

Martock & South Petherton United Trust 1761 – 1877

Extracted from an article in ‘Somerset Roads – The Legacy of the Turnpikes
By J.B. Bentley & B.J. Masters for the Somerset Industrial Archaeological Society, pp46-47.

Preamble

We would like to acknowledge our special thanks to Brian Murless, one of the co-authors of the original work, who has kindly given permission for its use here. This piece on Martock’s turnpikes represents only a small fraction of the entire work (available from the Somerset Industrial Archaeological Society) which, itself, represents many hours of painstaking study over a considerable period of time. Hopefully, their initiative in writing the original article will motivate others to add more to our knowledge of Martock’s role in the development of Turnpikes in future project work.

This small trust was interwoven with Langport, Somerton & Castle Cary Trust, which attempted, apparently without success, to take over some sections in 1831. Apart from one Deposited Plan, there are no records at Somerset records Office. There are doubts about the route of MA/2 which it has not been possible to resolve.

MA/1: B3165; Somerton, B3153 – Martock – Ringwell Hill, A303.

Ogilby (1675)¹ includes this route in his Bristol-Dorchester road. Except for possible minor changes in Somerton, the line of the road does not seem to have altered since 1675. The road was turnpiked in 1761 as ‘Dyed Way to Somerton’, but whether Dyed Way was the Fosse Way or the road leading north from it is not clear. Greenwood² shews a tollhouse at about ST462.200 (his map is very distorted here), which was probably Stapleton Gate, although well south of the presumed LS/25 (*qv*), but gates were moved quite frequently.

1	SOMERTON ST4820.2800/SW	Boundary Marker GWR 1905	2/84
2	SOMERTON ST4820.2797/SW	Boundary Marker GWR 1905	2/84
3	SOMERTON ST4802.2760/E	Milestone (Somerton 1) Plate missing	2/84
4	SOMERTON LONG SUTTON ST4738.2671/W	Boundary Stone	2/84

¹ Ogilby, J., *Britania*, 1675 (Osprey, 1971).

² Greenwood, 1822.

5	LONG SUTTON ST4745.2637/E	Milestone: cast iron plate with raised letters Long Sutton 1 Mile Somerton 2 Miles	1/83
6	LONG SUTTON ST4687.2527/E	Milestone Built into wall Somerton 3 Plate missing	2/84
7	LONG SUTTON ST4686.2522/E	Cast iron pump Foundry mark: W. ROWE YEOVIL	2/84
8	LONG SUTTON ST4673.2388/W	Boundary stone Probably County Bridge Boundary	6/84
9	LONG LOAD ST467.238	Load Bridge Built c15thC; widened 1814 for £425 – John Burt & Thomas Twining, contractors. Hadfield 1967: 83, 85, 87-8. Jervoise 1930: 93.	2/84
10	LOANG LOAD ST4669.2373/E	Milestone Somerton 4; plate missing	2/84
11	LONG LOAD ST4623.2218/E	Milestone Somerton 5; plate missing	2/84
12	MARTOCK ST4613.1910/E	Milestone inscribed: To WELLS/XX To Somerton/VII	2/84
13	MARTOCK ST4612.1907	Hurstbow Bridge Plaque incorporated into bridge Cast iron, MURCH 1848	2/84

MA/2: Barrington, B3168 – Shepton Beauchamp – South Petherton – Hurst Bow – Cartgate, A303.

Ford, ST461.189, to Cartgate, ST472.182, was turnpiked in 1761, and the rest in 1782/3. Barrington, ST383.184, to ‘Four Cross Roads near Shepton Beauchamp’, probably ST399.171, ceased to be Martock trust in 1831 (?), having been taken over by Ilminster Trust under their 1823 Act, see LS/5 (*qv*), but it is very doubtful if this took place.

As IM/10 (*qv*) continued south east to Lopen Head (White Cross), ST422.150, it is logical to expect MA/2 to take some other route from the ‘Four Cross Roads near

Shepton Beauchamp'. This, as confidently shewn by Morland (p21)³ would be via Shepton Beauchamp village and then east from ST403.168. However, a Deposited Plan of 1830⁴ shews the Martock Turnpike as from a point south west of Fouts Cross, ST414.159, (the plan extends no further west) to South Petherton. This means that MA/2 cannot have separated from IM/10 before Broom Bars, ST412.157. This can hardly be 'Four Cross Roads near Shepton Beauchamp'. Trusts could, and occasionally did, alter their roads without specific authority; Langport Trust could have shewn Martock's turnpike wrongly in their Deposited Plan, or there could be confusion in Ilminster Trust's 1823 Act (not an unknown phenomenon – Wiveliscomb Trust's 1786 Act is a classic example!). To add to the confusion, the 1820 return by the Martock trustees (SRO, Q/Ra, 25) includes 'Hurst Bow to Ilminster – Langport Turnpike, 6m 0fur. 6ch.', which is 6.075 miles. This, at face value, could only mean the fairly direct road via Shepton Beauchamp village to B3168 at ST383.184 (this was before IM/10 was turnpiked), but as all Martock Trust roads seem to be significantly under-measured, this is not conclusive. Both possible routes have been shewn dotted on Map7; MRM⁵ shews neither, only the section of MA/2 east of South Petherton being included as main Road.

