".

Figure 4. Transcription of the advert in Chester Chronicle of January 1876 for the removal of the tollhouses on the Nantwich and Woore Turnpike Trust.

TO BUILDERS & CONTRACTORS. —

The Trustees of the Nantwich and Woore Turnpike Trust being about to TAKE DOWN the TOLL HOUSES mentioned below, are prepared to receive TENDERS for the PURCHASE of the MATERIALS of which the same are built, including the Toll Gates upon the following conditions.

Separate sums to be offered for each house

The purchaser to pull down, and remove the materials and the hedges abutting on the highways, and clear and level the land, within one month from the acceptance of their tenders.

The purchasers to pay their purchase money before the removal of the materials.

The Trustees do not bind themselves to accept the highest or any tender, and reserve to themselves the right of accepting any tender in respect of any one or more houses.

Sealed tenders, marked "Nantwich & Woore Road Tender," to be addressed to the undersigned not later than the 12th day of February next.

Henhull Toll Gate House and Gate.
Barbridge Toll Gate House and Gate.
Alraham Toll Gate House and Gate.
Clotton Toll Gate House and Gate.
Woore Toll Gate House and Gate.
Stapeley Toll Gate.
Pipe Gate Toll Gate.

Dated this 26th day of January, 1876.

H. CLAUD LISLE, Nantwich
Clerk to the Trustees

The clause remained and the Wynbunbury parishioners kept their exemption until the Trust expired. However the Trust did get the tolls raised and the Woore gate collected more than enough money from them to keep the road heading south in good repair.

The unusual circumstances surrounding Watfield Pavement were also covered in the report. Watfield Pavement was a section of road at Calveley near Bunbury, so named after the founder of the road. In 1670 a messuage or dwelling house with appurtenance was owned by the Mayor and Citizens of Chester and let out to Richard Tomlinson – the whole of the rent was to be spent on the repair and maintenance of the road. However by 1853 the land appeared to be in the ownership of the Trust.

“This land has always been deemed to be held by the Trustees in exoneration of all liability on the part of the township of Calveley to repair the road.”

Apparently there were no deeds or documents proving this supposition although in the days of statute labour and composition (1555 to 1835) the parish had never been called to contribute. The land had been granted to the Trustees by the Davenport family and for nearly 100 years the rent from the land had been used by the Trust in much the same way as the 1670 deed described. The land is clearly delineated on the 1839 tithe map as a series of long narrow fields orientated with the long side running adjacent to the road. They ran from SJ 607 575 to SJ 598 581 in the township of Wardle in the parish of Bunbury. Only one of the fields is still evident on the ground – opposite to Tweedales Bridge over the Shropshire Union Canal⁵⁵.

The Nantwich and Woore Turnpike Trust ended on 1st November 1875 and chose to remove all the tollhouses along the route. In an advertisement in the Chester Chronicle of January 1876 tenders were requested for the taking down and removal of the tollhouses – see Figure 4. This advert shows seven tollhouses a reduction from the eight and two side bars reported in 1852. However while the 1852 report did not state where the tollhouses were situated the advert for their destruction lists them as:- Henhull, Barbridge, Alraham, Clotton, Woore, Stapeley and Pipe Gate.

The officers of the Nantwich and Woore Trust were reported from 1835 to 1850. The treasurer, often a banker, was John Eyton until 1848 when an S.W. Moore took over. The Clerk, usually a solicitor, was Richard Edleston throughout the period although his name appears in a series of partnerships. There were three surveyors, in 1835 George A. McDermott, from 1836 to 1839 William McDermott and finally John Redfern. These names will be seen again in respect of other Trusts.

Chapter 4. Newcastle-under-Lyme and Nantwich Trust.

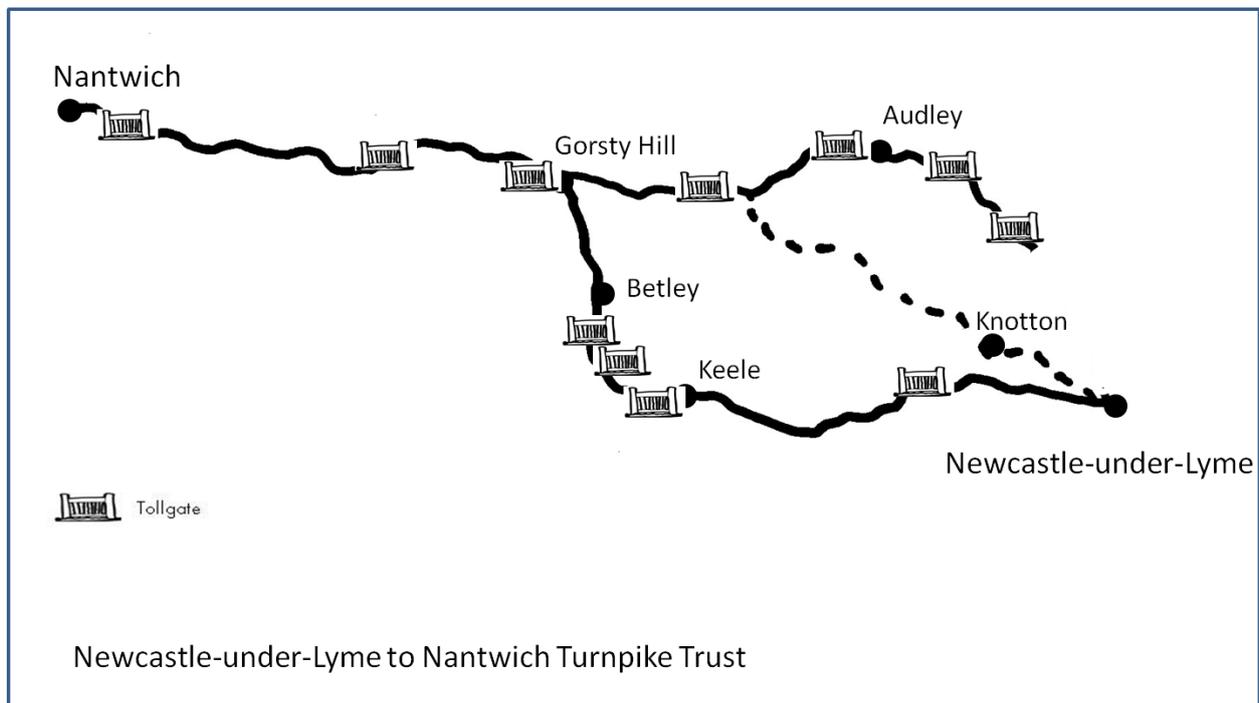
On the 15th February 1766 a petition of the gentlemen and clergy ... *“of the Counties of Stafford and Chester and of the towns of Newcastle under Line and Nantwich”* was presented to the House of Commons⁵⁶. The aim of the petition was to obtain a private Act of Parliament to turnpike a road from The Mill Dam in Newcastle through Keele and over Madeley Heath to the Woore to Chester turnpike road near Nantwich. The petition was referred to a Committee of the Commons, which included two prominent local members of parliament, Lord Grey and William Bagot. On the 16th April 1766 a second petition was submitted from several Gentlemen, Manufacturers and Traders residing in Newcastle⁵⁷. This second petition was for the extension of the original proposal to include the road through Chesterton, Audley and Balterley as far as Gorsty Hill. The justification for these roads was that it was *“narrow and incommodious, and the same cannot be repaired and widened by the laws in being; and the repair of the last mentioned road will increase the revenue of the Toll to be taken on the road to Nantwich”*. The first petition would have joined Newcastle to Nantwich and the second petition proposed an additional road from Holditch on the Tittensor to Talke turnpike road to join at Gorsty Hill (see Figure 5). The second reading on April 25th 1766 was routine but the House of Commons Journal records the addition of a clause during the third reading (6th May 1766) – *“no turnpikes to be erected within a mile of Audley”*⁵⁸. The Bill had its first reading in the House of Lords on the same day and was returned to the House of Commons on the 9th May 1766 to obtain Royal Assent.

The renewal act of 1786 gives us an insight into how the Trust had been structured from 1766. A petition from a number of the trustees describes how the road had been divided in to two districts⁵⁹. What happened was a tale of localism – Newcastle versus Nantwich. In the initial Act and in subsequent renewals the trustees were listed in two separate groups – the A-Z of Newcastle-under-Lyme (Staffordshire) trustees followed by the A-Z of Nantwich (Cheshire) trustees. All the early minutes and order books for the trust have been lost so this petition provides a useful window on the inner workings of the trust.

At the first meeting after the granting of the 1766 Act the trust was divided in to two districts:-

Newcastle or First District – from Newcastle to the ‘Sign of the Wolf’ in Little Madeley.

Figure 5. Map of the Newcastle-under-Lyme to Nantwich Turnpike Trust indicating toll-gates.



Nantwich or Second District – from the ‘Sign of the Wolf’ Little Madeley to the Nantwich and Woore Turnpike Road near Nantwich and the Branch from Gorsty Hill to Chesterton through Audley.

At a subsequent meeting this decision was changed:-

Newcastle or First District – from Newcastle to Richard Dale’s house in Betley.

Nantwich or Second District – from Richard Dale’s house in Betley to the Nantwich and Woore Turnpike Road near Nantwich and the Branch from Gorsty Hill to Chesterton through Audley.

It was then changed for a third time at the behest of a Newcastle majority at the meeting to:-

Newcastle or First District – from Newcastle to Gorsty Hill.

Nantwich or Second District – from Gorsty Hill to the Nantwich and Woore Turnpike Road near Nantwich and the Branch from Gorsty Hill to Chesterton through Audley.

Thus the First District covered eight miles and the Second District 12 miles of the road.

The £2500 raised on the credit of the tolls was divided between the Districts:-

Newcastle or First District - £1360 10s or £170 per mile.

Nantwich or Second District - £1139 10s or £95 per mile.

So the Second District was given less money to repair and improve a longer section of road. This was compounded when at a subsequent meeting a “*large number of trustees for the Newcastle or First District*” voted through an order that the “*income from the tolls within the Newcastle or First District be applied only in the repair of that District, and to pay the Interest of the Money borrowed for the use of that District*”. The same was applied to the Nantwich or Second District. By the combined move of increasing the Newcastle District to Gorsty Hill and setting each of the Districts as a separate financial entity the “Newcastle lobby” had severely disadvantaged the Nantwich trustees. The lengthening of the road to Gorsty Hill meant that the Wrinehill gate and side-gate with a yearly income of £200 passed to the Newcastle District. They took on an additional four miles of road which had minimal maintenance costs be-

cause of local access to iron slag from a nearby smelter and had gained a substantial income.

After all this manoeuvring the Newcastle or First Division had an income of over £300 per year and by the time of the 1786 renewal had paid off over £700 of the debt borrowed by the district. This left the Nantwich or Second Division with a reduced income of only £200 and 12 miles of difficult to maintain road. The costs of maintenance were high because of the nature of the underlying geology and the large volumes of heavy coal traffic from the Audley area moving down to the Cheshire plain and Newcastle. To make the situation even more inequitable the coal traffic through Audley and Cherterton to Newcastle was toll-free. So by 1786 the Second District had not been able to pay off any of the debt and was in arrears on the interest payments. The plea in the petition was for an equitable treatment for both Districts with the debts and interest being paid from the total income of the trust.

This situation was taken seriously by Parliament and as a result of the petition we find a specific paragraph in the 1786 renewal Act to address the issue.

“That if, at any such Annual Meeting, it shall appear that any Creditor or Creditors on the said former or this present Act hath or have received a greater proportion of Interest, upon his or respective Security or Securities, than other such Creditors, that then the Creditor or Creditors, whose interest shall be behind, shall, at his or their request, be paid up the Arrears of Interest due to them in the first Place, to the End that a due and perfect Equality may be at all times preserved in Payment and Interest to all the Creditors on the said former or this present Act. Share and Share alike”⁶⁰.

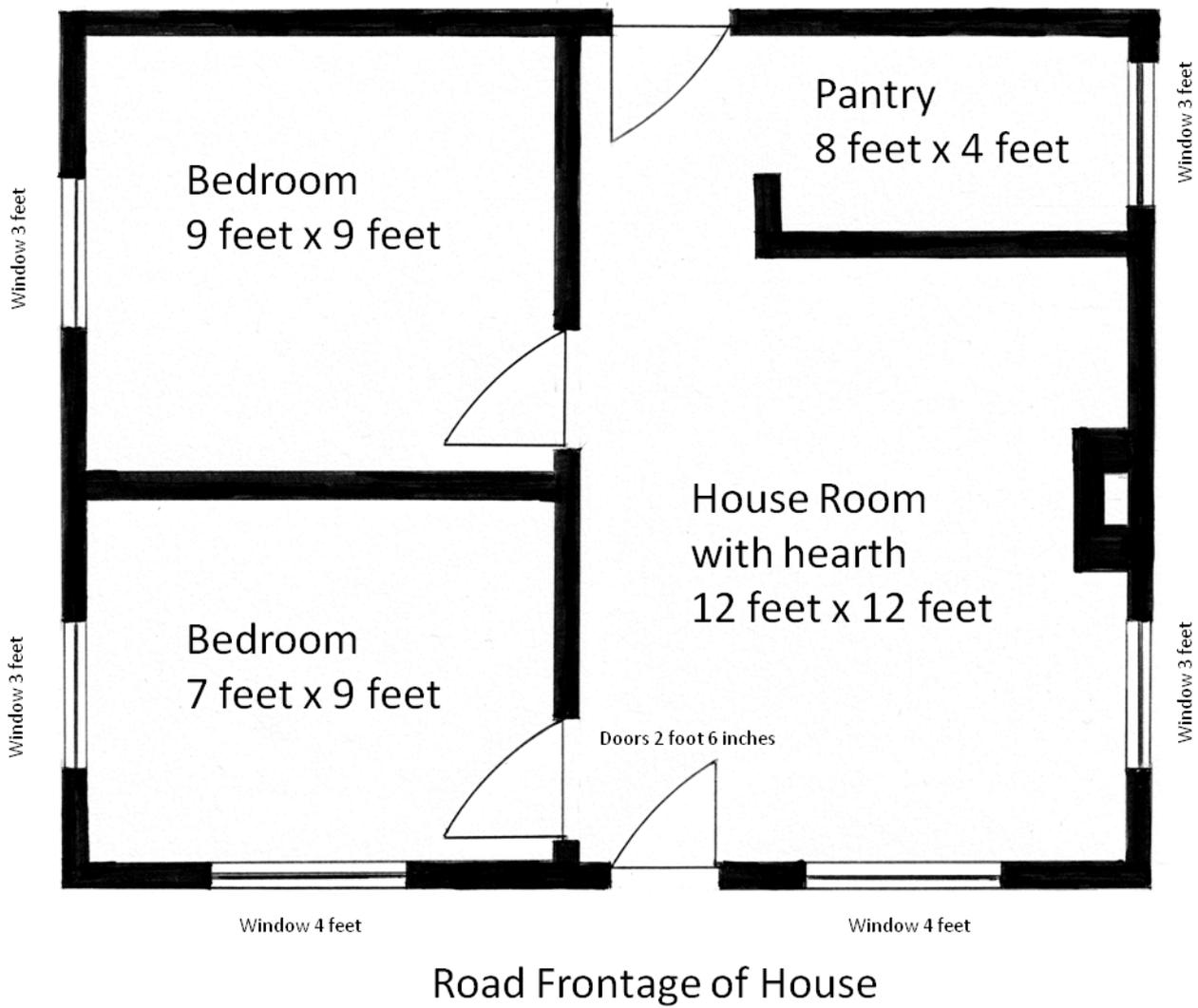
There is evidence from the London Gazette of the 23 September 1806 that a third road may have been considered for turnpiking, through Knutton and joining the existing turnpike at Old Peel gate (Bougey’s Mill), subsequent reports of the mileage of the trust some years later suggest that this was not completed⁶¹. A second entry in the London Gazette of the 14th November 1846 indicated that two more roads were to be added to the existing network⁶². Two new lines of road were proposed. Firstly, from Gorsty Hill to terminate near the Crewe Station passing through Weston and Stowford and secondly from Swill Brook near Hough to the Nantwich and Wheelock Turnpike Road at Dairy House and then on to the Oak in Church Coppenhall. There must have been a local reaction to this proposal as there is no further mention of these roads in conjunction with this Trust. However the Nantwich and Wheelock Trust did join Gorsty Hill to Crewe Station in 1848 but they had worked with Lord Crewe to also re-route a

road from in front of Crewe Hall. This new road was called the 'Branch' and is part of an interesting story to be told in a later chapter.

In 1821 in an appendix to the Report of the Select Committee on the Turnpike Roads of England and Wales there was a description of the turnpike – “15 miles from Newcastle to Gorsty Hill”. This is the distance from Newcastle to Nantwich. It would appear in that report that the road from Gorsty Hill through Audley back to the Newcastle to Talke Road had been excluded as part of the trust. This was resolved in a similar document from 1825 when the full route is defined. The length of the roads is now 21 miles and it is clear that it does include the branch to Audley. In the same document ten tollgates, two chains and five side-bars are identified. Gates are listed on a surviving toll board originally in the Blue Bell Inn, Wrinehill but currently in the Newcastle-under-Lyme Museum: – Keele, Newcastle, Lower Gorsty Hill, Old Peover & Bailey’s Lane chain. However it is likely that the Old Peover gate is actually Old Peel. The situation of the gates was:- Cheerbrook gate (SJ 672 517)⁶³, Basford Gate (SJ 716 512), Gorsty Hill gate (SJ 745 506), Upper Wrinehill gate (SJ 753 469), Lower Wrinehill gate (SJ 753 470), Old Peel (SJ 779 503) also known as Shraleley gate, Keele gate, also called Pepper Street (SJ 802 456), Bignall Hill gate, also known as Dean’s Lane (SJ 822 506) this was described as a chain in 1824 but was clearly a toll cottage on the 1854 OS 2½ inch to the mile map, Chesterton gate (SJ 827 503) this was described as a chain in 1824 but was marked as a toll house on the 1833 OS 1 inch to the mile map, Holditch gate (SJ 840 482) & Newcastle gate (SJ 841 456). In spite of the turnpike act initially preventing the building of a tollgate within a mile of Audley the inevitable happened and a gate was erected, in the 1820s, at the junction of Nantwich Road and Alsager Road (SJ 797 510)⁶⁴. The toll cottages still exist at Lower Wrinehill, Keele and Bignall Hill; all are much extended to allow for current living standards. The basic design for the Newcastle-under-Lyme to Nantwich Trust toll cottages was likely to be the simple single storey cottage that used to be at Cheerbrook. A plan of this cottage built for about £90 shows four rooms – two bedrooms (9ft x 9ft & 7ft x 9ft), a pantry (8ft x 4ft) and a ‘house place’ or living room with hearth (12ft x 12ft), there were front and back doors and a window in each room (see Figure 6)⁶⁵. The Cheerbrook tollgate is first mentioned in an advertisement in the Chester Chronicle of March 4th 1831 when a special meeting was called to agree the erection of a “*toll-gate with a toll house and other conveniences at or near a place called Cheer Brook*”⁶⁶. The local tithe map shows that in the 1840s the Cheerbrook cottage was occupied by James Holding⁶⁷.

In a set of deposited plans for the Nantwich to Wheelock turnpike there is evidence of a weigh engine (weighbridge) at the Gorsty Hill gate⁶⁸. There had been restrictions on

Figure 6. Ground plan of the Cheerbrook Tollhouse. Newcastle to Nantwich Turnpike Trust. Based on Cheshire County Records Office DDX 13/24.



the weight that could be carried by wagons since 1621 when no four-wheeled wagon was allowed to carry more than a ton. However it was not until the 1741 that the trustees were given the opportunity to install weighing engines and empowered to weigh loaded carriages. They were entitled to charge extra tolls for over-weight wagons on the basis that more damage was being caused to the roadway. There were a series of permitted weights by season (summer & winter) and by wheel width and excess weight was then charged at the rate of :-

"For the First and Second Hundred of Overweight, 3d per hundred.

For every Hundred above Two Hundred and not exceeding Five Hundred, 6d.

For every Hundred above Five Hundred and not exceeding Ten Hundred, 2s 6d.

For every Hundred above Ten Hundred and not exceeding Fifteen Hundred, 5s.

The weigh engines were of two types a large contraption that physically lifted the wagons off the ground or latterly what was a conventional weighbridge that would be recognised today. There are two examples of the large weigh engines that lifted the wagons left in the country both are associated with public houses:-

The Fountain, 1 Churchgate Street, Soham, Cambridgeshire, CB7 5DS. (Illus. 1)

Ye Old Bell & Steelyard, New Street, Woodbridge, Suffolk. IP12 1DZ. (Illus. 2)

An example of the more conventional weighbridge type can be seen in the Market Square, Alton in Hampshire. (See Illus. 3). There is no indication on the map which type of weigh engine was present at the site.

When the first financial information was published in 1821 the trust had been in existence for 55 years and it had accumulated a debt of £1650. In that year the trust is shown as having 43 trustees, income of £935 and *"a balance in hand equal to a year's income and half the debt"*. In the 1824 report the debt had risen to £2600 a near three-fold increase in just over two years. This report showed details of the rents from some of the lessees:-

Wrinehill Upper & Lower and chains at Dean's Lane and Chesterton £872.0s.0d.

Gortsy Hill, Old Peel and Pepper Street £163.6s.8d.

Illus.1. Weigh Engine. The Fountain, 1 Churchgate Street, Soham, Cambridgeshire, CB7 5DS.



Illus.2. Ye Old Bell & Steelyard, New Street, Woodbridge, Suffolk. IP12 1DZ.



Illus. 3. Weighbridge. Market Square, Alton, Hampshire.

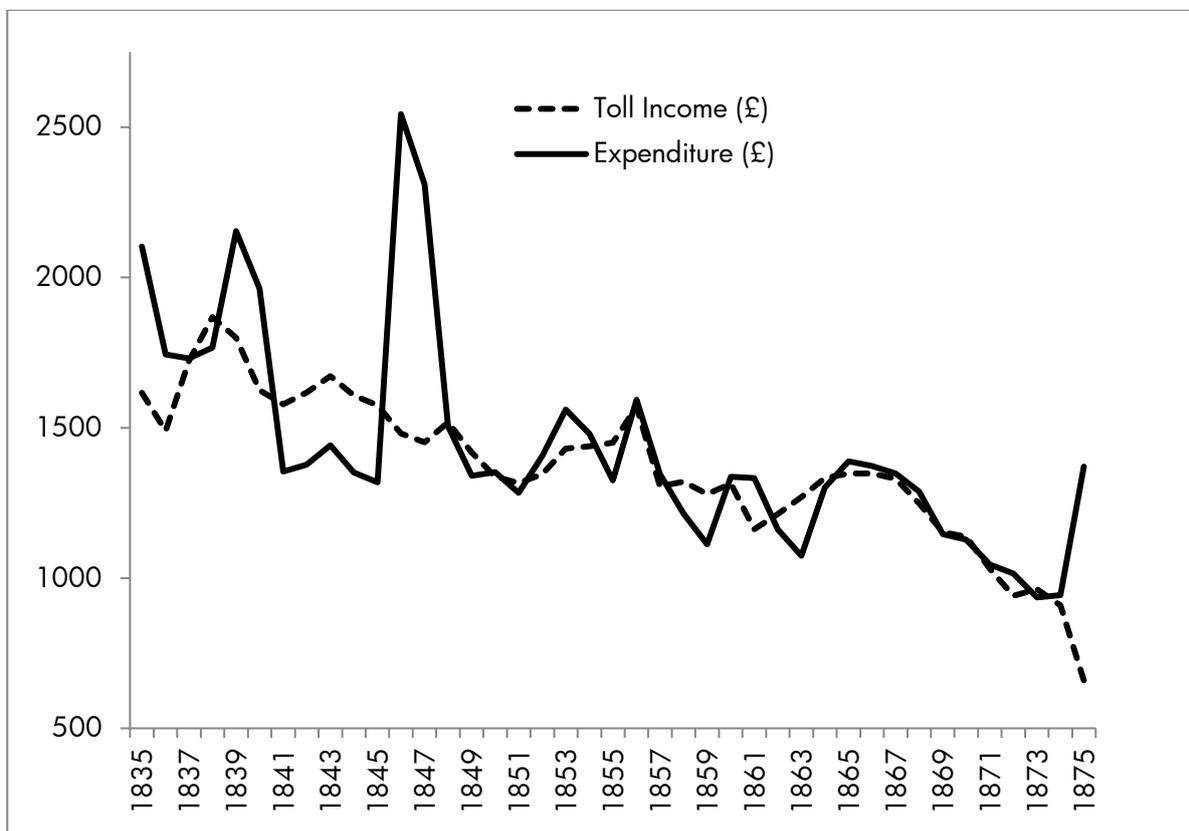


Some ten years later with the first of the long series of yearly financial reports on the trust the accumulated debt had increase further to £3502, secured with a mortgage at 5%. The toll income and expenditure are presented in Figure 7 and show a slow decline in income with three large peaks of expenditure in 1835, 1839 and 1846 & 1847, when it exceeded £2000 per year. In 1835 manual labour and materials for the roads exceeded £900 and improvements over £300, the same picture can be seen in each of the high spending years. Evidence of these improvements can be seen in the village of Wrinehill where Old Road can be seen opposite the Hand & Trumpet – the main road is an 1830 improvement. The foundations were slag from the local charcoal-fired iron forge in Betley⁶⁹. Likewise the cutting from Audley to Bignall Hill has left the remnant of the original road as Old Road and Chapel Street, Audley.

In 1862 the Newcastle-under-Lyme and Nantwich turnpike Road had obtained provisional order from the Principal Secretary of the Home Department to reduce interest the interest rate on the outstanding mortgage of £3137 from 5% to 4%. This was only part of the order, there was also an extinguishing of the arrears of interest on debt between the 1st August 1860 and the 31st December 1861. These orders were applied for by trusts in financial problems and while the request for the order only needed to be signed by four trustees, they certified that individuals with over two-thirds of the debt supported the request⁷⁰.

Even though the nineteenth century roadbooks such as those published by Daniel Pater-son and John Cary show the Newcastle-Keele-Betley road as an alternative 'Direct' road there is no evidence of long-distance coaching traffic using this route⁷¹. These roads served a more local need with probably more heavy wagons to be seen than coaches. The area between Audley, Chesterton and Madeley was coal and iron stone mining country and the trust was set up to support an expansion in production. The roads provided access for the coal to Newcastle and the Potteries and via Nantwich to the Cheshire salt towns, Chester and North Wales. Indeed the initial Bill contained a clause allowing free passage of coal from Audley and Chesterton for use in Newcastle. This free or reduced toll for the passage of coal was common to all the early turnpike trusts in the Newcastle area as many of the trustees were potters, the main users of the coal⁷². Carriage of heavy goods, such as coal, in wagons was considered to be detrimental to the road if the wheels were too narrow. The problem was summarised in the introduction to a 1753 Act entitled A Bill with Amendments for the Amendment and Preservation of Public Roads of this Kingdom; and for the more effectual execution of the Laws relating thereto.

Figure 7. Toll Income & Expenditure Reported to the Government between 1835 and 1877. Newcastle-under-Lyme to Nantwich Trust.



“Whereas by the great number of Waggons and other Wheel-carriages, passing, travelling, and used in and upon the Publick Highways and Turnpike Roads of this Kingdom and of the excessive Weights and Burdens and carried in and upon the same; and the small breadth and narrow dimensions of the fellies of the wheels of such wagons, and other carriages respectively; great parts of the said Highways and Roads are become ruinous”.

This was just one of a series of bills brought before parliament collectively called the ‘Broad Wheel Acts’. Effectively, the wider the wheel there was on the wagon or cart the cheaper the toll. Amateur legislators in Parliament laid down stringent rules as to the breadth of the wheels, form of the rim, use of iron tyres, use of headed nails, the height of the wheel, position of the fellies, the spokes and the axle, the space between the wheels & the line of draught between front & back wheels. As one proponent of the Broad Wheel Acts stated ...

“ Wheeled traffic is an intruder on the highway – a cause of damage & an active nuisance – to be suppressed, regulated & forbidden as much as possible. Traffic must become subservient to the maintenance of the road by converting every wheeled vehicle in to a road roller”⁷³.

The effect of the Broad Wheel Act on local tolls can be seen from the surviving toll board from the Wrinehill Upper Gate. This board is after 1830 and was signed by the joint clerks to the ‘Betley and Nantwich Turnpike R’ – Fred^kWilkinson & Rich^dEdleston. However the description of the road is more reminiscent of the pre-1785 period with the appearance of the second attempt to divide the Newcastle-under-Lyme and Nantwich Trust in to districts. A portion of the toll board is transcribed in Figure 8⁷⁴.

