

Rogue's Road and Capt. Harper

"This portion through the present Loudoun County, Virginia, on the old Carolina Road was then locally known as 'Rogue's Road' on account of the many bold robberies committed along its route by the famous gentleman highwayman of the day, Captain Harper, who regularly patrolled it and terrorized all those who lived adjacent to it until such was the fear of this dashing and bold highwayman, that women were afraid to venture out upon this road alone. A rather pretty story is related in this connection—a young Virginia maiden was walking this road alone one evening about twilight, hurrying from a visit to a neighbor rode up and reined his horse beside her.

"Are you not afraid to walk this road alone on account of Captain Harper and his band?' he asked. 'No' replied the maiden 'for I have always heard Captain Harper was a gentleman.'"

The dashing horseman looked at her a moment and then walked his horse beside her until she reached the gate leading to her home. And then raising his hat and bowing he said: 'Captain Harper bids you good night' and digging the rowels into his steed he vanished as he came." The writer omits to mention the local tradition that Harper, though mercilessly robbing the rich, gave generously to the poor.

The Carolina Road entered Virginia at a point on the bank of the Potomac, above the mouth of Maryland's Monocacy, where Noland's Ferry sometime prior to 1756 became its connecting link with Maryland; thence it ran in a southeasterly direction somewhere along the present clay road to Christ Church just south of modern Lucketts; thence south, following closely the present Leesburg-Point of Rocks State Highway, through Leesburg over what

is known as King Street (the King's Highway of yesteryear) and approximately along the present James Monroe Highway (Route 15 of the United States Highway System) to Verts' Corner, thence along what is still locally called the Carolina Road (or sometimes the Gleedsville Road) to Goose Creek at Oatlands. The present hard road from Verts' Corner to Oatlands, now the main road, was probably built and the old road's traffic at that point diverted about 1830 when the rough pavement of the road was undertaken. From Goose Creek at Oatlands the old road followed United States Route 15 as at present to the Little River Turnpike, now known as the Lee-Jackson National Highway, just east of the village of Aldie; crossing this, it followed what is now but a local and little-used, in its progress south of the county and under changing conditions, eventually crosses the other great rivers above their falls line and so on to North Carolina.

Along its route the first church in Loudoun, Aubrey's little log "Chapel of Ease," was erected at the Big Spring; and later many of the mansions of the Loudoun gentlefolk, such as the Noland House, Rockland, Springwood, Selma, Raspberry Plain, Morven, Rokeby, Oatlands, Oak Hill, and others in due time came to be built and historic "Ordinaries" or taverns such as that known as West's and later as Lacey's and towns such as Leesburg and the nearby Aldie grew up. All through the eighteenth century the flow of its colorful traffic continued and developed in volume until the founding of the City of Washington, as the nation's Capital, drew to the east those traveling the northern and southern States. And now, over a hundred years after the passing of its golden days of activity, there are rumored to revive the old road as a main north and south highway, and once again, in the not too distant future, we may see its old life restored, with motors and trucks speeding along its surface where the old-time foot

and horse-travel and Indians and soldiers,
missionaries and traders, drovers honest or
otherwise, were wont slowly to pass."

Source: Legends of Loudoun: An account of the
history and homes of a border county of
Virginia's Northern Neck by Harrison Williams