MA/3: Gawbridge – Stapleton, B3165 – Tintinhull Forts, A303.

Turnpiked in 1761, this is still shewn as turnpike in 1830 (SRO, Q/RUp/109), and is shewn as Main Road on MRM. West of Gawbridge Mill, ST443.196, the road was never successfully turnpiked (see LS/10 and LS/24 – *qv*) and the mill would seem to be the chief reason for the survival of the length west of Stapleton. Greenwood shews a tollgate at ST451.202, so it was probably reasonably economic.

1	KINGSBURY EPISCOPY ST4434.1984/W	Boundary Stone	6/84
2	KINGSBURY/MARTOCK ST444.199	Gawbridge Bridge Built by Somerset Drainage Commissioners, 1890 for £505 – contractors H.W.Pollard; Jervoise 1930, p99.	3/84
3	MARTOCK ST4442.1995/N	Boundary Stone	3/84
4	MARTOCK ST4445.1997/N	Boundary Stone Canted over	3/84
5	MARTOCK ST4445.1996/S	Boundary Stone Broken	3/84

³ Morland, O.B., An Introduction to the Infrastructure of the Industrial Revolution in Somerset (1982).

⁴ SRO, Q/RUp/109.

⁵ MRM – Main Road Map (c1880). SRO: Q/H/15.

6	ASH ST4664.2081/N	Milestone Martock 1 No evidence of inscription or plate fixings	3/84
7	ASH ST4817.2031/N	Milestone Martock 2 Top broken	3/84

MA/4: South Petherton – Lopen Head, A303/A356.

This road was turnpiked in 1782/3, and is still a major access road to South Petherton. Under the 1831 Act, it was supposed to be transferred to Langport, Somerton and Castle Cary Trust (see LS/21 – *qv*), but it is very doubtful if this was affected. The road is not shewn on MRM.

Maps

Day & Masters, 1782: This is the first county map, at 1 inch to 1 mile, shewing all roads. A few minor roads were surveyed at the ends only, these being arbitrarily joined up.

Greenwood, 1822: This, slightly later than OS First Edition maps, at 1 inch to 1 mile, county map shews much finer detail than Day & Masters map of 1782, and is often clearer than the Margery reproduction of OS as far as roads are concerned – but tends to exaggerate bends, probably deliberately for clarity. Accuracy is similar to Day & Masters (1782) and OS (1801-1815) overall, but there are some quite striking distortions. The inclusion of parish boundaries is helpful.

Ogilby, 1675: These are the earliest strip maps of selected main roads, at 1 inch to 1 mile. A tracing placed over the early OS maps will usually help in identifying precise routes, but inaccuracies in both leave some queries. Side roads shewn (for use by riders on horseback) are often unidentifiable.

References

IM/10: Puckington B.3168 – Barrington – Lopen Head A.303. The northern section had been turnpiked by Martock trust in 1782/3 and was returned to Ilminster in 1823 – confirmed by the langport, Somerton & Castle Cary Act of 1831 (see MA/2 and LS/5).

LS/5: Shepton beauchamp – South Petherton – Hurst Bow. This was Martock Trust MA/2 and was transferred to ‘Muchelney District’ under the 1831 Act, however, the change may not have taken place. MRM shews the length east of ST 440 178 as Main Road, the remained, through South Petherton, being omitted.

LS/9: Hambridge Green B.3168 – South Petherton Parish – Lopen Head A.303. Turnpiked in 1792 (Hall) but little, if anything, was done

LS/10: Burrow – Gawbridge. This was turnpiked from 1778 to 1792 (Hall), and connected with LS/9 (qv) somewhere near Burrow, in the general area of ST 415 200, running to Gawbridge (ST 444 199) where it joined MA/3, turnpiked in 1761. Presumably nothing was done and the intended route is so unclear that no attempt has been made to shew it on the map.

LS/21: South Petherton – Lopen Head A.303/A.356. This was turnpiked in 1782/3 by Martock trust, see MA/4. Transfer to the Langport, Somerton & Castle Cary Trust was included in the 1831 Act, but may not have been effected. It is not on the trust's 1857 map, nor the MRM.

LS/24 East Lambrook – Gawbridge (MA/3) & **LS/25:** Muchelney – Long Load – Stapleton Gate. These roads were included in the 1831 Act but were probably never turnpiked.