It is clear from the board that the narrower the wagon wheels the higher the toll. This board is relatively simple because the toll on the number of horse is dealt with in a separate section. In other trusts tolls are presented as a complex listing with the horse numbers and wheel widths combined. See Figure 9 for the full nightmare of all the possible combinations of toll from the 1850s when the Broad Wheel Acts were at their most complex.

The Newcastle turnpike act was granted at much the same time as the Trent and Mersey Canal was being built, with the Harecastle tunnel being completed in 1775 and the canal being opened throughout in 1777⁷⁵. This canal crossed the Cheshire plain passing close to Middlewich & Northwich and could have been used to carry coal to the salt works, however its main use seems to have, initially, been for carrying clay

Figure 8. Partial transcription of the surviving tollboard from Wrinehill Upper Gate.

Rules of Tolls Payable at this Gate pursuant to an Act of 10 th George VI.	
For every horse, mule, ass or other beast drawing any coach, stagecoach, landau, chariot, landauret, phaeton, hearse, curricle, chair gig, caravan, van or carriage of the like description by what so ever name called or known the sum of 6d	
For every horse, mule, ass or other beast drawing any waggon, wain, cart or other such carriage having the fellies of the wheels thereof, of the breadth of 6 inches or upwards and at the bottom or soles thereof the sum of 4d.	
For every horse, mule, ass or other beast drawing any waggon, wain, cart or other such carriage having the fellies of the wheels thereof, of the breadth of 4½ inches or upwards or less than 6 inches at the bottom or soles thereof the sum of 5d.	
For every horse, mule, ass or other beast drawing any waggon, wain, cart or other such carriage having the fellies of the wheels thereof, of the breadth of 3 inches or upwards or less than 4 inches at the bottom or soles thereof the sum of 6d.	
For every horse, mule, ass or other beast drawing any waggon, wain, cart or other such carriage having the fellies of the wheels thereof, of the breadth of 3 inches or upwards or less than 3 inches at the bottom or soles thereof the sum of 7d.	
For every horse, mule or ass, laden or unladen and not drawing the sum of 1d.	
For every drove of oxen, cows or neat cattle the sum of 1s. 4d. A score and so in proportion for any less number than a score.	
For every drove of calves, swine, sheep or lambs the sum of 8d. per score and so in proportion for any less number than a score.	

Figure 9. Blackburn and Preston turnpike tollboard 1852. A confusion of wheel widths, horse numbers, discounted and actual tolls.

For horses, &c. drawing any waggon or other 4-wheeled carriage with wheels less than 4½ inches wide, if 4 horses, &c.	2 4	4 0
Ditto, if 3 horses, &c.	1 9	3 6
Ditto, if less than 3 horses, &c.	each 7	1 each
For horses, &c. drawing waggons, &c. with 4½-inch and less than 6-inch wheels, if 4 horses, &c.	2 0	3 4
Ditto, if 3 horses, &c.	1 6	2 11
Ditto, if less than 3 horses, &c.	each 6	each 10
For horses, &c., drawing waggons, &c. with 6-inch wheels, if 6 horses, &c.	1 9	4 0
Ditto, if 5 horses, &c.	1 9	3 6
Ditto, if 4 horses, &c.	1 3	3 0
Ditto, if 3 horses, &c.	1 0	2 6
Ditto, if 2 horses, &c.	0 10	2 0
Ditto, if 1 horse, &c.	0 6	1 0
For horses, &c. drawing waggons, &c. with 9-inch wheels, if 8 horses, &c.	1 6	3 0
Ditto, if 7 horses, &c.	1 6	2 9
Ditto, if 6 horses, &c.	1 3	2 6
Ditto, if 5 horses, &c.	1 3	2 3
Ditto, if 2, 3, or 4 horses, &c.	each 3	each 6
Ditto, if 1 horse, &c.	0 6	1 0
For horses, &c. drawing waggons, &c. with 16-inch wheels, if 6, 7, or 8 horses, &c.	1 3	2 0
Ditto, if 4 or 5 horses, &c.	0 9	2 0
Ditto, if less than 4 horses	0 9	1 0

and salt in to the Potteries and finished wares out. The canal was not seen as a major competitor for traffic as it was some way from the mines and 'footrails' of the north-western area of the north Staffordshire coalfield⁷⁶. When Commissioners inquiring into the state of turnpike roads asked about the effect of the railways on the trust in 1840 the securities were said to be unaffected. However by the 1870s it is a distinct possibility that the increasingly rapid decline in income was because of railway competition, especially after the opening of the Silverdale & Newcastle-under-Lyme railway, which ran just north of the Keele to Newcastle section of the road and the building of the 'Audley Loop' that served all the local collieries in the trust area⁷⁷.

With the end of the Trust came the disposal of assets such as the toll houses. The Lower Wrinehill Tollhouse was offered to Lord Wilton for £120 and the materials of the Upper Wrinehill Tollhouse for £5. The correspondence only indicates that the Lower Tollhouse was purchased⁷⁸.

The Newcastle-under-Lyme and Nantwich Trust officers included the treasurer T. Kinnerly & Sons a Newcastle Bank founded in 1780 and incorporated in to the National Provincial Bank in 1855, two clerks Richard Edleston and Frederick Wilkinson and a surveyor John Redfern. Richard Edleston was a solicitor in Nantwich and also the clerk to the Nantwich and Woore Trust and John Redfern took over as the surveyor for the same trust in 1840. Frederick Wilkinson was replaced as the Newcastle-based clerk in 1845 by Francis Stanier.

Chapter 5. Whitchurch and Madeley Trust.

In 1767 a petition was presented to Parliament by several Gentlemen, Clergy, Freeholders and others of the counties of Chester, Salop and Staffordshire to repair and widen the road from Whitchurch (Salop) to Madeley joining the Nantwich to Newcastle-under-Lyme turnpike, also the road from Hinstock (Salop) to Drayton and Nantwich⁷⁹. The total distance of the turnpike was 37 miles⁸⁰. The turnpike trust, as set up, was effectively a cross with roads of nearly equal length running from Whitchurch to the east and Hinstock to the north crossing in Audlem – see Figure 10. The trust was initially set up as two districts that were financially separate. The Audlem District involved the roads:-

“from Whitchurch, in the County of Salop, through Burleydam, Audlem and to the end of the township of Brueton, in the County of Chester, leading towards Woor, in the County of Salop and also the Road from Hinstock, in the said County of Salop, to Drayton and from thence to Adderley, Audlem, Hatherton and Stapeley and to Nantwich.

The Woor District involved the road

“from the end of the Township of Buerton, through the Swan Yard at Woor, across or along the Woor Turnpike Road, not exceeding one hundred yards, through or along a private Road leading through certain Lands belonging to Herbet Mackworth⁸¹, now in the holding of Thomas Penington of Woor, where the said road is intended to go to the end of Gravenhunder Moss or Lane; and then through Onneley and Madeley, to the Turnpike Road leading from Nantwich, to Newcastle under Lyne.”

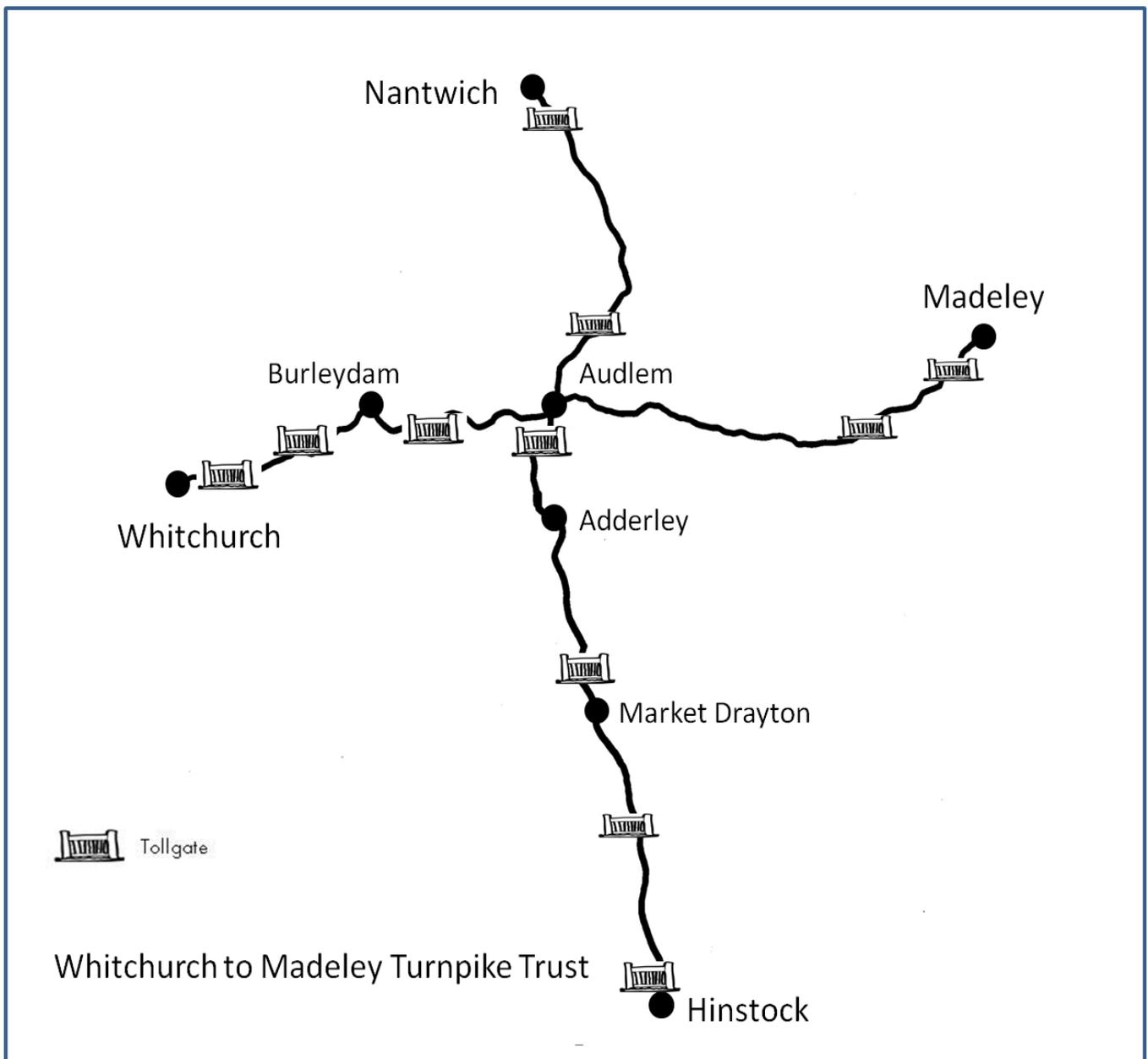
The tolls set out in the Act were relatively simple.

“For every Horse, Mare, Gelding, Mule or other Beast, drawing in any carriage, the Sum of Three Pence.

For every Horse, Mare, Gelding, Mule or other Beast, not drawing the Sum of One Pence.

For every Drove of Oxen, Cows, or Neat Cattle, the Sum of Ten Pence per Score; and so in proportion for any greater or less Number.

Figure 10. Map of the Whitchurch to Madeley Turnpike Trust indicating tollgates



And for every Drove of Calves, Hogs, Sheep, and Lambs, the Sum of Five Pence per Score and so in proportion for any greater or less Number.

However a quite different set of tolls was advised for Gravenhanger Lane, on "the road leading from Madeley to Drayton". This lane was a private road owned by Herbert Mackworth over which he already charged tolls for the passage of cattle and carriages, making a yearly income of seven pounds. Negotiation with the Turnpike Trust to take over this road led not only to a reduced toll at the Gravenhanger Gate but also a section in the Act allowing the Trustees to compound the tolls with "certain inhabitants". The reduced tolls are set out below:-

For every Waggon, Wain or other Four Wheel Carriage, drawing on the said Road, the Sum of Three Pence.

And for every Cart or other Two Wheel Carriage drawing on the said Road, the Sum of One Penny and a Half a Penny.

For every Horse, Mare, Gelding, Mule or other Beast, laden or unladen, drawing or not drawing on the said road, the Sum of One Half Pence.

For every Drove of Oxen, Cows, or Neat Cattle, the Sum of Two Pence and Half Penny Pence per Score; and so in proportion for any greater or less Number.

And for every Drove of Calves, Hogs, Sheep, and Lambs, the Sum of Five Pence per Score and so in proportion for any greater or less Number.

The compounding of the tolls affected the occupiers of Buckley Hall Farm, Master Shepherd's Farm and Widow Timmis's Farm all lying between Woore and Gravenhanger. For two shillings and six pence per farm per year not only the occupants but also the servants and workmen on the farms could pass the tollgate as often as they wanted. The one proviso was that the animals, carriages, carts and goods belonged to the occupants of the farms and they were not being used for hire.

The quorum for the District trustee meetings was set at five in the 1767 Act. However in the 1785 renewal Act the two divisions were united as it had proved difficult to do any business because they could not regularly find a quorum. This in spite of having 173 trustees in the original Audlem District and 96 trustees in the Woore District.

“that at the several Meetings appointed to be held by virtue of the said Act, a Quorum of five Trustees for both Districts could not be assembled; therefore, for the greater Ease and Convenience of the said Trustees for the said Districts, and to the End the same may be united and made in to One District only.”

Only one document exists giving any indication as to how much work was needed to improve the road and it relates to the purchase of a piece of land in the parish of Stapeley. In January 1799 Sir Thomas Broughton of Doddington (Chairman of the Trust), Richard Edleston (Clerk to the Trust) and George Steel (Surveyor of the Trust) purchased a messuage and dwelling house, from a Friendly Society called the “Senior Club of Wybunbury”, near the Artle Brook for £100. In addition each of the officers of the “Senior Club of Wybunbury” was given 5 shillings, in the hand⁸².

There is one description of a journey from Nantwich to Whitchurch in the 1790s that gives an indication that the Trust may not have been maintaining the road to an adequate standard.

“From Nantwich I continued my road to Whitchurch and a road so bad, so heavy, so sandy I never before travelled”⁸³.

There were further renewal Acts in 1804 and in 1824, each giving an interesting insight in to the way trusts were run. The 1785 renewal Act included what was in many ways the classic argument for the continued need for the trust. The trust claimed to have spent heavily on the road not only because “of the great length” and “expense of procuring Materials proper for repair” but also “stone and brick bridges across several large rivers and rivulets”. This had apparently led to the development of a “principal debt met on the credit of the tolls of £3170”. The Trust was heavily in debt and just needed another 25 years to get their financial problems under control!

Prior to the 1804 Act we find that the inhabitants and the neighbourhood of Drayton had submitted a petition to Parliament because proposals in the new bill would be detrimental to the town. In the original 1767 Act there were a number of restrictions on the placement of tollgates:-

- No gates within one mile of the towns of Whitchurch, Drayton or Nantwich.
- No gates within the manor of Madeley.
- No gates between Burleydam and Whitchurch

- No gates between Drayton and Adderley.

In addition there was only a limited requirement for parish statute labour to be spent on the turnpike road; indeed the inhabitants of the parish of Wybunbury, except for the townships of Stapeley and Hatherton were exempt.

In spite of the petition from Drayton, the 1804 Act repealed the legislation restricting where a tollgate could be placed and introduced greater statute labour obligations. The trust placed a gate on the Drayton to Adderley road at Spoonley, adjacent to the asylum (SJ 666356). The statute labour obligations were increased from one to two days at:-

- Stapeley
- Hatherton
- Woore
- Gravenhunger

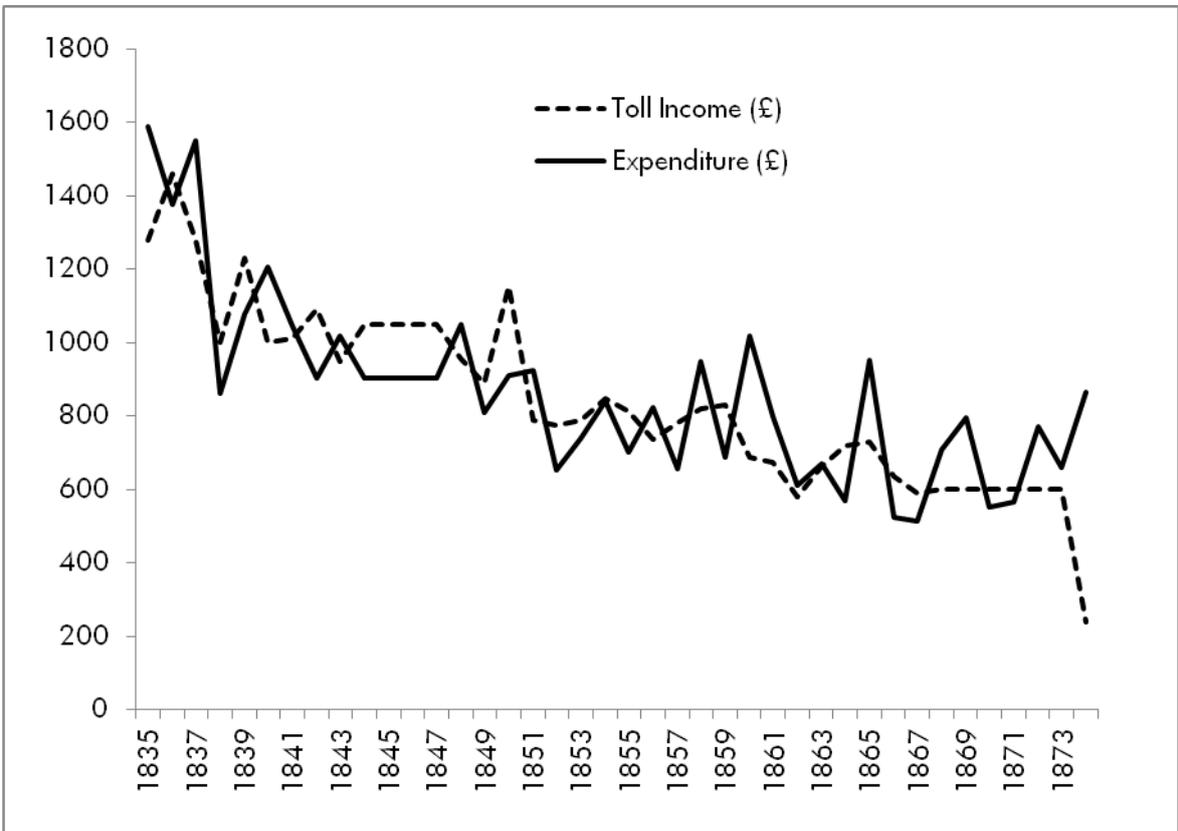
Because of the *“great length of road to be repaired, the scarcity of material and the great distance it has to be carried”* the statute labour obligations were increased from two to three days at:-

- Old Woodhouses
- New Woodhouses
- Broughall

In the 1824 Act the trust additional trustees were appointed. The AGM for the Whitchuch and Madeley Trust took place on April 23rd 1824 in Audlem. The newly appointed trustees included all the Justices of the Peace for Cheshire, Salop and Staffordshire, three baronets – Sir John Delves Broughton, Sir Andrew Corbet and Sir John Hill and their sons, nine clerics and 62 others, giving a total of 77 named trustees. There is no record of how many proved their credentials and became actively involved with the trust. At this time even this number of trustees did not guarantee that meeting would be quorate; many trusts with far greater numbers of trustees still failed to get three members to attend meetings.

The 1842 Act also introduced a road diversion in Audlem. The new route would have been surveyed and a detailed set of plans deposited with the Clerk of the Peace for the

Figure 11. Toll Income & Expenditure Reported to the Government between 1835 and 1874. Whitchurch to Madeley Turnpike Trust.



County – in this case Shropshire. However because a number of houses and gardens were to be demolished or damaged they were specifically listed in the Bill.

“Part of a certain House, building and garden of Richard Simpcock in the possession of James Heath; Part of a certain Avenue or yard, the property of George Houghton and John Cross in the possession of Richard Sillitoe; Part of a certain Avenue to a Dwelling house, the property of James Hall, in the possession of Thomas Bickerton; Part of a certain garden the property of Joseph Taylor, in the possession of Walter Furber; and part of a certain garden, the property of Thomas Allman, in the possession of Abraham Barnett; as shall be necessary to widen the part of the said turnpike road to the Breadth of Thirty feet.”

Tollgates can be identified at twelve sites. Hinstock (SJ 693 264) Sydnall (SJ 688 306), Spoonley (SJ 666 356), Audlem (SJ 657 434), Birchall Moss (SJ 679 461)⁸⁴, Shrewbridge, Nantwich (SJ 657 509)⁸⁵, Lightwood Green (SJ 635 427), Shropshire Lane Gate (SJ 594 413), Whitchurch Gate (SJ 554 413), Bearstone (SJ 725 392) and Gravenhunger (SJ 737 423)⁸⁶. The gates from Audlem to Whitchurch – Lightwood Green and Whitchurch are only identified on the Bryant Map of 1831. The Shropshire Lane Gate is on both the Greenwood Map of 1819 and Bryant’s Map of Cheshire. Tollgate cottages appear to have survived at Birchill Moss and Shrewbridge but the cottage at Audlem survives only in memory having been knocked down in 1947⁸⁷. The Audlem gate was occupied by Richard Bate, while on the tithe map the Birchall Moss Gate was shown as being owned by Charles Mare but occupied by Joseph Deakes⁸⁸.

This trust had reported relatively high accumulated debts both in the 1786 renewal Act - £3170 and the 1804 renewal £3710. In 1835 this has risen to £4131 but it then fell progressively to £3851 in 1840, £2642 in 1850, £1650 in 1860 & £900 in 1870 – see Figure 11. The history of this trust is one of a slow decline of income for the last 40 years of its existence. North – south traffic had two clear local competitors. Firstly, the Birmingham and Liverpool Junction Canal that opened in 1835, and merged with the Ellesmere and Chester Canal Company in 1845, becoming the Shropshire Union Railways and Canal Company in the following year⁸⁹. Secondly, the Nantwich and Market Drayton Railway that opened in 1863 through Audlem, it was merged with the Great Western Railway during the building of the line⁹⁰. Railway freight and passenger traffic generated by Audlem was relatively light in the early years, in September 1874 only £12.4s.10d. was taken by the freight business for the whole month and on a busy day less than 20 passengers travelled. Even by 1881 the income had hardly increased⁹¹.

Typical day in 1881	Goods receipts	£5-13-6
	Parcel receipts	11-10
	Passenger receipts	£1-14-11

As early as 1840 the trust had reported that the income had been adversely affected by the railways as the income in 1834 of £1526 had fallen to £1000 by 1838. *“One coach, upon the opening of the railway, stopped, which annually paid £250”* ... in tolls. The reduction in income by 1840 had led to a backlog *“of repairs and necessary improvements.”* This is likely to be the opening of the Grand Junction Railway from Birmingham through Wolverhampton and Crewe to join the Liverpool to Manchester Railway at Newton Junction⁹². This railway was opened in 1837 and would have introduced competition to all long-distance coach traffic from London to the North-west.

“It was observed that the opening of the Birmingham-Chester line in Shropshire was the cause of removing all traffic from turnpike roads as if by magic”⁹³.

The east – west traffic was much less open to competition and formed the foundation of the income until the trust was wound up in 1875.

The treasurer of the Whitchurch to Madeley turnpike Trust from 1835 to at least 1850 was George Corser. He was part of the day to day management team along with John Groom of Audlem (1835-1848) and William Machin of Audlem (1849-1850) as clerk and William Lockley as surveyor.

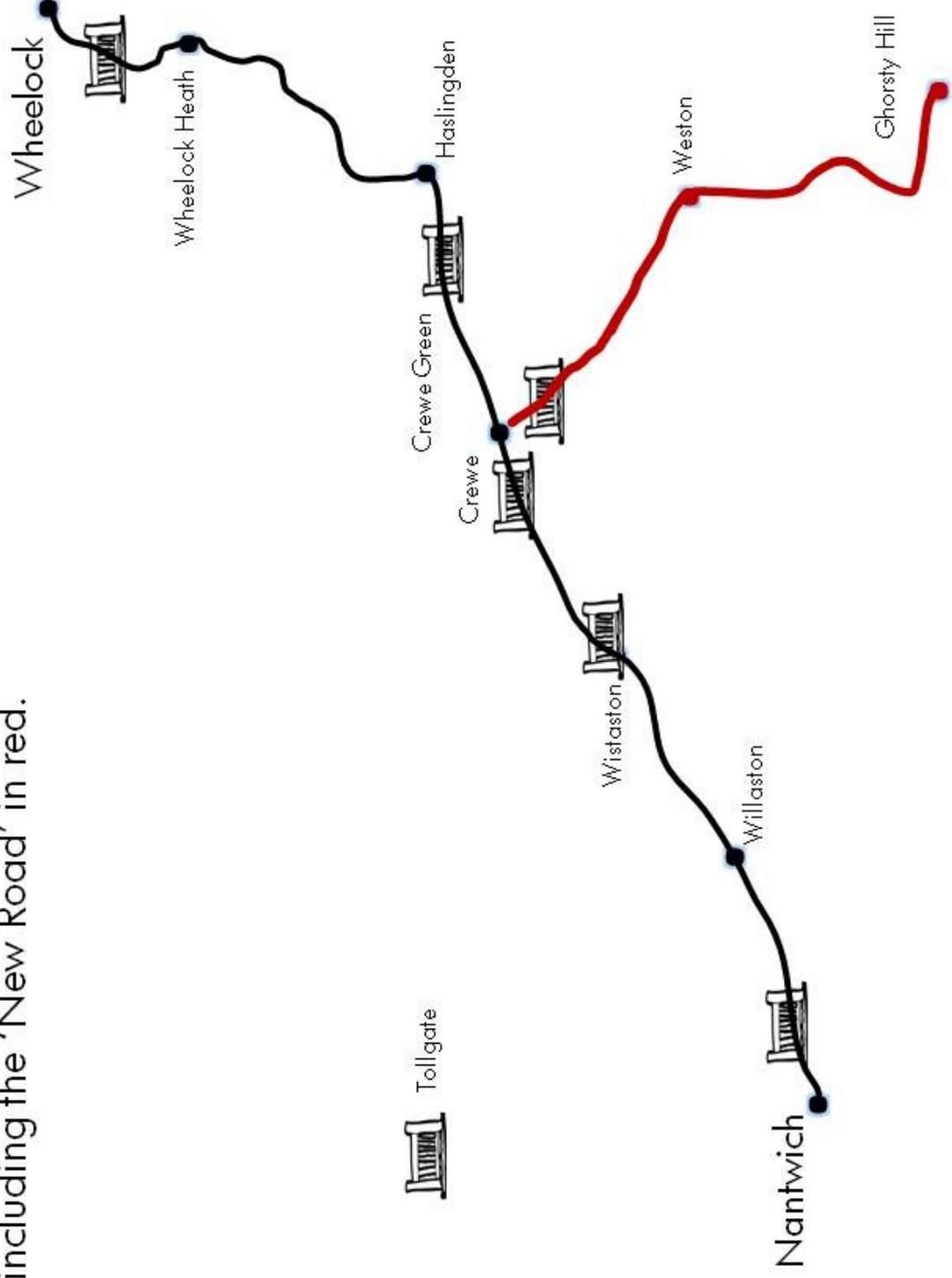
Chapter 6. Nantwich and Wheelock Trust.

The preamble to the Act contains the usual formula in words about the state of the road ... *“the road is much out of Repair, narrow and in many parts very incommodious to Travellers and Carriages”*. On this occasion there is a contemporary account of the state of the road by a local farmer, Richard Lindop. In his reminiscences he recalls that the

“excessively deep ruts cause the nave (central hub) of the wheel to draw along the mud ... the writer has seen nine horses in length (in line) at a narrow-wheeled wagon with little more than a ton of coal in it”.

