

## TURNPIKE ROADS IN NW LEICESTERSHIRE



BY SAMUEL T STEWART - FEBRUARY 2022

## **PREFACE**

Unfortunately, due to the era of the turnpikes and toll house coming to an end c.1880, it is unlikely that any local photographs have survived, but if any are in possession of our readers, these would be gratefully received. Fortunately, photographs of the hexagonal toll house at Lount cross roads have survived at Ashby Museum, and are included in Part 10 of this publication, courtesy of the museum.

The reader needs to be aware that the Hinckley to Melbourne Common turnpike had numerous branches. The turnpike, which originated at "Duck Paddle Street, Hinckley" went via Ibstock to Hoo Ash, where it divided into two branches. The Coleorton branch proceeded from Hoo Ash to Sinope, and turned down via a toll gate, what we now know as Upper Moor Road, and proceeded on via tollgates, down and over Cart Brook below Coleorton Methodist Chapels. Cart Brook currently defines the boundary of the Coleorton and Worthington parishes. It then proceeded on to join the main turnpike road which continued from Hoo Ash through Swannington. Pegg's Green, Gelsmoor, Newbold, Lount and Staunton Harold to Melbourne Common at a point just after it crossed the Ashby to Rempstone turnpike road. Various maps show the route of the Turnpike. Essentially, this meant that you had the choice of two routes on reaching Hoo Ash, which both converged later as described above. Another branch off the main turnpike road went along Froggatt's Lane (now Nottingham Road / Top Road) from the area of Tugby's Lane at Pegg's Green and continued over Rempstone cross roads, along Breedon Top Brand road, Redwood Lane, and over Woeful bridge at Tonge to its intersection with the Tamworth / Ashby to Sawley Ferry.

**The following narrative may be confusing in parts due to the fact that all the above described branches are referred to as the Hinckley to Melbourne turnpike road.**

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## PART 1

### PACKHORSES

Before the development of the turnpike roads, preventing the efficient use of wheeled vehicles, goods of every conceivable kind needed to be carried on the backs of packhorses or sumpters (horses, donkeys, ponies or mules). Heavy goods like coal were mainly carried in basket work panniers slung on either side of the horse and mounted on wooden pack frames. Packhorses were a flexible and reliable means of transport, able to carry upwards of 400 lbs each dependent on their size over long distances.

From the earliest times coal was transported from local areas to Leicester by pack horse, via Ibstock, Bagworth, Desford and Kirby Muxloe to Aylestone. Here the track crossed the Soar by means of a pack horse bridge before entering the town of Leicester and thence to Coal Hill (or Berehill), a site now occupied by the Clock Tower. The cost of transport was considerable; in 1603 coal purchased at the pit-head for 1s 7d a ton sold for 10s in Leicester. This method was still being used in the early nineteenth century. Higglers purchased coal from stock yards at Swannington, Coleorton and the Smoile by the pack-load. Throsby gave a vivid picture of the heavily laden horses, - "groups of crawling beings, enfeebled by oppression and often sinking under their loads, subject to the execrations and violent kickings of their masters".

There is little recorded history about packhorses in the local area so we are fortunate to have access to a copy of a story by the historian H. Butler Johnson who wrote c.1910 several articles about trades carried on in the area of Coleorton.

*An occupation in the Cole Orton district which came to an end c.1850 was the hawking of coal carried on donkey's backs in large panniers. These donkeys were generally run in droves of fifteen or twenty, and the burdens they carried, so old residents have informed us, were almost unbelievable, as much as four hundredweight of coal being at times placed in the panniers of one of the little animals, a weight that bent it's spine into the form of an inverted arch.*

*The last drove, we believe, of these pack animals, nineteen donkeys and one small pony, was that of William Bakewell, who lived in the Bakewell's lane now named after him. Bakewell, who seems to have been the last man in Cole Orton to habitually wear a blue smock frock, was in the habit of fetching his supply of coal from the old Lount pit ([presumably in Worthington Rough](#)).*

*On the way back home through the Woolrooms,, the drove of burdened animals always lay down for a rest when they arrived at the bridge under the Coleorton railway ([on Aqueduct Lane](#)), and, until they had it, refused to pass the spot. Here the burdens were re-distributed, and the contents of the panniers to some extent lightened, not so much we fear for humanities sake, as for the fact that the coal was sold by the pannier, and not by weight, as the present law requires. For which relief, the donkeys, and not the customers gave much thanks.*



**The above could well have been similar to the blue smock frock described by Butler Johnson as being habitually worn by William Bakewell**

The following 1841 and 51 Coleorton census information shows a senior and junior William Bakewell with a variance in ages recorded between the two censuses, who both carried on the trade of coal carrier. Sadly this couldn't have been a profitable business as William senior is recorded as a pauper in 1851, but still survived to a remarkable age for those times. Neither appeared in the 1861 census. They were living with Mary Wright (daughter & sister) who was a widow and her children.

William Bakewell	80		Coal carrier	Born Leics
William Bakewell	30		Coal carrier	Leics
Mary Wright		32		Leics
Jane Wright		8		Leics
John Wright		5		Leics
William Wright		7		Leics

**From the 1841 Coleorton census**

William Bakewell	88	Head	Widower	Pauper (former coal dealer)	Born Coleorton
William Bakewell	43	Son	Unm	Coal dealer	Coleorton
Mary Wright	42	Daughter	Widow	Lace worker	Coleorton
Jane Wright	18	Grand Daughter	Unm	Lace worker	Coleorton
John Wright	15	Grandson	Unm	Coal miner	Coleorton

**From the 1851 Coleorton census**

## PART 2

### AN INTRODUCTION TO THE TURNPIKE ROAD AND TOLL SYSTEM

**HIGHWAYS ACT 1555** – This was the first legislation of any importance which affected roads. It transferred responsibility for the upkeep of the King's highways to the parishes. Each parishioner owning a plowland in tillage, or keeping a draught or plough, was liable to supply a cart for four days a year for use in road repair. Each able bodied house holder or tenant was required to give four days 'Statute labour a year' (increased in 1691 to six). It was possible to pay a fine to commute this, or else provide a substitute (LRFHS Journal 145 2011). In many area, this law was ignored. Even in those parishes where repairs were carried out, as there was no outside supervision, it was usually just a case of people putting stones and gravel in the worst potholes. Little, if any, attention was given to drainage, and so, during the winter, these tracks, some of which just went across fields, would have become a sea of mud, where little if any transport would be able to move without major difficulties. It is not difficult to imagine what it would have been like.

During this period, coal was the most important cargo on British roads. In the 1670s, it is said, that around 2 million tons a year were being moved around Britain. Around one million tons by sea and a quarter of a million tons by inland rivers. Daniel Defoe, explained in his book, *"A Tour Through the Whole Island of Great Britain"*(1724), that to be successful, collieries needed to be close to water *"for once the rains come in, it (the road) stirs no more that year, and sometimes a whole summer is not dry enough to make roads passable"*.

Packhorses could carry only a hundredweight each and primitive carts only carried a few hundred weights. However, a typical wide-wheeled waggon from the early 1800s, could carry several tons of mixed merchandise. The early Turnpike Acts restricted this vehicle to carry no more than 6 tons of goods in the summer season and 4 tons in the winter.

The takeover of major roads by the turnpike trusts had begun in the country in 1726, with the main London road through Harborough via Leicester to Loughborough. In 1753-4, the roads from Hinckley, Coventry, Uppingham, Narborough and Ashby were turnpiked, and a number of other roads were added. In the 1760's, toll bars, gates and chains at which the finance for the maintenance of the roads was collected from travelers were established. See the explanatory notes on the following page.

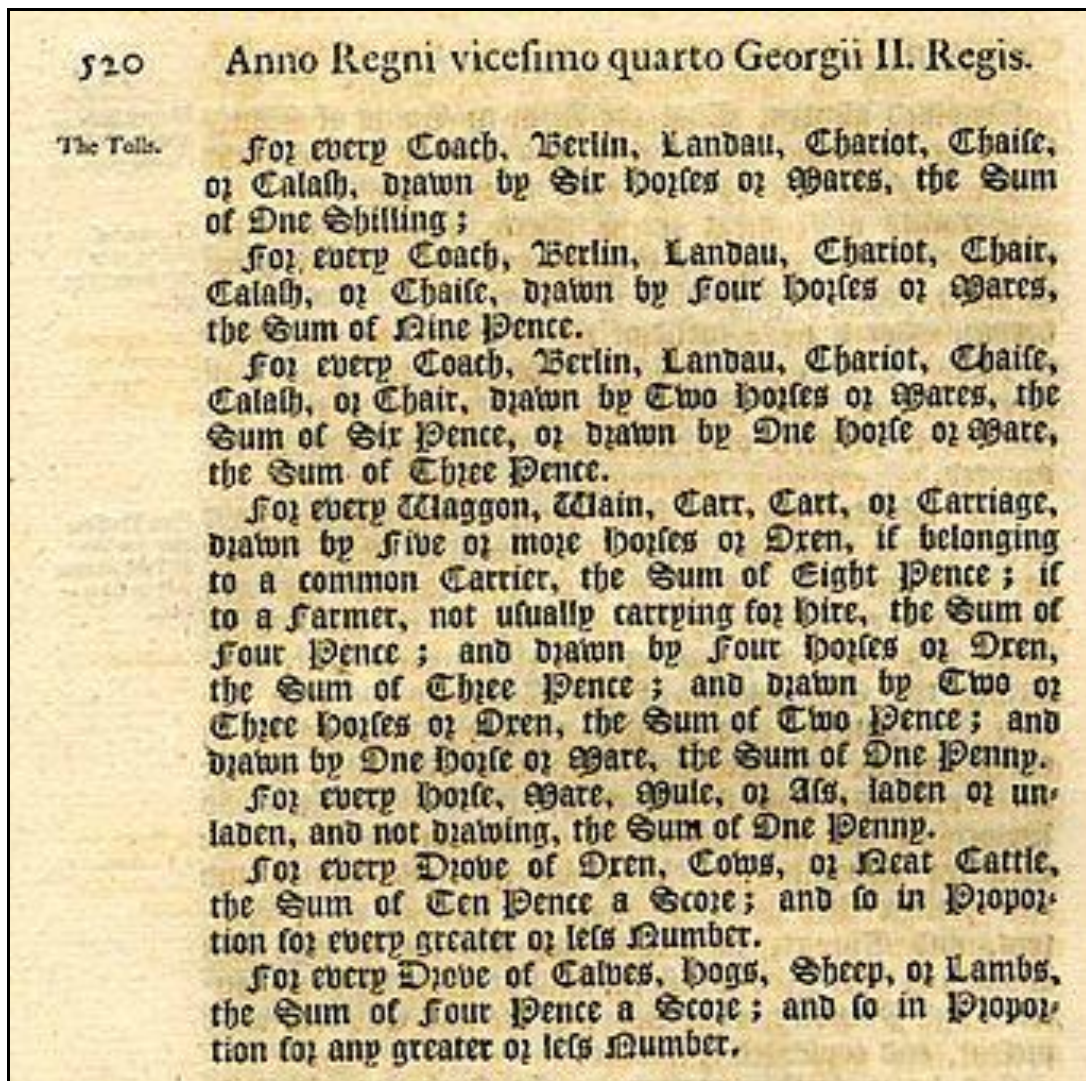
Turnpike trusts were set up by individual acts of Parliament, with powers to collect road tolls for maintaining the principal roads in Britain from the 17th century, but especially during the 18th and 19th centuries. At their peak, in the 1830s, over 1,000 trusts administered around 30,000 miles (48,000 km) of turnpike roads in England and Wales, taking tolls at almost 8,000 toll-gates and side-bars. The Trusts were empowered to construct metalled (broken stone and cinders) roads along the lengths of which were strategically sited toll bars, gates or chains, which were opened to allow passage on payment of a toll. Tolls were fixed according to a scale, depending upon the type of vehicle, animal or travelers passing the point; the tolls being advertised on a Toll Board on a pole or adjacent building. The tolls were collected at strategically placed Toll Houses, and where possible, at the junction with other roads (see the appended photographs of Lount toll gate in Part 10). The turnpike trusts declined with the coming



of the canals and railways and the Local Government Act of 1888 gave responsibility for maintaining main roads to county councils and county borough councils. From the 1880's, Toll Houses and Gates were being sold off and many were demolished. The turnpike trusts were eventually rendered bankrupt and obsolete by the railways and canals their roads had helped to build

Following the introduction of maintained Turnpike Roads, the local areas of Swannington, Griffydam, Pegg's Green, Gelsmoor, Swannington, Coleorton, Newbold Lount and Staunton were fortunate in being well served by a network of these, which made the transportation of goods such as coal, limestone, burnt lime, pottery, textiles etc, to outlying places much more efficient.

