

ART. XI – *Construction of the Military Road in Cumberland 1751-58*. By WILLIAM LAWSON, M.A., M.Litt.

Introduction

DURING the mid and late 'sixties research was undertaken by the present writer into, first, the course of events between 1745 and '51 leading to the building of the Military Road and, second, the actual work of construction between 1751 and '58. Results of the first investigation have already been published in *Archaeologia Aeliana* 4 xxxiv (1966) under the title of "The Origin of the Military Road from Newcastle to Carlisle", and of the second, though with reference to Northumberland only, in the same organ, 5 i (1973). For convenience, the main steps preceding construction are now briefly summarized:—

Wade's failure to relieve Carlisle and intercept the Jacobite rebels in 1745 was due to the foul state of the roads, worsened by adverse weather. After three days he had got no further west from Newcastle than the neighbourhood of Hexham and after waiting three more in the hope of improvement, he retraced his steps.¹ His failure emphasized the urgent need to establish adequate communications between east and west, a warning that did not go unheeded. On 4 April, 1749, an entry in the Minutes of the Surveyor-General² ordered that a petition³ from the "Nobility, Gentry, Clergy, Freeholders and Inhabitants of the counties of Northumberland and Cumberland" should be referred to the Surveyor-General (Thomas Lascelles) himself. The petition stated that much of the country between Carlisle and Newcastle was uncultivated, thinly inhabited and frequently impassable. Lack of communication had greatly endangered the kingdom during the recent rebellion, but the required road could not be laid out "or the expence thereof defrayed, but by a National assistance . . ." In response to orders from the Surveyor-General dated 7 and 22 May, 1749, Dugal Campbell,⁴ Sub-Director of Engineers, assisted by Hugh Debbeig, surveyed roads currently in use between Newcastle and Carlisle during the months of July, August and September. A further minute of 22 December, 1749, records that Campbell had submitted his report of the said roads

"and of the most proper Course for the new Intended Road, with an Estimate of the Charge to make the same, and the several Stone Bridges that are necessary upon it, amounting to £22,450, and inclosing a Plan or Survey of all the Country between those Places and some Miles farther on each end, extending in all 60 Miles, and about 6 Miles in Breadth."

Campbell's report cannot be found but two copies of the survey⁵ are extant, one of which was originally addressed to Lancelot Allgood who was Sheriff of Northumberland in 1745 and became a Member for the County in 1749. He is known to have been interested in road development and may have had considerable influence in promoting the petition.⁶ The route of the intended road is shown as a dotted line which for many miles west of Newcastle coincides with the Roman Wall. The remains of the Wall in this sector⁷

provided a cheap and convenient source of material, followed a fairly straight line and, since it often formed a boundary between farms or estates, would cause the least upset to landowners. Once the Wall begins its ascent to the central Whin Sill Crags the road swings away south-west, heading for Carlisle by the shortest way through Greenhead and Brampton. It was intended primarily as a military road for the rapid deployment of troops and not as a link connecting major centres of population between the two terminals.

A letter of 18 March 1748/9⁸ from John Peile and numerous inhabitants of Cockermouth to Cumberland member, Sir James Lowther, refers to the expected success of the petition and urges that the intended new road should be continued from Carlisle by way of Wigton, Bothel, and over Derwent Bridge in Cockermouth to Bridgefoot to meet the Turnpike Road (under construction) from Whitehaven. In support, it claims that the difficulty in getting cannon from Whitehaven to Carlisle had exposed the Duke and his troops to great danger and hardship at the siege of that city, just as the impassability of the roads had earlier prevented Wade from marching to its relief and hindering the progress of the rebels.

On 25 March Lowther replied agreeing that such an extension could be of great service to the county; however, it was well known that in the event of any further rebellion in Scotland the English army would be sent to Northumberland, which was why a good road was thought necessary from Newcastle to Carlisle; should the Scots move that way the English army could not only intercept them before they could take the town but could bring cannon with them.