The First Reading of the Act for the Nantwich and Wheelock Trust was on Tuesday 15th February and it was passed on the 11th April 1816, allowing the repair and widening of the road from Nantwich through Willaston, Wistaston, Monks Coppenhall, Crewe, Haslington to Wheelock Wharf on the Trent and Mersey Canal near Sandbach⁹⁵ – see Figure 12. The deposited plan of the turnpike road shows that they effectively used the existing road⁹⁶. There is no evidence that any new alignments had been surveyed with the work being limited to widening. A total of 14 parcels of land were purchased amounting to a total of 1 rod 17 perch – a very small area. Eleven of the purchases were grouped between Crewe Green and Winterley Mill, six involving Haslington were four gardens lost narrow strips to the road. The road started some ten yards into Crewe Road, Nantwich (A534) and follows the current road to the roundabout. It then went down Park Lane (Hungry Lane) before turning left to pass in front of Willaston Hall. The section of road in front of the Hall now only exists as a footpath from SJ 673 522 to SJ 674 525. The remainder of the route is easily traced as the road through Wistaston, passed Crewe Station and then via Haslington, Winterley and Wheelock Heath to Wheelock Quay on the Trent and Mersey Canal. While not specifically labelled or noted in the “Book of Reference to the Deposited Plan” there is a hint of a diversion to avoid Willaston Hall. There is a faint dotted line connecting the road from the old school just to the west of the roundabout on the Nantwich ring road and the northern end of the road running in front of Willaston Hall. This is the line taken by the modern Crewe Road to the junction with Colley’s Lane. This ‘new’ section of road is not shown on the 1833 First Series Ordnance Survey Map but it does appear on the 1846 Tithe Map⁹⁷. There are no surviving documents from the Nantwich and Wheelock Trust indicating when the road was re-aligned. However in the 1845 return of Income and Expenditure, submitted to the Government, a land purchase of

Figure 12. Map of the Nantwich and Wheelock Turnpike including the 'New Road' in red.



£139.5s.10d. is shown, as well as £111 on manual labour, £51 on team labour and £120 on road surfacing⁹⁸. As this seems to be the only major land purchase in the history of the trust up to the first proven existence of the 'new' road in 1846 it probably represents the work associated with this re-alignment. This will not be the last time we find a road running adjacent to the home of a major landowner being diverted because it ran too near for comfort.

There were 48 trustees, prominent amongst them, Sir John Delves Broughton (also a trustee of the Whitchurch to Madeley trust in the 1824 Act) and the Honourable John Crewe, minor gentry such as Randle Wilbraham and local merchants such as the Garnett family. "*George Garnett, a Nantwich cheese-factor, purchased a Church Coppenhall estate*"⁹⁹. In many ways the most interesting of the trustees was Richard Edleston a Nantwich solicitor who by 1816 had already purchased two farms in Monks Coppenhall – Oak Farm and the Hall o'Shaw farm and with further purchases eventually became Lord of the Manor¹⁰⁰. However not only did he become clerk to the Nantwich and Wheelock trust, but he also was clerk to the Nantwich and Woore as well as the Nantwich and Newcastle-under-Lyme trusts. The commonality of the officers and trustees between the trusts centred on Nantwich was mentioned in the Home Department report on the Nantwich to Woore trust. Indeed the clerk to the trust was specifically asked to comment on the proposal of a merger. His reply...

*"The expediency of merging the trusts has never been formally considered.....violent opposition from the creditors..... some would believe the value of their securities would be diminished. The Nantwich and Newcastle, Nantwich and Wheelock and Nantwich to Woore Trusts would seem a desirable group for consolidation"*¹⁰¹.

Even though there was a major move towards consolidating trusts from the 1830s, all the Nantwich trusts remained independent entities until their dissolution in the 1870s.

The Nantwich to Wheelock trust was very much a short local road promoted by local land owners – the road was 8 miles 4 furlongs 23 yards long and an important connection between Nantwich and a major local canal¹⁰². This was needed as the Ellesmere and Chester Canal Company, which served Nantwich, was isolated from the major Midland canals until 1st September 1833 when the Wardle or Middlewich branch canal was completed. The Crewe mentioned in the description of the road was not the modern town, which was a product of the railway age - still twenty years away; it was Crewe Green a small hamlet still situated to the east of Crewe Station. With the completion of the Grand Junction Railway in 1837 a small station was opened where the

line crossed the turnpike road. The land for the station had been bought from the honourable John Crewe (2nd Baron of Crewe) of Crewe Hall and thus the station bore his name – Crewe¹⁰³. The station was in the parish of Coppenhall and so we have continuity between the turnpike and the railway ages the local landowners who promoted the turnpike became the beneficiaries of the development of Crewe. That however is a different story.

Two tollgates were allowed on the road the first *“between the Windmill in the township of Willaston ... and a certain Messuage or Mansion House in the same township”*. This gate was set on the corner of Broughton Lane (SJ 688 535)¹⁰⁴. The second gate was to be *“between a certain place called Winterley Mill within the Township of Haslington ... and the aforementioned Township of Wheelock”*. This gate was set near Wheelock Hall (SJ 748 585). Two other gates were eventually established on the original line of the road, one near Nantwich – Willaston (SJ 665 523)¹⁰⁵ and the other at Crewe Green (SJ 723 554). A final gate was established on a new section of road built in the late 1840s in Weston Lane (SJ 712 547). There was a specific instruction within the Act that no tollgate could be erected within one hundred yards of Wheelock Wharf. The toll collector at the Wistaston Gate is shown as John Rushton on the local tithe map¹⁰⁶.

The Act also includes an exemption from toll in favour of the residents of Willaston and Wistaston ... *“in respect of any horse, cattle or Carriages ... going or returning to the said town of Nantwich”*. This exemption did not cover horse drawing wagons, wains or carts or carriage carrying too much weight.

On the 27th September 1847 Lord Crewe's agent wrote to one of the trustees.

*“Reverend Sir, —I have spoken to Lord Crewe upon the subject of the intended turnpike road from Stowford to Crewe Station, and I am authorized by his lordship to say, that he is willing to provide the necessary funds for effecting the above object, provided the amount does not exceed £2000, on receiving a mortgage from the **trustees** of the Nantwich and Wheelock Turnpike, extending to the whole of their tolls upon that road, as well as those of the intended new road, such mortgage to bear interest at the rate of £5 per cent., and to be paid off either in one sum, or by instalments not exceeding £500 each, except with his lordship’s consent. Lord Crewe will also expect a clause to be inserted in the new Act of Parliament, authorizing him to stop up the present road through Crewe Park.”*

As a consequence of this letter a meeting of the trustees of the old road was held on the 29th of September 1847, at which the following resolution was passed.

“Resolved unanimously, that his lordship's proposition be accepted, and that application be made accordingly to Parliament in the session next ensuing for leave to make and maintain, as a new turnpike road in connection with this trust, a road from Gorsty Hill to Crewe Station, and also from Stowford to point D. upon the plan of the said proposed road from Gorsty Hill to Crewe Station, provided his Lordship consent to give the land required for the purpose”¹⁰⁷.

In the London Gazette of October 23rd 1847 a notice was placed by Edleston & Edleston solicitors for the Nantwich and Wheelock Turnpike Road¹⁰⁸. The proposal was for the turnpiking of the existing roads from a junction with the Nantwich and Newcastle-under-Lyme Trust at Gorsty Hill through the villages of Weston and Stowford, then a new road running in front of Crewe Hall to the Crewe Station – Weston Lane (see Figure 13). It was represented as a joint initiative between the Nantwich and Wheelock trustees and the London and North Western Railway. This section of road was known as the ‘Branch’ in the financial returns. When the road was opened it changed the whole balance of the roads in South Cheshire, providing a more direct route to the Potteries. It also reduced the relative importance of Nantwich, which had been an historical road hub for the area¹⁰⁹.

However the drafting of the 1848 Act (11 & 12 Vict. c. Xlix) was to produce legal problems for the trust.

Clause XXVII stated: *“And be it enacted, that all monies which shall be received by the said trustees, by virtue of this Act, upon the road included in the said recited Act hereby repealed shall be applied as follows (that is to say)*

Firstly, in paying and discharging the expenses of obtaining and passing this Act, or incident thereto:

Secondly, in paying and discharging any interest which may from time to time be owing in respect of any money which may have been borrowed on the credit of the tolls authorized to be taken by the said former Act hereby repealed:

Thirdly, in paying the expenses of improving, maintaining and keeping in repair such road, and in putting this Act into execution with reference thereto:

Figure 13. One inch Ordnance Survey Old Series maps of Crewe Hall – above 1842 and below post-1869. The new runs north-west from Stowford to Crewe Station – Western Lane.



Fourthly, in reducing, paying off and discharging the several principal sums which have been borrowed on the credit of the tolls authorized to be taken by the said former Act hereby repealed."

Clause XXVIII stated: *"And be it enacted, that all monies which shall be received by the said trustees on or in respect of the new line of road authorized by this Act to be made shall be applied as follows (that is to say)*

Firstly, in discharging the expenses of obtaining and passing this Act, or incident thereto:

Secondly, in making, improving, maintaining and keeping in repair the said new line of road and putting this Act into execution with reference thereto:

Thirdly, in paying and discharging any interest which may from time to time become due and be owing in respect to any money which may hereafter be borrowed on the credit of tolls to be collected on the said new line of road:

Fourthly, in reducing, paying off and discharging any principal sums of money which may have been borrowed under the said recited Act, or may be due on the credit of the tolls to be taken on the said new line of road by this Act authorized so be made."

It appears to be quite clear that money collected on the 'Old Road' should be applied to the repair of and the repayment of the mortgages associated with that road. The new road was to be treated separately as a standalone enterprise. In the original clause covering the distribution of the income it had been proposed that surplus tolls from the 'Old' road could be applied to pay off loans required to build the new road. This clause was struck out during the passage of the bill through the House of Lords, which further reinforces this interpretation of the meaning of the clauses.

Initially the trustees made payments to Lord Crewe to not only reduce the £2000 mortgage but also to cover the 5% interest. These payments would initially have to have been from the total income of the trust including surplus tolls from the 'Old' road.

The income and expenditure of the new or 'Branch' road started to be reported separately in the financial returns to Government in 1854. This was not the usual practice unless the trust had been properly constituted in to administrative districts, which was not the case with the Nantwich and Wheelock trust. The separate reporting begins with the first year that the trust defaulted on their payments to Lord Crewe. The reason

for the default being that the 'Branch' was not generating enough income to fund the repayments, which were being paid from the surplus tolls from the 'Old' road. This would appear to be specifically prevented by the way clauses XXVII and XXVIII had been drafted in the 1848 Act. The situation was summarised in the court proceedings:-

"The interest upon this mortgage was duly paid down to the month of August 1853, but soon after that time, the trustees insisted that the £2000 was a charge only upon the tolls of the new road, and that those tolls never having been sufficient for the payment of the interest, the new road was indebted to the old road for the excess of the interest paid upon the mortgage, beyond the amount of the tolls received from the new road. They accordingly declined to pay any further interest upon the mortgage, and in the year 1854 they removed two of the gates upon the old road, and took steps for reducing the tolls."

Lord Crewe took legal action which culminated in a five day hearing at the Court of Chancery in March and May 1857.

"By an order made in the cause upon the application of Lord Crewe, and dated the 22d December 1856, His Honour the Vice-Chancellor Sir J. Stuart ordered, "That an injunction do issue to restrain the trustees, their agents, servants and workmen, from reducing any of the tolls upon the old and new roads or either of them, and from removing any or either of the gates or bars upon or at the sides of such old and new roads, or either of them, until the further order of this Court."

The trustees appealed from this order, and upon the appeal motion being opened, it was arranged that it should stand over, and that notice of motion for a decree should be given. Notice having been given accordingly, the appeal motion and the cause came on to be disposed of together."

The bill filed by Lord Crewe had a wider objective.

"It was also for the purpose of having his rights under a mortgage made to him of some turnpike tolls, toll-gates and toll-houses ascertained and declared by the Court and for the appointment of a receiver of the tolls, with directions to apply them in the mode in which it was contended on the part of Lord Crewe they ought to be applied".

The trustees lost their case because the clauses in the 1848 Act had to be read in conjunction with the 1822 General Turnpike Road Act (3. Geo. IV c.126). The trustees owed the money and they could pay from the toll surplus but they must also do nothing to decrease the trust income i.e. closing gates and reducing tolls. A receiver was appointed although he had a limited role as he could not interfere with the letting of the tolls – his role was to ensure that profits from the roads was applied to the payment of

Lord Crewe's mortgage. Costs of the action were awarded against the turnpike trust and they were specifically forbidden from "*making any mortgage for such costs*".

There appears to have been no immediate change in policy by the trustees as there were on-going discussions with Lord Crewe's legal representatives as late as 1862. Throughout this period the financial state of the 'Branch' or 'New' road was laid out clearly in the yearly returns. With a peak income of less than £100 p.a. and an average expense of £50 p.a. there was little excess to fund repayment of a £2000 mortgage – see Figure 14.

In January 1862 the trustees were reminded of the outcome of the case in a letter containing a legal opinion from Henry Matthews .

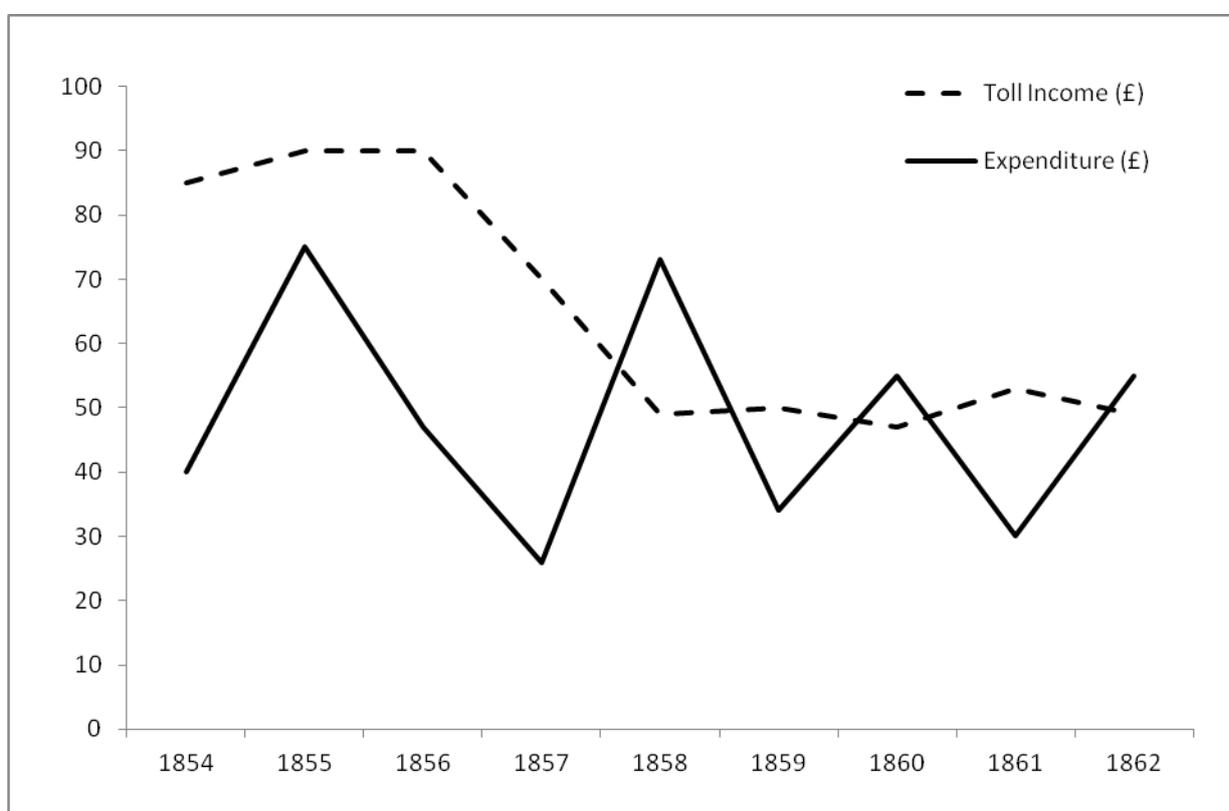
"I am of the opinion that Lord Crewe is entitled (under the GeoIV:126:49) to recover in Ejectment the Tollgates and Tollhouses both on the 'Old Road' and on the 'New Road' under the mortgage to him of the 21st February 1849"¹¹⁰.

Lord Crewe's position was made even stronger as the outstanding mortgages on the 'Old Road' had also been transferred to him. The proposition laid out in the opinion was that the Trustees should quit the properties to allow Lord Crewe to take possession.

The negotiations continued with a counter-proposal from a meeting of the Trustees on the 30th April 1862. The proposal was that Lord Crewe accepts a payment of £1000 to discharge the £2000 mortgage and to give up the unpaid interest. There is then a gap in the correspondence until October when it is clear that Lord Crewe would accept the loss of £1000 but he required the payment of the outstanding interest. The negotiations continued and in the 1862 financial returns the unpaid interest is shown as £707 with the income and expenditure both being about £500¹¹¹. While the correspondence is incomplete there is a clear indication that discussions between a representative of the Trustees and Lord Crewe were coming to a resolution. There is no evidence that Lord Crewe took possession of the Trust's property but we do know the final financial resolution.

In the 1863 financial return the outstanding mortgage is shown as having been reduced to £1000 with a footnote:- "*Reduced, £1000 relinquished*". The outstanding interest has fallen from over £700 to £46 with a footnote:- "*Interest on £2000 to July 1863 relinquished*"¹¹².

Figure 14. Nantwich and Wheelock Turnpike Trust. Income and Expenditure of the 'New Road' (Weston Avenue) between 1854 and 1862.



The Nantwich and Wheelock turnpike Trust opened an account at the Nantwich Branch of the Manchester and Liverpool District Bank in Churchside. The 'Hungerford Lord Crewe Mortgage' account was opened on the 14th August 1863 with a cash deposit of £50.6s.6d¹¹³. The trust paid off nearly half the outstanding mortgage by April 1865 but did not complete payments until 1869¹¹⁴.

Lord Crewe was a rich man with over 10000 acres in his estates in Cheshire with additional land in Staffordshire and Leicestershire. His yearly income on his death in 1894 was estimated at nearly £40000. He is described in his obituary as a benevolent landlord, who made many charitable gifts¹¹⁵. It is perhaps not surprising that he dealt so leniently with the trust as he probably did not want to run a turnpike trust and as will be seen later he was the main beneficiary of the 'New Road' as it moved traffic from immediately in front of his house to a respectful distance.

Not all the 'New Road' was actually constructed. The deposited map shows a section of road from the junction of Main Road and Snape Lane (just south-west of Weston – SJ 736 519) and Gorsty Hill (SJ 741 511) – see Figure 15. This was not built although the route of the projected road is shown as a short lane in the Old Series OS map from about 1836 and is still evident as a footpath.

The first analysis of the financial state of the road dates to 1821 and at that time it had been operating for five years and had accumulated debts of £1650. This debt would be made up of the cost of the Act of Parliament, the initial repair of the road, the purchase of land and the building of the toll houses and gates as well as eight milestones. The cost of the Act was £586. 3s. 11d., the building of the tollhouses some £200 with the gates a further £30. The costs of the tollhouses and gates are based on figures from estimates from the Nantwich and Congleton Trust. The accumulated debt rose in 1835 to £1808 but had fallen to £1542 in 1840 before rising as high as £2616 by 1850. This significant rise between 1840 and 1850 was associated with the expense of the new road – Western Lane, which is clearly shown as a peak of expenditure in 1848 – see Figure 16. Routine yearly road repair bills based on materials purchased and wages were between £350 and £400 but this increased to over £1500 in 1849, which along with the building of another toll house and gate would have increased expenditure to nearer £1700. On top of that was the Parliamentary costs of a new private act of parliament which was £329 1s. 7d. – a grand total of over £2000. However, in spite of the problems with Lord Crewe, the accumulated debt had fallen to £530 by 1860 and remained apparently under control until the expiration of the trust in 1875.

Figure 15. Sketch Map of the 'New Road' – Nantwich and Wheelock Turnpike Trust. Showing the section of road from Weston to Gorsty Hill that remained unmade, existing today as a footpath. Based on Cheshire County Records Office. QDP 285.

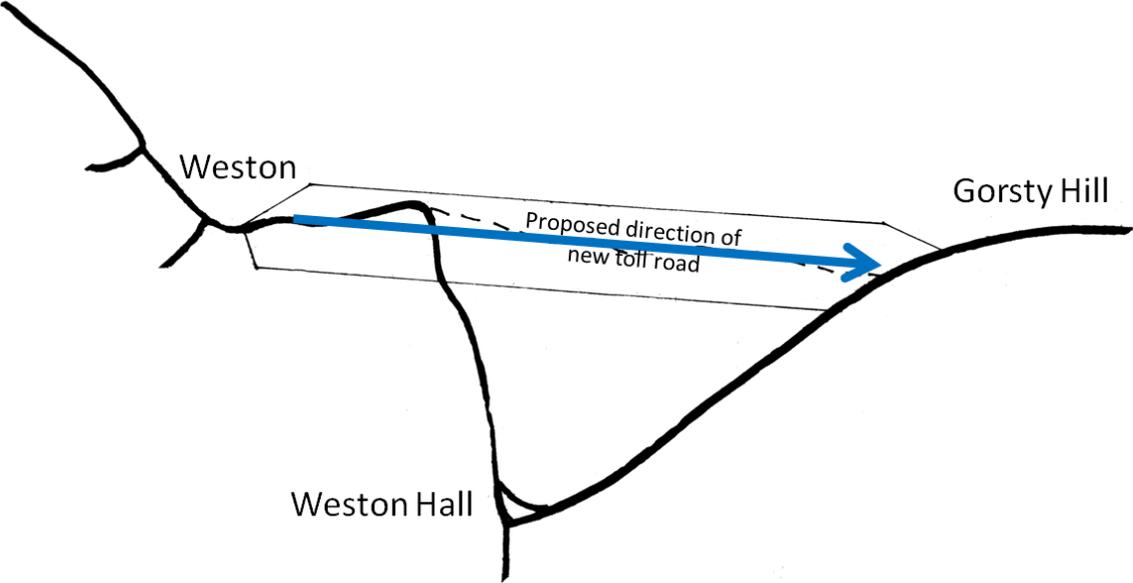


Figure 16. Toll Income & Expenditure Reported to the Government between 1835 and 1874. Nantwich to Wheelock Turnpike Trust.

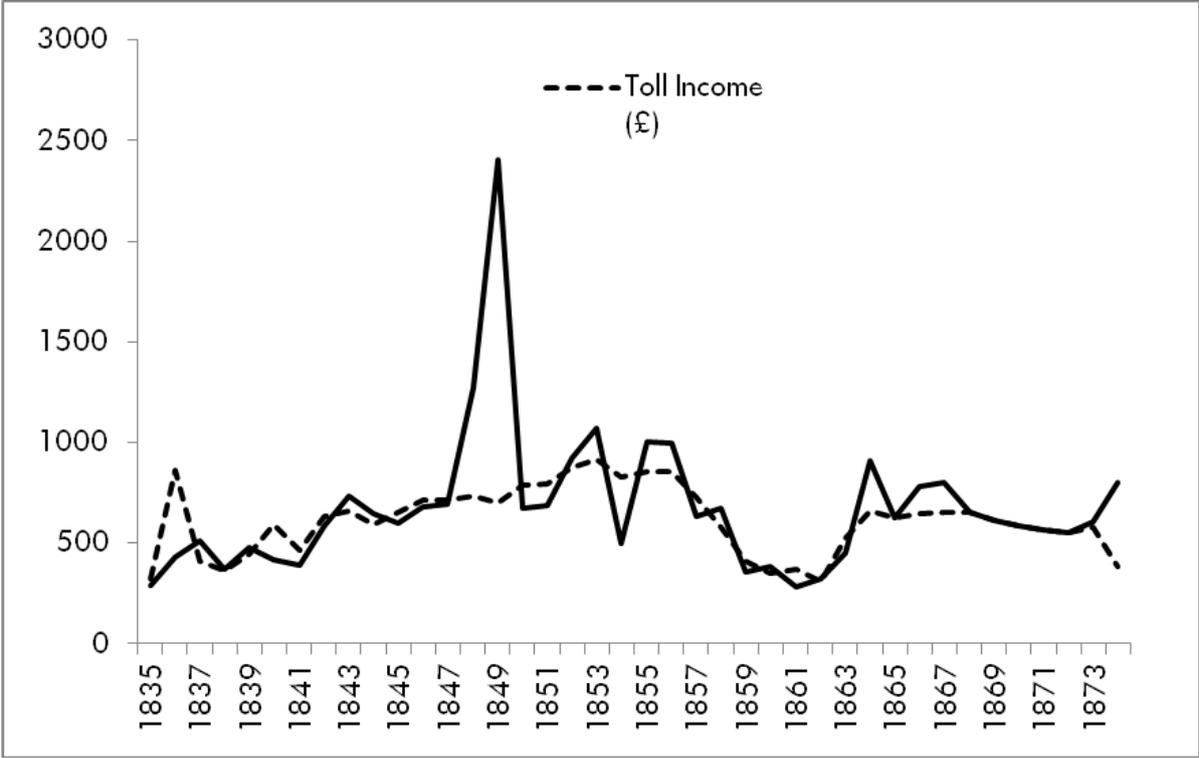


Figure 17(a) Nantwich and Wheelock Turnpike Trust. Income by Gate for 1864.

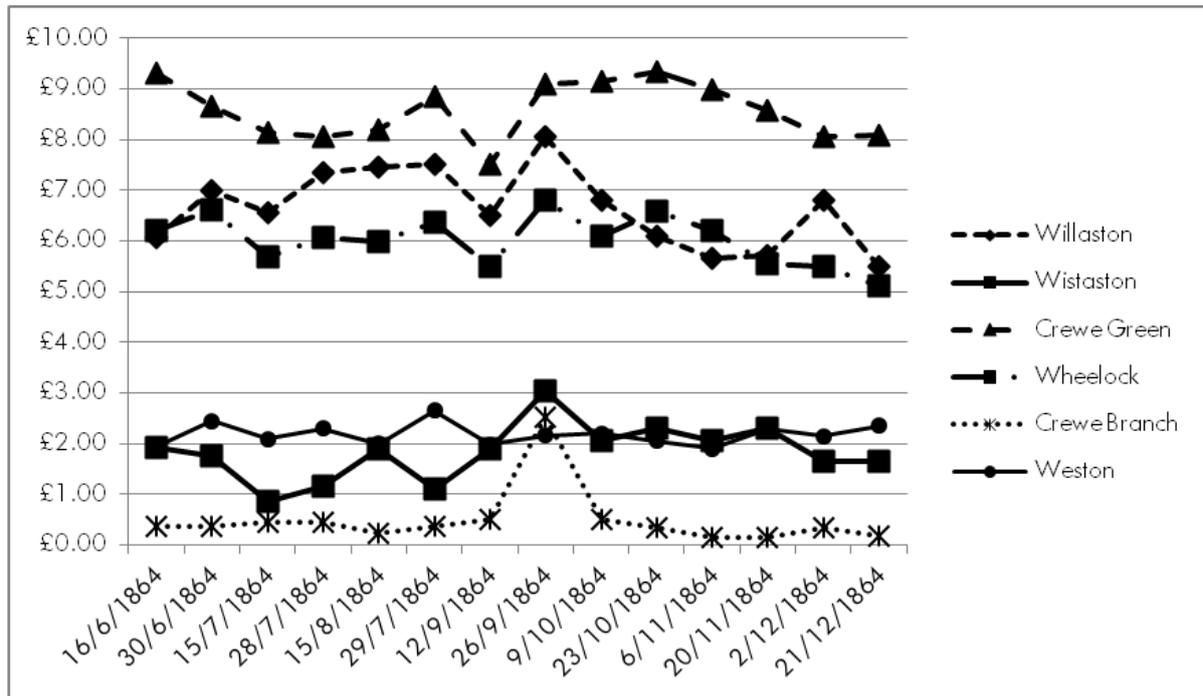


Figure 17(b) Nantwich and Wheelock Turnpike Trust. Income by Gate for 1865.