Turnpikes have been called "one of the central pillars on which the industrial revolution was based". The quality of roads was vital, because many industries producing light high-value goods, notably textiles, depended on them for relatively fast and reliable transport which rivers and coastal vessels could not provide.



TOLLS PAYABLE c.1751. FOR VARIOUS MEANS OF TRANSPORT AND ANIMALS

## LISTED IN THE PRECEDING EXTRACT OF THE ACT:-

### PASSENGER VEHICLES AND GOODS VEHICLES:-

Coach	Berlin
Landau	Chariot
Chaise	Calash
Chair	Waggon
Wain	Carr
Cart	Carriage

### ANIMALS

Horse  
Mare  
Mule  
Ass

### DROVES

For every Drove of Dren (Deer), Cows or Meat Cattle  
For every Drove of Calves, Hogs, Sheep or Lambs

## FURTHER EXPLANATORY NOTES

According to Webster's unabridged dictionary of 1864, the meaning of a "Turnpike" was - *A frame consisting of two bars crossing each other at right angles and turning on a post or pin, to hinder the passage of beasts, but admitting a person to pass between the arms.*

The word "turnpike" dates back to 1420, according to the Barnhart Concise Dictionary of Etymology. It originally referred to **a spiked barrier designed to restrict access to a road**. It comes from the Middle English "turnen" (to turn) plus "pike" (a sharp spike).

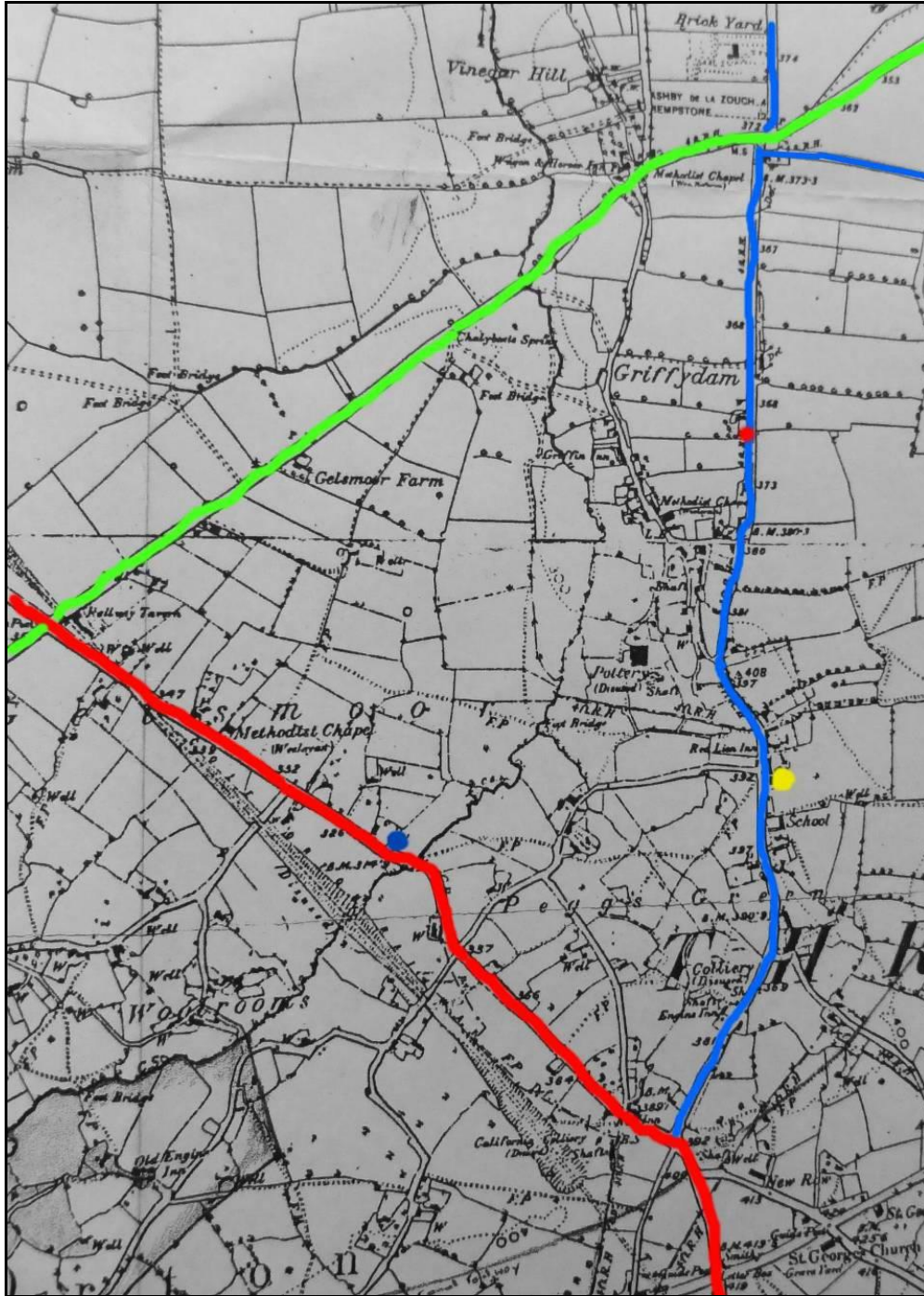
*The Oxford English Dictionary says the spiked barrier was used "as a defense against sudden attack, especially of men on horseback." In the late 17th century, according to the OED, "turnpike" began being used to refer to a barrier on a toll road. By the mid-18th century, the word was used to refer to the road itself.*

**Early toll gates were modeled on the old turnpike barriers and so the roads became known as turnpike roads, later shortened to just turnpikes.**



# PART 3

## TURNPIKE ROADS ENCLOSING GRIFFYDAM, PARTS OF PEGGS GREEN AND GELSMOOR



1881/2 SURVEYED O/S MAP

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## EXPLANATION OF THE TURNPIKE ROAD ROUTES AS SHOWN ON THE PRECEDING MAP

This 1881/2 surveyed O/S map has been used to indicate the paths of the various turnpike roads in the area covered as follows:-

Part of the Ashby to Rempstone turnpike (coloured **green**) ran along the North West side of Griffydam and approximately formed the boundary of the village on that side. The author has found no evidence of there being a Toll house, toll-gate, bar or chain on that stretch of the road.

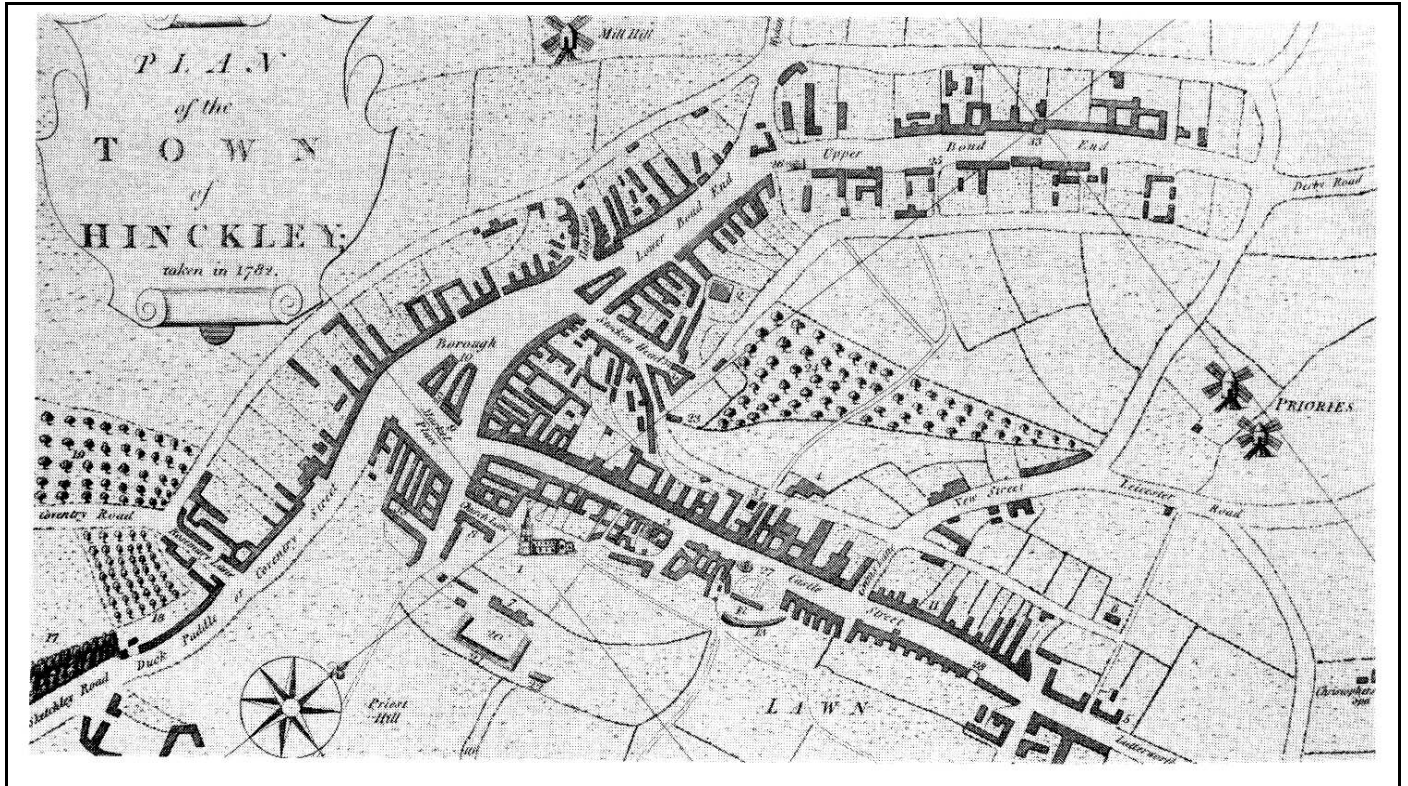
The main route of the Hinckley to Melbourne Common turnpike (coloured **red**) headed North West after Hoo Ash, passing through Swannington and Pegg's Green and on through Engine Gate at Gelsmoor, following which it crossed the Ashby to Rempstone turnpike (coloured **green**). It then proceeded via Newbold Gate through Lount tollgate at Lount cross roads on the Tamworth to Sawley turnpike and then on via Staunton, deviating through the grounds of Staunton Harold Hall at one time, which is explained later.

The road coloured **blue** (now Nottingham Road), was recorded as Froggatt's Lane on the 1807 Thringstone and Peggs Green enclosure map and also on turnpike maps. Froggatt's Lane was yet another branch of the Hinckley to Melbourne turnpike road and intersected with it in the area of Tugby's Lane, Peggs Green. The extension proceeded north from Rempstone cross roads, along the Breedon Top Brand till it reached Redwood Gate on Redwood Lane and then over Woeful Bridge, Tonge, where it eventually terminated at the intersection with the Ashby de la Zouch to Sawley Ferry turnpike. Woeful Bridge is not shown on the following maps, and apparently there was no toll house or toll gate / bar there.

Just to the south of Rempstone cross roads, a further extension of Froggatt's Lane (coloured **blue**) turned east and carried on via Osgathorpe till it intersected with the Ashby to Loughborough turnpike. This is now named Storden Lane, but was shown on the 1807 Pegg's Green and Thringstone Township enclosure map as Froggatt's Lane.