The petition came before the House on 4 March 1750/1 and was referred to a committee including all who served for the six northern counties. Evidence was taken from Maj-Gen. Cholmondeley, Col. Seabright, Capt. Morgan and Thos. Sayer. The first three had accompanied Wade to Hexham; Sayer knew the road west from there. Cholmondeley emphasized, once more, the badness of the road as being the reason for Wade's failure, and all three agreed on the importance of communication between the two towns for the commodious passage of troops and carriages on any future occasion. Sayer described the country beyond Hexham as rocky, mountainous and boggy, sparsely populated and impassable for heavy carriages both in summer and winter. The committee concluded that it would be impossible to repair the road by the ordinary course of law or even by erecting turnpikes.

The report was then referred to a Committee of Supply which on 22 April granted £3,000 towards the cost of the road and the House ordered that a bill be brought in for the "Laying Out, Making and Keeping in Repair a Road proper for the Passage of Troops and Carriages from the City of Carlisle to the Town of Newcastle-upon-Tyne."

Sir Wm. Middleton, Sir John Mordaunt, Mr Allgood, Sir Walter Blackett, Sir Charles Howard, Col. Stanwix, Mr Ridley and Mr Robt. Ord were instructed to prepare and introduce the same, incorporating the Committee of Supply's resolution. Passage was uneventful and Assent was granted 22 May 1751.

The Act emphasizes that the road can be laid only at public cost but expects that maintenance will be recovered by tolls. Commissioners and Trustees for the two counties are nominated and are to be responsible for construction and maintenance within their respective areas. The road is to run from Newcastle West Gate by East Denton, Heddon on the Wall, Portgate, Chollerford Bridge, Carrawburgh, Clowgill (Closegill), Brampton,

High Crosby and Stanwix to the Scotch Gate of Carlisle, the commissioners to decide the actual course between the points specified; the width is to be 27 feet⁹ where conditions allow. Copies of accounts are to be delivered annually to Parliament. Other clauses cover acquisition of materials, compensation, erection of tollhouses, rates to be charged and exemptions from same.

On 1 June the *Newcastle Courant* gave notice of the first meeting of commissioners at Carlisle¹⁰ that month and invited applications for the post of surveyor, also proposals from persons willing to make any part of the road.

Construction in Cumberland

Source material for this study is so abundant that it is often difficult to decide what to omit. All resolutions of the commissioners as far as December 1791 (Military Road Minute Book) are preserved at the County Record Office, and, for the most part, duplicated, together with financial accounts and contractual agreements, at the House of Lords Record Office. The contemporary local press, *Newcastle Journal* and *Newcastle Courant*, has much to yield, so have Vols. 26 and 27 *Journals of the House of Commons*. The Minute Book for 1855-77 and Account book for 1855-73, by which period the Cumbrian sector of the road was administered by the Carlisle to Temon Trust, are also available at the County Record Office. Among the most frequently recurring names of commissioners who attended meetings during the construction period of 1751-1758 are those of Sir Philip Musgrove (*sic*), Dr John Waugh, Montague Farrer, Joseph Dacre, Henry Aglionby, Jos. Nicholson, Rev. Jackson, Rev. Graham and Wm. Milbourne.

Finance presented few problems. As already reported, the Act of 1751 had granted £3,000 towards the project. This was allocated in the proportion of £2,000 to Northumberland and £1,000 to Cumberland, there being roughly two-thirds of the road in the first-named county. Thereafter further supplies were obtained by petitioning Parliament each year in January or February, and from a combination of appropriate references in the *Journals of the House of Commons*¹¹ (under the headings of *Carlisle Road* and *Supply*) and in the financial statements issued by the counties, it is a simple matter to arrive at the sums involved.

Thus:

	Northumberland	Cumberland
1751	2000	1000
1752	2000	1000
1753	2000	1000
1754	4000	2000
1755	4000	2000
1756	0	0
1757	2500	500
	<hr/>	<hr/>
	16500	7500
	<hr/>	<hr/>

No approach appears to have been made to Parliament in 1756 as both treasurers began the year with ample funds in hand (e.g. Cumberland £1711. 8s. 1d). From a total of £24,000 Treasury fees of approximately £1320 should be deducted, leaving the cost of the road at £22,680. This included settlements for compensation, walling, etc., which the

original estimate of £22,450 by Dugal Campbell, the surveyor, had not allowed for. At the end of the final year, 1758, Cumberland still had a small surplus of £115. 16s. 9½d.