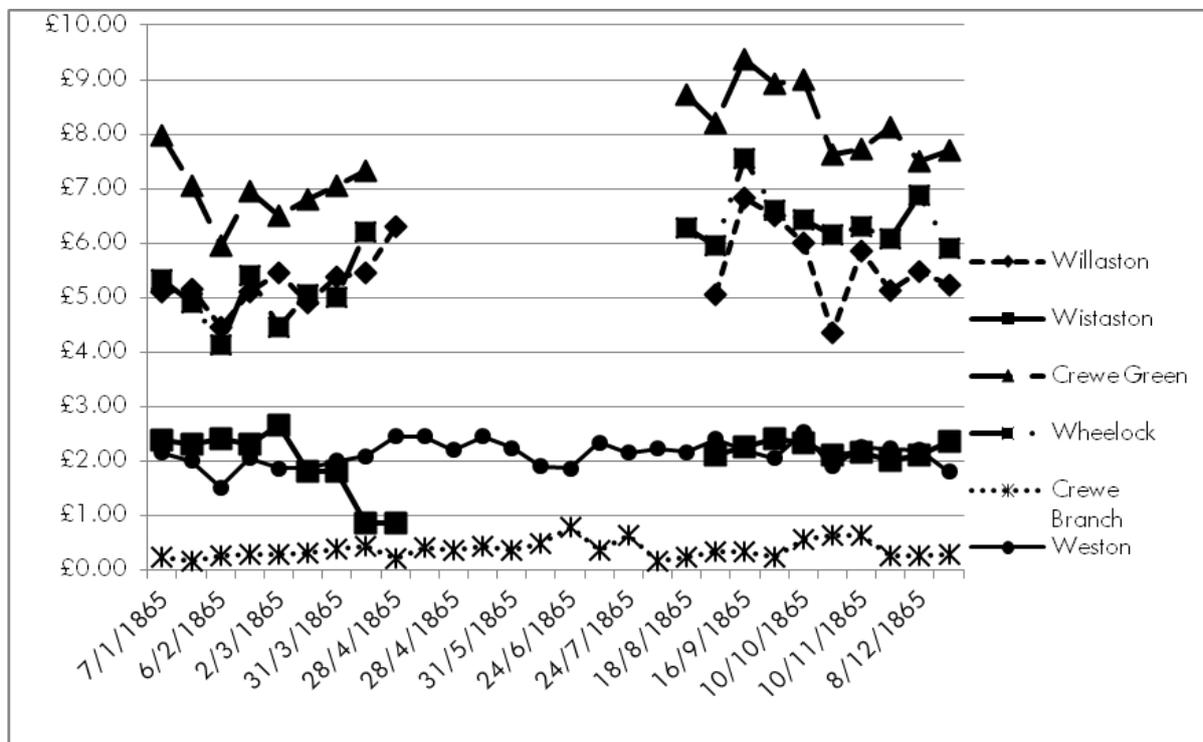
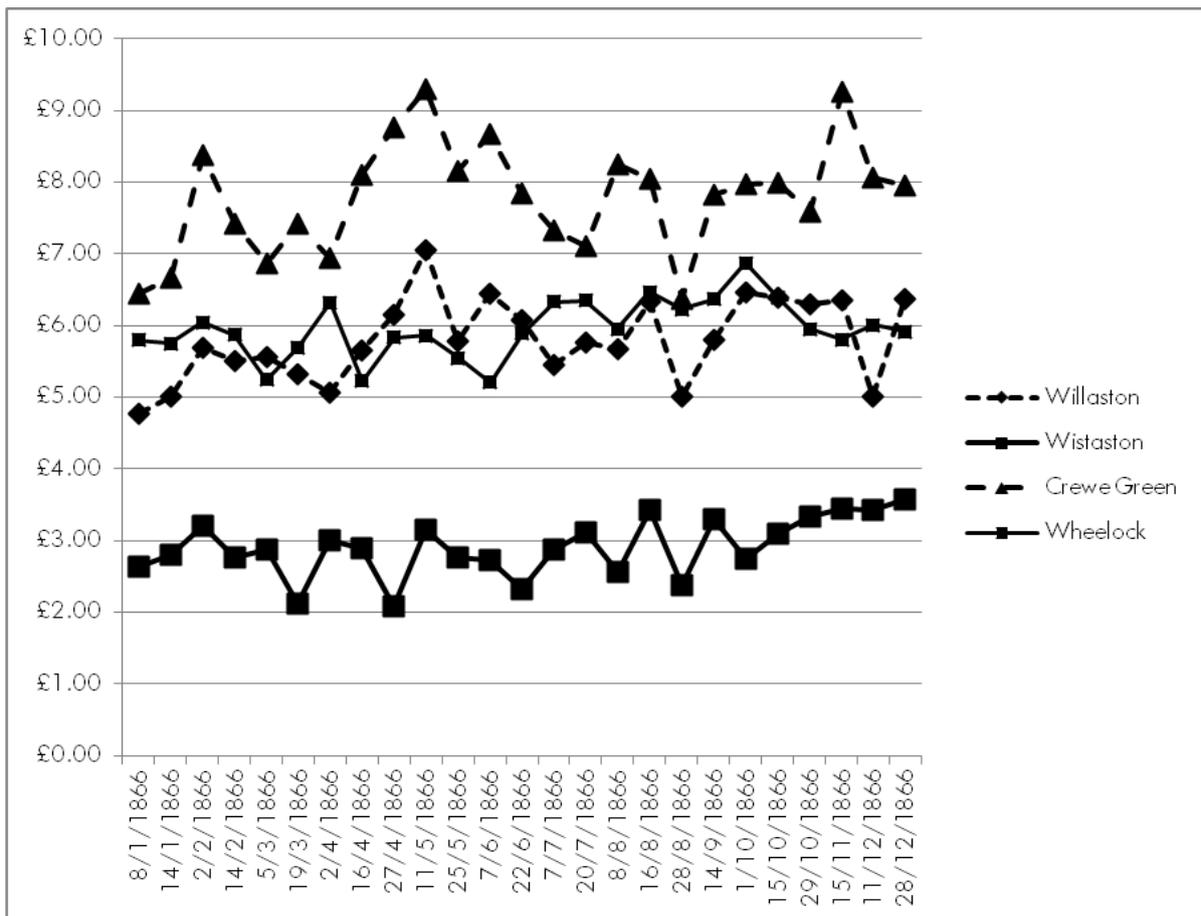


Figure 17(c) Nantwich and Wheelock Turnpike Trust. Income by Gate for 1866.



The new road did not produce a large increase in income but this may not have been unexpected. It was reported at the time that the road had been built to ... *“provide an alternative to, the right-of-way which the public enjoyed through Crewe Gates Farm and past the front of Crewe Hall”*¹¹⁶. As the town of Crewe gradually grew too many locals must have been making use of their rights.

In 1867 the trust had plans for a new tollgate within two miles of the Market Square. This caused the Monks Coppenhall Highways Board to propose that they would take over a section of road¹¹⁷. The road ran from where Smallman Road now joins with Nantwich Road to the cross roads where Mill Street and South Street cross Nantwich Road, near Crewe Station. There is also an indication on an Old Series Ordnance Survey map that the tollhouse was planned to be placed where Gresty Road joins with Nantwich Road (SJ 708 548).

There is some indication of the income by tollgate from returns between 1864 and 1866. In all three years the Crewe Green Gate showed the highest income but only about £9 per fortnight with the Crewe Branch (New Road) rarely exceeding £1 per fortnight. The income is shown graphically in Figure 17 (a-c)

There is an indication of the nature of the traffic on the turnpike, especially after the coming of the railway. When the Clerk to the Trust was asked what was the effect of the railways on the trust he was very positive. The financial state of the trust had been improved by the railways as the rent of the tolls had risen by £110 a year since the arrival of the Grand Junction Railway. The turnpike had become a feeder road for passengers for the trains at Crewe Station. Daily coaches ran from Macclesfield – ‘Crewe Railway Coach’ – through Congleton and Sandbach and Whitchurch with an omnibus from Nantwich.¹¹⁸ Welch’s omnibus left the principal inns in Nantwich, daily except Sunday, to meet every train¹¹⁹. There would also have been an increase in freight traffic but this would have been counter-balanced by a reduction in freight originating from the canal at Wheelock.

With the termination of the Trust the toll houses were sold off and in most cases removed. There are only details of one transaction with the toll house on the Crewe to Weston road at Weston, including garden and Hereditaments being sold to Sir Henry Delves Broughton of Doddington Hall for £73¹²⁰.

The treasurer of the trust between 1835 and 1848 was John Eyton when S.W. Moore took over. The clerk and the surveyor remained unchanged, Richard Edleston and John Redfern respectively.

Chapter 7. Tarporley and Whitchurch Trust

A survey for the line of the proposed turnpike road between Tarporley and Whitchurch was undertaken in early 1827. On October 27th 1827 all landowners affected by the proposal received a circular letter. The letter enclosed a "*few remarks on the advantages likely to arise from the adaption of this measure*" and an invitation to a meeting. The meeting was held on November 8th 1827 at the Cholmondley Castle Inn where a map of the proposed road was available for inspection. The letter made it very clear that the Marquis of Cholmondley was "*decidedly friendly*" to the proposal. A clear signal of approval from the major landowner. The "*few remarks*" included with the circular are in contrast with the usual preamble to a turnpike act as they reveal much more about the justification for the road.

The existing route was circuitous and new road would offer a more direct and shorter route between Tarporley and Whitchurch – a saving of four miles out of seventeen (Figure 18). It would improve connections with the Chester Canal at Beeston Brook, the Ellesmere Canal at Marbury and a direct connection between Whitchurch and the Weaver Navigation at Acton or Northwich. The improved connectivity leading to a reduction in the price of coal and lime as well as access to the major corn market at Four Lanes End, which was situated where the proposed road joined the Nantwich and Woore turnpike road. The major claim for the road, however, was as a missing link between Hereford, Shrewsbury and South Wales to Liverpool and Manchester. The importance of the likely bridging of the Mersey at Runcorn was stressed in view of the report by Thomas Telford on the Liverpool and London Coach road which advised a suspension bridge. This report had been commissioned by the General Post Office to assess if a similar road to Telford's Holyhead Road was possible between London and the rapidly growing port of Liverpool¹²¹. The report published by the House of Commons in May 1827 delivered a saving of fifteen miles, dependant on the bridging of the Mersey at Runcorn. No further action was taken on this road between the Metropolis and Liverpool and a bridge for road traffic had to wait until 1961. The final section of the 'Remarks' stressed that the road would follow fence lines and do the least damage to land by adopting Township roads and only making six miles of New road¹²².

The map presented at the meeting to the interested landowners has survived and the the deposited plans are available. The truth of the pre-turnpike road between Tarporley and Whitchurch being circuitous is plain to see in Burdett's map of 1777 and Greenwood's map of 1819¹²³. The route appears as a tangled knot of roads with a west to east travel bias. There is no clear north to south axis for much of the route. The six mile reduction in the distance by road between Tarporley and Whitchurch was achieved by

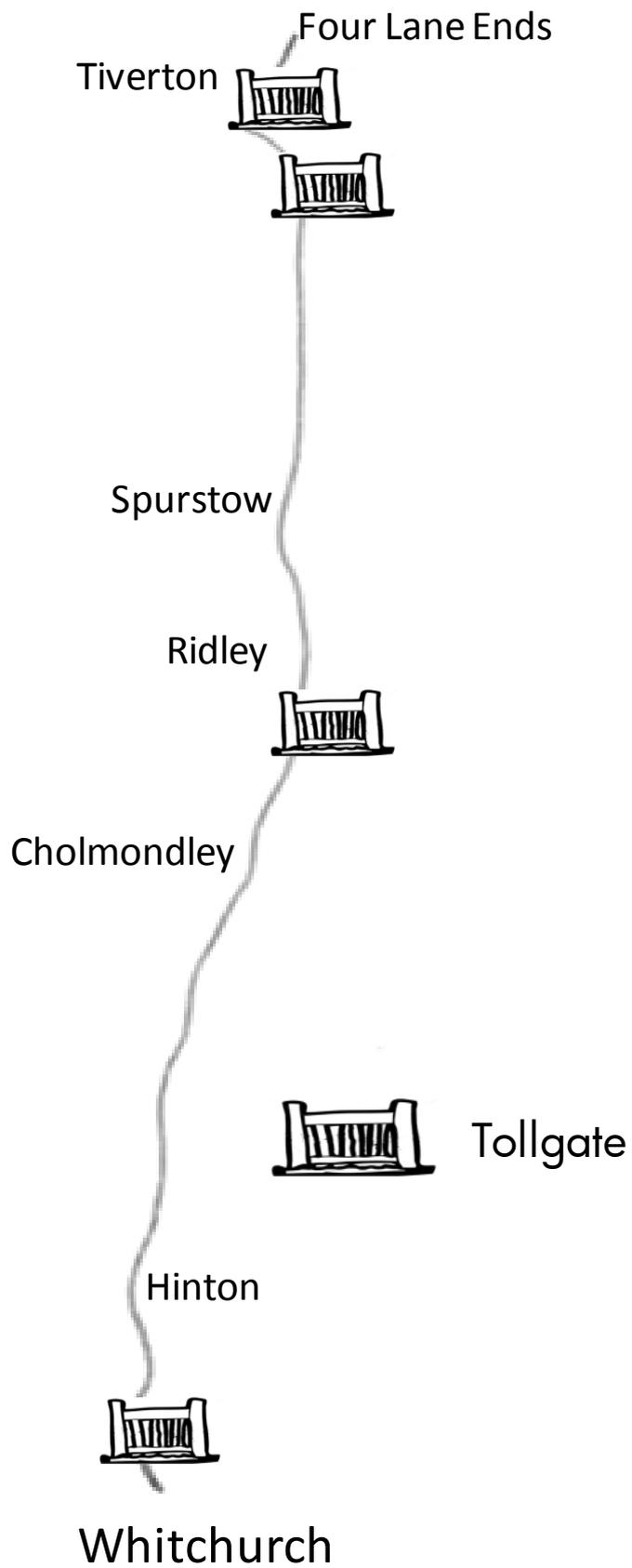


Figure 18. Map of the Tarporley to Whitchurch Turnpike Trust showing tollgates.

the construction of new sections of road. There were new sections of road north of Bickley Moss with road closures in Moss Wood. Additionally there was a major re-alignment of the old road. This had run from Swanswick Green via Quoisley and Wir-sall in to Whitchurch, even now a less than straight road, the new road being the current route of the A49. The layout of the road is radically different in Bryant's map of 1831 and the Old Series Ordnance Survey dated 1842 (surveys in 1830, April 1840 & May 1841)¹²⁴. Both maps show the turnpiked route, which is little different to the roads shown on a modern map.

The 'Remarks' had presented a clear business case as to why traffic and therefore toll income would be attracted to the road. A decision was made to prepare a petition to Parliament for a turnpike act. The Petition was presented on the 16th February 1829 and received its first reading in the House of Commons on the 12th March and the second on the 17th March when it was passed to the Commons committee that examined turnpike acts. The Bill was engrossed and passed to the House of Lords on the 12th May for consideration. It was passed six days later on the 18th May and received Royal Assent on the 22nd May 1829¹²⁵.

Eighty eight trustees were named in the Act, including all the major landowners. The landownership from Tarporley south along the line of the turnpike was :- John Tollemache, John Earlam, Samuel Aldersey, John Downes, Lord Crewe, Sir Thomas Mostyn (Champney), John Tollemache, Sir William Weller Pepys, Marquis of Cholmondley & Daniel Vawdrey. There is no surviving minutes from the Trust so we do not know how many of the trustees in the Act proved their credentials or actually became involved in the management of the Trust. However it should follow that being a Trustee implied support for this turnpike project. Not so in the case of Daniel Vawdrey. From surviving correspondence he evidently had a rather jaundiced view of the investment potential of turnpikes. He had subscribed money to a variety of trusts over a period of more than 20 years and "*to this day have not recd. Sixpence*". He did not subscribe but did allow the value of the land that was taken for the major road re-alignment to go unpaid and the money remain on security with the new trust¹²⁶.

The turnpike act identified three properties where a cottage and garden or parts of a garden were to be taken for the road¹²⁷.

Township	Owner	Occupier	Description
Beeston	John Earlam	Samuel Fitton	Garden
Bunbury	Admiral Tollemache	John Vickers	Part of Garden
Whitchurch	Samuel Worthington	William Wycherley	Cottage & Garden

From an examination of the landownership and occupation patterns along the proposed road it would appear that these represent the sites chosen for the toll houses. The Act allowed for One Eighth of a Statute Acre for each Toll House. The toll house sites were in Beeston (SJ 554 595), Ridley (SJ 555 544) and Whitchurch (SJ 538 418). A fourth Toll Gate is shown on the 6" to the mile O.S. map surveyed in 1874 at Tiverton (SJ 554 602).

The tolls granted in the Act showed the complexity introduced by the 'Broad Wheel Acts'. The toll schedule was:-

For every Horse or other Beast drawing any Coach, Stage Coach, Chaise, Chariot, Landau, Sociable, Curricle, Hearse, chaise, Phaeton, Whiskey, Gig, or Chair or other such Carriage, any sum not exceeding Nine-pence:

For every Horse or other Beast drawing any Waggon, Wain, Dray, Cart, Caravan, Tunbrel, Drag, Bone Mill, Thrashing Machine, or other such like Carriage having the Sole or Bottom of the Fellies of the Wheels thereof of the Breadth than Six Inches, any Sum not exceeding Sixpence:

For every Horse or other Beast drawing any Waggon, Wain, Dray, Cart, Caravan, Tunbrel, Drag, Bone Mill, Thrashing Machine, or other such like Carriage having the Sole or Bottom of the Fellies of the Wheels thereof of a less Breadth than Six Inches and not less than Four Inches and a Half, any Sum not exceeding Eight-pence:

For every Horse or other Beast drawing any Four-wheeled Chaise, Gig, Chair or other such Four-wheeled Carriage drawn only by One Horse or other Beast, any Sum not exceeding One Shilling:

For every Horse, Mule, or Ass, laden or unladen, and not drawing, any Sum not exceeding Two-pence:

For every Ox, Cow, or Head of Neat Cattle, the Sum of One Penny:

For every other Calf, Swine, Sheep or Lamb, the Sum of One Half-penny:

There is no existing contemporary toll list and as the Act provided a series of tolls up to but not exceeding a particular figure we do not know what was actually charged.

The road was initially funded by “two sums of £500 each from two Ladies on mortgage of the Tolls”. The purchase of the land was handled by an independent surveyor, Mr Lee. In a letter dated 29th August 1830 from the clerk to the trust, Philip Humberston, to solicitors Pritchard & Son we find that Thomas Boycott (of Rudge Hall) is dissatisfied with the valuation of his land. However it appears from the rest of the letter that there had been no problems with any of the other land purchases¹²⁹.

The trust surveyor, Jonathon Hill, issued a general specification for the road:-

Breadth of the road - 26 feet between cops (verges)

Cops to be 2' 6" above the road

Cops to be 3' 6" wide at the base and 2' 6" at the top

Ditch on the field side of the cop to be 4' 6" deep from the top of the cop and 1' wide at the bottom, increasing in width by 3" for every foot.

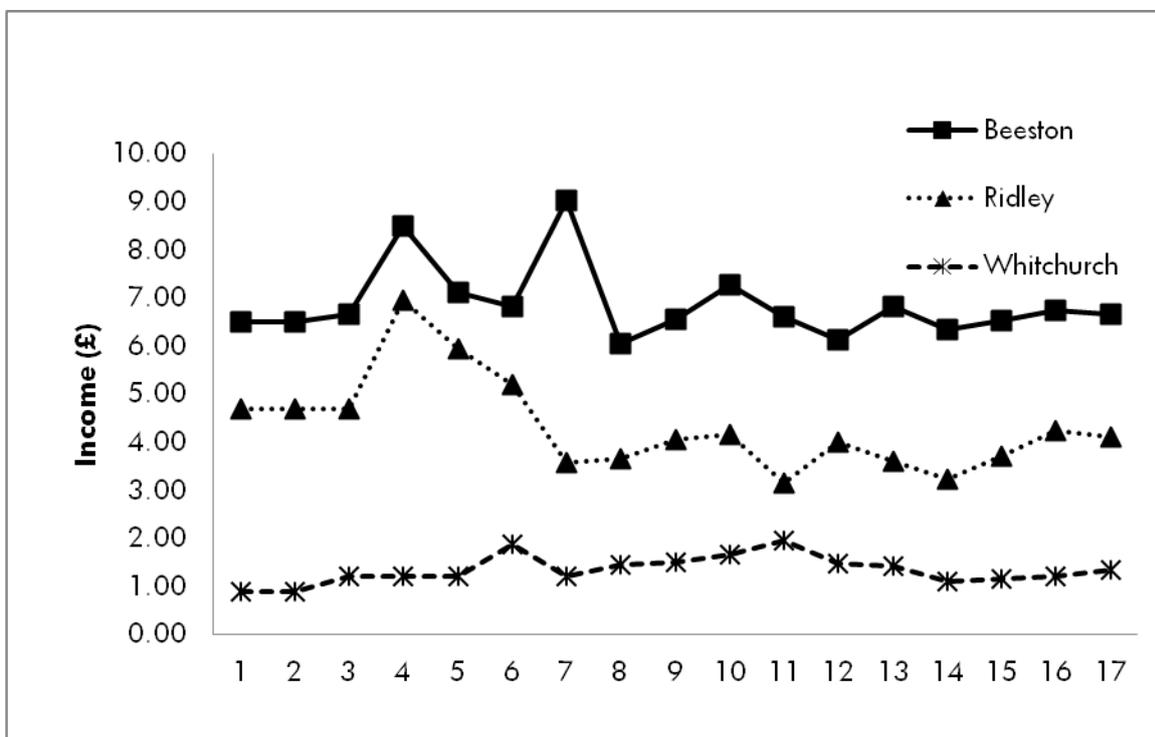
Examples of the made up road were to be seen at Dowse Green Farm and in Bickley Lane¹³⁰.

There is no description within the text as to how the road itself was to be constructed. This is perhaps surprising as McAdam had been propounding his theories in his book since the early 1820s¹³¹.

There is one surviving estimate for the construction of the road; however it is limited to the bridge over the canal, including embankments and culverts and three other minor bridges over ditches and streams. The quote came from Peter Humphreys and it totalled some £360 or a third of the initial loan¹³².

The work on the road probably started soon after the passing of the Act in May 1829. Letters had been sent to all land owners in June 1828 setting out how much land would be required for the road and asking them to accept a mortgage on the tolls of 5%, rather than a cash payment. Indeed in one letter there was a request to increase the mortgage to £100, which was greater than the value of the land¹³³. There is a clear indication that the work did not finish until June 1832. In September 6th 1833 there is an entry in the Surveyor's Accounts.

Figure 19. Tarporley and Whitchurch Turnpike Trust. Income per gate by four week periods for 1831 and the first four months of 1832.



“Total Expense of making the Road including Toll Houses and Bridges and one year and a quarter keeping in order.....£4823.6s.0d.”

There had been an accumulated expense of £4624.10s.2d by the end of June 1832, an excess of over £3600 on the original £1000 mortgaged against the tolls¹³⁴. As early as 1833 a House of Lords Select Committee Report on Turnpike Returns had highlighted the size of the Trusts expenses. The 1829 returns had shown that the 12 miles from Tarporley to Whitchurch had generated expenses of £517.17s.1d, which Mr Michael Ireland pointed out were mostly the cost of obtaining the Act of Parliament¹³⁵.

The earliest indication of the income from tolls is found in an advertisement, offering the tolls for auction, in the Chester Chronicle dated April 6th 1830. The “*gates from the whole line of the road*” produced an income of £190 above the costs of collecting during the year 1829-1830¹³⁶. There is no evidence as to whether the tolls were let at that auction but it would appear that the collection of the tolls was back in-house by 1831. The Surveyor’s Cash Received and Paid Book show the fortnightly income from the three gates recorded for 1831 and the first four months of 1832 – see Figure 19. The 1831 income from the Beeston Gate averaged around £7 per month, with Ridley at £5 and Whitchurch just over £1, giving a yearly income of just over £172. The income up to April 1832 was a further £47. The gates were then rented out for the year up to April 1833 for £200.

The first General Statement of Income & Expenditure is for April 1832 to April 1833 when the debts were summarised¹³⁷:-

Amount of Mortgage on the Tolls	£1000
Floating Debt	£4300
Interest due on Mortgage	£25

The Trust owed £5325 and only had an income of £284, including £84 of composition money (substitute for Statute Labour) from the different Townships, with a balance in hand of £80. From a very early stage it was evident that this Trust was going to be a financial disaster. Things came to head with a series of changes in the legal position of Turnpike Trust. Firstly in 1835 the Trusts lost the composition payments from the par-

ishes through which the road passed¹³⁸. In late 1835 and early 1836 we see moves by government to prepare the Trusts for the day when they could be consolidated in to larger entities. On the 12th February 1836 Philip Humberston, Clerk to the Trust, sent around another circular letter which summarised the predicament.

*"The funds of the Trust are, however, unable to bear the expense of the security, which must of necessity be paid by the Creditors requiring it; and if the Road is to be kept in its present state of repair, which is now barely sufficient to induce Travellers to use it, there can be no prospect of any interest being paid on the Securities, should they be taken, until travelling on the Road materially increases"*¹³⁹.

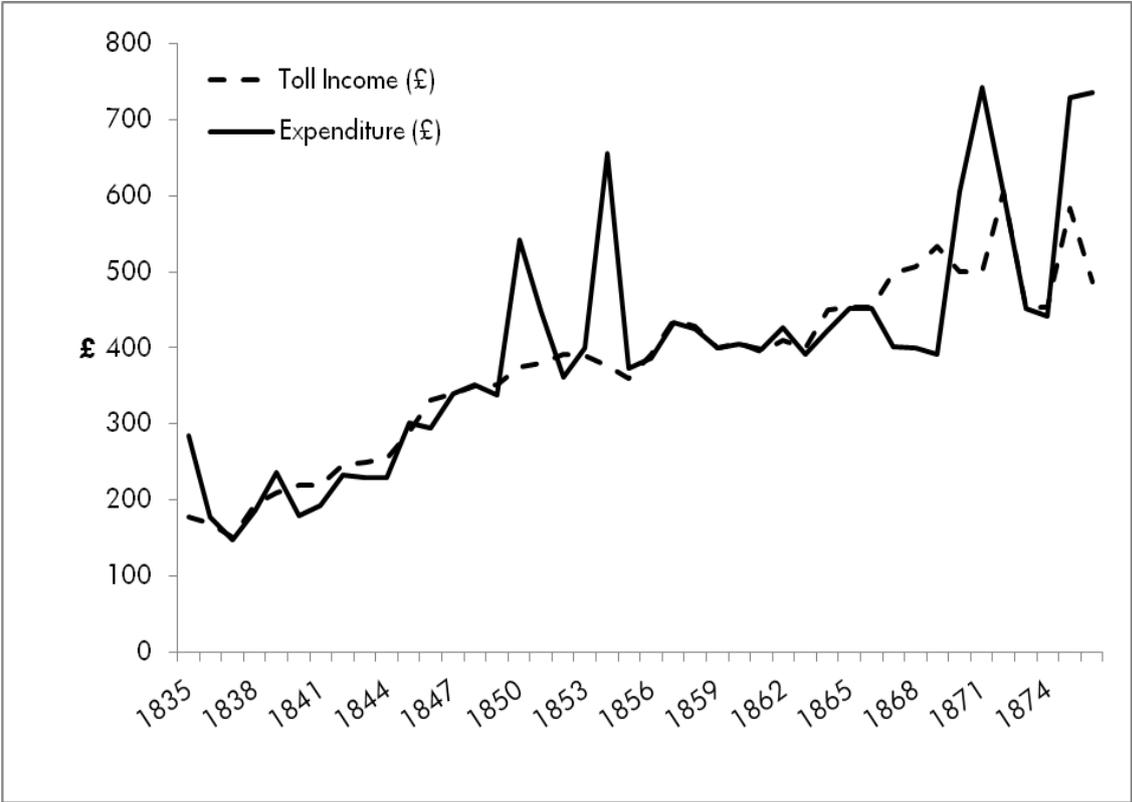
It was very evident by this stage that the traffic from Hereford, Shrewsbury and South Wales was not using this route to Liverpool and Manchester as the Mersey Bridge at Runcorn had dropped from the picture. The traffic had remained on the old established route via the Whitchurch and Chester and the Chester to Frodsham turnpikes.

The 1840 'Description of Turnpikes' showed the total debt had risen to £9185.7s.0d. with no yearly interest paid except for £50 a year paid on the original loan of £1000. The road is described as being "nearly ruined"¹⁴⁰.

In a series of financial reports on Turnpike Trusts in England and Wales the Tarporley to Whitchurch Trust figures large. In an 1843 report the Trust is shown as not having an income sufficient to pay 5% interest on its debts – income £220 with a bonded debt of £6506. It is also reported as having not paid interest in over six years and owing a further £1952 in unpaid interest, giving a grand total of £8458 for those years or a total of £9167 since its inception. It was not the only Cheshire trust in financial problems the Hinderton to Birkenhead, Macclesfield and Buxton and the Runcorn and Northwich were, if anything, in even deeper trouble¹⁴¹. The report on the 1846 financial figures showed a total debt of £11394 with an annual income of just £332 – an increase in the debt of over £2200 in six years¹⁴². In an 1854 report the financial situation of the Trust is laid bare in a short report.