**Various spellings for Froggatt's Lane are used in different records, however, for the sake of consistency the author has chosen to use this version.**

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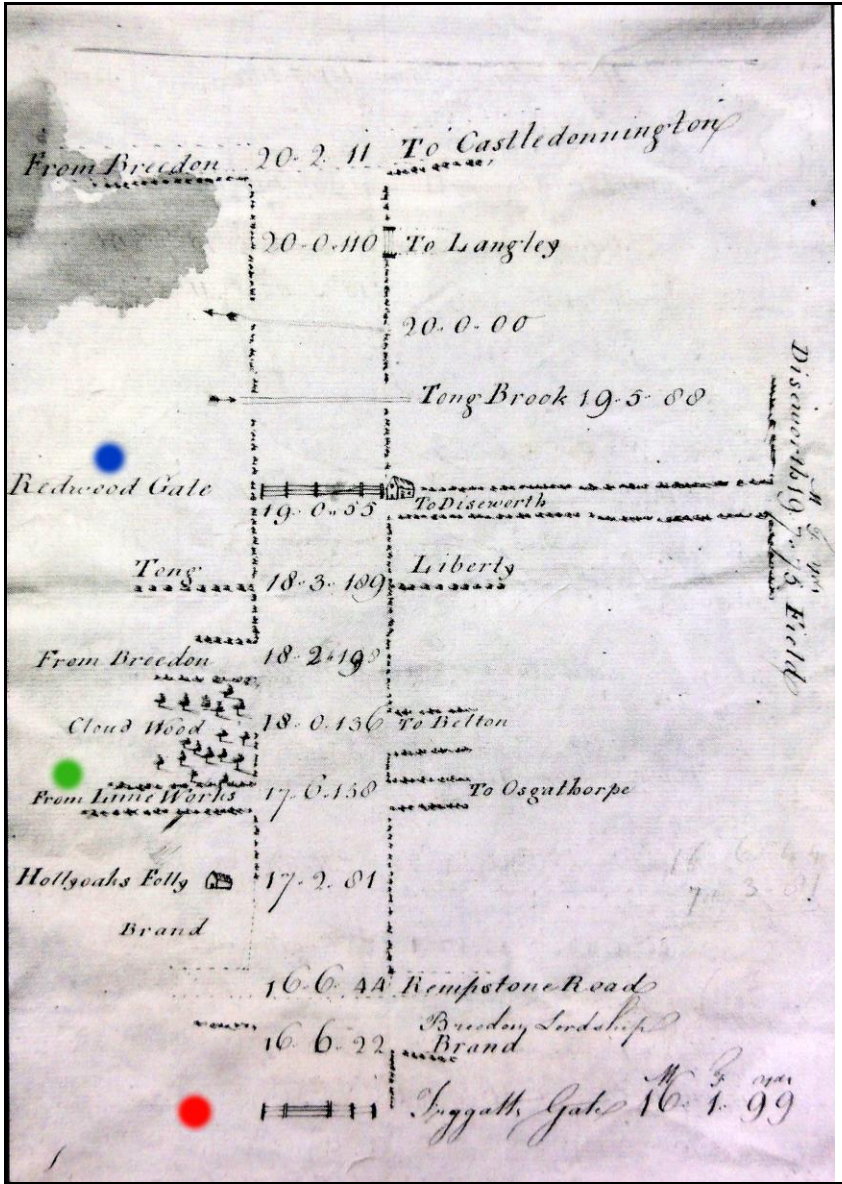


**Where the Hinckley to Melbourne Common Turnpike Road began in Hinckley at "Duck paddle Street" (Also described as Coventry Street) - Bottom LH corner**

*A 1782 Engraving From John Nichols  
"History & Antiquities of the County of Leicester" Vol 1V*

**PART 4**

**INFORMATION RELATING TO THE BLUE LINE SHOWN ON THE MAP ON PAGE 6 AFTER CROSSING THE ASHBY / COLEORTON TO REMPSTONE TURNPIKE ROAD AT REMPSTONE CROSS - ROADS HEADING NORTH**



**AS SURVEYED BY JAMES HOLWORTHY IN 1796 - FROM FROGGATT'S LANE GATE AT PEGG'S GREEN TO THE REDWOOD GATE ON REDWOOD LANE. CERTAIN INFORMATION HAS BEEN OMITTED FROM MAP**

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## KEY TO PRECEDING MAP

- Red dot** - Froggatt's Lane Gate at Pegg's Green (see page 17)
- Green dot** - From Cloud Wood / Cloud Hill Gate / Bar (see page 11)
- Blue Dot** - Redwood Gate shown with a branch to Diseworth / Diseworth Field, a distance of 7 furlongs 20 yard via Gelscoe Lane. Gelscoe Lane itself was recorded as being an official branch of the Hinckley to Melbourne Common Turnpike Road.

*Arthur Cossons in his publication entitled "The turnpike Roads of Leicestershire and Rutland" tells us that a further petition to that of January 21st 1760 was submitted on March 5th asking for the inclusion of the roads between Breedon Brand and Woeful Bridge, via Redwood Lane and through Gelscoe Lane to Diseworth Field.*

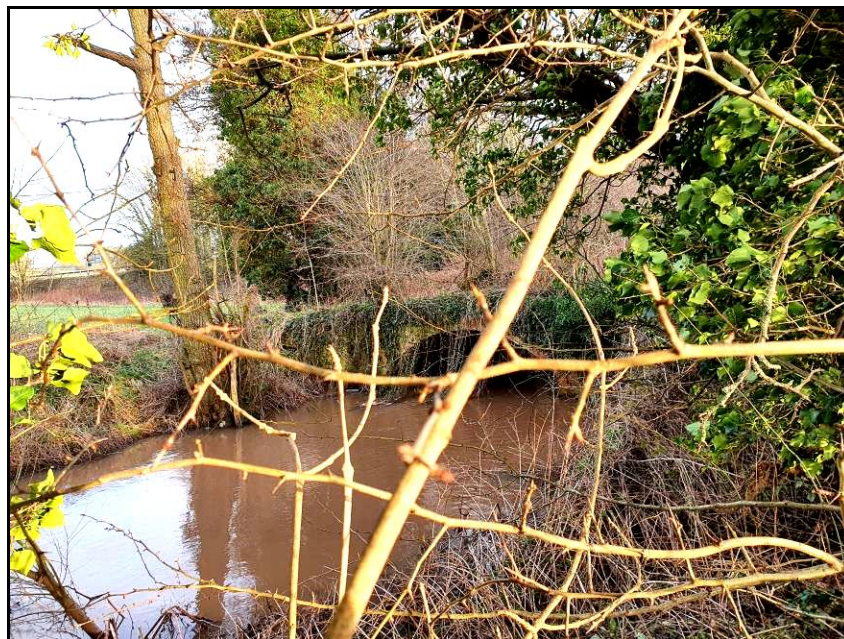
*The following day in the report stage, the bill was recommitted with instructions to the committee to make provision for the last mentioned alterations. The bill was reported again 12th March. The Lords signified their assent on 1st April and on 15th April, the Royal Assent was notified (HJC vol.28, relevant dates).*

*The Redwood Lane part of the roads included in the petition of 5th March seems to have been adopted as the main road in the Act, instead of whatever was intended by the original petition to be the way between Breedon Brand and Woeful bridge. The Belton turn which terminated the Gelscoe branch of the Act seems to have been the second turn towards Belton, which is at the Diseworth boundary, thus confirming the 5th March petition.*

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## WOEFUL BRIDGE - TONGE



### Woeful Bridge - February 2022

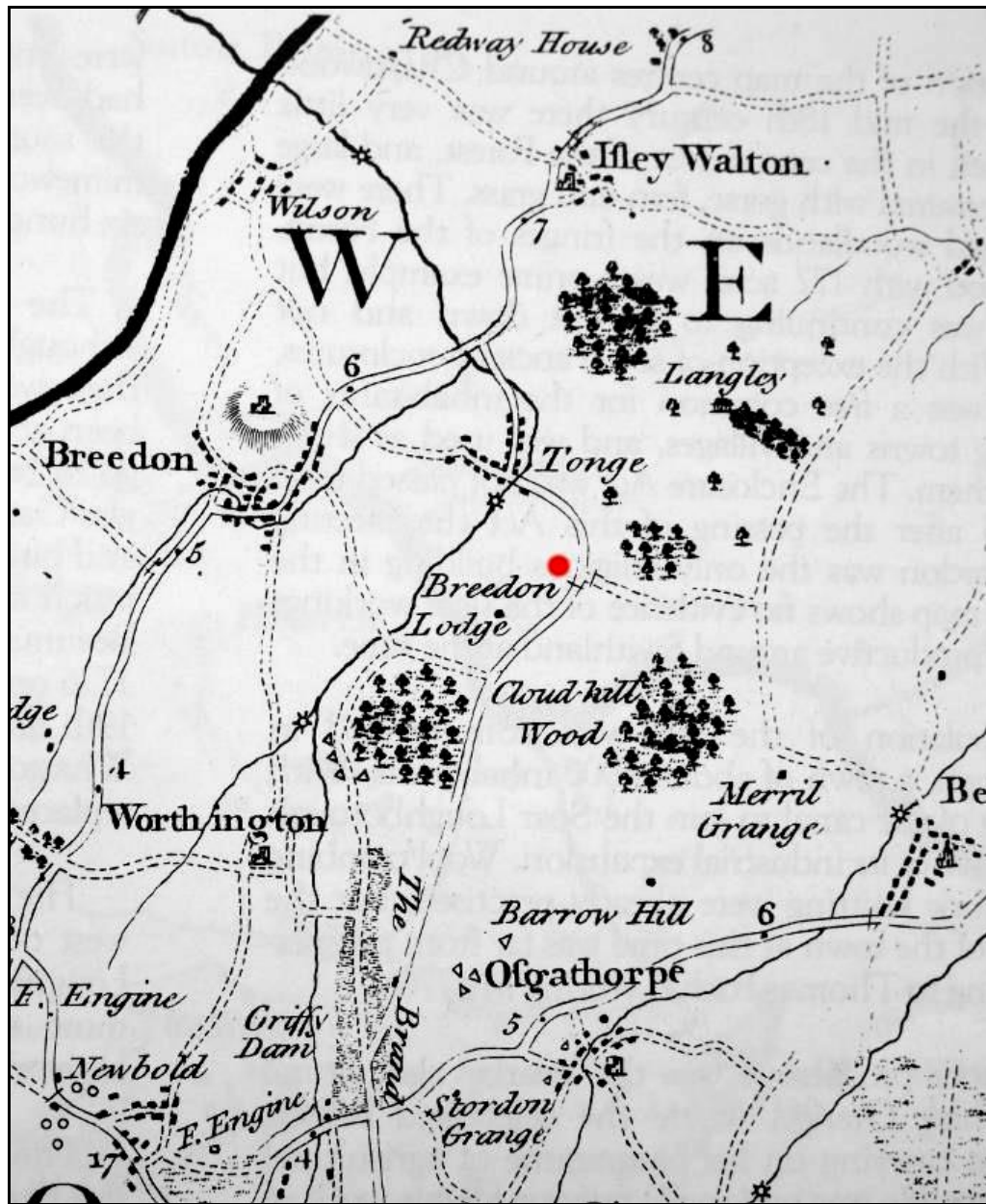
The preceding James Holworthy map does not show the "Woeful Bridge" at Tonge, where this branch of the Hinckley to Melbourne Common Turnpike passed over and finally terminated at the intersection with the Ashby de la Zouch to Sawley Ferry turnpike road. The following is included in the publication "Woeful Bridge and Breedon's Extra-Mural Cemetery" by Dr. Garry Fawcett, 2019 version 5, for which he owns the copyright:-

*Woeful Bridge is spelt as Woefull Bridge on the 1758 pre-enclosure map for the Lordship of Tonge. The bridge itself is not named on the map but is indicated by a heavier line where the road, marked as 'Moor Lane' and 'Road to Breedon', crosses the watercourse. It lies within a small area marked 'Common', but there is an adjacent 'Woefull Bridge Close' of just over an acre.*

*In 1760 Woeful Bridge became the terminus of this branch and occurs by name in the associated Act of Parliament. Comparison of two maps already mentioned (Tonge 1758 & Tonge 1761), dating from either side of the creation of the turnpike, shows some road widening, realignment, etc. Woeful Bridge featured, again in relation to the turnpike, in a further Act of 1774. The records of Leicestershire County Quarter Sessions then show that a contract for repair / building work on Woeful Bridge was placed for the turnpike in 1812. In 1867 work on the Derby to Ashby branch of the Midland Railway reached the area of Woeful Bridge. Part of the work required a new bridge, just a few yards away to the south, to carry the turnpike over the new line of railway as well as the brook. On completion of the railway construction works, the old Woeful Bridge was no longer used for the turnpike road but was nevertheless not demolished. The turnpike continued as such for several more years until 1878. **The author of this publication believes that the turnpike road continued over Woeful bridge till it intersected with the Tamworth /Ashby to Sawley Ferry turnpike road. No reference to an actual toll house, tollgate or bar at Woeful Bridge has been found***