On 24 June 1751 the first meeting of commissioners began at Carlisle Town Hall and adjourned to the Bush with twenty-three present. George Pattinson was appointed clerk and treasurer at a salary of £20 a year and Richard Waller surveyor at £40. The meeting adjourned until nine o'clock the following morning when only eleven commissioners attended and resolved

“That the making of the Road do begin at John Bowsteads house at Stanwix bank. That it be Carried the whole way in as streight (*sic*) a Direction as the ground will admitt. That it go along the lane to Luke Fishes, Thence thro' Widow Bell's close by Draw Dikes, thro Draw Dikes Grounds to the Wood bridge near Lancelot Clemisons from thence thro Mr. Hoskins Ground to the 2 ashes in Crosby Lane by High Crosby, from High Crosby over Newby Moor to the River Irthing at the Ford near Ruleholme.”

It was further resolved to advertise in the Newcastle papers that the road would be contracted for by the mile, all interested to apply to Waller in the first instance and then deliver their sealed proposals to Pattinson and attend the next meeting at the Bush on 16 July. Similar conditions were to apply to those interested in the building of a bridge over the Mill Beck in Draw Dikes field. At the July meeting an agreement for the making of the road as far as the two ash trees in Park Broom Lane was made with a group of partners from Yorkshire,¹² namely John Byers, Thos. Hetherington, John Hetherington, Isaac Byers, John Byers younger and Benjamin Byers. The price was to be twelve shillings per rood, the treasurer to pay the contractors such sums as were certified by the surveyor, who would also provide all necessary tools. The width from ditch to ditch was to be twenty-seven feet, that of the stone work twenty. Stones were to be broken according to the surveyor's directions and laid to a thickness of fifteen inches in the middle sloping to five at the extremities, the whole to be covered with gravel. Ditches must be one yard in width or as directed by the surveyor and all work maintained by the contractors for one year after completion. The partners signed the agreement in the presence of Pattinson and Waller but the matter of the bridge was not settled for some weeks.

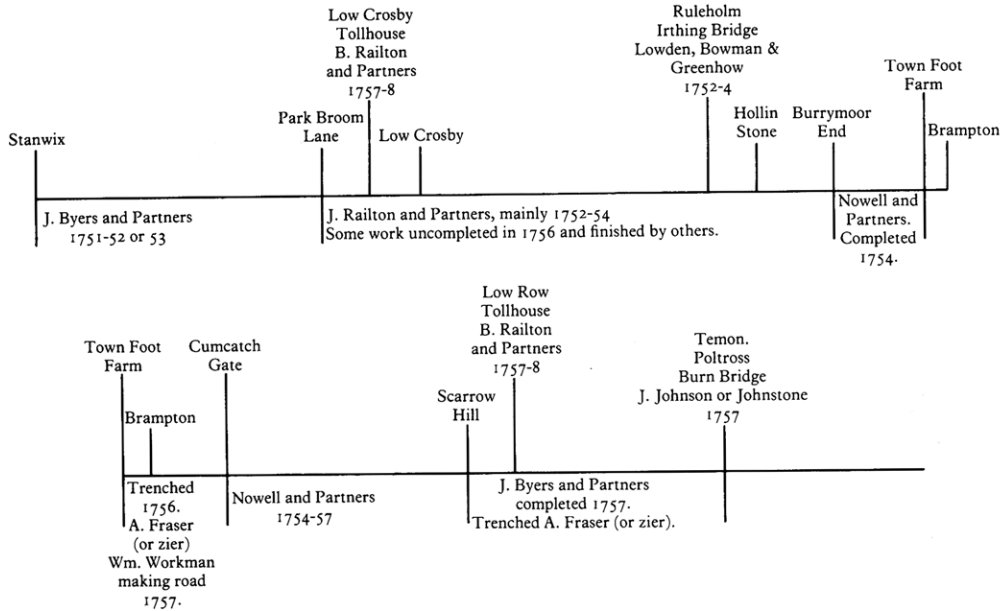
At the next meeting on 18 July it was ordered that all sums granted by Parliament should be deposited at the London bank of Sir Richard Hoare and Company (though Hoare refused to accommodate them and Gislingham Cooper of the Strand was eventually appointed in his stead); also that owners of ground through which the road was to pass should receive notice to attend the next meeting on 12 August to contract for its sale. It was also recorded that when the agreement with Byers and his partners was made it had been necessary to concede that if the undertakers appeared to have an unsatisfactory bargain at twelve shillings a rood (having originally demanded twenty) the matter would be further considered upon completion of the work. At the following meeting no owners were noted as present but the High Sheriff of Cumberland, George Ireton, (Irton) was requested to empanel a jury of twenty-four to attend the commissioners on the morning of Saturday, 17 August, when they were asked to present their verdict on 9 September (later deferred to 2 November) as to the value of the ground through which the road must pass. Their reports, dated 24 August and 7 October, show the assessors to have visited the following owners, the value of whose land per acre is given in brackets – Featherstone Nicolson (£18), James Bowstead (£18), Alexander Hoskins (£30), Henry Aglionby (£30), Widow Bell (£35), Rev. Dr. Waugh (£40), Thos. Lowry