"The Tolls for 1854 amounted to £377.4s. 10d., the bonded debt being £6771.4s. at 5 per cent, including a preference debt of £1000. There were unclaimed debts of £150 and £687.16s. original subscriptions and £4919 arrears of interest. In September 1855 the Clerk reported that the Creditors had consented to reduce the interest on the debt of £5771.4s. to 2½ per cent.....the creditors with one exception had given receipts of discharge of all

Figure 20. Toll Income & Expenditure Reported to the Government between 1835 and 1874. Tarporely and Whitchurch Turnpike Trust.



*arrears of interest up to December 1854, and that the remaining creditor was fully aware that nothing more would be paid on account of such arrears. By the present arrangement, the full interest of 5 per cent will continue to be paid upon the preference debt of £1000*¹⁴³.

Nobody was going to get any more money out of this Trust, except for the original two lady investors.

In 1857 the Clerk's report was updated and the financial figures appeared rather better, with the debt now only £5771.4s. because *"interest reduced and arrears extinguished by consent of creditors"*¹⁴⁴.

Income was now less than 3% of the accumulated debt. Where figures exist there is little evidence that there is any significant profits between 1835 and the cessation of the trust in 1876 – see Figure 20.

In January 1867 the preference debt of £1000 had been reduced to £175 and was due to be *"extinguished"* later that year, when *"I hope to be able to pay the bond holders a better dividend"*¹⁴⁵. However the final nail in the financial coffin of the Trust came in the 1867-1868 session when a bill was introduced in to Parliament *"to alter the Laws relating to Turnpike Roads and Trusts so far as it relates to the Tolls levied.....to provide for the Abolition of such Tolls and for the future Maintenance of such Roads as Public Highways"*¹⁴⁶. As a consequence of this Act any surplus money within the trust was to be used to pay off the debt. If there wasn't sufficient money then a proportion of the individual debts would be paid as a final settlement. In the case of the Tarporley and Whitchurch Trust the creditors were asked to bid for a proportion of the £220 available. The creditors with the lowest rate of composition would be paid first, then if any was left the next lowest. So for instance if the creditor had accepted 6d in the £ (pound) and this was the lowest bid he would be paid first. If he was owed £20 he would receive 20 x 6d or 10s (ten shillings). Thus the debts of the trust were paid off at a special meeting at the Tollemache Arms in Beeston on Monday 22nd March 1869¹⁴⁷. The total monies paid off to the creditors in the life time of the trust amounted to some £1440 out of over £11000. The trust struggled on for a further six years until 1st November 1876. However the House of Commons Committee, examining under the Turnpike Acts Continuance Act 1873, had imposed severe restrictions on the Trust. It was resolved that no toll money was to be spent on the repair of the road, no interest payments were allowed and the total salaries to be limited to £10 per annum¹⁴⁹.

There was also little apparent improvement in income when the Beeston Castle Cattle Market started in probably 1872. The market was started by Booth Hewitt who had also developed livestock markets near the railway stations at Malpas, Aldersey Arms near Tattenhall, Calveley and Worleston. Beeston received most investment, probably because the London and Northwest Railway had made an arrangement with Lord Tollemache that every train would stop at Beeston. The original cattle market was on the same side of the road as the station and the animals did not use the toll road if they were moved by train. Cattle being herded from Tarporley also did not pay a toll as the market was several hundred yards before the first toll gate. Subsequently the market moved across the road to the current site¹⁵⁰.

The Tarporley to Whitchurch Trust announced its opening in October in both local press such as the Shrewsbury Chronicle and the more regional papers such as the Manchester Courier and Lancashire General Advertiser in 1830. This is the Shrewsbury announcement (30th October 1830)... *"We are informed that the new turnpike road extending from Tarporley, in Cheshire, to Whitchurch, in this county, and which reduces the distance between these places to 13 miles, is in such a state of forwardness that it will soon be thrown open to the public. Even in this age of improvement, when so much is done to add to the convenience of our internal communications, we can confidently say that we know of no undertaking more likely to conduce to the accommodation of the public than the one alluded to. The commercial world in general and travellers from Bristol and the south of England, who may have no particular object in visiting the city of Chester, will find in the new line through Whitchurch and Tarporley a saving of no less than 14 miles in the distance between Shrewsbury and Manchester; and when the bridge across the Mersey (now in contemplation) is completed, this will be the shortest line, by land, to Liverpool. We have no doubt some of our spirited coach proprietors will quickly avail themselves of the advantages thus afforded, and that we shall ere long have the satisfaction of seeing one daily coach at least established from –Shrewsbury to Lee Bridge 10 miles–Whitchurch 10 miles–Tarporley 13 miles– Northwich 11 miles–Altrincham 12 miles–Manchester 11 miles–Total 64 miles. This, in addition to public accommodation, will also contribute to the convenience of the noblemen and gentlemen residing near the line. The names of Hardwick Grange, Acton Reynald, Hawkstone, Prees Hall, Marbury, Cholmondley Castle and the far-famed Beeston, are sufficient to convince our readers that they will travel over a country abounding in picturesque beauties."*

The bridge over the Mersey didn't happen and no coach ran on the road so Mr Vawdrey's comments about turnpike trusts were proven to be all too true.

Chapter 8. Nantwich and Congleton Trust

The birth of the Nantwich and Congleton Trust was not straight forward due to a variety of false starts. The early history of the trust is outlined in a series of documents produced by John Timmis, the surveyor and William Lowe, the solicitor acting on behalf of the trust in obtaining the Act¹⁵¹. The first proposal for a new turnpike road was the 19th September 1832, with a route from the "*Shropshire side of the County to Nantwich and thence to Church Minshall to Middlewich and thence to the Junction of the Brereton Green to Knutsford Trust, a Turnpike Road*". At the beginning of October a route was surveyed from Burleydam through Nantwich and Middlewich to Toft, just south of Knutsford. At a meeting of fourteen interested gentlemen at the Crown Inn, Nantwich on October 8th this route was approved. Nothing happened for over a year until another meeting was held at the Crown Inn on the 25th October 1833 when the first proposal was formally cancelled. The new proposal was for a road from Nantwich to Middlewich and then to Holmes Chapel to join with the turnpike road running from Twemlow to Chelford. This decision was formally recorded and a notice of the intention to develop this road was sent to the Chester Chronicle and the Macclesfield Gazette on 12th November. The survey was undertaken immediately with the formal plans being deposited with the Clerk to the County Justices on the 28th November. The application to obtain a Bill to turnpike this road was now under way according to the Standing Orders for Private Acts of Parliament¹⁵².

However all did not run smooth as at the next meeting of the developing trust at the King's Arms, Middlewich on the 11th February 1834 a deputation from Congleton was in the room. They presented a resolution passed at a meeting called by the Mayor of Congleton – unless the road was carried to Congleton they would oppose the Bill. The meeting agreed to suspend the application to parliament. In February the road between Holmes Chapel and Congleton was surveyed and presented at a meeting on the 17th February. The route was agreed at least until the 14th April when the idea of the road continuing from Congleton to Sandbach was proposed. Two routes were surveyed via Brereton Green and over Arclid Heath through Smethwick. By June the two surveys had been completed and a meeting was convened at the Boar's Head, Brereton Green to review the objections made to certain diversions, no decisions were made. However by the next meeting in Middlewich on the 7th July the objections raised about the new section of road by Sir Charles Shackerley, of Somerford House near Congleton, caused the meeting to abandon the idea and decide that the Congleton to Sandbach Road should be a separate trust. On 10th November 1834 notices were

Figure 21. Map of Nantwich to Congleton Turnpike Trust (Nantwich to Middlewich Division) indicating tollgates

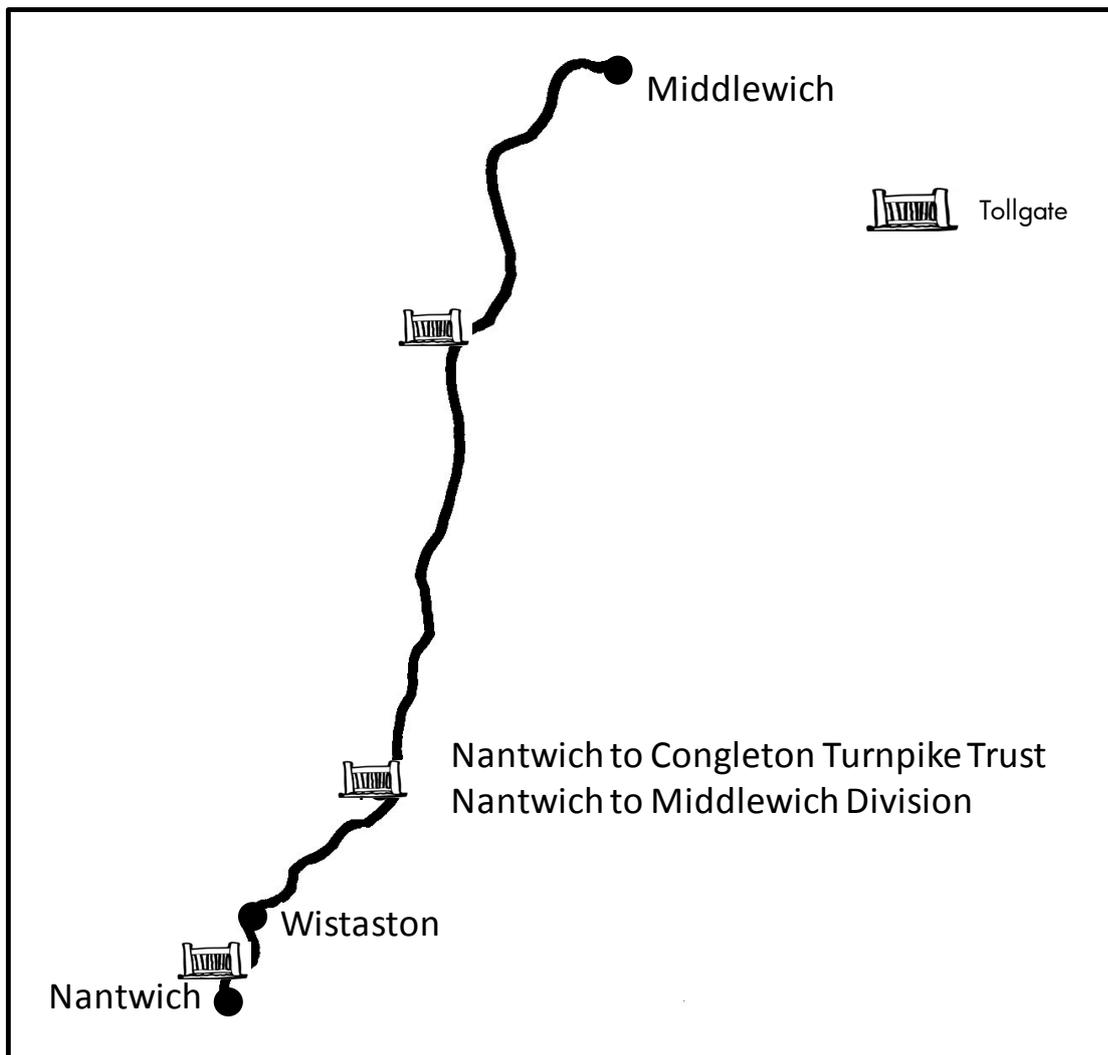


Figure 22. List of parishes and distances of turnpike road⁽ⁱ⁾.

Parish	Miles	Yards
Nantwich	0	940
Alvaston	1	826
Wistaston	0	150
Woolstandwood	1	260
Leighton	1	215
Minshull Vernon	2	400
Wymboldsley	1	40
Occlestone	0	1446
Stanthorpe	0	1250
Newton	0	1056

again placed in the local newspapers as the petition for the turnpike trust started over again, over two years after the first meeting. Now we move to London and the parliamentary agent.

The Bill was presented to the House of Commons for its first reading on March 31st 1835 by the Cheshire Member of Parliament, George Wilbraham of Delamere Lodge. On April 6th he also moved the second reading where it was referred to committee. George chaired the committee meeting on May 13th and prepared the report for the house. On May 18th the Bill was up for its third reading and whilst it was proposed, because Mr Wilbraham had not attended there was no seconder – the Bill was referred. The Bill was presented on both the 20th and 21st May but on each occasion the sitting was adjourned before it could be debated and it did not receive its third reading until May 22nd. The passage through the House of Lords was a lot smoother.

June 1st Presented for first reading

June 3rd Presented for second reading and referred to committee

June 5th Committee meeting

June 10th Presented for third reading

June 12th Royal Assent with a term of 31 years

The committees of the two houses examined the Bills to ensure the road really was in need of repair by questioning the potential trustees, on this occasion a Peter Egerton travelled to London for the Commons review. The second item on the agenda was any counter-petitions objecting to the road and the final item was had the trust followed the Standing Orders, especially those related to giving notice of the road development to the local area before the application to Parliament.

The first meeting of the new trust took place on July 16th 1835 at the King's Arms, Middleswich and the real work of the trustees got under way. The first job was to raise the subscriptions to pay the costs of obtaining the Bill. On the 1st October 1835 the treasurer George Reade wrote to the Reverend Tomkinson with a review of progress¹⁵³. By that date they had received subscriptions of £650 from the Congleton end and £910 from the Nantwich end – a total of £1560. The costs of individual parts of the process become evident:-

Mr Timmins Surveyor £160 16s. 10d.

Mr Lowe Solicitor £115 0s. 0d.

Mr Thorpe Parliamentary Agent £247 13s. 7d.

After all the expenses there was a residue of £270 10s. 11d. with which to build the road, tollhouses etc – Congleton end £78 10s. 0d. and the Nantwich end £192. 0s. 11d. We now move on to the next round of calls on the subscribers.

In the Act there was no provision for the turnpike to be divided into districts but after the first meeting of the trustees it was thought practical to manage the road as two distinct entities:- Nantwich to Middlewich and Middlewich to Congleton districts (Figure 21). Each division had separate management and financial reporting to Parliament. It was made very clear in the early meetings of the Trustees that money raised in a division could only be spent on that division, money raised on a line could only be spent on that line and there were to be separate accounts for each division and line. Only the expenses of the initial survey, drawing maps, obtaining the Act and incidental expenses that could be ascribed to the whole road were to be shared amongst the divisions and lines.

The Nantwich to Middlewich Division started at the end of Beam Street and led out of Nantwich across the Barony. The turnpike then divided into two lines. The Nantwich to Middlewich General Line ran for nine miles one thousand three hundred and twenty yards and passed through ten parishes – see Figure 22. It passed through the townships of Alveston, Wistaston, Woolstanwood, Leighton and Minshull Vernon. The other road through Worleston, Aston-juxta-Mondrum and Church Minshall to rejoin with original route at Minshull Vernon – the Minshall Line. A single road then ran as far as Occlestone where again it divided one branch running in to Middlewich along ‘Sutton Hollow’ to terminate at Lewin Street. The General Line passing via Lea Head and entering Middlewich at Newton Bank. In modern road terms the routes are represented by the current A530 and the B5074 to Church Minshall then the unclassified road that runs back to join the A530 near Walley’s Green. The Occlestone and ‘Sutton Hollows’ section is now only represented by footpaths, a farm track and Sutton Lane. This is interesting as in the turnpike act it was proposed that once the ‘Sutton Hollow’ road had been widened and repaired the alternate route (the current A530) would be abandoned by the trust. The ‘Sutton Hollows’ and Sutton Lane route is evident on the pre-turnpike maps of Burdett (1777)¹⁵⁴ and Bryant (1831)¹⁵⁵ as well as the post-turnpike maps produced by the Ordnance Survey in 1834¹⁵⁶ and on the 1847 Tithe map¹⁵⁷. The road was transferred to the local Highways Board on the expiry of the trust in 1878 and some four years later the 10 inch to the mile Ordnance Survey Map of

1882 shows only a footpath at the southern end of the lane. The footpath runs from Hopley House (SJ 691 631) to near Occlestone Green Farm (SJ 693 633), but it shows a road for the rest of the route in to Middlewich. In 1888 the highways were handed over to the newly formed Cheshire County Council and on the 1909 25 inch to the mile Ordnance Survey map the situation remained unchanged¹⁵⁸. However by 1922 the road is only shown as running from Sutton Mill (SJ 699 642) in to Middlewich, much as it is today¹⁵⁹. There is no evidence that this line was repaired by the Trust and there is no mention of this line in the surviving documents. It is possible that this is an example of the abandonment of this section of the turnpike road, even though it shown on the deposited map and listed in the Act.

Six toll gates were planned. Four in the Nantwich and Middlewich Division with two on both the Minshull Line and the General Line, with two gates in the Middlewich to Congleton Division. The sites for the four gates in the Nantwich to Middlewich Division were described in the Order Book.

"Township of Occlestone opposite a house in the possession or occupation of John Scragg.

Township of Woolstantonwood at the junction of the road from Church Coppenhall.

Township of Church Minshull opposite a house in the possession or occupation of Samuel Hitchen near the junction of the road to Wettenhall.

Township of Worleston opposite a house in the possession or occupation of Stephen Hollowood near to Beam Bridge."

All the sites can be identified but there is only evidence for two of the gates being completed. The Woolstanswood (Marshfield) Gate (SJ 675 554) which is shown on the 1838 Tithe Map as being owned by Eliza Cooke and in the occupation of William Cadman with the gates clearly shown across the Middlewich and Church Coppenhall Roads. The second being the Occlestone Gate (SJ 690 627), where a tender of £8.5s.0d. from Mr W. Williams was accepted, on the 15th August 1835, to erect a tollgate. Why were the other gates not erected? When the list of mortgages raised against the tolls for the Nantwich to Middlewich Division is reviewed it is apparent that only the General Line (via Leighton) seems to have been financed. It therefore follows that if no monies were raised to repair and widen the Church Minshull Line so no work took place. There is no documentary evidence that either of the gates on this line were built. To avoid a loss of revenue from travellers using the Church Minshull Line the tollgate on the Barony in Nantwich (SJ 654 531) was built where the two lines divide, with Occlestone already in place where the two lines again coincide. While the map evi-

dence seems to support this theory it cannot be confirmed from the existing Order Book as from mid-1836 it only deals with the Middlewich to Congleton Division. The Oc-
clestone and Marshfield Gates were let to Thomas Noble, a Toll Contractor from
Harper Hey in Lancashire, for £80 for 10 calendar months starting from the 1st March
1836. John Greenwood, a coach proprietor from Lancashire and John Ramsbottom
from Pendleton in Lancashire stood surety.

The Middlewich to Congleton Division had two tollgates

*“at or near a Place in the Township of Kinderton cum Hulme between the Guide
Post at the Lane End leading to Huntsford and Kinderton Lodge Gate.”* Kinder-
ton Gate (SJ 710 666).

*“at or near a place in the Township of Congleton at the junction of the road
nearest to Congleton which leads to Radnor and is nearly opposite a House
then in the Occupation of George Cookson but at the Easterly Side of said Rad-
nor Road.”* Somerford Gate (SJ 845 631).

The placing of the gates was discussed in both the June and September 1836 meetings
of the trustees with the tolls being let for £82 from January 1837 to the previously men-
tioned Thomas Noble. While all seemed set fair with the tollgates built and the tolls let,
as early as March 1837 the *“low state”* of the funds of the Middlewich to Congleton
Division caused the Trustees to ask the Bonded Creditors to forego interest or the *“road
could not be kept in sufficient repair”*. The situation got worse when the tolls could not
be let for 1838 and collection had to be brought in-house. William Dale was retained
as the toll collector at the Kinderton Gate and two of the Trustees, Mr Steward and Mr
Shackerley *“put in”* a collector at Somerford Gate. At least the mortgagees had agreed
to forego interest for the next four years.

The tolls for these gates were again let for 1839 at the sum of £123 to Thomas Noble,
but they were not taken the following year. Again the collecting was brought back
within the trust and William Dale was again recruited at the Kinderton Gate at 4/6d
per week, a Mr Naylor stood as surety. Messrs Tipping and Shackerley agreed to re-
cruit the Somerford Gate keeper and Mr Shackerley provided surety for up to one
month’s toll income. At the same meeting the Reverend John Armistead offered to pro-
vide a person as *“treasurer without salary”* and he would stand surety. In addition
Messrs Tipping and Shackerley offered to become the surveyors of the Holmes Chapel
to Congleton section of the road. Both these move were indicative of the poor financial
state of the Trust. The financial situation had become so bad that the value of the secu-

rities had become depreciated, however much of this problem dated back to 1835 when 'Statute Labour' or the financial duty associated with it had been removed. It had brought £90 a year in to the Trust, a major portion of the income. The 1840 Report on the State of the Turnpike Roads in England and Wales reported that the Middlewich to Congleton was in a "*very bad repair, but not under indictment*"¹⁶⁰. The tolls were again not let in 1841 and it became increasingly evident that the parish (township) Surveyors of Highways were being used to maintain the road. In January 1841 an allowance of £20 was given from the 'Turnpike Road Fund' to each township for material to be "*laid upon the road*". This situation of using Trustees and Parish Surveyors of the Highway to maintain the road lasted until December 1841 when John Johnson was appointed surveyor at a salary of £30 for 1842 and £20 per year if he was retained. The new surveyor was instructed to spend money on the road "*at an equal rate per mile*"; he was not to favour any township. The Kinderton Gate was again not let in 1842, however the Somerford Gate was let for £76 to Peter Painter of Congleton, surety was provided by Jeremiah Painter of Biddulph, a stone getter and John Painter of Congleton, a weaver. All this activity in 1842 created a peak of expenditure as the new surveyor brought the road back in to repair – expenditure over £300, income less than £100. The details of the management of the Nantwich to Congleton Trust are from this date obscured by the lack of any further preserved documents beyond the yearly financial report to Government.

There appears to have been a major road re-alignment in the vicinity of Reaseheath. The turnpike was, if built, originally planned to run in front of Reaseheath Hall and is shown as such on a series of maps from Bryant 1831 and the Ordnance Survey 1833 to the Tithe Map of 1842. However by 1875 the road has been re-aligned with a new section of road from Beam Bridge, Nantwich to Park Farm on the B5074 – see Figure 23. The original route can still be traced through Reaseheath College as the original front drive from the A51, it becomes enmeshed in a series of buildings before becoming a farm track which also becomes a footpath before joining the B5074. There is no evidence in the financial returns for the Trust of any land purchases or increased manual or team labour costs that could have been associated with the building of this road. This is the third example of a turnpike road diverted from the front door of a major country house. Other than this example and Sutton Lane the turnpike roads are essentially still operating as through routes although with some sections much reduced in importance.

An unusual surviving document from the trust describes the construction of the road¹⁶¹.

Figure 23. Comparison of the route of the Nantwich and Congleton Turnpike Road near Reaseheath Hall on the Bryant 1831 map and the current Ordnance Survey (OS). Note that the line of the B5074 is first shown on the 1875 OS map.

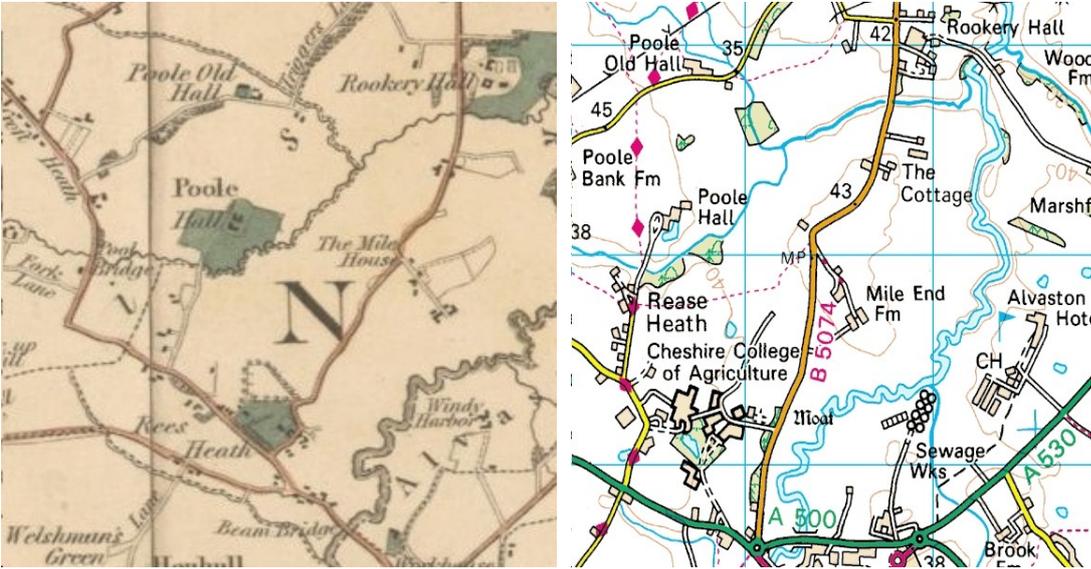


Figure 24. Undated specification for constructing a road. Nantwich to Congleton Turnpike Trust. Based on Cheshire County Records Office DDX 13/10.

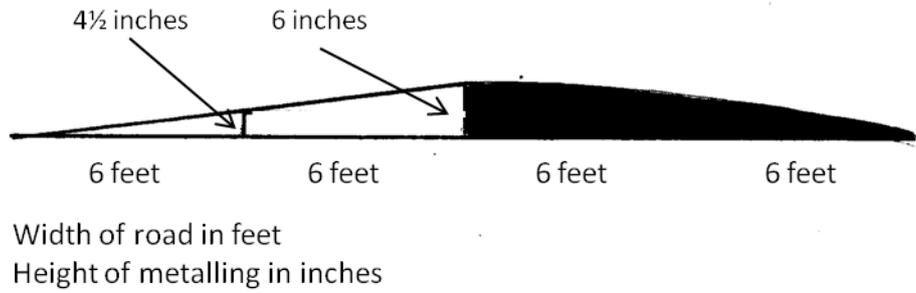
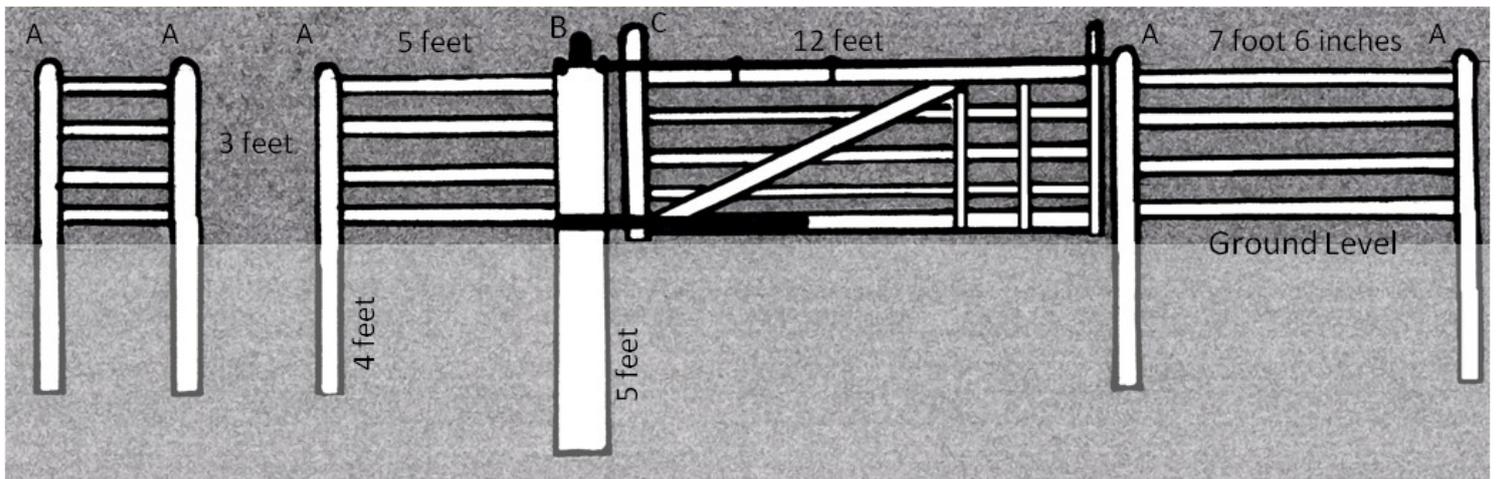


Figure 25. Construction details for a tollgate on the Nantwich to Congleton Turnpike Road. Based on Cheshire County Records Office. DDX 13/23.