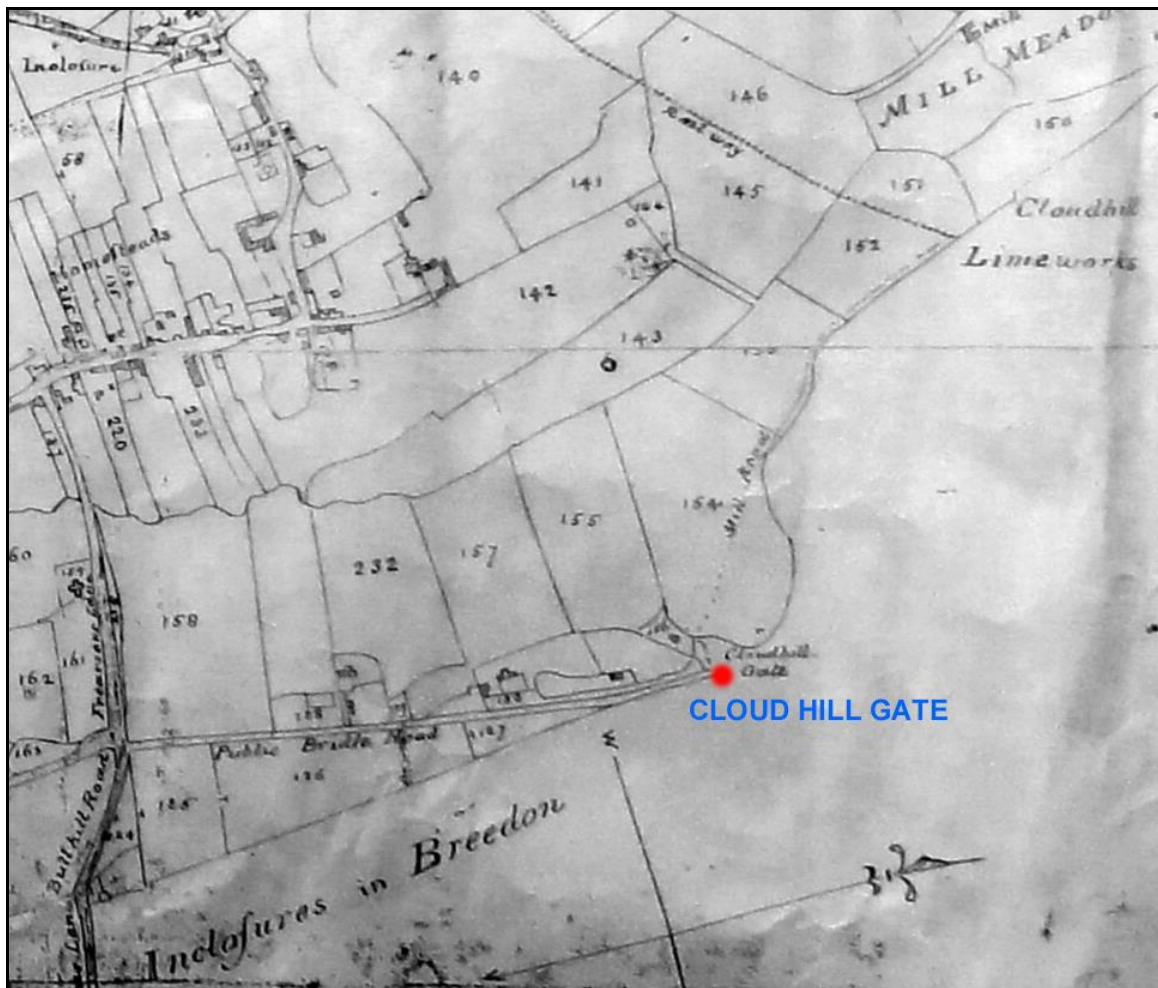
## JOHN PRIOR'S 1777 MAP OF LEICESTERSHIRE

Below is an extract from John Prior's 1777 maps of Leicestershire. This indicates a line across Redwood Lane at the red dot where the Redwood Toll House and Toll Gate was situated, but also shows a bar at right angles on Gelscoe Lane also. These presumably controlled the traffic going from the lime works at Cloud Hill with limestone and burnt lime from the kilns. **The document on page 26 confirms that there was a toll house built here in addition to the toll gate.** The road at this point swings round to the north west and just before entering Tonge, Woeful Bridge crosses over Tonge Brook. It is believed that the turnpike road then followed Moor Lane through Tonge till it intersected with the Ashby de la Zouch to Sawley Ferry turnpike.





**EXTRACT FROM 1806 BREEDON PARISH ENCLOSURE MAP SHOWING  
LOCATION OF CLOUD HILL TOLL GATE AT THE ENTRANCE TO THE MAIN  
ROAD TO CLOUD HILL LIMESTONE WORKS**



There was also a toll bar recorded as being at Cloud Wood which was operated from a hut as confirmed by both the toll ticket on page 24 and the toll house and gate sale document on pages 26 respectively. The author believes that they were most likely one and the same.

See the **green dot** on James Holworthy's map on page 11 which relates to this

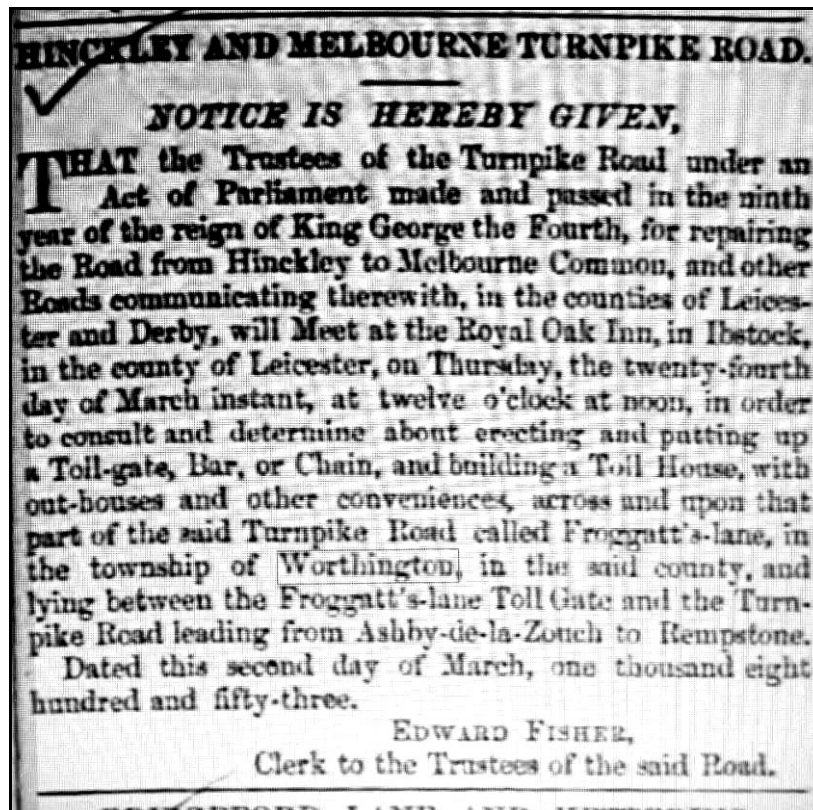
## PART 5

### TOLL HOUSES AND GATES ON FROGGATT'S LANE (BLUE LINE ON MAP ON PAGE 8) FROM PEGG'S GREEN TO REMPSTONE CROSS-ROADS

#### GRIFFYDAM TOLLGATE

Post 1853 a new tollgate house was built at Griffydam confirmed by the following newspaper announcement and census records. The following entry was recorded in the 1871 Griffydam census, showing Fanny Bacon (Widow) as being the toll collector at Griffydam Toll house. **This is shown on the map on page 8 as a red dot on the blue line.**

Griffydam Toll house	Fanny	Bacon	Head	45	Widow	Toll collection	Thringstone, Leics
	John	Bacon	Son	16	Unm	Clerk at Colliery	Thringstone, Leics
	Lewis	Bacon	Son	12		Banksman at colliery	Swannington, Leics



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The preceding newspaper announcement dated March 2<sup>nd</sup> 1853, is a record of the meeting of the turnpike trustees at the "Royal Oak Inn", Ibstock, to decide on a toll house to be built at Griffydam. The article refers to the toll house being built in the Township of Worthington (of which Griffydam was a hamlet at this time). Worthington did not become a parish in its own right till much later and was a Township and Chapelry of Breedon parish at that time. This would mean that the toll house would have been on the west side of Froggatt's Lane, as the opposite side was in the Township of Thringstone. Research is currently taking place to try and define an accurate location.

## FROGGATT'S LANE TOLL HOUSE AND TOLL GATE

On the map on page 8, the location of Froggatt's Lane toll house and gate is marked by a yellow dot on the blue line. It is also marked T.G. on the 1835 O/S map below, north of where Pegg's Green Colliery is written. Pegg's Green was enclosed as part of the Township of Thringstone (part of the ecclesiastical parish of Whitwick) in 1807. It was not till 1936 that Pegg's Green became part of Coleorton parish, hence the census for Pegg's Green being under the Township of Thringstone at this time. See the map on the following page which shows a clearer picture of the location of the Froggatt's Lane toll house and gate.



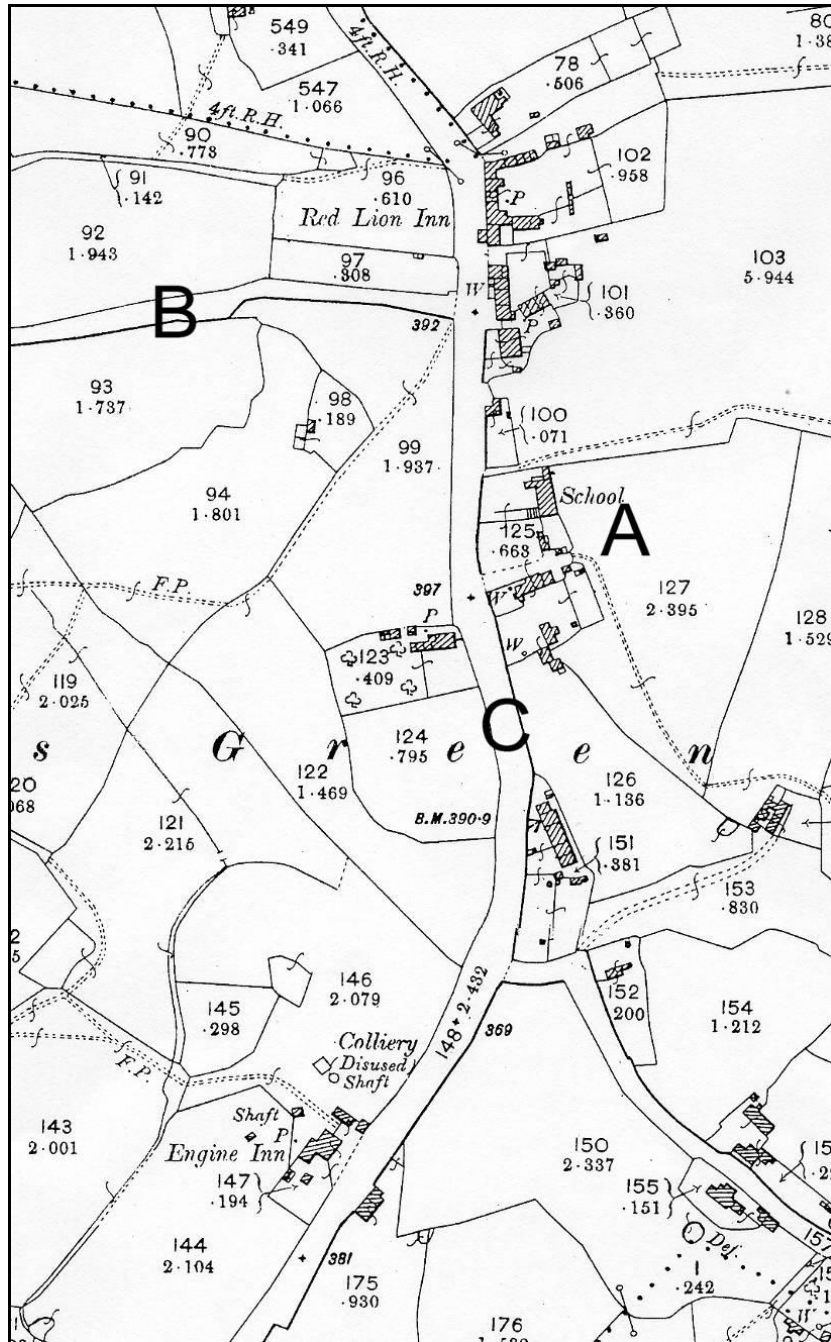
			William Champ	1	2	10	Thringstone
138	Wife Same	1	Matthew Bakewell	Head	30	At the Coal Mine	Thringstone
			Patience Bakewell	Wife	39	Toll Gate Keeper	Thringstone
139		1	John Hayward		11		Thringstone

The above extract from the Township of Thringstone 1861 census shows Patience Bakewell, wife of Matthew Bakewell (coalminer) as "Toll gate keeper"

137	Froggatt Lane Toll Gate	1	Sarah Wood	Head	Widow	60	Toll Gate Keeper	Thringstone
			Harriet Whymman	Daughter	36			Thringstone
			William Wood	Son	34	Coalminer	Thringstone	
			Samuel Whymman	Son	10	Scholar	Thringstone	

The above extract from the Township of Thringstone 1861 census shows Sarah Wood (Widow) as "Toll gate keeper".

