

## The Stamford to Oakham Turnpike

The turnpike from Scot Gate, Stamford, to Oakham and thence to the Cross Guns inn at Greetham, connecting to the Great North Road at both ends, was first authorised by Act of Parliament in 1794. The Stamford to Oakham section had toll gates at Stamford and Oakham, with toll bars at Stamford Fields (on the county boundary), Tinwell Lodge, Shacklewell, Empingham and Burley Fishponds. This latter bar was known as the Hambleton or Fishpond Bar and was at the turn off the turnpike to Upper Hambleton. Collectors at this bar between 1841 and 1861 were Joseph and William Marriatt, and John Walker. Toll bars were introduced to catch those travellers who attempted to avoid the toll gates by using alternative routes.

Turnpikes were established so that money could be collected from users to pay for their improvement and maintenance. In theory, busier roads, which needed more maintenance, generated more funds to pay for this work. Prior to this, each parish was responsible for the upkeep of its roads, and this still applied to non-turnpike roads. Standards varied considerably and repair methods were primitive in the extreme (*see* Aspects of Topography: Old Barnsdale Hill).

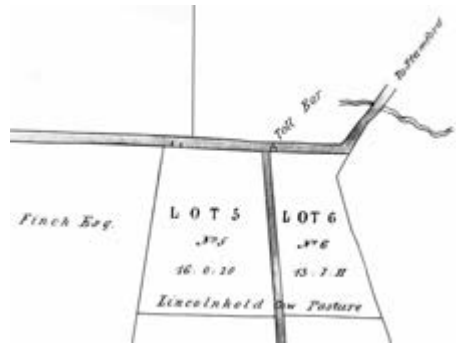
Turnpiking, at first, did not improve matters, but the influence of the great road makers Thomas Telford and John McAdam gradually had such an effect that Royal Mail coaches saw a 40 per cent increase in speed between 1811 and 1835. However, railways were just around the corner by this date, and by 1878 all turnpike trusts in Rutland had ceased to exist, the Stamford to Oakham to Greetham turnpike trust closing in 1871.

### FISHPOND TOLL BAR

#### Toll Receipts

1820	£177
1825	£159
1830	£206
1835	£252
1840	£360
1845	£451
1850	£251
1855	£226
1860	£326
1865	£359
1870	£346

*Right: Fishpond Toll Bar shown on an estate sale map of 1864. The river is the north arm of the Gwash as it passes under the old Stamford Road at Fox Bridge (ROLLR DE 2209/14)*



*Stamford Road near Burley Fishponds, leading to Barnsdale Hill. The sign post once pointed to Upper Hambleton. This is the former location of Fishpond Toll Bar. This photograph was taken in 1976 as Rutland Water was filling for the first time (Richard Adams)*