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The Turnpike Roads.

BY REV. D. K. TURNER, HARTSVILLE, PA.

(Meeting at Solebury Meeting-House, August 10, 1899.)

Roads are essential to civilization. In savage countries they are almost unknown. In the dark regions of Africa, the vast portions of South America and other parts of the globe where barbarism prevails, obscure paths through the forests bewilder the traveler and give him little aid in his journey. As nations become enlightened, the avenues for mutual intercourse between different districts improve; those, who have attained the highest culture, have constructed the best roads; those, who are on a lower scale in the refinement of life, have proportionally neglected their means of passing to and from various localities, and if we had no other criterion of the state of any people in respect to their advancement in material interests, it might be found in the condition of the arteries through which their intercourse with each other flows.

In the more recently settled parts of the United States the roads are little more than tracks over the prairies, hills and mountains, improved indeed above nature by cutting down the forest and a slight grading of the ground, yet generally muddy or rough several months of the year. In the older portions of the country some of the roads have been made hard and in a measure smooth by macadamizing or covering them with broken stone. If all could be treated in this way, it would be an improvement greatly beneficial to all our population. The expense, however, will probably prevent this from being realized in reference to many of them for a long period in the future.

These stone roads have generally been the result of the combined efforts of incorporated companies; some are profitable to the stockholders, but they are often maintained at a pecuniary loss to those who originated them. Perhaps it may throw some light upon the actual cost of constructing and keeping in repair macadamized roads, (a subject concerning which there is little knowledge and much misapprehension in the public mind.)

if I give from original records a sketch of the turnpikes on the Old York road, commencing at the Willow Grove and extending northward. They are three in number and part of a fourth: the first from Willow Grove to the Street road in Warminster; the second from the Street road to Centreville; from Centreville to Lahaska, about two miles, is a section of the Doylestown and Lahaska turnpike; and the remaining one runs from Lahaska to New Hope.

HATBORO AND WARMINSTER TURNPIKE ROAD COMPANY.

The York road below the Willow Grove toward Philadelphia was macadamized previous to 1846, and likewise the Easton road northwest of Willow Grove to Doylestown. About that time the project of covering with stone the part north of the Grove to Hatboro began to be zealously canvassed and a company was formed for the purpose in 1847, which was incorporated by Act of the Legislature February 2, 1848, with the following incorporators acting in behalf of the stockholders, viz: Gove Mitchell, M. D., Joseph B. Yerkes, William Glasgow, Elijah W. Beans, Hiram Reading, Joseph Hart, Samuel Craven, John C. Beans, Charles H. Hill, M. D., Jacob Fretz, Asa Comly, Harman Yerkes, Ezra Walmsley, Robert Darrah and John Engard.

It was provided in the charter that the road from fence to fence should be at least 45 feet wide, and the stone track 20 feet wide. The first meeting of the company was held June 20, 1850, at the public house of Robert Radcliff in Hatboro; William Glasgow was temporary chairman and Dr. C. H. Hill, secretary. Dr. Gove Mitchell was elected president for the ensuing year and John C. Beans, treasurer. The contract for building the road was given to Robert Scarlett for \$12,150; the length 4 miles and 120 rods, or $4\frac{3}{8}$ miles, which is \$2,777.12 per mile. The cost of the bridge enlargement at Sampson's hill was \$300 additional. The lower toll-house cost \$305, and the upper one, at the county-line, \$360. It was determined to pay the gate-keepers \$9 a month and furnish oil for the lamps, which was subsequently increased to \$11.50 a month. The survey of the road was made by Elijah W. Beans. The treasurer was allowed \$15, and the secretary \$5 a year for their services.

In later years the treasurer received one per cent. of the annual income.

In 1851 it appeared that the actual expense of constructing the road had been \$13,467.21 or \$3,078 per mile. Toll was first taken in May, 1851. The rate of toll first adopted was one cent a mile per horse for narrow wheels, and afterwards increased to one and a half cents, and half these rates for broad wheels. In 1861, when the volunteer soldiers moved to the south for the defence of the Union against the Confederate States, no toll was charged the vehicles conveying them, a spark of the same patriotism which animated all parts at that time.

