

## ANTONINE'S ITINERARY. ROUTE IX., BRITAIN.<sup>1</sup>

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At the Colchester Meeting of the Institute in 1876 I had the honour of reading a paper on Roman roads in the east of England, in which something was said on the subject treated of on this occasion. The views then enunciated have been modified on some points and confirmed on others by further information and examination. It is not without hesitation that the present remarks are made. They will be found mainly directed towards the first stage on the route, to which I have been able to give some personal attention.

A few words may be said on the document with which we have to deal.

The detail of the work which has come down to us by the name of Antonine's Itinerary of necessity ranges over a great extent of time. From the record of the Appian Way to the mention of Diocletianopolis the mind has to traverse some six centuries, and the mileage of the former as well as of other early roads is probably earlier than their titles, for the words of Livy about the Appian Way ("viam munivit." *Liv. ix, 29,*) leave it quite open to conjecture whether Appius Claudius Cæcus laid out the great road which goes by his name, or merely threw up an agger on that which had long existed as a level road. A compilation embedding in itself the result of earlier work it must of course be; and the question is to whom it owes its name. There are three Emperors who bore the name of Antoninus, to any one of whom the publication of the Itinerary may be ascribed. The claims of

<sup>1</sup> Read in the Antiquarian Section at the Annual Meeting of the Institute, at Norwich, August 7th, 1889.

others of the name are but slender. These three are Titus Antoninus Pius, Marcus Aurelius Antoninus, and the elder son of Severus, commonly called Caracalla, but never known formally by that name, his designation on coins being also Marcus Aurelius Antoninus. The name of the first is little connected with road-making, but Julius Capitolinus in his life of the great philosophic Emperor records his care for the roads of the *Itinera* ("Vias etiam urbis atque itinerum diligentissime curavit," cxi.),<sup>1</sup> and this is very strong evidence, if the text be trustworthy. To support Caracalla's claim, there is an inscription recorded by Maffei, to the effect that Severus and Caracalla ordered the restoration of "millaria vetustate conlabsa." The honours thus divide themselves between the philosopher and the fratricide. The Itinerary further contains traces of the days of Diocletian, but nothing later than those of Constantine the Great.

An element of uncertainty is thus introduced by the very title of the book, which does not leave us when we come to the examination of the special route, which is our subject this evening.

The text, after a most exhaustive recension of MSS., by the latest editors stands thus:—"Item a Venta Icenorum Londinio.

	mpm.	CXXVIII,	Sic.
Sitomago	mpm.	XXXII.	
Combretonio	mpm.	XXII.	
Ad Ansam	mpm.	XV.	
Camoloduno	mpm.	VI.	
Canonio	mpm.	VIII.	
Cæsaromago	mpm.	XII.	
Durolito	mpm.	XVI.	
Londinio	mpm.	XV."	

The sum of these distances is a mile short of the total. It will be unnecessary for me, in the presence of so many members of the Norfolk and Norwich Archæological Society, to reiterate the arguments by which the identity of Norwich with Venta Icenorum has been established. I have been for years a convert to them. The extremities being thus fixed, let us first take the half-way house, Camolodunum, better known under the form Camūlodu-

<sup>1</sup> Parthey and Pinder question the correctness of the text.

num, the Καμουλόδουνον of Dion Cassius.<sup>1</sup> Now we have as a guide to this part of our road the fifth route in the Itinerary; the obscurities in which are comparatively trivial till we get past Essex. In that route from London to Luguvalium ad vallum, on the Roman wall near Carlisle, via Colchester and Lincoln, we have the following mileage:—

A Londinio Cæsaromago	mpm.	XXVIII.
Colonia	mpm.	XXIV.

I quite assent to the identification of Cæsaromagus with Billericay, but would draw attention to the difference of mileage in the two routes, twenty-eight miles in the fifth route to thirty-one in the ninth. Now, in the latter there is an intermediate station, Durolitum, which according to Reynolds and Mannert is Romford. I follow them from etymology and mileage; and suggest that a shorter road was made by cutting through the scrub and forest further east. If this be the true solution of the discrepancy, then the ninth route is older than the fifth. This, I think, is confirmed by Camulodunum appearing in the ninth route, but Colonia in the fifth. That the two places are not identical is shown by the fact that the ninth route gives twenty-four miles between Cæsaromagus and Colonia, whereas the fifth gives twenty-one between Cæsaromagus and Camulodunum; and the fifth, which as yet we have found the longer road, has an intermediate station, Canonium, which would be unlikely to shorten the distance. Thus we are taken by the mileage to Prebendary Scarth's conclusion that Lexden, not Colchester, is the Camulodunum of Tacitus, Dion Cassius, and the ninth route in Antonine's Itinerary, the city of Cunobellinus and Boadicea.