(£40), Tho. Lowry of Stanwix (£35), Colonel Stanwix (£35), James Robinson (£35) and Thomas Sutton (£35). In all cases the cost of hedging is given as 12s. 6d. per rood. At the meeting of 19 September a contract to build the bridge over the Mill Beck had been signed by Richard Bell, Arch. Thompson, and Jos. Robinson, work to be finished by the following May Day for £46.

On 16 November one instruction issued to Cooper was that as soon as he should receive the one thousand pounds sanctioned by Parliament for 1751, he should pay £95 to Edward Bigge,¹³ the solicitor, as Cumberland's share of the expense incurred in passing the Act, and retain £58. 13s. paid by himself as Exchequer fees. Also before the meeting was the report of work done, now to be despatched to Parliament. In all, 127 roods or 889 yards had been finished and 157 roods or 1099 yards begun: on Nicholson's, Bowstead's and Hoskins' land respectively 28, 18, and 81 roods finished; on Aglionby's, Ann Bell's and Waugh's, 111, 26 and 10 roods trenched and part-stoned, and on Lowry's 10 roods trenched and stoned. At the same meeting the commissioners availed themselves of their right under the Act to make a temporary road for general use to permit work to proceed upon its permanent counterpart, and Waller was instructed to mark out such a road from Luke Fish's house to the Tythe Barn at Stanwix. It would seem that in this sector, at any rate, the new Military Road coincided with an already well-established track. In the same month of December withdrawals totalled £800.

In 1752 the January meeting was largely concerned with the 'Rule Holme' bridge and at that of February a provisional agreement for its construction was made with William Lowden, James Bowman and Joseph Greenhow, the formal contract to be executed the following month. The work was to be done for £340 provided that sufficient rock could be found within six feet of the surface. Should it not, the commissioners were to provide a frame of wood or contract with the partners to do so, provided that a reasonable price could be agreed. The same meeting directed that "a memorial" to the Lords of the Treasury be drawn up for Cooper to receive the one thousand pounds granted by Parliament and that a notice be inserted in the Newcastle papers seeking proposals for making the road from the two ash trees in Park Broom Lane to the Ruleholme Bridge and thence to the lane at the east side of Burrymoor.¹⁴ In March a contract for this work with John Railton of 'Bows' and partners at seventeen shillings a rood and a formal agreement in respect of the bridge were accepted, but Lowden and partners were bound in the sum of £400. Railton soon repented of his bargain and at a meeting on 25 April refused to keep the agreement. Re-advertisement produced no response and Railton was evidently prevailed upon to continue, perhaps on better terms. Certainly in August he was at work on Irthing Common, for three commissioners were informed through Waller that they might inspect progress there before Railton applied the gravel. The sector as far as Hollin Stone appears to have been largely completed by 1754 though some work remained even in 1756.

The annual report to Parliament, accepted at the December meeting, states that two miles and forty-seven roods have been completed between Carlisle and the end of Park Broom Lane; the bridge at Draw Dikes is finished; two miles of road, one on either side of the Irthing have been contracted for but not finished (though part is stoned) because of bad weather; two hundred and eighty-nine roods are trenched ready for stoning on Irthing Moor; scarcity of materials between the end of Park Broom Lane and the east side of Burrymoor, wet weather, and difficulty of arriving at reasonable terms with



contractors account for the slow progress; work on the Irthing Bridge has been hampered by the ignorance of the workmen in not laying a proper foundation and by the violence of the floods; as sufficient security has been taken to complete the bridge in a workmanlike manner, it is hoped to finish the work by the following summer.