In 1867 the project of opening Broad street, Philadelphia, through Montgomery and Bucks counties, was agitated, and being dreaded by many outside the city limits, a remonstrance was adopted against it by the directors of the turnpike company.

The following persons have been presidents of the company: Dr. Gove Mitchell from 1850 to 1855; G. Justice Mitchell 27 years to 1883; Ezra P. Carrell 10 years to 1893; William J. Kirk 1893; Samuel S. Thompson from 1893 to the present time. The treasurers have been John C. Beans from 1850 to 1874; Isaac Warner from 1874 to 1882; Samuel M. Hazlett from 1882 to the present time. The secretaries have been: Dr. Charles H. Hill from 1850 to 1868; William J. Kirk from 1868 to 1893; James VanHorn from 1893 to the present time.

The following persons have acted as superintendents, overseeing and directing the work, and often doing a large amount of work themselves: G. J. Mitchell, William Glasgow, Hiram Reading, Charles Kirk, Dr. Charles H. Hill, Joseph B. Yerkes, Daniel Lloyd, Jonathan Beans, Elijah W. Beans, John Betts, Samuel M. Hazlett, Abner Walmsley, William J. Kirk, Watson T. Davis, James VanHorn, Samuel J. Garner and H. Warner Hallowell.

The directors acting at different times and for various periods, have been as follows: Dr. Gove Mitchell, Harman Yerkes, G. J. Mitchell, Daniel Lloyd, John Betts, Samuel M. Hazlett, Jonathan Stackhouse, Jonathan Davis, John C. Beans, William Glasgow, Charles Kirk, William J. Kirk, Ezra P. Carrell, Sr., Joseph Barnsley, George Jarrett, Elijah W. Beans, Charles H.

Hill, M. D., Joseph B. Yerkes, Hiram Reading, Comly Hampton, George Kenderdine, David Jarrett, D. K. Turner, H. W. Hallowell, Watson T. Davis, Samuel S. Thompson, James Van-Horn, Frank Kimball, O. E. C. Robinson, S. J. Garner, William Hallowell, Thomas Reading, M. D.

The turnpike runs through the whole borough of Hatboro, and as the citizens have the free use of the road and are not liable for repairs, and as there is no toll-gate within the borough limits except at one edge, it was deemed just that some compensation should be given, and accordingly for a number of years past \$100 has been annually paid by the borough to the company and the main street of the town has been by the company telfordized and kept smooth and hard.

Previous to 1820, the policy of the managers had been to keep the road in fair order and pay yearly dividends to the stockholders, they had usually been successful in returning five or six per cent. on the par value of the stock. But soon after that time, partly in consequence of great improvements having been made in the roads nearer Philadelphia, it was determined to give the turnpike a smooth dressing of fine stone and put it in first class condition. The estimated expense was \$2,700 per mile. One section of 1,500 feet long cost \$1,000. The proposed work has been nearly accomplished, but the whole income of the road has been put upon it; a house and lot and stone quarry at Samson's hill, long owned by the company, and from which a large amount of stone was quarried, have been sold for about \$2,800, and the balance after cancelling a debt turned into the treasury; \$2,000 was borrowed; and all pecuniary obligations are not yet paid. No dividend has been declared for seven years and the traveling public are indebted to the generosity of the managers and owners for a hard, smooth roadbed.

There has been received from the toll-gates, rent of house and the telegraph line, from 1853 to 1898 inclusive, 46 years, \$100,602, an average of \$2,187 a year, and there has been expended \$67,936, an average of \$1,477, or \$337.60 a mile.

HARTSVILLE AND CENTREVILLE TURNPIKE.

Previous to 1856 the York road was not coated with stone

north of the Street road in Warminster township, and the people for a considerable distance on each side of it suffered great inconvenience, in the winter and spring, from mud, or roughness when it was frozen. Farmers taking hay to Philadelphia were in the habit of having four or five horses draw the load as far as the common road extended and an extra man or boy to bring back part of the team, when the rest would continue their journey to the city. In 1855 the project of macadamizing the road from the Street road in Warminster to Centreville was discussed by many, and the next year a company was formed to carry out the plan.