**Trade Directory** – The History, Gazetteer & Directory of Leicestershire & Rutland, 1877, records Banber Rowland and Mrs. Sarah ?? as toll collectors, Froggatt's lane gate, Thringstone. The Toll Gate house is thought to be the first building directly north of the Griffydam Wesleyan Methodist Day School marked **A**. This small cottage has now been demolished although the site still remains, fronted by a hedge.



**Extract from 1903 O/S Map**

**A** = Griffydam Wesleyan Day School

**B** = School Lane

**C** = Nottingham Road

## PEGGS GREEN TOLL BAR

In the document on page 25, there is mention of Pegg's Green bar to be let by auction in 1856. The following is recorded in Colin Owen's respected book on the Leicestershire and South Derbyshire Coalfields :-

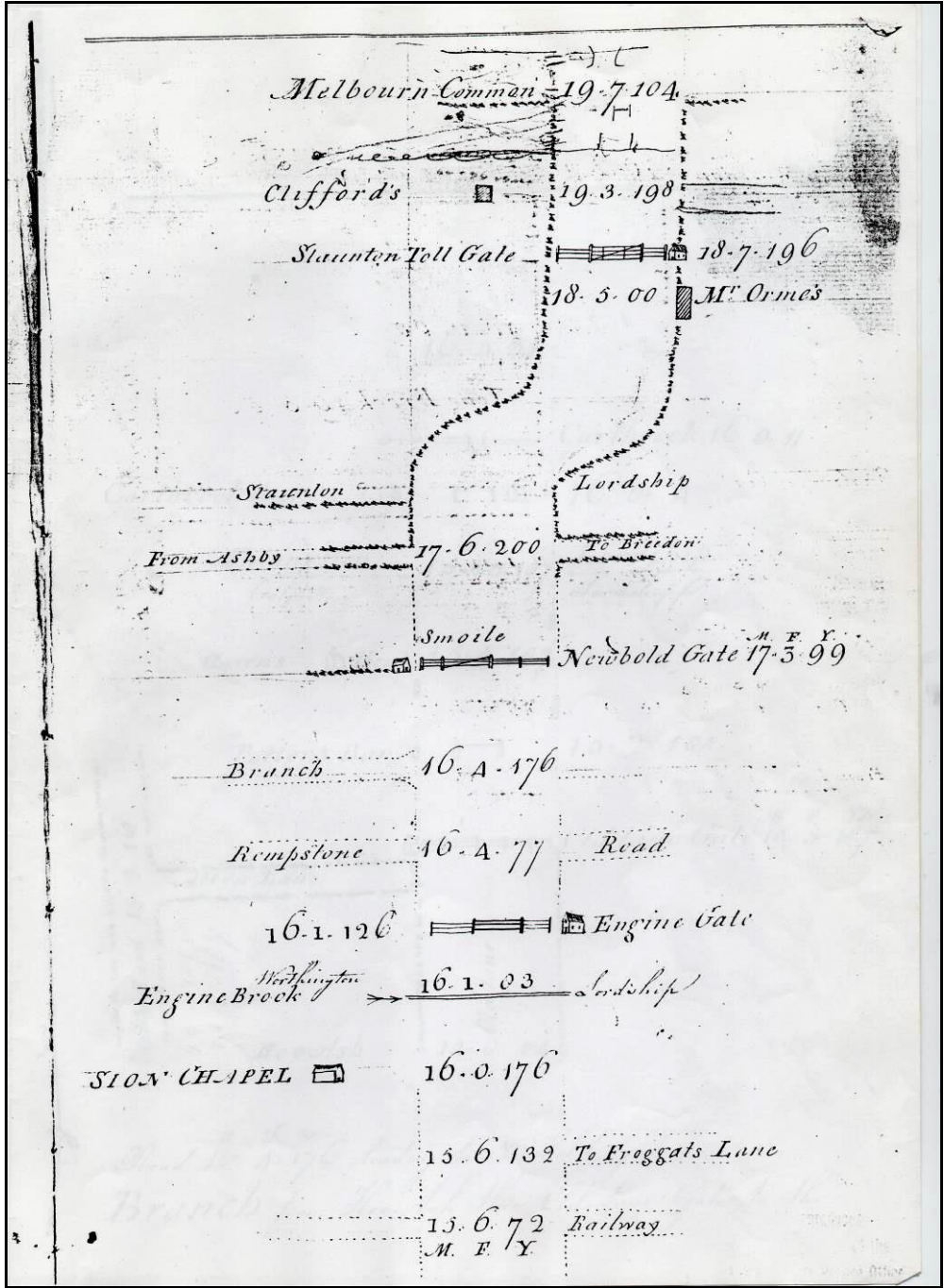
*Following the sinking of Pegg's Green Colliery (in 1830) by Price and Company, the Trustees of the Hinckley to Melbourne Turnpike endeavored to take advantage of the new coal traffic by erecting a bar across the road immediately to the south of the colliery. Anxious to avoid payment of extra tolls, Price & Company agreed to maintain a stretch of the road between the colliery and Swannington Common for seven years in return for the removal of the bar, although the Trustees were careful to ensure that any coal sent northwards passed through Newbold Gate. (LRO, 13D40/11, meetings of 13th February, 24th April, and 20th Sept 1833).*

**As the letting auction document on page 25 is dated 1856, then presumably as coal output increased, the Trustees had reinstated the bar by this time. Pegg's Green Colliery closed in 1859, so the bar would have been removed altogether after closure.**



PART 6

FROGGAT'S LANE TURN TO ENGINE GATE AT GELSMOOR -  
(SEE PART 10 RELATING TO ENGINE GATE NORTHWARDS)



SURVEYED BY JAMES HOLWORTHY IN 1796

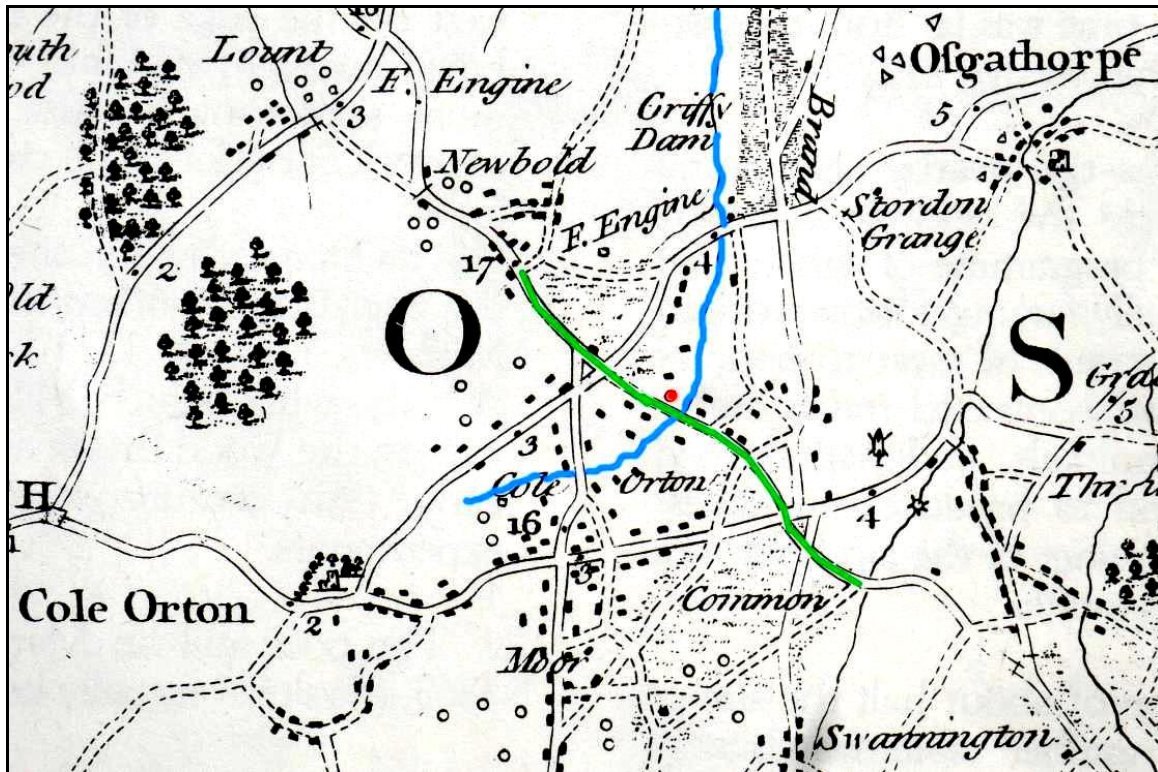
The preceding James Holworthy's 1796 surveyor's map depicts the "Engine Gate" toll house and gate, just north of Cart brook, but marked as Engine brook. The location is shown as a **blue dot** on the **red line** on the map on page 8 and also as a **red dot** on the c.1807 map below. As James Holworthy refers to it as Engine Gate, and the brook as Engine brook, it is plausible that there was also an engine located there, pumping water out of the mine (see the following page) into Cart brook. The brook was the boundary between Pegg's Green which was in the township of Thringstone at that time and Breedon Parish, which later became Worthington parish in that area. Pegg's Green became part of the administrative parish of Coleorton in 1936 and the brook still defines the current parish boundary between Worthington and Coleorton in that area.

It is thought that the coal mine at Engine Gate was responsible for the subsidence resulting in Richard' s Pond being formed.



The above c.1807 map has been annotated by the author and shows the junction at Tugby's Lane branching off the main turnpike road along Froggatt's lane and the main turnpike road continuing on through Pegg's Green, Gelsmoor and on to Newbold & Lount. It also shows the alternative Coleorton branch going from Hoo Ash to Sinope and on through Coleorton to rejoin the main turnpike road just north of the Ashby to Rempstone turnpike road. This is explained / shown in more detail in Part 10 of the publication.





The above is an extract from John Prior's 1777 map who indicated a coal pit (**red dot**) in the approximate place where Engine Gate was subsequently established. It is thought that the coal mine at Engine Gate was responsible for the subsidence of the surrounding land and the formation of Richard's Pond. Prior's map also shows two cottages in this area which are not there now.

Based on information from a respected past researcher, it appears that there was a Newcomen fire engine which pumped water from a coal mine to the north into Cart brook **coloured blue** via a wooden trough structure mounted on stilts above ground. It is thought that this is how Aqueduct Bridge and Aqueduct Lane just to the north at Gelsmoor got its name. Coleorton Railway passed over Aqueduct Bridge of course.

John Prior indicated on his map the location of various Fire Engines used to pump water out of coal mines and one can be seen on the above map just to the south east of Newbold. Whether this was the engine pumping water from the adjacent coal mine which Prior has shown with the small circle down to Cart brook cannot be confirmed but the author takes the view that it was.

A part of the main Hinckley to Melbourne Common turnpike road is **coloured green**.