Records of meetings for 1753 are mainly concerned with payments to contractors. Early in the year a decision was taken to build a stone bridge over the beck at Low Crosby and in July the bills for damage were required of all people from Stanwix to Linstock who had allowed the contractors to go through their lands. In September and October payments to John Johnstone are mentioned for work on the Low Crosby bridge. In November, Bigge's bill of £84. os. 5d. for attendances at the Houses of Lords and Commons during the year was approved and Hetherington and partners were allowed an additional £57. 10s. od. in accordance with the promise of further consideration should their original bargain prove disadvantageous. At the final meeting on 22 December the clerk was instructed to advertise for proposals regarding the next section of road from Burrymoor End to Brampton but no summary of the year's work appears to have survived.

In 1754 no meeting occurred until March when the nine commissioners present signed a petition, presumably to the Lords of the Treasury, to release the two thousand pounds voted this year by Parliament, and also a letter of authority to Cooper to receive it. In May a number of orders were issued, including one that the surveyor should immediately begin to get the road trenched from Closegill to the river at 'Powtross'; also that he should immediately set people to work to trench and make that part of the road from Burrymoor to Brampton, apparently in fulfilment of their statutory obligations. There is no evidence that this procedure was adopted and we know from records of payments made that the section was actually completed by J. Nowell and partners. In July final payment was

authorized to Lowden and partners for finishing the Irthing bridge,¹⁵ and an agreement signed with Tho. and John Hetherington, Richard Bell of Brampton and apparently John Nowell to make the road from Cumcatch Gate on Brampton Common to Scarrow Hill at nineteen shillings a rood. Three bridges were also to be built, two at the Milns and one at 'Capon Clugh' for eighty pounds by the same contractors. In September Waller was ordered to complete as soon as he could the sector from "the end of the road now finished to Stanwix Bank to the end of Priest Beck Bridge" and to increase its width to nine yards, also to set up good oak posts on either side of the causeway.

The annual report, approved at the meeting of 23 November, stated that the road had been finished from Carlisle to Brampton Town Foot; the four hundred yards contracted for between Cumcatch Gate and Scarrow Hill had been trenched, stoned and "broak" only awaiting the final covering of gravel and the completion of the three bridges; the remaining part of the road within the county (i.e. east from Scarrow Hill) had also been trenched, stoned and "broak" except for some one hundred and five roods; three stone bridges had been completed, but there was still a section of about three hundred roods from Brampton Town Foot to Cumcatch Gate not yet contracted for, but which, when finished, would complete the whole road within the county.

The report might seem encouraging but in reality the rate of progress had encountered severe criticism in the *Newcastle Journal* of 6 July 1754 when it reported

"We hear from Carlisle that the Military Road now making at the public expense from that city to Newcastle will scarce be finished as soon as was expected, that part of it which lies in the County of Cumberland is going on very slowly; and, in proportion to what hath already been made of that Road, more money will be required to compleat that part of it which lies in Cumberland than that part which lies in Northumberland, it being double the length of the other part which lies in Cumberland.

We are also informed that several of the Turnpike Acts which have been obtained for repairing the roads in Cumberland are far from answering the expectations of the public; the country in several parts being burdened with tolls, while the roads still remain in a ruinous condition, which creates such discontent that very little money can be borrowed on the credit of the tolls, and that only at the highest interest.

. . . It is suggested that management of these roads be put in hands of those Trustees who will lend . . . the money necessary . . .

. . . If something is not speedily done the County will be much exasperated against those who oblige them to pay their money without having anything done for it."

At the first meeting of 1755, held on 22 March, George Blamire had already been appointed clerk and treasurer in succession to Pattinson whose death had apparently occurred in the early weeks of the new year. Cash in hand (£403. 3s. 11½d.) was transferred to the new treasurer and an order made to pay Waller £32. 17s. 7½d. to enable him to discharge several workmen employed by Robt. "Rontree" though upon what particular task they were engaged is not clear. The same meeting appointed Sir Wm. Lowther of Whitehaven a commissioner and trustee in place of Sir James Lowther, deceased. For some time past no orders had been made to advertise for proposals from contractors, so that arrangements were probably left to Waller. At least there seemed to be no shortage of money since resources for the year totalled £2,941. 10s. 3½d, comprising £403. 3s. 11½d. held by the first treasurer, £538. 6s. 4d. in Cooper the banker's hands from the previous year, and a grant of £2,000 from Parliament. No annual report for 1755 appears to have survived but noteworthy payments included £13. 16s. to Nowell and