The first meeting of the stockholders, who took the name of the Hartsville and Centreville Turnpike Road Company, was held at the public house of Samuel Fries in Bridge Valley, April 7, 1856. William Glasgow was chosen chairman pro tem, and John Blair secretary pro tem. Courtland Carr was elected president for the ensuing year and Mahlon Long secretary. The latter acted as secretary but a short time, when he resigned and William Glasgow was appointed to fill the vacancy.

The contract for constructing the turnpike was let to Nicholas Pickens for \$3,035 per mile, and he agreed to take as part payment 15 per cent. of the cost in stock, but this did not include the gate-houses and many other incidental expenses.

The gate-keepers at the three gates, below Hartsville, at Jamison and at Bushington, were allowed \$9 per month, and they were at first required to furnish their own light, but subsequently the company paid for one lamp each. Albert Mattis, of Bridge Valley, was employed to erect the toll-gate house at Bushington for \$462. William Stavely, John Blackfan and Jonathan Ely were chosen, May 4, 1857, commissioners to view and examine the road with reference to its acceptance from the contractors. On July 4 they reported to the directors, that they had carefully examined it and recommended that it be accepted and their recommendation was adopted. The whole length of the road is $8\frac{5}{8}$ miles. The stone part is 16 feet wide and the broken stone is 13 inches deep. There were originally 878 shares of stock, par value \$25 a share, amounting to \$21,950. The company began taking toll July 15, 1857, and

commenced taking it the whole length December 12, 1857. No dividends have ever been declared to the stockholders; the whole income has been used to keep the road in order, meet expenses and pay the interest on debts for borrowed money and some few years the directors have been able to pay small portions of the loans contracted.

The following persons have been presidents of the company: Courtland Carr 15 years, from 1856 to 1871; John M. Darrah from 1871 to the present time. The secretaries have been William Glasgow from 1856 to 1882; Joseph Barnsley from 1882 to 1888; R. T. Engart from 1888 to the present time. The treasurers have been George Jamison from 1856 to 1860; Cress Fell from 1860 to 1897; George Opdyke from 1897 to the present time.

The directors have been as follows, serving at various times and for different periods: William Glasgow, Watson Kirk, Andrew Craven, Cress Fell, Thomas B. Spencer, Jonathan Opdyke, Amos Ellis, Samuel B. Buckman, John Worthington, Joshua Bennett, Nathaniel Burroughs, John M. Darrah, Andrew Long, Joseph Barnsley, B. Taylor Jamison, John Opdyke, William M. Jamison, George Taylor, R. T. Engart, J. Johnson Beans, Charles Buckman, George Opdyke, Ezra P. Carrell.

The superintendents have been: Samuel Buckman, Cress Fell, Jonathan Opdyke, Courtland Carr, Joshua Bennett, John M. Darrah, R. T. Engart, Charles Ellis, William Glasgow, Charles Buckman, Andrew Long, N. H. Burroughs, George Taylor, E. P. Carrell and George Opdyke. They served in that capacity in different sections at various times, some for a year or two and some for a large number of years, and were paid \$5 or \$10 or \$20 a year, according to the extent of the road which was placed under their charge. The number of stockholders was originally about 125, but many of them subscribed for less than ten shares each.

In 1859 the gate-keepers were directed not to take toll for travel to and from religious meetings on Sunday morning, nor to or from funerals directly, but to require it Sunday night.

In 1755 a bridge was erected over the west branch of the Neshaminy creek, on the York road above Hartsville, which

was replaced by a much larger structure of six stone arches in 1789. This stood for the most part uninjured by the wearing of the elements until 1865, when an almost unprecedented freshet took place in the stream and undermined it. Its appearance above the water was unchanged, but the foundation was seriously impaired and two years after, March 5, 1867, four of the arches one after the other, in the course of the forenoon quietly fell.

It was resolved by the company, March 16, to ask the Legislature for authority to borrow \$5,000 and issue bonds to meet the expenses of rebuilding. A timber bridge was built during the summer of that year to cover the space occupied by the part destroyed at a cost of \$3,779.22, by Isaac P. Corson, which was the last work he engaged in, as he was then suffering from a disease that terminated in his death.