- Timber A – 6 inches x 6 inches
- Timber B – 13 inches x 6 inches
- Timber C – 6 inches x 4 inches

“The Pavement to be lifted. The Road to be formed according to the above section (see Figure 24). 24 feet wide with a rise of six inches in the centre at 6 feet from the centre on each side 4½ inches. The Pavement to be broken in such a manner that no stone shall exceed 2 inches in its largest dimensions. The stones to be laid on the road 12 feet wide and 4 inches deep the overflow to be placed in heaps at the side of the road. The ruts to be racked in levelled by the contractor until his contract has been completed. The contractor to find labourers, tools and implements. ... the entire breadth of the road and to execute it according to the above specification. The road when formed to be left until the rain shall have soddened it and the ruts continually racked in before the broken stones are placed upon it which are not to be placed but according to the directions and superintendence of the surveyor.”

There is also an existing plan for the construction of a tollgate showing not only the road gate but also a pedestrian access (see Figure 25)¹⁶².

The setting up costs of the turnpike road from Nantwich to Congleton is reflected in the expense for 1835 of over £900 – the one year they were not reported separately (see Figures 26a & 26b). The cost of the Act had been £383.15 and a large portion of the remainder was the cost of building two tollgates, milestones, road materials and manual labour. The accumulated debt in 1835 was £1619 for the combined trust but by 1840 the Nantwich district was £1092, by 1850 £1136 falling in 1870 to £325 and £175 the year before expiration. The income from the Middlewich to Congleton tolls was rarely over £150 with expenses exceeding toll income most years. They stopped collecting tolls in July 1866. However the Nantwich to Middlewich Division of the Trust had applied to the Principal Secretary of State for the Home Department for a reduction in the interest paid on the outstanding loan of £425 from 5% to 3% in November 1867 back-dated to the 31st December 1866¹⁶³. However the toll income for the Nantwich District had doubled in 1856 and remained at that level until the trust expired in November 1878.

This trust was the last of the Nantwich roads and had the lowest income. This road connected three market towns and was used by local traffic; it was an in-fill road with no obvious potential for major freight or passenger traffic. The important roads had been turnpiked in the mid 1700s, over 60 years previously.

The treasurer of the Nantwich to Middlewich Turnpike Trust was John Eyton (1836 to 1847) and then S.W. Moore (1848 onwards) – these names are familiar from the Nantwich to Wheelock Trust. The clerk was William Lowe initially followed by Thomas

Figure 26a. Income and Expenditure of the Nantwich to Congleton Turnpike Trust (Nantwich to Middlewich Division) between 1835 and 1878.

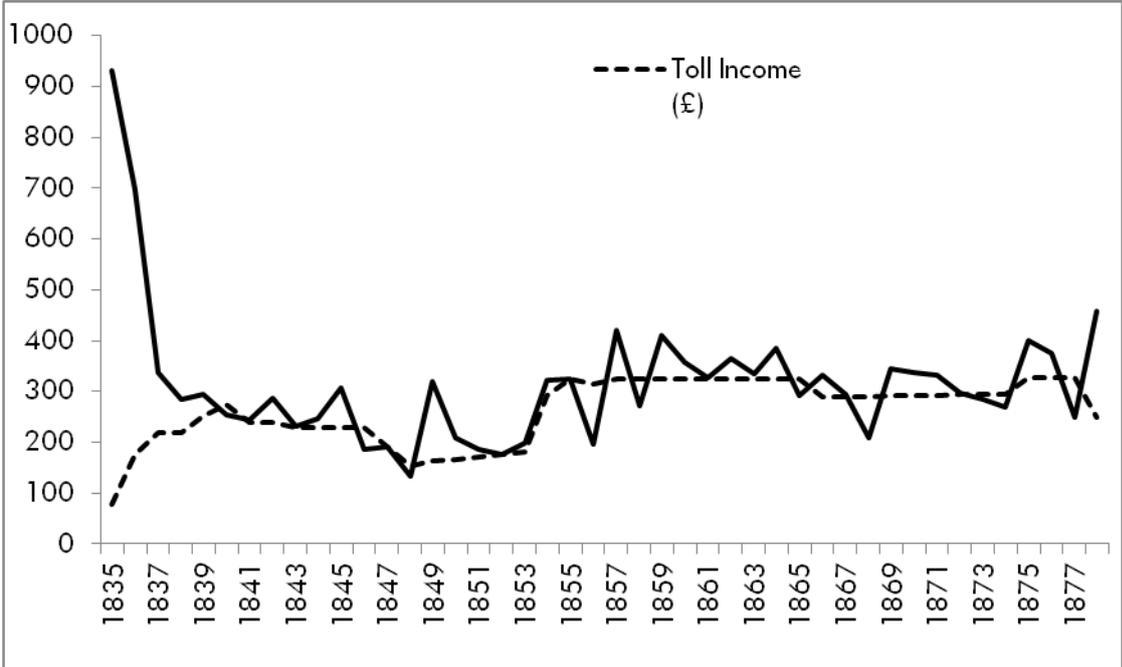
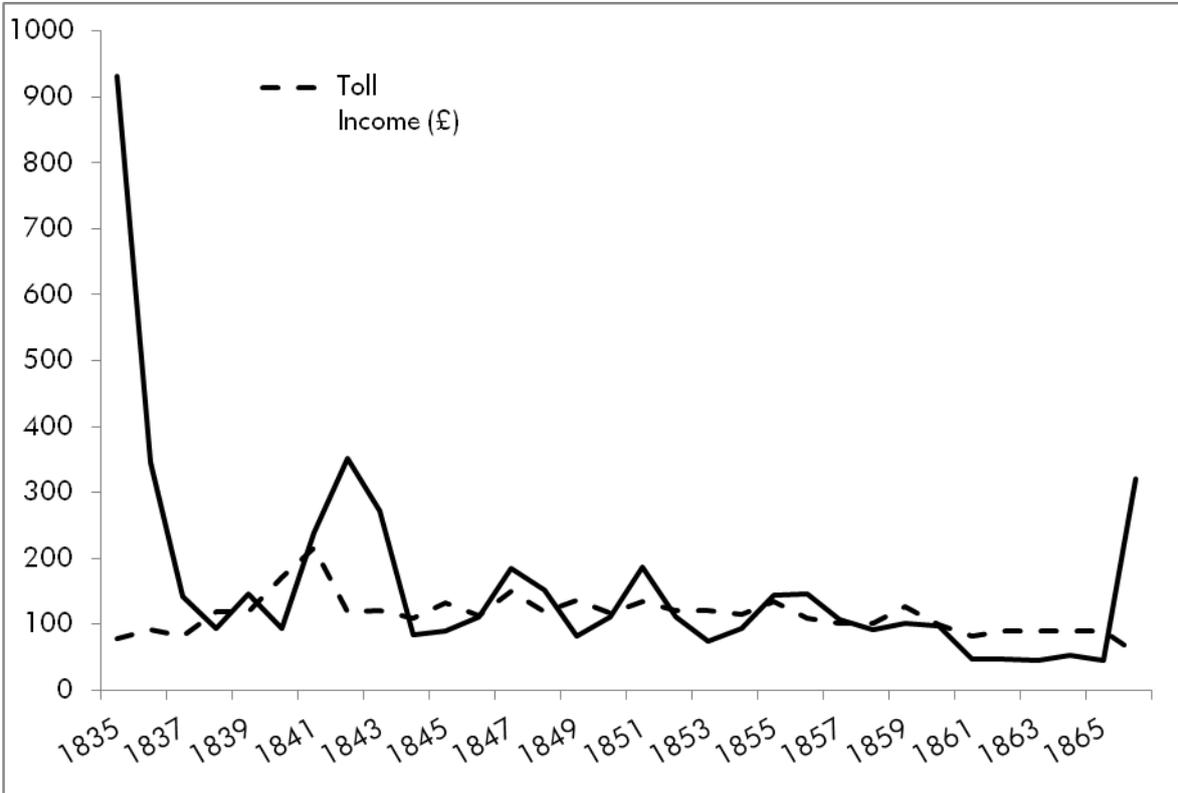


Figure 26b. Income and Expenditure of the Nantwich to Congleton Turnpike Trust (Middlewich to Congleton Division) between 1835 and 1866.



P Lowe with the surveyor being John Ward (1836 to 1847) and John Johnstone (1848 onwards).

Chapter 9. Turnpike Trustees and Mortgages

Each turnpike act, including renewals, listed the trustees. These lists could be quite long with some trusts having over 400 names. It would appear that the trusts prior to 1750 had an average of just over 100 trustees but it jumped to over 200 during the 20 years to 1770 and then fell back slightly to some 180¹⁶⁴. In the initial acts for the local trusts there were more trustees prior to 1800. However this is too simplistic a view as the major national roads were turnpiked in this period.

Date	Name of Trust	Number of Trustees
1744	Nantwich and Woore	197
1767	Newcastle-under-Lyme and Nantwich	365
1767	Whitchurch and Madeley	269
1816	Nantwich and Wheelock	50
1829	Tarporley and Whitchurch	88
1835	Nantwich and Congleton	71

Who were the trustees? Each turnpike act started as a local initiative and the trustees tended to be the local landed gentry because there was a land and income qualification for the position. Early turnpike acts were considered to be 'private' bills but from 1720 they were defined as 'local' bills. The essential feature of the bill that carried most weight in Parliament was the scale of the local support. The longer the list the greater the support, but this did not imply any active involvement from the trustees after the Act had received Royal Assent.

The list of trustees often started with all the County Justices, the Lord Mayor and Corporation, Members of Parliament, Lords, Gentlemen, Clerics, Industrialists and Tradesmen. The one thing they all had in common was they were landowners. The turnpike trust was one of many local institutions, which the Government put into the hands of "qualified persons". The qualification being ownership of land or a very large per-

sonal fortune. In the early turnpike acts the qualifications were listed within the Act. So within the Newcastle-under-Lyne to Nantwich and the Whitchurch to Madeley Turnpike Acts the qualification was:-

“unless he shall be in his own Right, or in the Right of his wife, in the actual possession or Receipt of Rents and Profits of Lands, Tenements or Hereditaments, of the clear yearly Value of Fifty Pounds above Reprizes or possessed of or intitled unto a Personal Estate of the value of One thousand Pounds or shall be heir apparent to a person possessed of an Estate in Lands, Tenements or Hereditaments of the clear yearly Value of One hundred Pounds.”

The 1773 General Highway and Turnpike Acts included a section on qualification of trustees in which the rental value of the land was reduced to £40 per year and the personal estate to £800 or be an heir to an estate with a rental value over £80. This was a lower qualification requirement than in the 1767 Newcastle-under-Lyne to Nantwich and Whitchurch to Madeley Turnpike Acts.

Under the 1822 General Turnpike Act the qualifications and behaviour of the trustees were well described.

“Trustees, in his own right or in the right of his wife, must be in actual possession or receipt of the rents and profits of freehold and copyhold lands, tenements, or hereditaments, of the clear yearly value of one hundred pounds above reprises or be heir apparent to a person with actual possessions or receipts of the rents and profits of freehold and copyhold lands, tenements, or hereditaments, of the clear yearly value of two hundred pounds”.

There were then a series of clauses on their behaviour. None of the trustees could *“enjoy any office or place of profit”* within the trust. Nor could they have *“direct or indirect contracts or bargains to build or repair toll houses, tollgates, weighing machines nor supply any building material or hirer any wagons, wains, cart or carriage or any horses, cattle or team for use on the turnpike road, nor receive any sums of money for their use from the tolls.”* Finally when attending meetings of the trustees they had to cover their own expenses, except for 10 shillings that could be used towards the cost of the meeting room. The trustees could meet as often as they wanted, where they wanted and could transact business as long as three members were present. There had to be 14 days notice of a general meeting in the local newspapers and 21 days notice for the Annual General Meeting, with the AGM taking place in April, September or October¹⁶⁵.

The list of trustees in the turnpike act is very misleading because legally they did not actually become trustees until they had proved their credentials, usually at the first meeting, by swearing an oath before two or more trustees.

*"I do swear, that I, truly and bone fide, am, in my own Right, or in the Right of my Wife, in the actual Possession and Enjoyment, or Receipt, of Rents and Profits of Lands, Tenements, or Hereditaments, of a clear yearly Value of.....Pounds, or possessed of, or intituled to, a personal Estate alone, or real and personal Estate together, to the Value of.....Pounds.
So help me GOD."*

If subsequent to swearing the oath it was found to be a false statement the fine was set at £50 in the 1767 Newcastle-under-Lyne to Nantwich as well as the Whitchurch to Madeley Turnpike Act, £50 in the 1773 General Highway and Turnpike Act and £100 in the 1822 General Turnpike Act.

Where enough information has survived it becomes evident that the minority of trustees bothered to prove their qualifications and even fewer actively managed the trusts. The earliest example is from the Whitchurch to Madeley Trust where the two districts set up under the 1767 Act had to be reduced to one district in the renewal of 1785. Each district had the requirement for a quorum of five trustees and in spite of the Audlem District having 173 trustees and the Woore District 96 trustees

"that at the several Meetings appointed to be held by virtue of the said Act, a Quorum of five Trustees for both Districts could not be assembled; therefore, for the greater Ease and Convenience of the said Trustees for the said Districts, and to the End the same may be united and made in to One District only."

It would appear that at least 250 trustees were needed to guarantee a quorum of five.

A Select Committee Report highlighted these issues and the findings from a number of the local Nantwich Trusts are presented in the table over the page¹⁶⁶:-

Name of Trust	Number of Trustees in Act (Date)	Number of Qualified Trustees in 1821
Nantwich and Woore	106 (1803)	20
	88 (1824)	
Newcastle-under-Lyme and Nantwich	216 (1808)	43
	119 (1829)	
Nantwich and Wheelock	50 (1816)	17

A further report by Mr Alexander Hastie in 1848 showed little improvement. Covering the five year period from 1843-1847 the number of active trustees and the number of trust meetings were recorded for an incomplete set of the English and Welsh trusts¹⁶⁷.

Name of Trust	Number of Active Trustees 1843-47	Number of Meetings of Trustees 1843-47	Number of Meetings of Trustees p.a.
Nantwich and Congleton	14	25	5
Nantwich and Wheelock	23	18	3.5
Nantwich and Woore	22	30	6
Tarporley and Whitchurch	21	11	2
Average for Cheshire	22	11	2

The worst performing Cheshire trust was the Chelford to Holmes Chapel with only three active trustees (the minimum quorum), holding one meeting a year.

There has been too much emphasis on the lists of names in the Turnpike Trust Acts, only a small proportion bothered to prove their qualification, few invested in the Trust and even fewer actually bothered to become involved in the management of the Trusts. The management of the trust therefore fell on to the shoulders of the paid staff – the clerk, surveyor and treasurer.

Qualification for a position based on landownership was fundamental to much of government policy throughout the 1700s and the early 1800s. In the 'Putney Debates' after the Civil War, Ireton preached that the representatives in parliament should "*have a permanent fixed interest in this Kingdome.....that is, the person in whome all land lies*"¹⁶⁸. This thinking was carried over to governance in the Stuart period. Land Tax

Figure 27a. Nantwich Town Committees from 1746-1824 derived from Hall (A History of the Town and Parish of Nantwich) showing Turnpike Trusts Acts in which a selection of members are listed.

Surname	First Name	Title	Nantwich Organisation	Trust
Audley	George (elder)	Mister	1746 Nantwich Vestry Committee	1767 Newcastle & Nantwich
Church	Richard	Mister	1746 Nantwich Vestry Committee	1744 Nantwich & Woore 1767 Newcastle & Nantwich 1767 Whitchurch & Madeley
Cooke	William	Mister	1746 Nantwich Vestry Committee	1767 Newcastle & Nantwich
Gibbons	George	Mister	1746 Nantwich Vestry Committee	1767 Newcastle & Nantwich 1767 Whitchurch & Madeley
Hall	Jonathon	Mister	1746 Nantwich Vestry Committee	1744 Nantwich & Woore 1767 Newcastle & Nantwich 1767 Whitchurch & Madeley
Leversage	Richard	Mister	1746 Nantwich Vestry Committee	1744 Nantwich & Woore 1767 Newcastle & Nantwich
Maisteron	Thomas	Esquire	1746 Nantwich Vestry Committee	1744 Nantwich & Woore 1767 Newcastle & Nantwich
Massie	Thomas	Mister	1746 Nantwich Vestry Committee	1767 Newcastle & Nantwich 1767 Whitchurch & Madeley
Oulton	John	Mister	1746 Nantwich Vestry Committee	1744 Nantwich & Woore 1767 Newcastle & Nantwich 1767 Whitchurch & Madeley
Pratchitt	Thomas	Mister	1746 Nantwich Vestry Committee	1767 Newcastle & Nantwich
Taylor	Robert	Mister	1746 Nantwich Vestry Committee	1767 Newcastle & Nantwich 1767 Whitchurch & Madeley
Tomkinson		Mister	1746 Nantwich Vestry Committee	1744 Nantwich & Woore 1767 Newcastle & Nantwich 1767 Whitchurch & Madeley
Watkiss	William	Mister	1746 Nantwich Vestry Committee	1744 Nantwich & Woore 1767 Newcastle & Nantwich 1767 Whitchurch & Madeley
Wetenhall	Edward	Esquire	1746 Nantwich Vestry Committee	1744 Nantwich & Woore
Wicksted	Thomas	Mister	1746 Nantwich Vestry Committee	1744 Nantwich & Woore 1767 Newcastle & Nantwich 1767 Whitchurch & Madeley
Wilbraham	Roger	Esquire	1746 Nantwich Vestry Committee	1744 Nantwich & Woore 1767 Newcastle & Nantwich
Woodworth	Andrew	Mister	1746 Nantwich Vestry Committee	1744 Nantwich & Woore
Yoxall	Richard	Mister	1746 Nantwich Vestry Committee	1744 Nantwich & Woore

Figure 27b. Nantwich Town Committees from 1746-1824 derived from Hall (A History of the Town and Parish of Nantwich) showing Turnpike Trusts Acts in which a selection of members are listed.

Surname	First Name	Title	Nantwich Organisation	Trust
Barrow	Samuel	Esquire. JP	1779-80 Workhouse Committee	1744 Nantwich & Woore 1776 Newcastle & Nantwich 1776 Whitchurch & Madeley
Bate	Charles	Mister	1779-80 Workhouse Committee	1803 Nantwich & Woore
Caldwall	James	Mister	1779-80 Workhouse Committee	1829 Newcastle & Nantwich
Cappur	George	Mister	1779-80 Workhouse Committee	1808 Newcastle & Nantwich 1816 Nantwich & Wheelock 1829 Newcastle & Nantwich 1835 Nantwich & Congleton
Cotton	Robert, Salisbury	Sir	1779-80 Workhouse Committee	1776 Newcastle & Nantwich 1776 Whitchurch & Madeley
Eddowes	John	Mister	1779-80 Workhouse Committee	1776 Newcastle & Nantwich 1776 Whitchurch & Madeley
Garnett	George	Mister	1779-80 Workhouse Committee	1824 Whitchurch & Madeley
Kent	John	Reverend	1779-80 Workhouse Committee	1767 Newcastle & Nantwich
Payne	George	Mister	1779-80 Workhouse Committee	1776 Newcastle & Nantwich 1776 Whitchurch & Madeley
Skerret	Joseph	Mister	1779-80 Workhouse Committee	1816 Nantwich & Wheelock 1824 Whitchurch & Madeley
Sprout	William	Mister	1779-80 Workhouse Committee	1803 Nantwich & Woore 1816 Nantwich & Wheelock
Taylor	Robert	Mister	1779-80 Workhouse Committee	1776 Newcastle & Nantwich 1776 Whitchurch & Madeley 1803 Nantwich & Woore
Tomkinson	James, Jnr	Mister	1779-80 Workhouse Committee	1803 Nantwich & Woore 1809 Nantwich & Woore (3rd Division) 1816 Nantwich & Wheelock 1829 Newcastle & Nantwich 1835 Nantwich & Congleton
Watkiss	William	Mister	1779-80 Workhouse Committee	1744 Nantwich & Woore 1776 Newcastle & Nantwich 1776 Whitchurch & Madeley 1801 Newcastle & Nantwich
Wicksted	Richard	Mister	1779-80 Workhouse Committee	1776 Newcastle & Nantwich

Figure 27c. Nantwich Town Committees from 1746-1824 derived from Hall (A History of the Town and Parish of Nantwich) showing Turnpike Trusts Acts in which a selection of members are listed.

Surname	First Name	Title	Nantwich Organisation	Trust
Crewe	John	Colonel	1803 Volunteers	1808 Newcastle & Nantwich 1809 Nantwich & Woore (3rd Division) 1816 Nantwich & Wheelock 1829 Newcastle & Nantwich
Cotton	Robert	Major	1803 Volunteers	1744 Nantwich & Woore 1767 Newcastle & Nantwich 1767 Whitchurch & Madeley
Bayley	James	Captain	1803 Volunteers	1804 Whitchurch & Madleley 1808 Newcastle & Nantwich 1816 Nantwich & Wheelock 1829 Newcastle & Nantwich
Sprout	William	Captain	1803 Volunteers	1803 Nantwich & Woore 1816 Nantwich & Wheelock
Garnet	Thomas	Captain	1803 Volunteers	1816 Nantwich & Wheelock 1824 Whitchurch & Madeley
Bayley	Peter	Captain	1803 Volunteers	1803 Nantwich & Woore
Folliott	William	Captain	1803 Volunteers	1803 Nantwich & Woore
Tomkinson	James	Captain	1803 Volunteers	1803 Nantwich & Woore 1809 Nantwich & Woore (3rd Division) 1816 Nantwich & Wheelock 1829 Newcastle & Nantwich 1835 Nantwich & Congleton
Rodenhurst	Benjamin	Lieutenant	1803 Volunteers	1803 Nantwich & Woore 1808 Newcastle & Nantwich 1829 Newcastle & Nantwich
Leversage	Richard	Lieutenant	1803 Volunteers	1803 Nantwich & Woore 1808 Newcastle & Nantwich
Pratchett	John	Lieutenant	1803 Volunteers	1816 Nantwich & Wheelock
Garnett	Jasper	Lieutenant	1803 Volunteers	1808 Newcastle & Nantwich 1816 Nantwich & Wheelock
Sprout	Peter	Lieutenant	1803 Volunteers	1803 Nantwich & Woore 1816 Nantwich & Wheelock
Kent	William	Lieutenant & Surgeon	1803 Volunteers	1767 Newcastle & Nantwich
Cliff	John (Jack)	Ensign	1803 Volunteers	1803 Nantwich & Woore 1808 Newcastle & Nantwich
Sutton	William	Ensign	1803 Volunteers	1767 Newcastle & Nantwich 1803 Nantwich & Woore
Holland	Robert	Ensign	1803 Volunteers	1808 Newcastle & Nantwich

Commissioners had to have an income from land of £100 per year¹⁶⁹, Improvement Commissioners had to be assessed for poor rates more than £20 or receive and income from rents exceeding £50 or a personal estate of over £1000¹⁷⁰. Justices of the Peace, an estate with a clear yearly value over £200¹⁷¹. Even your rank in the local militia waiting to protect England from a Napoleonic invasion and your expectations of promotion were tied to your land holdings; the land qualifications having to be proved in front of a Justice of the Peace¹⁷².

Rank	Income from Land (p.a.)	Heir to Income from Land (p.a.)
Lieutenant- Colonel	£600	£1200
Major	£400	£800
Captain	£150	£300
Lieutenant	£30	£60

Look at the lists of many of the local institutions and you will find the same names as in the trustee lists in the published Turnpike Act. Indeed an examination of the Nantwich bodies reveals a high level of turnpike trustees amongst the governing elite, with apparent membership of multiple trusts – Figures 27 (a-c). Where a ‘Private’ or ‘Local’ Act of Parliament was being sought numbers mattered. It was essential to recruit as many of the local landowners as possible and the rising trading and manufacturing classes in towns. A Local Act had to represent the community pressing for change for it to stand a chance in Parliament. Early turnpike acts tended to have a large number of players because there were often challenges from other interested parties, such as towns that wanted to be on the improved route. However with such a small proportion of the documentation of local trusts, such as minute books, surveyor’s accounts, day books etc., having survived we often have to fall back on what information we can get – the lists of trustees from Turnpike Acts.

Trustee Meetings started with a series of public gatherings held before the proposed petition to Parliament was submitted. These public meetings would be mirrored by more private discussions between the local landowners, their agents and the local Members of Parliament – many of whom would owe their seats to the major landowner. With a long list of local worthies the petition for the Turnpike Act was submitted to Parliament and then guided through the House of Commons by one of the local Members of Parliament and through the Lords by a local Viscount, Baron, Earl or Lord.

The Turnpike Acts always stated when and where the first meeting of the trust was to take place.

Turnpike Trust	Date of Meeting	Place
Nantwich and Woore	24 th June 1744	Sign of the Crown, Stone.
Newcastle-under-Lyne and Nantwich	Day fortnight after passing this Act	House of John Jackson. Sign of the Black Horse, Betley.
Whitchurch and Madeley (Audlem District)	Day fortnight after passing this Act	House of Thomas Hall. Sign of the Goat's Head, Audlem.
Whitchurch and Madeley (Woor District)	Day fortnight after passing this Act	House of Thomas Latham. Sign of the Swan, Woore.
Nantwich and Wheelock	Third Monday after passing this Act	Haslington.
Tarporley and Whitchurch	Fourth Wednesday after passing this Act	Cholmondley Castle Inn, Cholmondley.
Nantwich and Congleton	Fourth Monday after passing this Act	King's Arms Inn, Middlewich

The trusts often continued to use the same public houses for many years and they are still listed in the renewal acts. With the Nantwich and Woore Trust the initial meeting in Stone reflected the Staffordshire, especially Lichfield, origins of the Act. Subsequent meetings were held at the Crown Inn in Nantwich, much nearer the centre of operations.

In general this first meeting was the best attended, with the new trustees proving their qualifications. There were then small peaks of attendance when some of the early decisions were taken on the appointment of the officers and siting of tollgates. After that the numbers of active trustees attending meetings rapidly fell away. With the early trusts a quorum of five was needed to do business but by the 1800s this had fallen to three. Even then meetings were non quorate and business could be delayed for months.

Figure 28. Lichfield Road Trust (Division 3) – Chester to Tarvin Trust. Trustee attendance at meetings from the 1769 renewal act to 1770.

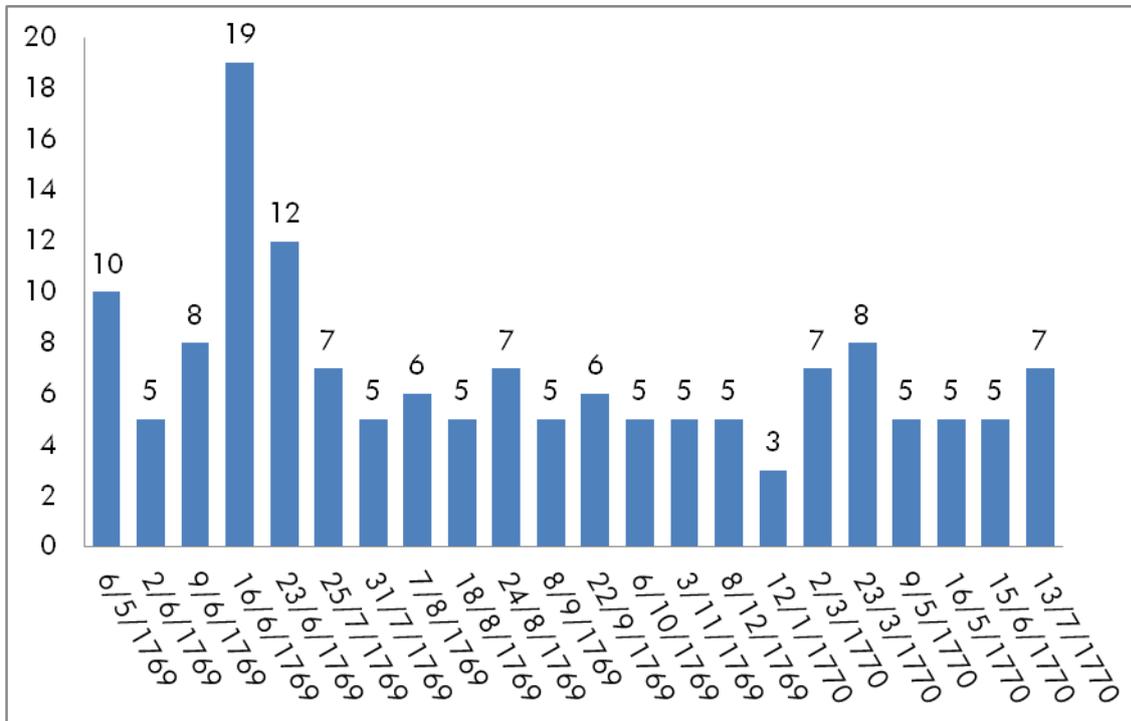
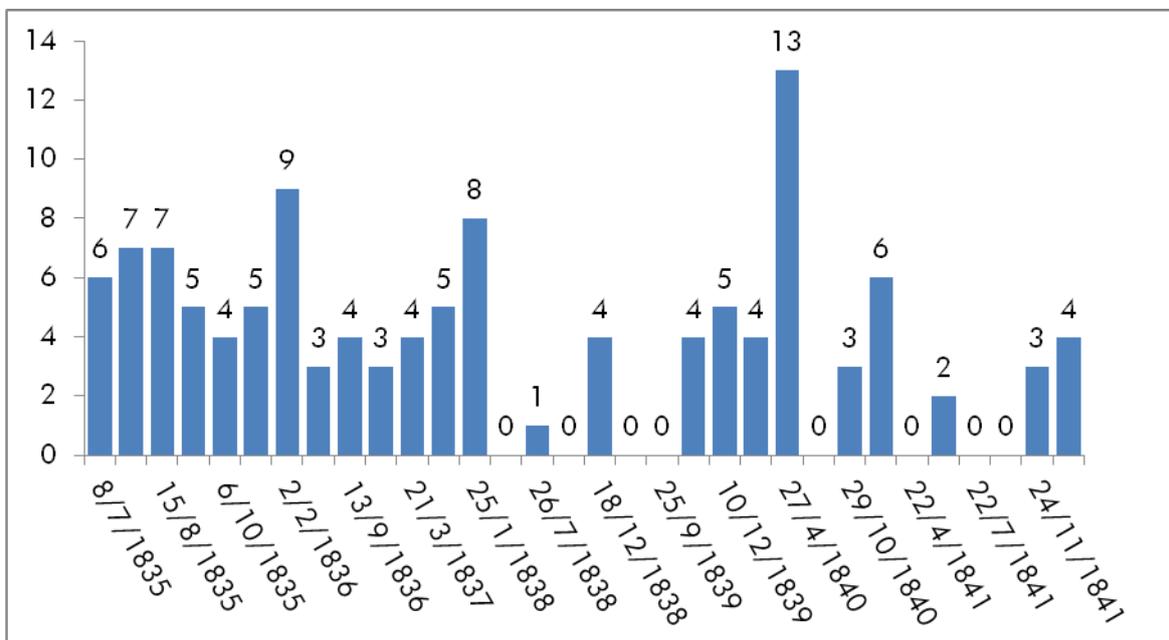


Figure 29. Nantwich and Congleton Trust. Trustee attendance at meetings from 1835-1841



Two of the local trusts have detailed records of the Trustee Meetings.