partners in March for completing two hundred and eighty-two roods from Brampton Town Foot to Burrymoor, and a total of two hundred pounds for work between Cumcatch and Scarrow Hill, a similar total to Byers and his partners for work between Scarrow Hill and Temon; and one hundred pounds to Railton for work between the two ash trees in Park Broom Lane and "Bury Moor".

In July orders were issued to empanel a jury to value ground taken in between Scarrow Hill and "Powtross" and in August the surveyor and treasurer were instructed to view and measure the amount of road "stoned and broak" on Nowell's and Byers' contracts. In the record for September a new name occurs, that of Archible (*sic*) Frazier or Fraser for trenching between Scarrow Hill and Temon at 2s. 4d. a rood, though the road was constructed by J. Byers and partners and not finished till 1757.

The year 1756 is unusual in that no request was addressed to Parliament for money, indeed Blamire began with resources of nearly two thousand pounds. Accounts contain numerous details of payments for damages, for ground taken in, for hedging, and all the usual operations involved in construction. Records of meetings provide little of interest save that in September the difficult situation between the commissioners and Railton and his partners came to a head. On the day of the meeting (14th) the balance of their account stood at £344. 6s. 3½d., they acknowledging work to the value of £22. 10s. to be unfinished. This amount the commissioners retained with instructions to Waller to employ "proper persons" to finish the work. The treasurer was ordered to pay all wages and debts due to the workmen and others out of the remainder. Such debts amounted to nearly eighty pounds leaving £243. 6s. 2d. due to the partners. At the same meeting (September) payment to Byers was sanctioned for the construction of a side road of thirteen roods and five yards from "the Great Road" down towards Low Row. The annual report announced completion of the road from Carlisle to Brampton Town Foot though some places would require gravel in the spring; about three hundred roods from Town Foot to Cumcatch Gate was mostly trenched and advertised to be stoned and completed; from Cumcatch Gate to Scarrow Hill was finished except that some places required gravel; the remainder of the road from Scarrow Hill Bridge within the county was all trenched, stoned and "broak", only requiring gravel.

Records of meetings in 1757, of which the first took place on 5 March at the Bush as usual, are again mainly concerned with payments. Another new name appears among those of the contractors – that of Wm. Workman, who was engaged in making the road over Brampton Fair Hill. In May Blamire was instructed to attend ("with power to agree") a meeting of the Northumberland Commissioners concerning the building of a bridge over the "Powtross" between the two counties. This was to be a joint effort of which Cumberland Commissioners must have had previous knowledge, since an advertisement in connection with the work had already appeared in the Newcastle press on 23 April. Work on the Road, though not on the bridges and tollhouses, had been finished for some time in Northumberland and proposals for a combined venture in bridging the Poltross were now sought. They were to be addressed by 14 May to either Waller or John Brown¹⁶ of Kirk Harle in Northumberland. Significantly, press notices, which had hitherto been headed "Carlisle Road", now began "Grand Road from the City of Carlisle to the Town of Newcastle upon Tyne". Of the outcome there can be little doubt. In the Northumberland financial account for 1757 payments are recorded in July and September to John Johnson "Undertaker of Bridges" while at their meeting of 22

October Cumberland commissioners authorized payment of £22. 10s. od. to John Johnstone¹⁷ in full for building half the bridge over the "Powtross at Temmon". Their meeting of 14 July had ordered settlement of the accounts of three contractors upon completion of their work, *viz.* Nowell and Partners for the section from Cumcatch to Scarrow Hill with three bridges, Wm. Workman for that over Brampton Fair Hill, and Byers and partners for that from Scarrow Hill Bridge to Temon. The treasurer was directed to seek estimates for oak posts, six feet long, ten inches square and clear of sap, to be erected at the end of every mile.