The bridge over the north branch of the Neshaminy at Bridge Valley with eight fine stone arches was erected by the county about 1795, and is a noble piece of architecture. As the York road passes over it, the turnpike company was compelled to assume its ownership, and become responsible for repairs. In the progress of a century it has suffered somewhat from the ravages of time, and has been occasionally repaired at considerable expense by the company. It still bears the marks of strength and durability and will no doubt last many generations.

In the course of forty years, extending from 1858 to 1898, there has been expended upon the road, including the cost of maintaining the gate-houses and paying the gate-keepers, the sum of \$66,329.35; besides the original cost of stone coating and toll-houses and a new bridge, which were more than \$30,000.

The first cost and repairs together have been over \$96,000. The amount of money received from tolls during forty years has been \$70,810.89. The average annual income has been \$1,770. The average annual expense has been \$1,658 or \$188.75 per mile. The yearly margin of income over expense \$112, which has disappeared in paying interest on the debt, and making a few diminutions of the principal. The officers and directors have received no salary; they have always paid their own toll like other people, and the superintendents have had a very meagre compensation for their time and labor.

THE BUCKINGHAM AND DOYLESTOWN TURNPIKE.

It had been in my mind to give a somewhat full account of the Buckingham and Doylestown and of the Lahaska and New Hope turnpikes, but on applying to John S. Williams, secretary of the latter company, for the use of the records, I was informed that he prepared a sketch of the history of those roads in 1888, and that it was published in the Bucks County Intelligencer. Through his courtesy I have consulted this sketch, which rendered it unnecessary and inexpedient for me to bring before you a minute statement of the past transactions of these two organizations. I will therefore present only a brief resume of them and this will render complete the notes on the whole line from Willow Grove to New Hope.

The Buckingham and Doylestown turnpike, which runs from the county seat to Lahaska, was chartered April 30, 1843, but sufficient stock to authorize calling a meeting was not subscribed for nearly four years. In January, 1847, a call was issued for the meeting, signed by Samuel D. Ingham, Thomas Paxson, Joseph Broadhurst, Samuel Yardley, Charles H. Mathews, John Blackfan, Mathias Shaw, Edward Williams, Valentine Dickerson, William T. Rogers, Joseph Campbell and Samuel Eastburn. The meeting was held February 18 following, when Samuel D. Ingham was made temporary president and Thomas Paxson secretary. Permanent officers were chosen as follows: William T. Rogers, president; Harvey Shaw, secretary; Edward Williams, treasurer, and managers, William Stokes, Joseph Broadhurst, Valentine Dickerson, Thomas Paxson, Samuel Eastburn, Simon Meredith, John Blackfan, Abner Atkinson, Jacob Eastburn and James Harvey.

May 6, 1847, the contract for building the road was entered into with B. and D. McLane, for \$2,700 per mile, exclusive of the toll-houses and gates. The length was six miles wanting four rods. Levi Hartley was the first gate-keeper at Centreville, he began taking toll January 1, 1848, at a salary of \$7.50 a month. About that time Governor Shunk appointed Samuel Hart, Esq., of Doylestown; David Evans, of New Britain; and John L. Radcliff, of Warrington, commissioners to inspect the road as far as completed, who soon made a favorable report.

During the summer of 1848 the entire road was finished, and C. Day first received toll at Pool's Corner August 5.

The presidents of the company have been William T. Rogers from 1847 to 1863; Joseph Fell to 1867; Edward Williams to 1876; Joseph Fell again to 1883; Samuel E. Broadhurst to the present time.

The treasurers have been Edward Williams to 1848; secretary and treasurer combined, Harvey Shaw to 1852; William Balderston to 1860; R. R. Paxson to 1880; Oliver Balderston to 1883; John W. Balderston to 1898, and Valmore Hellyer to the present time.

The whole cost of the road was \$18,688.32, an average of \$3,114 a mile. As sufficient stock was not subscribed at first to meet this amount, \$5,000 was borrowed on mortgage, which was paid off in a few years. A dividend has also been usually made to the stockholders of from four to twelve per cent. annually on the par value. The income in 1848-9 was \$1,315, which afterwards increased to nearly \$3,000 a year, but lately has been about \$2,500 annually. The expenses for repairs, gates and improvements, have been about \$1,200 a year, or \$200 per mile, as I have been informed by Valmore Hellyer, secretary.

