

It is evident that in Oxfordshire, as in other counties, plans were made by the magistracy to submit integrated proposals in particular parliamentary sessions for lengthy routes. In 1755 there was a co-ordinated attempt to turnpike the road between Oxford and Coventry, and when powers were granted it was managed as two divisions, north and south of the route of the earlier Buckingham-Warmington (or Weeping Cross) trust, which was responsible for the road between Adderbury and North Bar in Banbury. The splitting and merging of trusts is well-explained, and due attention is given to road management and to the winding up of trusts in the third quarter of the nineteenth century. The survival rate for milestones and tollhouses in Oxfordshire is not good, but information in the book will be valuable for students of local topography. Above all this is a book that will be welcomed by family historians. It provides a wealth of detail about those involved in the road system, whether gentry petitioning parliament, making investments and actively participating in the management of trusts, surveyors working on the roads, or men hired to collect tolls, who were often able to follow such trades as shoemaking in their tollhouse homes. The text is meticulously indexed with numerous references to other genealogical sources.

The book is copiously illustrated with newly-drawn and historical maps, facsimiles of newspaper advertisements, copies of engravings and watercolours, and sketches (modern photographs, where possible, would have been preferable) of surviving tollhouses and milestones. The attractive dust jacket is in full colour. The production makes an interesting contrast with the Historical Society's first records publication, the *Index to the Banbury Peculiar Court Wills*, of 1959, which extends over 76 pages, was set in type, and had no illustrations.

In some respects the book fails to engage with modern scholarship on turnpike roads, and its bibliography is particularly disappointing. It omits the two works that laid the foundation of modern turnpike studies (W Albert, *The Turnpike Road System in England 1663-1840*, Cambridge University Press, 1972, and E Pawson, *Transport and Economy: the turnpike roads of eighteenth-century Britain*, Academic Press, 1977), as well as the standard work on the legal aspects of the road system (S & B Webb, *The King's Highway*, Longman, 1913), and the most enlightening original source on road construction and management (Sir Henry Parnell, *A Treatise on Roads*, Longman, 1838). Arthur Cossons, chronicler of the history of roads in many Midland counties (Neil Cossons, 'A Nottinghamshire Historian: Arthur Cossons [1893-1963]', *Transactions of the Thoroton Society*, vol 113, 2009) is not accorded an initial in the bibliography nor in the footnotes. Local sources that are surprisingly omitted include Arthur Young, *A General View of the Agriculture of Oxfordshire*, Sherwood, Neely & Jones, 1813, which testifies to the improvements brought about by turnpike trusts in Oxfordshire, and J Drinkwater, *Inheritance, being the first book of an autobiography*, Benn, 1931, a superb family history that describes the coaching activities of the author's ancestors.