At the meeting of 24 September four commissioners, or any three of them, were empowered to accept proposals regarding unfinished work between Brampton and Fair Hill, also regarding the posts or "milestones". The reason seems to be that Waller had been taken ill. He received a quarter's salary of ten pounds due on 25 December following, but his post was filled in March 1758 and his death is mentioned at the meeting of March 1759 when Alice Waller, presumably the widow, received two guineas as salary due at his death, which would thus seem to have occurred in January 1758. Blamire was instructed to insert in the Newcastle papers notice of a meeting to fix tollgates, which duly appeared on 1 October and stated that the road within the county of Cumberland being nearly completed, commissioners would meet on 22nd to consider places for fixing gates and tollhouses and to proportion tolls.

At the October meeting it was decided to erect a tollhouse and gate at each of Low Row and Low Crosby. Proposals, for which advertisements appeared in the *Newcastle Courant* on 5, 12 and 19 November, were to be delivered at the Bush by 26th. With so much of the work now complete the annual report was brief, namely that the road from Carlisle to the Poltross was finished, save for some paving at the east end of Brampton, which would be completed in the following spring and that the sector from Carlisle to Brampton needed a new coat of gravel which would be added in the following summer; finally that negotiations were in hand for two tollgates and tollhouses which would be erected as soon as the season would permit.

At the first meeting of 1758, on 4 March, Blamire was appointed to the additional office of surveyor at the yearly salary of ten pounds. Now that the project was nearing completion the reduced salary probably reflects the decreasing amount of work involved; in any event, much of the outdoor work could now be done by commissioners. On 3 June payment of £111. 5s. was authorized to Benjamin Railton and partners for erecting the two tollhouses and gates. Barnard Sewell, a yeoman of Botchergate, was appointed collector at Low Row at a salary of ten pounds a year and Adam Dixon, a carpenter of Coal Hill, to Low Crosby on similar terms, both to commence duty at 6 a.m. on 12 June. Dixon appears not to have taken up the appointment, for on 1 July Valentine Leighton was appointed to Low Crosby Gate and, according to the 1758 account, Robert Nixon was paid £1. 3s. 7d. for twenty-three days' duty (i.e. 12 June – 4 July incl.). The annual report was again brief, merely certifying that the road in Cumberland was complete in accordance with the intent of the Act, and that any money remaining in the treasurer's hands would be used in repairing some of the bridges, putting up horsing stones and repairing the road. The Low Road tollhouse has long since disappeared though it is shown on the 1865 O.S. as being near the junction with the side road to Low Row. The address on the post box near the same junction is, significantly, "Toll Bar". The Low Crosby tollhouse, known as East Lodge, Eden Grove, Crosby on Eden, stood on the south side of

the road at the bend midway between the third and fourth milestones west of Carlisle and near to the lane to Walby. Demolition began in 1977 and a replacement cottage has been erected on an adjacent site further from the edge of the road.



East Lodge, Eden Grove, Crosby on Eden, the former Low Crosby tollhouse. Demolition began 1977.

Conclusion

The tolls charged, and how the income was applied, cover too wide an area to be included in this study, though it may be noted that from 1811 the Cumbrian sector of the Military Road was administered by the Carlisle to Temon Trust until its dissolution in 1877. Even before the Military Road had been completed, a bill for widening and repairing a loop from Glenwhelt (Greenhead) by way of Haltwhistle, Haydon Bridge, Hexham and Corbridge to Sheldon Common in the Matfen Piers area had received assent on 26 March 1752 and, when completed, must have diverted much traffic away from the central areas. The natural extension of the loop from Corbridge to Heddon on the Wall would follow as a matter of course. Further diversions came from other developments, particularly the Stainmore road. Still, the coaches ran and the carriers plied their trade between the two terminals till a much more serious competitor appeared in the form of the Newcastle-Carlisle Railway which by 1838 was open throughout its length and, even by that date, had reduced toll revenue of the Carlisle-Temon Trust by two-thirds.¹⁸

Constructed before the age of the great road builders (excluding Wade), the Military Road was reported by the nineteenth-century writer, Cadwallader Bates, as the worst engineered road in the country. Indeed, within living memory, parts of the central sector of the carriageway had deteriorated to a pair of ruts with grass growing between them.¹⁹ Because of its relative freedom from populated areas, its straightness, and the comparative ease with which convoys and other Service traffic could traverse it, a new vitality came to the Military Road during the Second World War. The volume of

movement continued to grow to such an alarming extent in post-war years that extensive measures have had to be taken – widening, straightening, by-passing – to divert traffic to what is virtually a new road in the Heddon to Greenhead sector of the old A69. In Cumbria too, where similar processes have taken place, much of the present Military Road bears little resemblance to the original.