- i) Lichfield Roads Trust (Division 3). This became the Chester and Tarvin Trust in 1769. Minutes available 1769-1770¹⁷³.
 - ii) Nantwich and Congleton Trust. Minutes available 1835-1841¹⁷⁴.
-
- i) Lichfield Roads Trust (Division 3). This Trust had 15 meetings in 1769 and seven in 1770. The largest attendances were the first meeting in May and the last two meetings in June when most of the early decisions needed to get the road underway were taken. However as can be seen from Figure 28 there were only 10, 19 and 12 trustees in attendance. Of the 22 meetings only one was non-quorate – January 1770. In 10 of the 22 meetings the minimum quorum of five members was in attendance. The average attendance for the first five meetings was 11 but enthusiasm waned and until the meeting record finishes the average was five.
 - ii) Nantwich and Congleton Trust. Over a period of seven years the Trust held 36 meetings of which 10 were non-quorate and a further five had the minimum of three trustees in attendance. The initial four meetings of 1835 were combined meetings of the two divisions of the road (Nantwich to Middlewich & Middlewich to Congleton). The remaining two meetings of 1835 and all subsequent ones only dealt with the business of the Middlewich to Congleton division of the road. There was one noticeably well attended meeting when 13 turned up in April 1840 at which little significant business was transacted (Figure 29). However when there were considerable concerns about the honesty of one of the tollgate keepers in July 1841 the meeting was non-quorate with only two signing the minute book. There was no solid evidence of theft and the gate keeper was not immediately dismissed.

“After investigating the Collectors Accounts and the Check Books and Papers of the Railway Contractors and the Check Accounts of the Persons employed to watch the traffic there does not appear to be sufficient ground for discharging the Collector but that he should take Notice to be prepared to quit the Gate after the next Meeting”¹⁷⁵.

When the attendance record of individual trustees is examined we find that very few were regulars – see Figure 30. Twenty-seven trustees attended meetings over the seven years for which we have records. Only four of the trustees could be said to be actively

Figure 30. Individual Attendance at the Meetings of the Nantwich and Congleton Trust by year.

Name	1835	1836	1837	1838	1839	1840	1841	Total
Thomas Tipping	4	2	0	3	2	3	3	17
James Frances France	4	2	1	2	0	1	3	13
Clement Swetenham	5	3	0	1	1	0	1	11
Rev. John Armistead	2	2	2	2	0	1	2	11
William Eccles	2	1	2	1	0	2	1	9
John Howard			1	2	0	2	1	6
Lawrence Armistead	1	1	0	0	1	2	1	6
William Court	2	0	0	2	1	1	0	6
Rev. Charles Bishope Hodges	2	1	0	0	0	1	1	5
Rev. Henry Tomkinson	4	1	0	0	0	0	0	5
William Theophilus Buchanan	1	1	1	0	0	1	1	5
Geoffrey Joseph Shakerely	1	1	0	0	1	1	0	4
John Baskervyle Glegg				2	0	1	1	4
Thomas B Naylor		1	1	0	1	0	0	3
Charles Pedley	1	1	0	0	0	0	0	2
H.J. Buchanan		1	0	1	0	0	0	2
John Haskin Harper	1	0	0	0	0	1	0	2
Edwin Corbett	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	1
Egerton Leigh						1	0	1
J. Dudley					1	0	0	1
James Hand			1	0	0	0	0	1
James Walthall Hammond	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	1
John Thomas Braband				1	0	0	0	1
Randle Wilbraham		1	0	0	0	0	0	1
Sir Charles P. Shakerley					1	0	0	1
William Hand						1	0	1
William Smith Reade	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	1
Number of Meetings/yr	7	5	2	6	4	4	8	36

involved in the management of the Trust. Ten attended just the once to prove their qualifications and the remainder just attended the AGM. There was one notable exception, the Reverend Henry Tomkinson, who attended all four meetings in 1835. However as his interests were centred near Nantwich once the two divisions of the Trust had divided he did not attend the Middlewich and Congleton meetings.

From the limited information we have from two of the local trusts attendance by trustees at meetings was poor. Where we have reasonable attendance it is for the AGM and lunch and not when business needed to be undertaken. National studies tend to show average attendance of over 12 trustees for the first three years of trusts with low mileage (<11 miles) but only 9 trustees for the medium (11-30 miles) and large trusts (>30miles). These figures are always lower once the trust is established and the management becomes more routine, especially once the tolls are let on a yearly basis¹⁷⁶. If we consider the three counties covered by the turnpike roads local to Nantwich – Cheshire, Shropshire and Staffordshire - it is likely to be the merchants and manufacturers who represent the active trustees¹⁷⁷.

Turnpike Trusts did not own the road therefore they could not issue shares. The initial funding of a turnpike trust was usually by obtaining loans mortgaged against future toll income. You would expect that this was the time for the turnpike trustees to put their hand in their pockets. This is especially the case when the roads were local and improved access to markets should directly benefit the local landowners by increasing the value of their properties¹⁷⁸. There are three of the local trusts were the names of the mortgagees and the value of the individual mortgages has survived:-

- a. Lichfield Roads Division 3. (Chester and Tarvin Trust).
 - b. Nantwich and Wheelock Trust.
 - c. Nantwich and Congleton Trust.
-
- a. Lichfield Roads Division 3. See Figure 31. The mortgages seem to have been raised in two tranches 1769-1791 and 1822-1830. The original act setting up the division was in 1769 with the renewal act in 1809, these dates give some insight in to the timings of the mortgages. In the first tranche £2718 was raised from 12 mortgages involving nine mortgagees of whom only one was listed as a trustee in the 1769 Act. In the second tranche £2250 was raised from 8 mortgages involving six mortgagees of whom none were listed as trustees in the 1809 renewal Act. Some individuals provided multiple loans to the Trust (John

Figure 31. A list of the Mortgages of the Lichfield Roads Trust Division 3 (Chester and Tarvin) Turnpike Trust. Cheshire County Records Office LTA2.

Surname	First Name	Year	Value of Mortgage (£)
Dickenson	Thomas	1769	400
Hignett	John	1769	400
Grosvenor	Lord	1770	68
Dickenson	Thomas	1770	100
Hignett	John	1770	300
Hignett	John	1773	100
Patton	Thomas	1773	250
Briscoe	William	1775	20
Henchman	Charles	1789	180
Luiney	William	1790	200
Gregory	Jim	1791	300
Gregory	Timothy	1791	400
Dixon	Ann	1822	200
Stevenson	Ann	1823	500
Patten	Thomas	1827	200
Harding	Charles	1827	100
Spence	Mary	1828	50
Fletcher	John	1830	400
Fletcher	John	1830	400
Fletcher	John	1830	400

* Assigned to Miss Linbury who married Cpt John Forbes whose daughter and only child married William Hanmer Esq

Figure 32. A list of the Mortgages of the Nantwich and Wheelock Trust. Cheshire County Records Office DCR\49\6. Package entitled The Trustees of the Nantwich and Wheelock Turnpike Road to the Right Honourable Hungerford Lord Crewe.

Surname	First Names	Date	Value of Mortgage (£)
Aspinall	John Bridge	6/8/1817	300
Broughton	John Delves	6/8/1817	200
Cooke	William	6/8/1817	300
Crewe	John (Lord)	6/8/1817	100
Crewe	John (Lord)	6/8/1817	300
Farr	John	6/8/1817	300
Garnett	William (Reverend)	6/8/1817	100
Salmon	Charles	6/8/1817	100
Offley	Elizabeth Emma Cunliffe	6/8/1838	100
Court	John Roylance	21/7/1858	100
Bayley	John Salmon	27/7/1858	100

Figure 33. A list of the Mortgages of the Nantwich and Congleton Trust. Cheshire County Records Office. Papers re: Turnpike Trusts DDX13. Nantwich and Congleton Accounts and Papers 1824-1836.

Nantwich to Middlewich through Leighton	
Name	Mortgage
Edward Jeremiah Lloyd	£100
James Frances France	£100
William Court	£100
Rev Henry Tomkinson	£100
Rev James Tomkinson	£100
James Walthall Hammond	£100
William Massey	£100
Total	£700
Middlewich to Congleton	
Name	Mortgage
Gibbs Crawford Antobus	£100
Charles Peter Shakerley	£100
Clement Swetenham	£100
William Eccles	£100
Thomas Tipping	£100
Rev Charles Bishope Hodges	£25
Charles Pedley	£25
John, Thomas & James Reade	£30
George Reade	£50
Total	£630

Hignett – July 1769 £400; June 1770 £300; April 1773 £100. John Fletcher – March 1830 £400; April 1830 two loans of £400). Three of the mortgagees were women Ann Dixon (April 1822 £200), Ann Stevenson (January 1823 £500) and Mary Spence (March 1828 £50). This road was part of a much larger initiative with the initial trust stretching from Lichfield to Burton-on-Trent and Chester. The initial trustees seemed to be from the Lichfield and Nantwich areas with relatively little support beyond Tarporley. It is therefore not unreasonable to find that the trustees named within the Act did not choose to invest in what could be considered a rather distant area. The loans were raised from the local area with Thomas Dickenson being the Vicar of Tarvin, Lord Grosvenor the Member of Parliament for Chester City and John Fletcher the proprietor and sometime editor of the Chester Chronicle. John Fletcher was also a close friend of Thomas Telford and worked with him as a contractor on the Ellesmere Canal and on roads in North Wales¹⁷⁹.

- b. Nantwich and Wheelock Trust. See Figure 32. Of the 11 mortgages, eight were dates 1817, one 1838 and two were dates 1858. The first eight mortgages raised £1500, the single mortgage in 1838 from Elizabeth Emma Cunliffe Offaly £100 and the last two mortgages £200. Seven of the mortgagees were listed as trustees in the Turnpike Act. One of the trustee mortgagees devolved his mortgage to John Barker -a non-trustee. All the mortgages were subsequently assigned to Lord John Crewe as part of the legal proceedings involving the 'New Branch' on the 24th July 1858. This road was a local initiative and it is not surprising that a high percentage of the mortgages were listed as trustees in the Act. The non-trustees were all local landowners with holding adjacent to the road or in the case of Elizabeth Offaly a relative of a trustee (sister to Lord Crewe)¹⁸⁰.
- c. Nantwich and Congleton Trust. See Figure 33. The mortgages were divided between the road from Nantwich to Middlewich through Leighton and from Middlewich to Congleton. Seven mortgages each of £100, from six mortgagees all trustees, financed the first section of road. Nine mortgages of amounts varying from £25 to £100 (total £630), from 11 mortgagees all trustees, financed the section of road into Congleton. This was a very late trust joining three market towns and the trustees listed in the Act and the source of the finance was the local landowners. This trust was fully funded by the trustees.

Figure 34. A comparison of the percentage of turnpike trusts approved in England, Hampshire & Cheshire by time periods⁽ⁱⁱ⁾.

New trusts as a percentage of total trusts by time period between 1663 and 1839

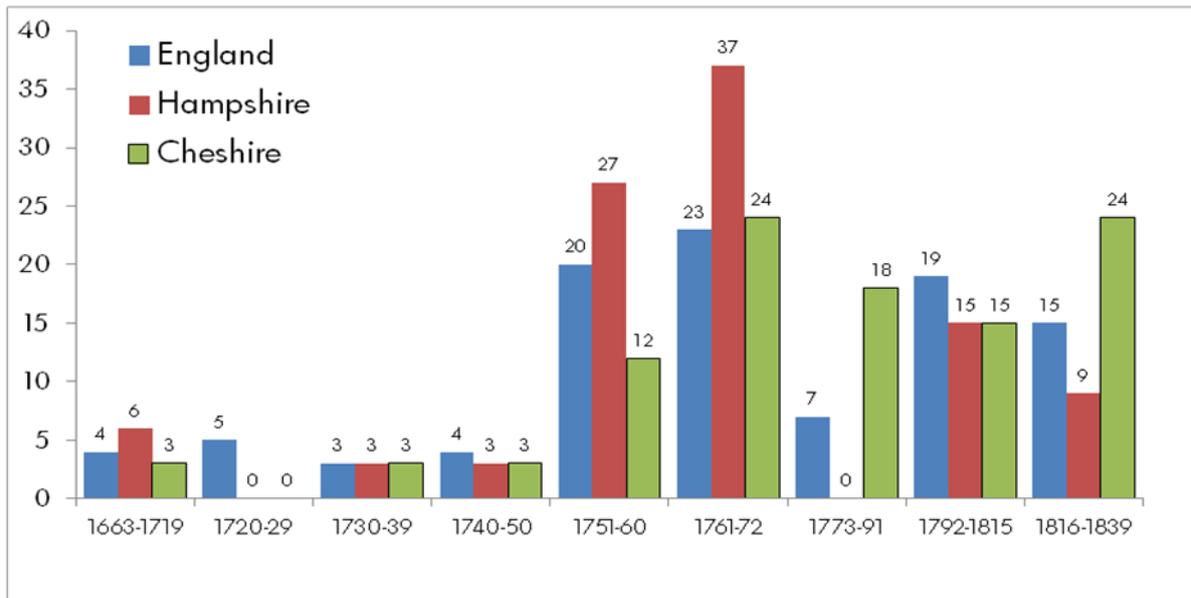


Figure 35. List of Coaches (co) and wagons (wa) leaving London for Nantwich and Chester showing the London Inn, the name of the operator and the frequency of the service. Holden's Annual List of Coaches and Carriers. 1800.

<i>Golden Cross, Charing Cross</i>	CHESTER (Cheshire, 181, W. S)	m. c. d. 7 ev. Su. 6 ev. Boulton & Co.
<i>Golden Cross, Charing Cross</i>	.	c. Tu. Th. S. 6 m. MWF. 4a. Boulton
<i>George & Blue Boar, Holb.</i>	.	co. daily, 3 aft. Ibberson and Co.
<i>Saracen's Head, Snowhill</i>	.	co. M. W. F. 5 aft. Mountain & Co.
<i>Blossoms Inn, Lawrence-l.</i>	.	wa. W. S. 4 aft. Nicholson and Co.
<i>Castle & Falcon, Aldersgate</i>	.	wa. Tu. 2a. F. 9 mo. Wakeman & Co.
<i>White Horse, Friday-street</i>	.	w. Tu. W. 4 m. F. S. 6c. Holebrooke
<i>George, Smithfield</i>	.	wa. daily, 10 morn. Wallis and Co.
<i>Golden Cross, Charing Cross</i>	NANTWICH (Cheshire, 164, S)	m. c. d. 7 ev. Su. 6 ev. Boulton and Co.
<i>Golden Cross, Charing Cross</i>	.	co. Su. Tu. Th. 6 mo. MWF. 4a. Boulton
<i>George & Blue Boar, Holb.</i>	.	co. daily, 3 aft. Ibberson & Co.
<i>Saracen's Head, Snowhill</i>	.	co. M. W. F. 5 aft. Mountain & Co.
<i>Blossoms Inn, Lawrence-l.</i>	.	wa. W. S. 4 aft. Nicholson and Co.
<i>Castle & Falcon, Aldersgate</i>	.	wa. Tu. 2a. F. 9 mo. Wakeman & Co.
<i>White Horse, Friday Str.</i>	.	wa. Tu. W. 4 m. F. S. 6c. Holebrooke
<i>George, Smithfield</i>	.	wa. daily, 10 morn. Wallis & Co.
<i>Castle, Wood-street</i>	.	wa. daily. Pickford
<i>White Horse, Cripplegate</i>	.	wa. Tu. F. noon. Bradshaw & Co.

Chapter 10. Conclusion

To provide some context Figure 34 shows the percentage of the turnpike acts granted by time period for England and Wales, Cheshire and Hampshire. Hampshire was chosen as a comparison because it was an agricultural area similar to Cheshire but near to London. There was little activity on turnpike trusts until the early 1750s. Where roads had been turnpike before that date they tended to be the major roads in to London. This is the case both in Cheshire with the London to Chester Road passing through Nantwich and the Exeter and Portsmouth Roads in Hampshire. The major wave of activity in the period 1750 to 1772 is reflected nationally and in both the individual counties as major towns and cities sought improved road transport links. This period is reflected in the Newcastle and Whitchurch trusts. Cheshire is unusual in a having nearly a quarter of the trusts from the final period of legislative activity from about 1816 through to 1839. Many of these trusts were relatively short and have been described as filling in the gaps left after the turnpike mania on the mid-1700s. This is not necessarily the case in Cheshire, as the Nantwich to Wheelock trust served a clear purpose related to a missing canal link caused by a dispute between the Shropshire Union Railway and Canal Company and the Trent and Mersey Canal management over a connection between the two canals near Middlewich. After that had been resolved the road became a major route connecting 'old' Cheshire towns to the new and vibrant railway town of Crewe. The Nantwich to Congleton trust was exactly the sort of enterprise that should have been a product of the turnpike mania – it was somehow delayed by 50 years.

While the annual returns to Parliament provide a lot of potentially interesting financial figures they tell us nothing about the traffic that used the roads. You cannot convert toll income in to numbers of coaches and wagons by any simple formula. Certainly by the 1820s most tolls would have been leased out by the trusts so the figure shown in the return is not a direct measure of the traffic passing through a gate. However as the profit margins were claimed to be relatively slim by this time they are probably not too misleading¹⁸¹. Many types of traffic did not pay tolls either because of a general exclusion such as the Royal Mail coaches and pedestrians, or turnpike act specific exclusions such as the coal taken in to Newcastle (Newcastle-under-Lyme to Nantwich Act) or residents in some parishes were allowed to pass certain gates free of toll (Nantwich to Woore Act & Nantwich to Wheelock Act).

Only the Nantwich to Woore turnpike carried significant long-distance coaches and wagons from London and the Midlands. However this only amounted to two regular coaches a day and six carriers, of which four were on their way to Chester – see Figure 35¹⁸². The Nantwich to Wheelock trust was also used by a daily coach – The Nettie that ran to Middlewich via Sandbach. The bulk of the traffic on the roads around Nantwich was therefore freight or local passenger movements in privately owned carriages, on horseback, on foot or in local carrier's wagons.

The traffic in the Chester area has been estimated for the years 1827-1828¹⁸³. During this period the Nantwich Road to Chester is estimated to have carried just over 12000 passengers, of which about 6500 were in coaches offering a regular service and nearly 6000 tons of freight per year, of which 624 tonnes was by scheduled carrier. To put this in to context a single coach carrying nine passengers daily would deliver over 3250 travellers per year to Chester and a similar number would travel the opposite direction. The 6500 passenger movements per year reflect the commercial activities of the Liverpool Royal Mail Coach and the Independent Tally-ho running from Chester to Birmingham. The freight tonnage is also relatively small as a single long-distance carrier would have a six horse wagon carrying about 6 tons; the estimated tonnage for scheduled carriers on the Nantwich to Chester road therefore only accounts for about 1000 loads¹⁸⁴. Just the London carriers through Nantwich would have accounted for 728 trips. The 5,000+ tonnes by local carriage was to an extent seasonal traffic where local farmers acted as carriers and they would have used much smaller two wheeled one-horse carts, which carried only 4 to 5 cwt. Wagons were rare in Cheshire as the economy was based on pastoral farming and two-wheeled carts are all that is needed to carry hay. Even in the arable district to the north of Northwich few wagons were used and they were considered a rarity¹⁸⁵. Also the condition of the roads had been such that it was not many years previously that Lindop was describing nine horses being required to pull a one ton load of coal¹⁸⁶. Local traffic, unaccounted for in the study of the Chester road was associated with the routine transfer of goods from the canal basin in Nantwich and the canal quay at Wheelock. Nantwich carriers in the 1828 were shown as going to Birmingham (on Saturdays), Drayton (on Wednesdays), Manchester (Monday, Thursday & Fridays) and Shrewsbury (on Thursday)¹⁸⁷. See Figure 36 for a sample of the carriers serving Nantwich.

Essentially Nantwich sits in an agricultural region with some minor local industry; it generates the traffic you would expect. A review of the toll income (£) per mile of the local turnpike roads, the Chester to Whitchurch Turnpike road, our neighbours in Staffordshire and another essentially agricultural county Hampshire illustrates the point. In Figure 37 we can see the average income per mile for the 1820s, 1830s & 1840s.

Figure 36. A sample of carriers listed as visiting Nantwich or providing a service to Nantwich via Wheelock Quay on the Trent and Mersey Canal⁽ⁱⁱⁱ⁾.

Birmingham	1795		
Road Carrier			
J Twiss	via Lichfield		in Wed, out Thur
Wm. Bradbury	via Lichfield		in Tue, Fri, out Wed, Sat

Manchester	1818-1820		
Road Carriers			
John Warburton	Altringham, Northwich, Middlewich & Nantwich		Tue, Thur, Sat
John Glover	Altringham, Northwich, Middlewich, Sandbach & Nantwich		every Fri
John Maxon	Northwich, Tarporley, Nantwich		Tue, Fri, Sat
Samuel Dean	Northwich, Tarporley, Nantwich		every Sat
Cosfield & Co.	Chester, Nantwich, Ellesmere		daily
Canal Carriers			
Trent & Mersey Canal			
Moseley, J.			Wheelock for Nantwich

Liverpool	1824		
Canal Carriers			
Trent & Mersey Canal			
Coffield & Co	2, Paradise Wharf	Fly Boat	Nantwich via Wheelock
Pickfords & Co	7, Harrington Street, Back Leeds Street, N. side Dukes Dock Quay		Nantwich via Wheelock
Snell, Robins & Co	4, Northside, Dukes Quay	Fly Boat	Nantwich via Wheelock
Williams, T.W.	N.W. Corner of Kings Dock	Fly Boat	Nantwich via Wheelock
Worthington & Co.	4, Northside, Dukes Dock Quay	Fly Boat	Nantwich via Wheelock

Cheadle	1828-29		
Road Carrier			
Richard Brammer			every Friday

Figure 37. Income per mile (£) from the Turnpike Trusts around Nantwich and selected trusts from Cheshire, Hampshire and Staffordshire compared with the average income of England and Wales ^(iv)

Name of Trust	1820s	1830s	1840s
Around Nantwich			
Nantwich to Woore	17.0	15.3	19.0
Newcastle to Nantwich	62.3	61.6	81.6
Nantwich to Wheelock	43.4	42.1	58.8
Tarporley to Whitchurch		16.7	23.9
Whitchurch to Madley			29.7
Nantwich to Congleton			26.8
England & Wales Average Income	52.0	73.0	66.2
Cheshire			
Chester to Whitchurch	38.0	58.4	45.0
Hampshire			
Andover	79.2	81.5	42.8
Basingstoke & Alton	18.5	19.5	23.0
Botley	18.0	18.7	17.9
Gosport	49.9	54.4	42.2
London & Southampton	16.6	24.6	19.3
Popham & Winchester	53.9	72.8	40.3
Ringwood & Wimborne	44.6	48.1	45.1
Stockbridge	30.8	34.5	16.4
Winchester & Andover	11.8	20.1	16.1
Winchester & Romsey	22.1	25.9	22.7
Winchester & Stephen's Castle Down	27.2	14.0	9.7
Winchester & Stockbridge	29.8	29.6	27.5
Staffordshire			
Ashbourne - Congleton	49.3	97.7	77.1
Cheadle	31.89	41.2	38.1
Darlaston - Talke		153.3	93.4
Eccleshall - Newport	29.9	30.6	32.5
Leek - Buxton	46.7	19.7	19.5
Newcastle - Drayton	31.5	34.3	95.3
Newcastle - Lawton	117.3	157.4	193.7
Newcastle - Leek	60.4	59.3	86.7
Stone - Trentham	30.7	36.2	45.5
Tunstall - Bosley	12.3	19.8	43.9

During that time the UK average figure for the 1820s was £52 per mile, which rose to £73 in the 1830s and fell again to £66 in the 1840s. The Nantwich to Woore Turnpike Trust only took in tolls equivalent to between £15 and £19 per mile during that period. This road may have had the history of being the 'Great Post Road' to Ireland since the medieval period but it was only lightly used by the 1800s. Indeed by 1830 the income from the Chester to London Mail Coach was so poor that

"The Contractors for working the Chester and London Royal Mail having given notice to the General Post Office that, in consequence of the want of encouragement of this mode of conveyance from Chester, they would decline working it further than Stafford after the 5th April, it was consequently determined upon by the Post Master General that the mailcoach should cease between CHESTER and STAFFORD after that date, and that a one horse cart should be substituted in its stead...."

As could be expected the reaction from the City of Chester was rapid and they sent a Memorial to the Post Master General pointing out that the one horse coach was not a sufficiently secure method of transferring post and especially money. As a consequence a meeting was arranged with the Contractors.

"Charles Johnson Esquire Supervisor of the Mail Coaches suggested at a meeting of the Contractors held in London that they should make a further trial until 5th July next. This they have accordingly consented to do; and if the mail from Chester be not better supported in future than it has hitherto been, they beg to announce that they must in their own defence abandon it; although nothing short of great and absolute loss to themselves would induce them to give up a means at once, of convenient cheap and expeditious travelling and of safety to the commercial remittances of this district"¹⁸⁸.

Whether it was the shock of possibly losing this connection with London or a reduction in the fare for inside seats to £3.0s.0d and outside seats to £1.10s.0d the coach continued to run until 1837 when the railways killed long distance coaching.

There is an interesting contrast between the Nantwich to Woore trust and the Whitchurch to Chester trust which shows at least double the income per mile. Herson in his review of the traffic in the Chester area shows nearly 20,000 passengers per year on scheduled coaches and some 17,000 tons of freight on the Whitchurch road. The increased freight is essentially from coal and the products of the industrial activity in North Wales moving to Chester. The Newcastle to Nantwich Turnpike Trust is more typical of the other Staffordshire Trusts as the coal mining area of North Staffordshire opened up and the 'Potteries' grew under such entrepreneurs such as Josiah Wedgwood. The Nantwich to Wheelock Trust income was initially produced by freight from

Notes

1. English Local Government: The Story of the King's Highway. Sidney & Beatrice Webb. Longmans, Green & Co, London. 1913. Pages 28-48.
2. Quarter Sessions Records with other Records of the Justices of the Peace for the County Palatine of Chester 1559 - 1760 together with a few earlier miscellaneous Records deposited with the Cheshire County Council: Volume I . J. H. E. Bennett and J. C. Dewhurst (editors). The Record Society for the Publication of Original Documents Relating to Lancashire and Cheshire. Page 84.
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APPENDIX 1

Remains of the Turnpike Age around Nantwich.