## PART 7

### EXAMPLES OF UNUSED TOLL GATE AND TOLL BAR TICKETS



The above are a selection of unused tollgate and toll bar tickets for *Froggatt's Lane Gate*, *Cartbrook Bar* (Coleorton), *Engine Gate* (Gesmoor), *Cloudwood Bar* (Cloud Hill Lime Works), *Redwood gate* (Top Brand), *Swannington bar* (Swannington), *Old Lane Gate* (Coleorton)



## PART 8

### EXAMPLES OF THE LETTING /AUCTIONING OF TURNPIKE TOLLS

*In 1809, the following was recorded in the "Leicester Journal and Midland counties Advertiser" Volume LV111 iss:2961 dated 20.10.1809 and 17.11.1809. regarding the auctioning / letting of Turnpike Tolls:-*

**TURN PIKE TOLLS TO LET** - Notice is herewith given that the tolls arising at the several toll gates and Bars under-mentioned, erected upon the Turnpike Road leading from Hinckley to Melbourne, coming in the County of Leics, and the several branches thereof, will be let by auction to the best bidder or bidders, at the Bull's Head in Market Bosworth on Wednesday the 22nd of November next, between the hours of 2 and 6, in the manner directed by the Act passed in the thirteenth year of the Reign of his present Majesty, for "regulating turnpike roads", which tolls let the last year for the following sums, and will be put at the same sums - "Hinckley and Stapleton Gates" £121;"Osbaston Gate and 4 Bars" £120; "Heather and Swepstone" £116; "Hoo Ash, Old Lane, Froggatt's Lane, Etigene (Engine?) Cartbrook, Newbold and Swannington" >£386; Staunton £53, Redwood £50. Whoever happens to be the takers of the said tolls, must at the same time pay a deposit of ten per cent of the rent agreed for, and be prepared to take yearly.

**HINCKLEY AND MELBOURNE TURNPIKE ROAD.**  
**NOTICE IS HEREBY GIVEN,**  
THAT the Tolls arising at the several Toll Gates and Bars hereafter-mentioned, erected upon the Turnpike-road between Hinckley and Melbourne Common, the several Branches thereof, in the Counties of Leics and Derby,

**WILL BE LET BY AUCTION,**  
To the Best Bidder, at the House of Mr. Trivett, the Dir's Arms Inn, in Market Bosworth, in the County of Leicester, on Friday, the 21st day of November, 1856, between the Hours of Eleven and Two, for the Term of One Year, commencing the First Day of January next, in the manner directed by the Acts passed in the third and fourth years of his Majesty King George the Fourth, for regulating Turnpike Roads, which Tolls produced the last year the several sums hereafter mentioned, clear of the expenses of collecting them, and will be put up at such sums and in such lots as the Trustees present shall think fit.

	£.	s.	d.
Hinckley Gate and Stapleton Gate and Bar	98	0	0
Cadeby Machine, Gate, and Bar	82	0	0
Osbaston Gate and Bars	98	0	0
Swepstone Gate and Bar	51	0	0
Fisc Lane Gate and Bar, and Heather Mill Bar	76	0	0
Hoo Ash Lane and Old Lane Gates, and Swannington Bar	42	0	0
Froggatt's Lane Gate, Pegg's Green Bar, Engine Gate and Cartbrook Bar, and Newbold Gate and Bar	204	0	0
Redwood Gate and Bar	55	0	0
Staunton Gate and Bar	44	0	0

Whoever happens to be the best Bidder, must at the same time pay One Month's Rent in advance of the rent at which such Tolls may be Let, and give security with sufficient sureties to the satisfaction of the Trustees of the said Turnpike Roads, for the payment of the rest of the Money Monthly.

The Renters of Gates that stand in arrears will not be allowed to bid.

EDWARD FISHER,  
Clerk to the Trustees.  
Asliby-de-la-Zouch,  
16th October, 1856.

1856 Newspaper advertisement for auction and letting of Toll Gates and Toll Bars

## PART 9

### THE SALE OF TOLL HOUSES, GATES / BARS IN 1880

# TURNPIKE TRUST.

Expiration of the Local Act of Parliament and Sale  
of the Toll Houses and Gates.

## NOTICE IS HEREBY GIVEN

That in consequence of the Abolition of the Tolls on this Road on the  
1st day of November, 1880, the

## **MATERIALS OF THE TOLL HOUSES**

AND THE TURNPIKE GATES,

WILL BE SOLD BY PUBLIC AUCTION,

For removal immediately after that day, by

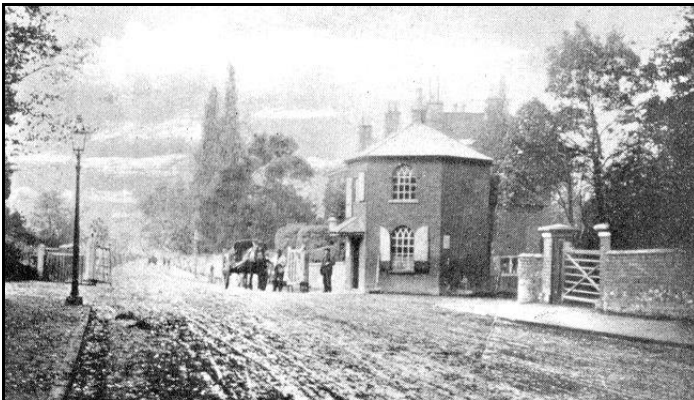
***MESSRS. GERMAN, GERMAN, AND LOWE,***

Subject to such Conditions as will be read at the Time of Sale, and at the following times and places:

- LOT 1.—THE HINCKLEY GATE TOLL HOUSE and Gate, on *Thursday, the 28th day of October, 1880, at 11 o'clock* in the Forenoon precisely, at the Hinckley Gate.
- LOT 2.—THE STAPLETON GATE TOLL HOUSE and Gate, on *the same day, at 11.30 o'clock* in the Forenoon precisely, at the Stapleton Gate.
- LOT 3.—THE CADEBY MACHINE GATE TOLL HOUSE and Gate, on *the same day, at 12 o'clock* in the Afternoon precisely, at the Cadeby Machine Gate.
- LOT 4.—THE OSBASTON BAR TOLL HOUSE and Gate, on *the same day, at 12.30 o'clock* in the Afternoon precisely, at the Osbaston Bar.
- LOT 5.—THE OSBASTON GATE TOLL HOUSE and Gate, on *the same day at 12.45 o'clock* in the Afternoon precisely at the Osbaston Gate Toll House.
- LOT 6.—THE BELCHER'S BAR TOLL HOUSE and Gate, on *the same day, at 3 o'clock* in the Afternoon precisely, at the Belcher's Bar.
- LOT 7.—THE PISCA LANE BAR TOLL HOUSE and Gate, on *the same day, at 3.30 o'clock* in the Afternoon, at Pisca Lane Bar.
- LOT 8.—THE HEATHER MILL BAR TOLL HOUSE and Bar, on *the same day at 4 o'clock* in the Afternoon precisely, at the Heather Mill Bar.
- LOT 9.—THE SWEPSTONE BAR TOLL HOUSE and Bar, on *the same day, at 4.30 o'clock* in the Afternoon precisely, at the Swebstone Bar.
- LOT 10.—THE OLD LANE GATE TOLL HOUSE and Gate, on *Friday, the 29th day of October, 1880, at 10.30 o'clock* in the Forenoon precisely, at the Old Lane Gate.
- LOT 11.—THE SWANNINGTON BAR TOLL HOUSE and Gate, on *the same day, at 11 o'clock* in the Forenoon at Swannington Bar.
- LOT 12.—THE FROGGATT'S LANE TOLL HOUSE and Gate, on *the same day at 11.30 o'clock* in the Forenoon precisely, at the Froggatt's Lane Gate.
- LOT 13.—THE FROGGATT'S LANE BAR TOLL HOUSE and Bar on *the same day at 11.45 o'clock* in the Forenoon precisely, at the Froggatt's Lane Bar.
- LOT 14.—THE CLOUDWOOD BAR TOLL HUT and Bar, on *the same day, at 12.30 o'clock* in the Afternoon precisely, at the Redwood Gate.
- LOT 15.—THE REDWOOD GATE TOLL HOUSE and Gate, on *the same day at 12.39 o'clock* in the Afternoon precisely, at the Redwood Gate.
- LOT 16.—THE ENGINE GATE TOLL HOUSE and Gate, on *the same day, at 2 o'clock* in the Afternoon precisely, at the Engine Gate.
- LOT 17.—THE CARTBROOK BAR TOLL HOUSE and Bar, on *the same day at 2.30 o'clock* in the Afternoon precisely, at the Cartbrook Bar.



Toll Houses built in the early 19th century often had a distinctive bay front to give the pikeman a clear view of the road, and to provide a display area for the Toll Board. In 1840, according to the Turnpike Returns in Parliamentary Papers, there were over 5,000 toll houses operating in England. These were sold off in the 1880s when the turnpikes were closed. Many were demolished but several hundred have survived as domestic houses, with distinctive features of the old tollhouse still visible. The notice on the wall of this Toll House states “for sale by auction” and the photograph was c.1880.









The Hinckley to Melbourne Common turnpike has numerous branches. For example, the main turnpike road divide at Hoo Ash, and a branch proceeded to Sinope, and turned down via a toll gate, what we now know as Upper Moor Road, Coleorton and then proceeded down through other toll gates over Cart Brook below Coleorton Methodist Chapels. Cart Brook currently defines the boundary of the Coleorton and Worthington parishes. The turnpike then proceeds onwards to join the main turnpike road from Hinckley which went via Hoo Ash, Swannington, Pegg's Green, and Gelsmoor "Engine Gate", at a point just after crossing the Ashby to Rempstone turnpike. Proceeding north, the Hinckley to Melbourne turnpike is next crossed by Newbold Hurst Road and after a short distance we reach "Newbold toll gate". Now proceeding NE at the sharp bend on Melbourne road, we then come to Lount toll house and gate at Lount cross roads.



**Lount hexagonal toll house pre 1930**

Photograph taken from the Breedon side of the main Breedon to Ashby Road. This was originally at the junction of the Hinckley to Melbourne and Tamworth to Sawley turnpikes and became commonly known as the "Round House" as was usual with this type of toll house. It was thought to have been built in 1836 which was the date on the toll tariff board. The toll house was demolished c.1930.

**EXTRACT FROM HANSARD – DECEMBER 11TH 1929**

Mr. WINTERTON asked the Minister of Transport why no progress has been made with the removal of the toll house at Lount cross-roads, Ashby-De-La-Zouch, where a motorist was burnt to death after a collision in July last; whether he is aware that there have been several narrow escapes of accidents at this spot since his attention was last called to the matter; and what steps he proposes to take to bring about the removal of the building, which is an obstruction and a danger to the community.

Mr. HERBERT MORRISON. I am informed that the Leicestershire County Council have been in negotiation with the owner of the Lount tollgate, Ashby-De-La-Zouch, for the acquisition of the toll-gate cottage at Lount cross-roads, and it is hoped that a settlement will be reached at an early date. As soon as that property has been acquired, the county council will arrange for its demolition.