Notes and References

- ¹ Despite popular belief, Wade had no part in building the Military Road. There is abundant evidence that construction did not commence until 1751; Wade died in 1748.
- ² Minutes of the Surveyor-General, 1749-92, National Record Office, (W.O. 47/34) appear to contain a full record of the Board of Ordnance's daily proceedings. In 1855 the duties of the Board were transferred to the Secretary of State for The War Department. (See *Guide to the Contents of the P.R.O., vol. II*, pp. 304 and 325). In the mid-18th century military engineers had their own designations beginning with Practitioner Engineer, and ascending through the grades of Sub-Engineer, Engineer Extraordinary, Engineer in Ordinary, Sub-Director, Director, to Chief Engineer. Until 1750, the Chief Engineer also held the office of Surveyor-General. Army rank was eventually conferred on military engineers through the intercession of the Duke of Cumberland with the King. (See *Hist. of the Corps. of Royal Engineers, vol. I*, p. 168).
- ³ The petition appears not to have survived. Its form is clear from vol. 26, *Journal of the House of Commons*, entry for 4 March 1750/51.
- ⁴ For outline of the career of both Campbell and Debbeig see AA4 xxxiv (1966) pp. 195-8.
- ⁵ They measure approx. 10ft 6ins by 2ft, are hand-worked in coloured inks and cover five sheets joined to make one roll. How the Allgood copy came to light in 1936 is described in AA4 xiv (1937). Both are now at Northumberland C.R.O.
- ⁶ In his *Vallum Romanum*, John Warburton claimed to have suggested such a road as the Military to Gen. Carpenter in 1715. On Warburton's untrustworthiness see Macdonald *John Horsley, Scholar and Gentleman*, AA4 x (1933). Warburton's map was probably pirated from the official survey, and his extensions of it from Horsley's work. His insets deceive no one. The present writer would not accept Warburton's claim without confirmation.
- ⁷ Stukeley (1687-1765) could not understand why the Military Way, which never appears on the official survey, had not been used as a foundation for the new road, declaring that he and Roger Gale had traversed it in 1725. For his outbursts against the surveyors and roadmakers for their destruction of the Wall, see entries in his diary for 19 and 23 Oct. 1754, also pp. 9 and 135, vol. I of his *Medallic History of Carausius*.
- ⁸ C.R.O. D/Lons/W/Letters/44.
- ⁹ Interpreted as the distance from ditch to ditch. In Cumberland the width of the metalled road was 20ft.
- ¹⁰ Also at Newcastle.
- ¹¹ Between 1750/1 and 1757 (incl.).
- ¹² In Northumberland one group of partners made the entire road. Not so in Cumberland, where many different groups were employed.
- ¹³ He regularly delivered the annual accounts and reports of both the N'land and Cumb. commissioners to Parliament up to 1758 and probably presented the petitions for further grants. He seems to have performed legal services for other trusts and to have been a member of the family associated with Linden in Northumberland.
- ¹⁴ Various spelt Burry Moor and Bury Moor. Account for 1755 places "Burrymoor" 282 roods (1974 yds) west of Brampton Town Foot.
- ¹⁵ The bridge is inscribed "This bridge was built at the charge of the Government. Begun in 1753. Undertakers Wm. Loudon, Jos. Greenhow . . ." Raising of the road surface has obscured Bowman's name. Preliminary work was begun in 1752. See report for that year.
- ¹⁶ Surveyor to the N'land commissioners, and brother of "Capability" Brown. See AA4 xxxiv (1966) p. 207 for biographical note.
- ¹⁷ Doubtless the same man as "Johnson" in the Northumberland accounts.
- ¹⁸ i.e. from £877. 18s. 6d. in 1835 to £295. 15s. od. at end of 1837. Acknowledgements to Williams, *Road Transport in Cumbria in the Nineteenth Century*, p. 145.
- ¹⁹ Confirmed by Mr. E. Hunter of Tower Tye and formerly of Blackcarts Farm, Humshaugh; also by Prof. E. Birley.