Milestones

Each turnpike trusts would have had their own design of milestone. However in Cheshire the ending of the turnpike era lead to the loss of many of these distinctive milestones. When the Cheshire County Council took over the maintenance of the roads they removed the existing stones and replaced them with a cast metal milepost. The Cheshire mileposts were clearly branded by the County Council and dated to one of three tranches of removal 1896, 1898 and 1901. There is a single stones dated 1914 but this is probably a replacement.



SJ 683 433 Buerton on the A525. Route of the Whitchurch and Madeley Trust.

(Photograph by John V Nicholls)

There wasn't a total change to this style of milepost in Cheshire and a markedly different style is found on the Middlewich road from Nantwich known as the 'open book design'. The post includes an indication of the township in which it has been placed and there is no reference to the County Council.



SJ 691 651 Stanhope on A530. On the route of the Nantwich to Middlewich Trust.

(Photograph by John V Nicholls).

There is an unusual survival in Tarporley High Street with an apparently turnpike age stone including not only mileages but also the name of the township. The mileage to London reminds us the Nantwich and Woore Trust was on the great road from London to Chester.

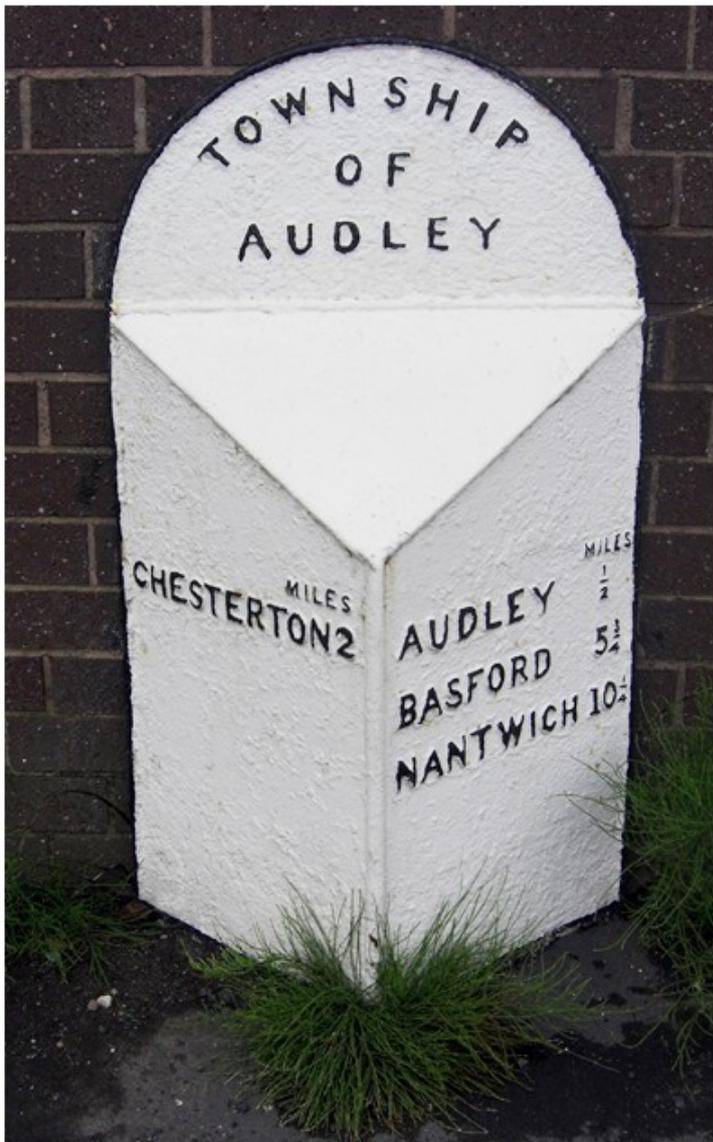


SJ 553 627 Tarporley High Street. On the route of the Nantwich to Tarporley section of the Nantwich and Woore Trust.

In a report on Staffordshire Milestones by John Higgins (2008) he stated that

“West of Newcastle are an interesting set of six cast iron triangular posts with headplates. Two occur in Betley parish (ST/BET/02 Betley village, and ST/BET/01) at Wrinehill, Balterley (ST/BAL/01); Audley (ST/AUD/01 at Bignall End), & ST/AUD/02 at The Quarry and Keele (SJ80614542). Two out of the six have lost their headplates. The sans serif lettering would suggest a late Victorian date: the Newcastle under Lyme and Nantwich Turnpike Trust- a Cheshire trust- was inaugurated

in 1788, and these replacements must have taken over from stones a hundred or so years old at the time. Interestingly, the milepost south east of Wrinehill must have already been lost by 1909, as a Cochrane replacement of that date now stands in lieu of its predecessor."



SJ 803 510 Audley on B550. On the route of the Nantwich and Newcastle-under-Lyme Trust.

There is a full list of surviving stones on Staffordshire section of the route of the Nantwich and Newcastle-under-Lyme Trust in John Higgins report .

Mile Marker Analysis	
From Newcastle, A525 towards Keele. At 1.0 miles	No surviving milepost.
At 2.0 miles	No surviving milepost.
At 3.0 miles, via Keele village	1. Milepost (ST/KEE/01) (left/ south side of road), Keele.
At 4.0 miles	2. Cochrane Post (ST/MAD/04) (left/ south side of road). Madeley Heath.
At 5.0 miles	No surviving milepost.
At 6.0 miles	3. Cochrane Post (ST/MAD/04) (left/ south side of road). Bowseywood Farm.
At 7.0 miles	4. Milepost (ST/MAD/04) (left/ west side of road), Wrinehill.
At 8.0 miles	5. Milepost (ST/BET/01) (left/ west side of road), Betley.
At 9.0 miles	No surviving milepost.
At 9.5 miles, county boundary. Remainder of turnpike in Cheshire.	

Second Route from Newcastle to Nantwich via Audley. From Newcastle, A34 northwards. Turnpike starts at B5500 junction at Chesterton. At 0.3 miles	No surviving milepost.
At 1.3 miles	No surviving milepost.
At 2.3 miles	6. Milepost (ST/AUD/01) (right/ north side of road), Audley.
At 3.3 miles	7. Milepost (ST/AUD/02) (right/ north side of road), The Quarry, Audley.
At 4.3 miles	No surviving milepost.
At 5.3 miles	8. Milepost (ST/BAL/01) (right/ north side of road), Balterley.
At 6.3 miles, county boundary and junction of A531. Remainder of turnpike in Cheshire.	

List of mileposts in Staffordshire on the route of the Nantwich and Newcastle-under-Lyme Trust. Higgins, John (2008). *Sylloge of Mile Markers in Staffordshire*. A thematic review of milestones in the administrative county. Staffordshire County Council/The Milestone Society.

Tollhouses.

There is a relatively poor survival of tollhouses as by their very design there was often a narrowing of the road where they stood ; an obstruction to be removed. When the roads were deturmpiked the first casualty was usually the tollhouses. The advertisement reproduced in Figure 4 clearly indicates that the tollhouses on the Nantwich to Woore turnpike road were to be removed within weeks of the folding of the trust. Where we have evidence of the direct sales of tollhouses the sale prices were usually based on the value of the reclaimable materials. There were also examples of tollhouses being torn down brick by brick by the local population when the road was deturmpiked. These were unusual and tended to be when the hatred of the local trust was so great that riots against the trust had occurred in the preceding years. The most notable, relatively local, incident was in Hayfield, Derbyshire where...

“At midnight on Monday the first of November the Thornsett Turnpike Trust expired. It was the occasion for a singular outburst of feeling throughout the district. The Trust had six toll bars near New Mills. As early as eight o’clock on Monday night cannons were fired in various parts of the district. One of the toll-bars was situated close to an iron foundry on Albion road, and the gate keeper, fearing, what would happen, left the house early in the day. When the hour of twelve struck on Monday night, a crowd of several hundred gathered at the toll-house, and with bars of iron from the adjoining foundry, smashed the windows of the toll-keepers house. They also broke open the door, ripped up the posts, pulled down a wooden shed largely used as a coal house, and set fire to the material. Having completely ransacked the premises and demolished everything, the mob proceeded to Hyde Bank Bar, where a wooden office for the toll-keeper stood. This was a valuable building. They at once smashed in the windows and door, lighted a fire inside, and burnt the structure to the ground. These proceedings continued all night, and on Tuesday the toll-houses which were completely destroyed, were visited by many anxious to see the ruins.”

(ref: <http://www.stevelewis.me.uk/page31.php>)

A selection of five surviving tollhouse are illustrated. It would be difficult to identify them as tollhouses as they have been much modified to allow modern living. The Audlem Road, Nantwich tollhouse appears to be a relatively unmodified building and is probably not too different to when it operated. The typical bay front of the archetypal tollhouse, seen in the plan of the Cheerbook tollhouse – see Figure 6, is not evident in the surviving buildings.



SJ 753 474. Lower Winehill Tollhouse on A531. Nantwich to Newcastle-under-Lyme Trust.



SJ 822 506. Deans Lane Tollhouse. Nantwich to Newcastle-under-Lyme Trust.



SJ 658 509. Audlem Road Tollhouse on A530. Whitchurch to Madeley Trust.



SJ 802 478. Pepper Street Tollhouse, Keele. Whitchurch to Madeley Trust.



SJ 749 586. Crewe Road, Wheelock. Nantwich and Wheelock Trust.

Tollboard.

Each of the tollgates would have had a tollboard showing the current payment rates for the traffic. These tend to rarely survive but one board, from the Wrinehill Upper Gate (Nantwich and Newcastle under Lyme Trust) is currently stored at the Newcastle Borough Museum.

While the board is undated the names of the Joint Clerks suggest a date in the 1840s and 1850s.

Points of interest:-

The board was produced while the "Broad Wheel" Acts were in place, note the wider the wheel the lower the toll.

The 'free' coal traffic has been curtailed the only toll exempt traffic being that described in the General Turnpike Act.

The purchase of one ticket allows passage through seven other gates.

The Bailey Lane Gate is described as 'Chain' - this suggests that the tollhouse now at the site was built late in the trust's history as chain usually suggests a locked chain across a road which was unlocked after a payment at a nearby cottage.

WRINEHILL UPPER GATE

Rule of Tolls payable at this Gate Pursuant to an Act of the 30th Georgii IV

For every Horse, Mule, Ass, or other Beast drawing any Coach, Stage Coach, Landau, Chariot, Chaise, Landauret, Phaeton, Hearsel, Curricicle, Chair Gig, Caravan, Van, or Carriage of the like description, by whatsoever name called or known the Sum of Six Pence.

For every Horse, Mule, Ass, or other Beast drawing any Waggon, Wain, Cart, or other such Carriage having the Fellies of the Wheels thereof, of the breadth of six Inches or upwards at the bottom or soles thereof, the Sum of Four Pence.

And having the Fellies of the Wheels thereof, of the breadth of four and a half Inches or upwards or less than six Inches at the bottom or soles thereof the Sum of Five Pence.

And having the Fellies of the Wheels thereof of the breadth of three Inches or upwards, and not more than four and a half Inches at the bottom or soles thereof the Sum of Six Pence.

And having the Fellies of the Wheels thereof of the breadth of three Inches at the bottom or soles thereof the Sum of Seven Pence.

For every Horse, Mule or Ass, laden or unladen and not drawing the Sum of one penny.

For every drove of Oxen, Cows, or Neat Cattle, the sum of one Shilling and four Pence a score and so in proportion for any less Number than a score.

For every drove of Calves, Swine, Sheep, or Lambs, the sum of Eight pence per score and so in proportion for any less Number than a score.

Toll to be paid but once a day for any Horse, Mule, Ass, Beast or other Cattle upon producing a Ticket denoting the payment thereof on that day.

Toll for all Horses, or other Beasts drawing any Stage Coach Diligence Van, Carriage, Stage Waggon, or other Stage Carriage Conveying any Passengers or Goods for reward payable every time of passing.

Toll for Horses or Beasts let out to Hire or drawing any Post Chaise or other Carriage payable every time of passing whenever any new Hiring takes place.

Tolls payable Pursuant to the General Turnpike Act of 3rd Georgii IV.

For every Coach, Chariot, Chaise or any other Carriage whatsoever with four Wheels affixed, tied or secured to any Waggon or Cart the sum of One Shilling.

For every Chaise Cart or other Carriage whatsoever with two Wheels only affixed or secured to any Waggon or Cart the sum of Six Pence.

For every Horse fastened to but not used in drawing any Waggon Cart or other Carriage.

If any Coach, Chariot, Chaise, Chain Cart or other Carriage, so affixed tied or secured to any Waggon or Cart shall have any Goods Conveyed therein other than the Harness thereto belonging, and which Articles of Package necessary for the Protection of Carriages, the same shall be liable to.

In all Carriages wherein Oxen or Neat Cattle shall be used two Oxen or Neat Cattle shall be considered as one Horse and be liable to Toll accordingly.

N.B. No exemptions from Toll except those contained in the General Turnpike.

A Ticket from this Gate Frees Keele, Newcastle, Wrinehill Lower; Gorstyhill, Old Peover, Audley Gate and Baileys Lane Chain.

{ **Fred. Wilkinson** } Joint Clerks to the Trustees of Betley
{ **Rich^d. Edleston** } and Nantwich Turnpike R

Coaching Inns

The Nantwich and Woore turnpike road was the only one with substantial long-distance coach travel and there were two changes of horses while the vehicles were within the trust.

The first change was in Nantwich at the Crown Inn, High Street. The Crown is a black-and-white building erected, in 1585, on the same site as an inn destroyed in the 'Great Fire of Nantwich' in 1583. This is not a purpose built coaching inn being some 200 years old before the first coach ran through Nantwich in 1785. In contemporary records the Crown Inn was described as a "Commercial Inn and Posting House" with large amounts of stabling. The other posting inn in the town was The Lamb in Hospital Street now named Chatterton House and housing the Aroma and Costa coffee shops.

The coaches from London would have entered Nantwich down Hospital Street and High Street stopping in front of the Crown Inn where the horses were changed. The horses would have been brought from the stables down what is now a covered way named Crown Passage (Crown Mews). The coaches left via the High Street, Nantwich Bridge and Welsh Row for Tarporley the next change of horses.

The Swan in the High Street, Tarporley is brick built and is contemporary with the Crown Inn, also not being a purpose built coaching inn but a posting house. The horses were again changed in front of the inn, having been brought from the stables through the arch to the right of the building. The Swan is also home to the Tarporley Hunt Club and an upstairs dining room acts as an interesting museum to local fox hunting.

There were other coaching inns in Nantwich but they were not used by the Royal Mail or main-line coaches. Local coaches to, for instance Chester and Crewe, ran from the Three Pigeons in Welsh Row— now Nakatcha (20-22 Welsh Row) and The Union Inn (15-17 High Street).



Crown Inn, High Street, Nantwich, Cheshire.



Crown Passage (Mews), High Street, Nantwich, Cheshire.

The timebill from 1797 of the London to Holyhead mailcoach via Nantwich, Tarporley and Chester clearly shows the stops where the horses were changed. What is notable is the long run between Eccleshall and Namptwich (Nantwich) of over 20 miles; it was usual to change the horses every 10 miles. The other point of interest was the 15 minute break at Stafford for tea and then the through run, with quick changes of horses, to Chester. There was no leaving the coach for nearly six hours—so let's hope they didn't drink too much tea in Stafford or maybe carried a bordalieu.

London to Holyhead

1st Day

	D.	T.A.		No. 10
			G.P.O. 8	P.M.
Boulton	12	1.30	Barnet 9.30	"
Sweatman	11	1.30	St Alban's 11.0.	"
Mrs Shaw	30½	4.27	Lathbury 3.27	A.M.
F. Shaw	14	1.58	Northampton 5.25 (T.P.), <i>Breakfast 30 mins</i>	"
Briggs	15	2. 0	Welford 7.55	"
Spencer	8	1. 5	Lutterworth 9.0. <i>Office Business 10 mins</i>	"
			10	
Towle	11	1.30	Hinkley 10.40 (T.P.), <i>Office Bns. 10 mins</i>	"
			10	
"	8	1. 5	Atherstone 11.55	"
Burton & Jarvis	15	2. 5	Litchfield 2.0, <i>Dinner 35 mins</i>	P.M.
			35	
Hanbury	9¾	1.15	Wolsey Bridge 3.50	"
Hughes	7½	1. 0	Stafford. <i>Office Business and Tea 15 mins</i>	"
"	7	1. 0	Eccleshall 6.5	"
Latham	21	3. 5	Namptwich 9.10	"
Southern	10	1.20	Tarporley 10.30	"
Paul	10	1.30	Chester 12 (T.P.), <i>Supper & O.B. One hour</i>	"
			1. 0	

Edmund Vale (1967). *The Mail-Coach Men of the late eighteenth century*. David & Charles, Newton Abbot. Page 237.

By 1827 an additional change of horses in Woore had been introduced, which produced a 12 mile leg from Eccleshall and an 8 mile run into Nantwich. The horses were changed at The Swan, Nantwich Road, Woore, another inn of probably a 16th century origin as a posting house.



The Swan, High Street, Tarporley, Cheshire.



The Swan, Nantwich Road, Woore, Shropshire.

APPENDIX 2. Toll Collectors in the 1841-1871 Censuses by Turnpike Trust.

Turnpike Trust	Name of Gate	OS ref (SJ)	1841 Census		1851 Census		1861 Census		1871 Census	
			Surname	First Name						
Nantwich & Woore	Pipe Gate TG	738 405	N/F		Smith	Thomas	Lawton	William	Williams	Richard
Nantwich & Woore	Woore TG	726 435	N/F		Williams	Richard	N/F		Jones	John
Nantwich & Woore	Stapeley TG	664 519	N/F		N/F		Brian	Ann	N/F	
Nantwich & Woore	Henhull TG	643 525	Birtles	Hannah	Moss	Emma	Moss	John	Welch	William
Nantwich & Woore	Henhull (2)	643 525	#		Welch	William	Welch	William	#	
Nantwich & Woore	Barbridge TG	615 568	Davies	Frances	Davies	Elizabeth	Hares	Ann	Hares	John
Nantwich & Woore	Alraham TG	590 593	N/F		N/F		Holding	Randle	Grant	Joseph
Nantwich & Woore	Alraham (2) TG	590 593	N/F		N/F		Jackson	John	#	
Nantwich & Woore	Clotton TG	521 643	N/F		Moulton	Samuel	Davenport	Eliza	N/F	
Newcastle & Nantwich	Cheerbrook TG	672 517	N/F		N/F		Boote	Henry	Boote	Elizabeth
Newcastle & Nantwich	Basford TG	716 513	N/F		N/F		N/F		N/F	
Newcastle & Nantwich	Gorsty Hill TG	745 506	N/F		Gresty	Jonathon	Gresty	Jonathon	Cooper	George (Snr)
Newcastle & Nantwich	Lower Wrinehill TG	753 469	N/F		Brampton	Joseph	N/F		Cooper	John
Newcastle & Nantwich	Upper Wrinehill TG	753 468	N/F		N/F		Wood	Sarah	N/F	
Newcastle & Nantwich	Old Peel (Shraley) TG	779 503	Gater	Sarah	Gater	Sarah	N/F		Boughey	John
Newcastle & Nantwich	Audley TG	797 510	N/F		N/F		Darlington	Matthew	N/F	
Newcastle & Nantwich	Pepper Street (Keele) TG	802 456	Grocott	Stephen	Grocott	Stephen	Proctor	Francis	Proctor	Francis
Newcastle & Nantwich	Bignall Hill (Deans Lane) TG	822 506	Sheehan	Sarah	N/F		Frost	William	Frost	Ann
Newcastle & Nantwich	Chesterton TG	827 503	N/F		N/F		N/F		N/F	
Newcastle & Nantwich	Newcastle TG	841 456	N/F		Tipper	Sarah	N/F		Ellis	Ann

APPENDIX 3. Toll Gate Sites from Map and Other Sources

Turnpike Trust	Name of Gate	OS ref SJ	Greenwood 1819	Cheshire Tithe Maps 1830s-50s	Staffordshire Tithe Maps 1830s-50s	Bryant 1831	1" OS D & C*	1" OS Cassini	6" OS NLS*	Other Sources
Nantwich & Woore	Pipe Gate TG	738 405					Y	Y		
Nantwich & Woore	Woore TG	726 435				Y	Y	Y		
Nantwich & Woore	Stapeley TG	664 519								
Nantwich & Woore	Henhull TG	643 525							Y	
Nantwich & Woore	Barbridge TG	615 568		Y		Y	Y	Y	Y	
Nantwich & Woore	Alraham TG	590 593							Y	
Nantwich & Woore	Clotton TG	522 641	Y	Y		Y	Y	Y		
Newcastle & Nantwich	Cheerbrook TG	672 517		Y					Y	
Newcastle & Nantwich	Basford TG	716 513							Y	
Newcastle & Nantwich	Gorsty Hill TG	745 506	Y	Y		Y			Y	
Newcastle & Nantwich	Lower Wrinehill TG	753 469					Y	Y		
Newcastle & Nantwich	Upper Wrinehill TG	753 468	Y				Y	Y	Y	
Newcastle & Nantwich	Old Peel (Shraley) TG	779 503			Y		Y	Y	Y	Web 2
Newcastle & Nantwich	Audley TG	797 510			Y				Y	Web 2
Newcastle & Nantwich	Pepper Street (Keele) TG	802 456					Y	Y	Y	
Newcastle & Nantwich	Bignall Hill (Deans Lane) TG	822 506			Y				Y	Web 2
Newcastle & Nantwich	Chesterton TG	827 503							Y	
Newcastle & Nantwich	Newcastle TG	841 456					Y	Y	Y	
Whitchurch & Madeley	Hinstock TG	694 265								Web 1
Whitchurch & Madeley	Woodeaves (Sydnall) TG	688 306					Y			
Whitchurch & Madeley	Spoonley TG	666 356					Y	Y		
Whitchurch & Madeley	Audlem TG	657 434	Y	Y		Y			Y	
Whitchurch & Madeley	Birchall Moss TG	679 461		Y		Y	Y	Y	Y	
Whitchurch & Madeley	Shrewbridge TG	657 509		Y					Y	
Whitchurch & Madeley	Lightwood Green TG	635 427				Y				
Whitchurch & Madeley	Shropshire Lane TG	594 413	Y	Y		Y			Y	

APPENDIX 4

Following '[The Turnpike Roads around Nantwich](#)' on-line.

The on-line resources referred to in this article are free.

Cheshire has a particularly wide range of on-line resources for anyone interested in the historical mapping of the turnpike roads around Nantwich. Take for example E-mapping Victorian Cheshire (<http://maps.cheshire.gov.uk/tithemaps/>) hosted by the Cheshire archives; there are nearly 500 Tithe Maps on line with the details of land ownership and occupation. The opening screen of the site shows a 'Search Tithe Maps' panel. The easiest way to find Nantwich is by searching by 'specific townships'. The search will then bring up a double screen with the Tithe Map on the left and a potential range of maps on the right – it will open with the modern road map. The tithe map on the left will have no usable detail. Centre the modern map on the roundabout at the end of the A500, at the junction with the A51. The Tithe Map will be showing a junction between different tithe maps. Zoom in two clicks and the details of the roundabout should be evident, with Cheerbrook House Farm clearly labelled. On the right hand map click the tab 'Plot Details' – a cursor will appear in the left screen and the ownership and occupation details of the site in the right window. Move the Tithe Map so the cursor centres on the site numbered 101 – it is identified as the Toll Gate House and Garden owned by the Newcastle and Nantwich Turnpike Trustees. On the left hand map click on the tab – Large Map and more detail is revealed that can be printed with all associated information, including the Ordnance Survey Grid Reference. Click on the tab for OS c1875 (Ordnance Survey about 1875) and the Cheerbrook Gate is named and identified by the initials T.P. Returning to the twin map view reset the zoom bar to mid-range. Centre the modern map on an area shown as 'The Barony' and especially at the cemetery (Cemy). Zoom in three clicks and a height measure of 38m is in the centre of the modern map – the tithe map has no interesting detail. On the left hand map click on OS c1875 and the Barony Gate (T.P.), erected by the Nantwich and Congleton Turnpike Trust to collect tolls from passing traffic, is now evident. This gate disappeared soon after the map was produced. Other toll gates shown on this web site are listed in Appendix 3.

The Cheshire Local History Society has digitised a series of historic Cheshire maps from Saxton to Bryant (<http://www.cheshirehistory.org.uk/archive//index.php?id=12>). Maps of Nantwich can be extracted from the 1777 Burdett, 1819 Greenwood & 1831 Bryant maps.

The site opens with the 1577 Christopher Saxton map on screen. Click on the down arrow to reveal the other available maps – click on the chosen map and then on the

view button, when the map appears use the 'Click here to view large image'. This then takes you into the 'Zoomify' view which allows dynamic enlargement of the map. Three clicks and Nantwich can soon be found towards the southern border of Cheshire. If we view the 1777 Burdett Map first, the representation of Nantwich is rather crude but identifiable. The roads are also not that accurately portrayed but give a feeling of the Eighteenth Century landscape of Cheshire. The 1819 Christopher Greenwood Map appears far superior and shows more detail in Nantwich, as well as Welch Row and the cluster of houses around Acton Church there is a windmill to the east of the town on Crewe Road. The surprise to many who are not deeply immersed in the history of Nantwich is the presence of Cotton Mills and the Race Course to the North-east of the town. This is the oldest map showing the sites of toll-gates. The initials *T.B.* stand for toll bar and there is a clear example to the west of Tarporley at the village of Clotton – this is a gate of the Nantwich and Woore Turnpike Trust dating from the 1769 renewal, named as Duddon Smithy Gate.

The 1831 map by A. Bryant is coloured and it is far easier to use because of the basic resemblance to the current Ordnance Survey maps. There a greater number of toll-gate sites identified, for instance, following the 'Chester Road' to the North West from Nantwich we pass through Acton, Hurleston, Stoke and just before we reach Wardle the TB adjacent to Bar Bridge identifies the Stoke toll gate of the Nantwich and Woore Turnpike Trust. A trip to the east of Nantwich through Willaston shows the Wistaston, the Crewe Green and the Wheelock Gates of the Nantwich and Wheelock Turnpike Trust. While this is a high quality map approaching the standards that would be achieved by the Ordnance Survey it is a 1 inch to the mile and lacks detail.

There is a string of other Cheshire Maps available from the Map House of London (<http://www.themaphouse.com/>). On the opening page click on English Counties – All Maps of CHESHIRE. As an example select the 1793 John Cary – click on the button 'More Details' and then on 'Zoom map'. The 1808 Richard Phillips, 1840 Archibald Fullerton, 1848 Samuel Lewis, 1863 Edward Weller and 1870 J&C Walker add little extra to our knowledge of the turnpike roads around Nantwich. They do, however, begin to show the development of the railway network in Cheshire.

The National Library of Scotland has provided what is perhaps the most interesting on-line map resource for Cheshire – the Ordnance Survey 6" to the mile maps (<http://maps.nls.uk/os/6inch-england-and-wales/index.html>). The easiest route to the maps is to click on 'As individual sheets using a zoomable map of England and Wales'. In the left hand 'County' box choose Cheshire. The initial County screen reached is zoomable and a few clicks will bring you to Nantwich. Click on the red coloured square nearest your target and a series of maps are offered on the right hand side of the screen – choose for example Cheshire Sheet LVI; Surveyed 1874 to 1876 and Published 1882. Zoom in and both Crewe to the top right and Nantwich to the lower left are visible. This map can now be zoomed to show individual or blocks of houses. Three tollgates surround the town at Cheerbrook (look for T.P.), on the Barony and just before the Aqueduct at the western end of Welch Row. A list of the gates shown

on these maps is available in Appendix 3.

Conclusion

It is now possible to undertake some serious desk based studies of 'The Turnpike Roads Around Nantwich' using freely available web-sites and undertaking the occasional visit to the County Records Office or public library. Even the archives can be searched from the comfort of your home and a specific hit list of materials drawn up before your visit. It should be easier than ever to undertake serious historical research except for one thing. This article is only about sources and how to use them it has not provided the questions for which these facts may provide an answer. I will leave you to conjure up the insightful questions and I can only hope that this list of resources may make a small contribution to your success in finding the answers.