The present officers are: President, S. E. Broadhurst, secretary and treasurer, V. M. Hellyer; managers, John M. Grey, Preston J. Fell, J. Monroe Paist, J. Simpson Large, Harry C. Large, John S. Williams, T. Howard Atkinson, William C. Blackfan, V. M. Hellyer.

THE LAHASKA AND NEW HOPE TURNPIKE.

The Lahaska and New Hope Turnpike Company received its charter from the Legislature, February 24, 1847, but the formation of the company lingered five years. The commissioners named in the Act of Incorporation were John Blackfan, John C. Parry, Edward Williams, Matthias Shaw, Oliver Paxson, William Stavely, Benjamin S. Rich, William Williams, Harvey Shaw, Thomas Paxson and William H. Johnson.

The company was organized June 8, 1853, with 500 shares of stock at \$25 a share, making the capital \$12,500; afterwards increased to 516 shares and \$12,900, but the whole cost of the

road was \$16,255.59, and the length four miles and three quarters and 26 rods, averaging \$3,422 a mile.

The presidents of the company have been John Blackfan from 1853 to 1864; Moses Eastburn to 1887; Richard E. Ely to 1890, and Hugh B. Eastburn to the present time.

The offices of secretary and treasurer have been combined in the same person and held by William Balderston from 1853 to 1860; Richard R. Paxson to 1880, and John S. Williams to the present date.

The following have been managers of the company at various times and for various periods, viz: William T. Rogers, Mathias Shaw, William Stavely, Henry L. Corson, Elias E. Paxson, Richard E. Ely, Thomas L. Murray, Joseph E. Reeder, William Balderston, Hiram Scarborough, Moses Eastburn, Spencer W. Kirk, David K. Reeder, John Blackfan, Charles M. Shaw, Amos C. Paxson, Hugh P. Paxson, John S. Williams, Eastburn Reeder, Richard R. Paxson, Joseph S. Atkinson, William C. Blackfan, Hugh B. Eastburn, William T. Eastburn, Joseph P. Wildman, Timothy T. Eastburn, Alfred Paxson.

It has been a custom with this company to present to the gate-keepers every year at Christmas a turkey, as a token of good will and an encouragement to future fidelity; a commendable as well as unusual practice.

Between the years 1855 and 1865 the average annual income for ten years was \$1,300, and the average annual expense, (including interest on a debt,) \$944, or \$192 per mile. This was not greatly different from the receipts and expenditures of other periods of the company's history.

Let us now make a brief recapitulation of the cost of building and maintaining per mile the four turnpikes, whose career we have described.

The original cost of the Hatboro and Warminster turnpike per mile was \$3,078; Hartsville and Centreville, \$3,478; Buckingham and Doylestown, \$3,114; Lahaska and New Hope, \$3,422, making an average cost of \$3,273 per mile.

The annual cost of repairs and maintenance per mile has been as follows: Hatboro and Warminster, \$337.60; Hartsville and Doylestown, \$188.75; Buckingham and Doylestown, \$200;

Lahaska and New Hope, \$192, making an average of \$229.59 per mile.

In conclusion a few reflections may not be out of place.

1. The gentlemen, who have had the management of these turnpikes for half a century, have been among our most enterprising, yet wise, prudent and judicious citizens, and the roads could not have been under the control of men, who would have conducted their affairs more carefully, more disinterestedly, or more for the benefit of the community.

2. The stone part of a macadamized road, which is much used for heavy hauling as well as light driving, should be from sixteen to twenty feet wide and thirteen or fourteen inches deep.

3. The original cost of such a road will be about \$3,000 a mile.

4. The annual expense of keeping it in good condition will be about \$200 a mile.

5. After the road is constructed it must not be neglected, as constant repairs are necessary.

6. It costs far more every year to maintain in satisfactory order a macadamized road than it does a common dirt road. Hence the reason all our roads are not covered with a coating of broken stone is to be found not, as some have intimated, in the want of knowledge and enterprise of our rural population, but in their lack of pecuniary ability to procure all the luxuries they desire.