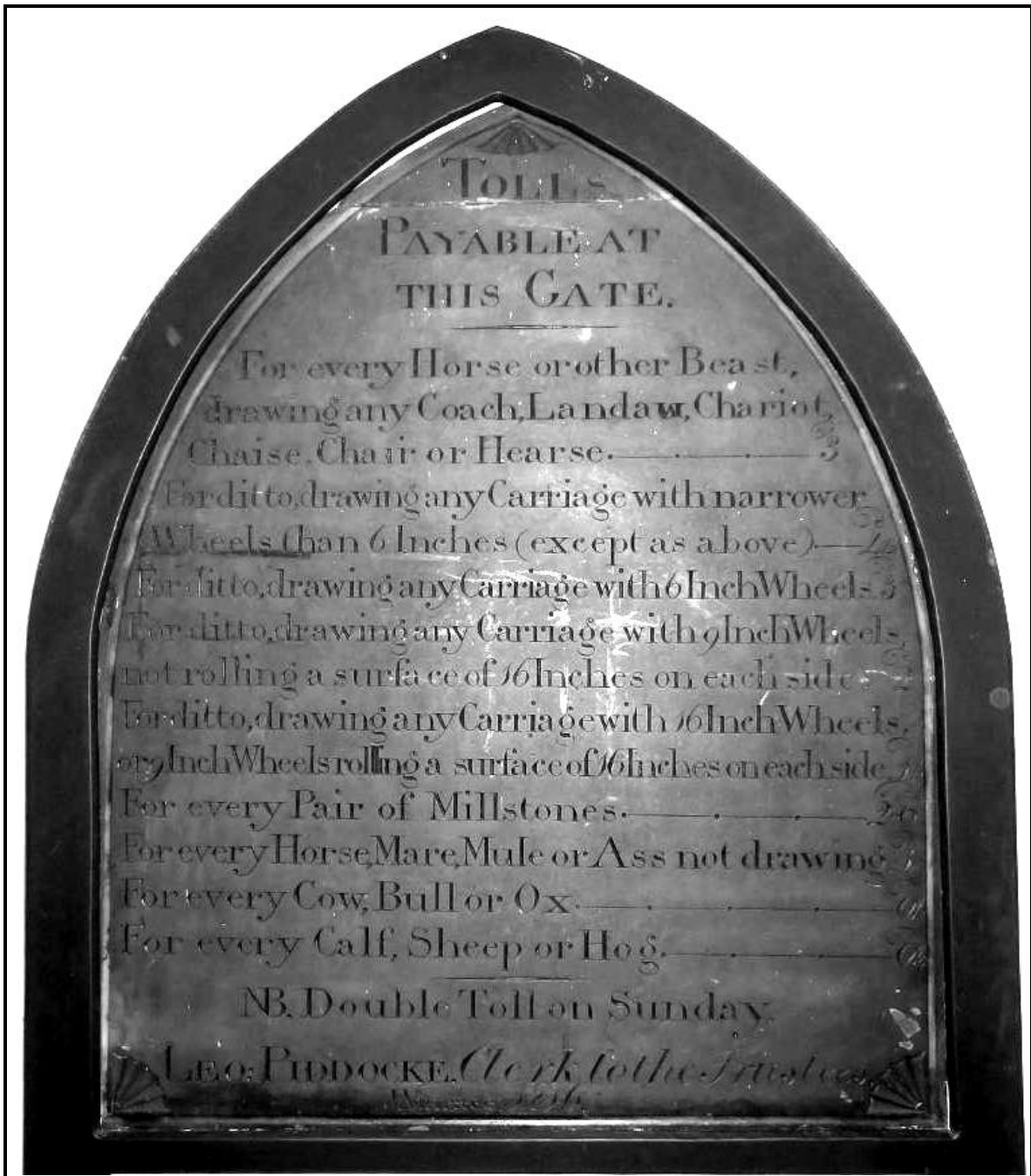


The people in the preceding photograph are recorded in Ashby Museum as being William Baker, who lived at "Rose Cottage", Lount, and was a "coal higgler", together with his wife seated and daughter Mary Johnson and her son Walter Johnson. At the doorway is thought to be Joseph Chester, who was the toll collector, possibly following the Griffons.



**Note the cat to the left and the fowls to the right**





**Slate toll tariff board dated 1836 originally mounted above the front door  
See transcription of tolls on next page**

### TARRIF BOARD TOLLS

For every horse or other beast drawing any Coach, Landau, Chariot, Chaise, Chair or Hearse	- 3d
For ditto drawing any carriage with narrower wheels than 6 inches (except as above)	- 4½d
For ditto, drawing any carriage with 6 inches wheels	- 3d
For ditto, drawing any carriage with 9 inch wheels, not rolling a surface of 16 inches on either side	- 2d
For ditto, drawing any carriage with 16 inches wheels or 9 inches wheels, rolling a surface of 16 inches on either side	- 3½d
For every pair of millstones 6d	- 2s.
For every Horse, Mare, Mule or Ass not drawing	- 1d
For every Cow, Bull, or Ox	- ½d
For every Calf, Sheep or Hog	- ¼d

### DOUBLE TOLL ON SUNDAY

## OCCUPANTS OF LOUNT TOLL HOUSE

### 1841 CENSUS

Joseph Smith and his wife Jane, both aged about 35 are living at the tollgate house. Joseph was born in Leicestershire and his occupation is given as an Agricultural Labourer.

**LEICESTER CHRONICLE – FEBRUARY 8<sup>TH</sup> 1845**.....John Gostilow was keeper of Lount tollgate from 1843 – 1845.

### LEICESTER MERCURY – MAY 4<sup>TH</sup> 1850

**ASHBY PETTY SESSIONS** - Thomas Walker of Lount, was charged by William Hough of Ashby with going off a turnpike road to evade the payment of the toll at Lount gate on March 16<sup>th</sup> last. Convicted and fines 1s. and costs.

### LEICESTER MERCURY – MAY 18<sup>TH</sup> 1850

**A CONSTABLE IN A MESS** – A correspondent says that the constable of a village near Lount partook too freely of the “Barley Bree” while on a visit to a friendly tollgate keeper, that he quite lost the command of his own person – performed feats that cannot be described – and had to be taken home on a dog cart. The ungrateful dog Berry then refused to pay the dog cart driver for his trouble.

### 1851 CENSUS

Joseph Fairbrother, a widower, aged 50 is listed as living at the tollgate house. He was born in Staunton Harold, and his occupation was listed as an Agricultural Labourer. He has two daughters living with him, Elizabeth aged 17 and Mary aged 8. His daughters were born in Staunton Harold

### 1861 CENSUS

David Wardle, who was born in Thringstone and is aged about 78, is living at the tollgate house with his granddaughter Ann Wardle, aged 15, who was born in Whitwick. David Wardle's occupation is given as an Agricultural Labourer.

### 1871 CENSUS

There is no mention of the Toll Gate / House in the Staunton Harold returns. However, there is a “Toll Collector” listed. His name was George / Joseph Griffon or Griffin. He was aged about 78 and was born in Sheepshead (now named Shepshed). His wife's name was Rebecca L Griffon, aged 77.

It is recorded in “The History Gazetteer & Directory of Leics & Rutland 1877 and the Post Office Directory for Leics and Rutland 1876 that William Watson was the toll collector. He is given in the toll records as being born in Staunton Harold in 1795. The toll road closed in 1878 so he was probably the last collector of tolls at Lount. He was shown as a retired toll contractor in the 1891 census

The people in the second of the preceding three photographs, have been recorded in Ashby Museum as being William Baker (who lived at Rose Cottage, Lount & was a coal higgler), his daughter Mary Johnson and her son Walter Johnson, together with Joseph Chester, who ran the tollgate possibly after the Griffon's.



## PART 11

### INFORMATION ON THE ROUTE OF THE TURNPIKE FROM LOUNT CROSS-ROADS TO MELBOURNE COMMON

It is important to establish the relationship of the hamlet of Lount with the turnpike roads that intersected in the area of Lount cross roads as we know it today. The Tamworth to Sawley and Hinckley to Melbourne turnpike roads basically crossed in the area of Lount cross roads.

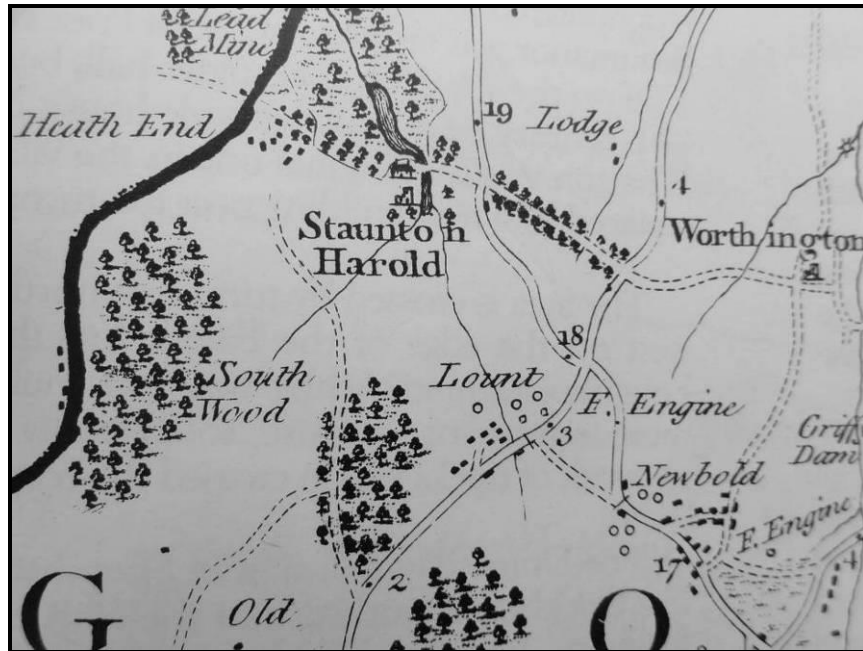
In the introduction to the book entitled "Leicestershire in 1777" and edited by J. D. Welding which features Prior's map of Leicestershire, the following was written by the "Leicestershire Industrial Historic Society":-*The map is particularly detailed in its indication of roads, both the turnpikes and the network of minor lanes which criss-crossed even remote areas of the county. The takeover of major roads by the turnpike trusts had begun in the country in 1726, with the main London road through Harborough via Leicester to Loughborough. In 1753-4, the roads from Hinckley, Coventry, Uppingham, Narborough and Ashby were turnpiked, and a number of other roads were added in the 1760's The map indicates not only the milestones along the roads, but also the position of the toll bars at which the finance for the maintenance of the roads was collected from travellers.* The map is described as being accurately surveyed at the time it was created

There is no reason to believe as has been suggested elsewhere, that the original Swarcliffe Lane (Coleorton Turn) to Sawley section of the Tamworth to Ashby turnpike road did not basically follow the route bypassing the hamlet of Lount as originally shown in the Prior map, and eventually became the Breedon to Ashby road as we know it today. The book entitled "The Turnpike Roads of Leicestershire and Rutland" by Arthur Cossons states that the Swarcliffe Lane (Coleorton Turn) to Sawley section of the turnpike road which by-passed the hamlet of Lount, and intersected with the Hinckley to Melbourne turnpike road in the vicinity of Lount cross-roads, was awarded the Act of 1<sup>st</sup> Authority in 1759-60, as was the Hinckley to Melbourne toll road.

The following extract from the prior map shows a tollgate bar just to the east of the hamlet of Lount in the direction of Breedon. It is marked **A** in the following enlarged extract. This was moved some time between 1806 and 1836 to Lount cross-roads when the tollgate house was built between those dates. See the earlier feature on the hexagonal tollgate house.



On the stretch of the turnpike road which ran from Lount Cross Roads to Melbourne, the first toll bar / gate was in the area of the Ashby Lodge entrance to Staunton Harold Hall, near to the milestone number 18 on the Prior 1777 map below. Another toll bar / gate, close to the milestone number 19, was situated further along towards Melbourne Common, beyond the Melbourne Lodge entrance to Staunton Harold.

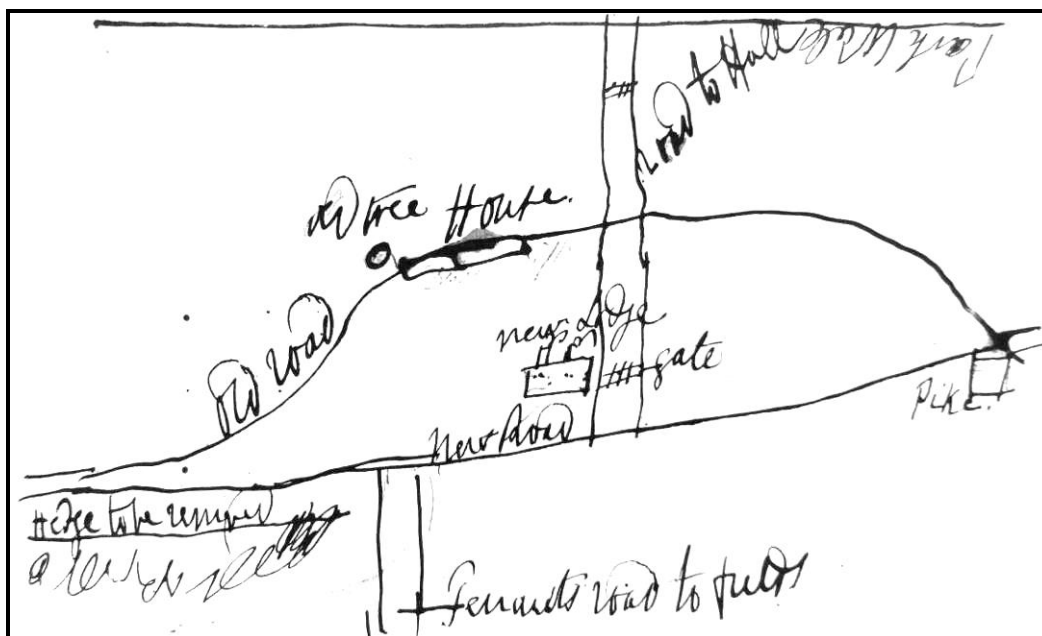


Although it is not made clear on the Prior map, a section of the turnpike road approximately 200 yards long, ran roughly between numbers 18 and 19 in a path reasonably close to the lake at the front of the Staunton Harold Hall. This was discovered when an 1857 record came to light at the Derby Records Office with an appended sketch plan, which follows.

