

ROUNDAABOUT VERWOOD

PAST and PRESENT

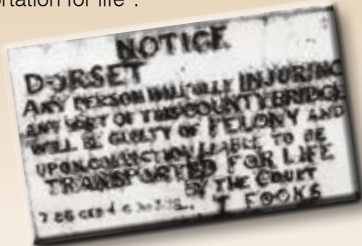
The Turnpike Road through Three Legged Cross



The Turnpike Road to Poole looking south towards Ringwood with the old Travellers Rest Inn on the right.

The eighteenth century brought with it the building of many turnpike roads. In 1756 there were several from Poole Gate into Cranborne Chase. (Poole Gate refers to the only gated entrance to the north of the port since the original settlement of Poole was surrounded on the south, east and west by water.) In 1759 two more turnpike roads were established, one of which ran from Ringwood, through Woolsbridge, Three Legged Cross and Horton.

A turnpike is literally a defensive frame of pikes that can be turned to allow passage of horses, but in this context it refers to a gate set across the road to stop carts until a toll was paid. These turnpike roads generally around 20 miles in length, were paid for by the tolls collected from travellers. The importance of maintaining them and their fabric is reflected in the signs found on many Dorset bridges warning that the penalty for damage was "transportation for life".



The money raised by mortgaging the future toll income permitted substantial investment in the improvement of the drainage, gradients, width and running surface of existing highways. Later it enabled the construction of new engineered structures such as embankments, cuttings and even bridges to provide faster routes where horse power could be used more efficiently to haul vehicles and at much faster speeds.

October 2011



The photo above taken in October 2011 taken from the same viewpoint shows what was the original turnpike road through the main part of the village, where the Woodcutters pub, formerly the Traveller's Rest Inn, the shop and the garage stand side-by-side in Ringwood Road. Ahead, the road continues towards Ringwood, while opposite the garage is the Verwood road.