This record gave details of a request that the 9<sup>th</sup> Earl Ferrers made to the turnpike trustees to have this road diverted to a new stretch of road which would run for a length of 160 yards in what appears to be along the line of the current Melbourne road to the east of the Melbourne Lodge entrance to Staunton Harold. This was approved on the agreement that the Earl would keep the road in good repair for the space of two years from completion thereof, to the satisfaction of the said surveyor. The following people attended the meeting:-

The Rev. G. P. Belcher (Chair), Edward Fisher (Clerk to the trustees), Mr. Clarke, Sir George Howland Beaumont, Rev. Francis Merewether.

The sketch map below suggests that the old toll road followed the route of the old coach road from the milestone number 18 near to Ashby Lodge, bypassing the hall to the east of the lake, and then onto a point where it passed between the old ash tree and the malthouse on the Melbourne Lodge entrance to the Hall. It then joined the turnpike gate close to milestone number 19 on Prior's map, which was just beyond Hill Farm and is referred to as "pike" on the sketch map. The new section of road and the rest of the turnpike road shown on the Prior map was presumably replaced at some future time with the current section of the Melbourne road from Lount cross roads.

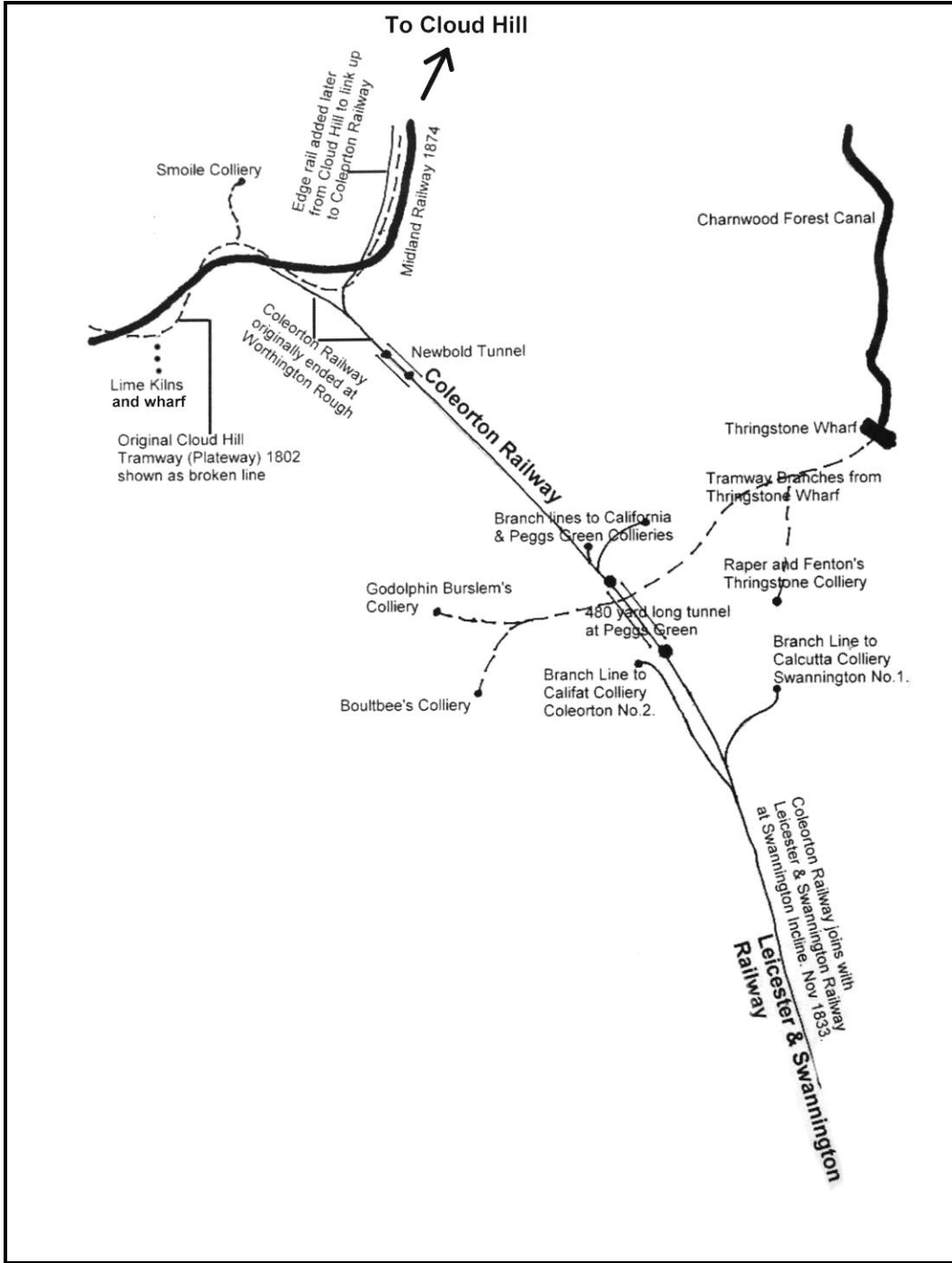


As already stated, we have no reason to suspect that the original turnpike road did not basically follow the current route of the Breedon to Ashby main road. However, we have to ask the question, why are the original front doors on Stewart's Lount Farm house at the rear of the property, on the opposite side to the main road as we look at them now?

Similarly, at Roper's Hill Farm House, where the front entrance is on the north-west side of the property, the opposite side to the main road. We believe, from various pieces of evidence we have seen, including the Ashby Hastings 1837 estate map, that this was because, prior to, or even after, the turnpike road was built, a track existed which was an extension of Featherbed Lane from Ashby which continued into the area of Lount Wood where it intersected with Callin's Lane and carried on through the hamlet of Lount to Stewart's Close and the rear of Lount Farm House, and then continued on across the fields to the rear of Roper's Hill Farm. More research needs to be carried out in relation to this theory.

# PART 12

## A SCHEMATIC DIAGRAM PROVIDING AN EXAMPLE OF HOW LOCAL CANALS & RAILWAYS LED TO THE DEMISE OF THE LOCAL TURNPIKES IN THE 2nd HALF OF THE 19TH CENTURY





## **THE GROWTH AND DEMISE OF TURNPIKE ROADS IN LEICESTERSHIRE**

Between 1760 and 1840, Britain passed from a state of local economies, with a basic road transport system, into a nation who had the benefit of a national railway system developing alongside an existing strong network of canals and good interconnecting roads.

Between 1730 and 1755 there was little growth in the turnpike road system, with only c.50 miles of turnpike roads being developed. However, over the next 10 to 15 years, a period of major growth took place with some further 275 miles being added. By 1820, a total of c.350 miles had been built. The growth stagnated somewhat over the next 50 years, and by 1870, a dramatic reduction started to take place in the turnpike road system due to a significant fall off of traffic and a parallel reduction in income from tolls due to more efficient and economical means of transport being developed, and by 1880 the turnpike trusts were eventually rendered bankrupt and obsolete by the railways and canals their roads had helped to build. The era of turnpike roads as such had come to an end and all the toll houses and gates etc., had been sold off.

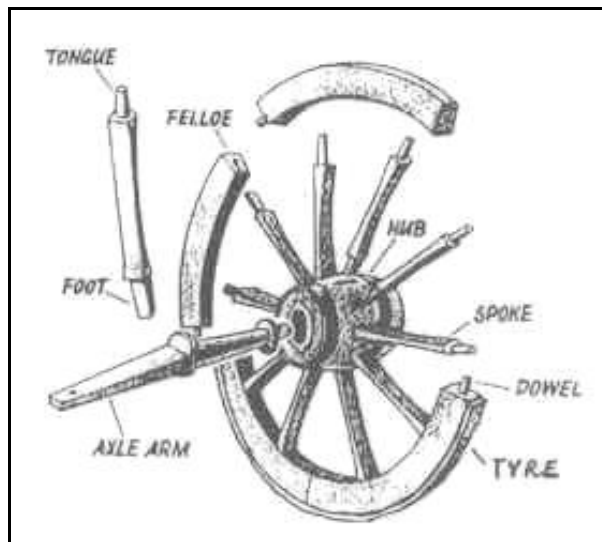
## PART 13

### WAGGON, CART AND CARRIAGE WHEELS ETC., SHOED WITH STRAKES

**PLEASE NOTE THE TARRIF BOARD ON PAGES 32 / 33 REFERRING  
TO 6 INCH AND 9 INCH WIDE WHEELS.**

Wheeled construction in the period before the 18th century generally favoured the use of short strips of wrought iron, called **strakes** (sometimes referred to as shoes), nailed across the wooden felloe joints of the wheel. This method also continued through the 18th century but was gradually replaced by full hooped welded iron tyres which were shrunk onto the outside of the wooden wheel through a system of heating the iron hoop, and after fitting to the wheel, cooled it in cold water to make it contract onto the wheel in order to provide a tight fit and tighten up the felloe joints. The process was much more complicated than that of course, and was a job carried out by skilled Wheelrights and blacksmiths.

The strakes were simply short strips of wrought iron (see photograph on next page), formed to the shape of the periphery of the wooden wheel during pre-heating by the blacksmith in his forge. A strake was nailed across one joint only where two felloes met. Each joint had its strake. If there were six felloes, there were six joints and six strakes, but the strakes were never joined and didn't even meet. Shoeing with strakes was a much more antiquated affair than tiring with a complete iron hoop of course. The purpose of shoeing a wheel was just the same as shoeing a donkey, horse or Ox, namely to provide an iron shield against the wear of the road / land.



**Diagrammatic sketch showing the basic elements of a modern wheel  
(for tyre read strakes)**

It would have been unlikely for a shoed / straked wheel to have lasted more than a days work, and this is no doubt why there was such a proliferation of blacksmiths and wheelrights in those days. The wider wheels would have possibly employed two or three

rows of strakes alongside each other around the wheel. Nailing the strips of iron on to the wheel was known as 'shoeing' the wheel.



**A strake made from Wrought Iron - 120mm wide by 715mm long**

The fitting of the strakes (shoeing) was a skilled operation, carried out by the wheelwright and he had to ensure that the fit was neither too loose nor too tight and only years of experience would result in a job well done.

The wheel would have been set up over a pit of water. The wheelwright took out the strip of iron, already curved by heat and punched with nail-holes by the blacksmith, and laid it red hot on top of the wheel rim. As the hot iron burned into the wood, the wheelwright punched in big rose headed nails, and then turned the wheel round in the pit of water. While the newly fastened strake was cooling, the same operation was repeated on the opposite side of the wheel, until the fitting of the strakes was completed. Shoeing a wheel in this manner continued until the latter part of the nineteenth century.

In 1719, as a result of Act 5 Geo.I, c.12. the rose headed nails use to secure the strakes to the felloes, could only be used on wheels with strakes less than two and a half inches wide. the 1753 Broad Wheel Act stipulated that no waggon was allowed on turnpike roads, with wheels less than nine inches in width, except those drawn by oxon or by less than five horses. Also any number of horses up to eight in number were permitted to be used with broad wheels without being charged overweight penalties (26 Geo.II, c.30).

Other Acts followed in 1755, 1762 and 1774 regarding the specification of broad wheels and the strakes used on them. Gauges were supplied to the toll keepers to check the width of the wheels so that the appropriate toll charges were accurately made.