Standing now at Lexden we have to deal with the distance from that place to Norwich, seventy-five Roman miles in the Itinerary, but under fifty as the crow flies. How is this to be accounted for? It seems certain that there must have been a great deflection either to the east or to the west. First of all the Stour had to be crossed, no doubt near the station *ad Ansam*, presumably the lowest point where the river would be usually fordable, still

<sup>1</sup> ὁ Πλατύτος—τὸ Καμουλόδουνον τὸ τοῦ Κυνοθελλίνου βασίλειον εἶλεν. Dion Cassius, *l. c.* 21.

known by the suggestive name of Stratford S. Mary. The name seems to have arisen from the gathering up as in a clamp the various tracks which came together at the ford. Once across the river we must use our judgment for the east or for the west. The next station is *Combretonium*. If we adopt the eastward course this will be Burgh near Woodbridge, if the westward it will be Brettenham, about half-way between Lavenham and Stowmarket. I regret that I have been unable to visit either place, but I am informed that both possess earth-works. The syllable Bret has, of course, proved attractive, but it ought not to weigh against the entire absence of roads of any note radiating from Brettenham in any direction. In the Peutinger Tabula *Convetni* which no doubt represents *Combretonium* is close to the coast. Written against it is xv. the Antonine mileage between it and *ad Ansam*.

Suckling's remark that the adoption of the eastward course would charge the Romans with having left the heart of the county of Suffolk unprotected may be disposed of by the fact that the fifth route traversed that very district. Camden's preference for the westward course has no other basis but the supposed identity of "Sit" in *Sitomagus*, with "Thet" in Thetford. He speaks of the river Sit or Thet, but there is no proof of other existence of the first name.

The balance of evidence seems to me to incline eastward, and such remarks as I have to make from local knowledge are based on that theory. Assuming this, let us look to the first stage. And first of all its length (32 miles) is remarkable, being rarely surpassed. We have 35 mile stages twice in the very obscure Iter v., and one 36 mile stage on Iter xv. between *Durnonovaria* and *Muridunum*, on the road from Silchester to Exeter, and these are the only British instances in excess of the stage between *Venta Icinorum* and *Sitomagus*. And as it was undoubtedly long, so it was presumably difficult. Three rivers, the Tase, the Waveney, and the Blyth, had to be forded. On the inland side lay, for the greater part of the way, an ancient and deep forest, which also extended occasionally beyond the road on the sea side. The lighter lands on the sea side were covered with thickets and scrub, and

excellent shelter was afforded to marauders, whether sea-rovers or salvagers. The character of the soil was hostile to traffic for a great part of the year, and so far as the record of Antonine's Itinerary goes, the road was no thoroughfare. I am not denying the existence of other roads out of Norwich at the time; none of them, however, were thought worthy of a place in the Itinerary. If the centurion, M. Favonius, whose monument remains at Colchester, ever made the journey, he would have had occasion to contrast the stage with others to its disadvantage.

We pass out of Norwich by Ber Street and Bracondale, and cross the Tase by Trowse Station.

Here the name of the place must stop us. A suggestion has been made to me by the Rev. M. H. Lee, Vicar of Hanmer, that Trowse is a British word, Traws, the crossing, a corruption of the Latin *Trajectus*. I am told that this is confirmed by the discovery of the old ford, close to Trowse Bridge. By this way we are reminded that King Anna rode forth to the fatal field of Bulcamp, (*bellus campus*), and the Conisford Ward preserved the name till the Reform Bill swept away the beautiful picturesqueness of the old designations, and ticketed the citizens by number, like cattle on the hill. I am inclined to think that the road did not make straight for the ford across the Waveney, but bent to the left to catch the little earth-work at Bergh Apton, and thence by Mundham and Thwaite reached Belsey bridge. The road beyond Thwaite, with Tindal wood on the right, is remarkably good, much better than might be expected in such a district. At Belsey bridge, a small tributary of the Waveney is crossed, and near here in September, 1862, some urns of inferior construction were discovered.

The passage of the Waveney was the most critical point in the road, and at no place are the conditions more favourable than at Wainford. The extent of marsh is here reduced by the presence of a two-fold patch of higher ground called Pirnough-street. Below Wainford the Waveney is not fordable. On Friday last I examined the way between Ditchingham station and the church of Ilketshall S. John's. The turns in the road at first are quite accounted for by the advantage of keeping on these

patches of gravel in the marsh. The second of the two patches ends a little more than 100 yards before the first of the two present bridges ; but everything here has been cut about for milling and malting. The old road ran to the east of the malthouses, and here in 1856 were found Roman coins.<sup>1</sup> Very likely if the mill were ever to be pulled down we might have a second edition of the Bassingbourne discovery. The gravel on the south side of the river is about five feet from the surface, so that the little bit of marsh could not have been very formidable. I have little doubt that the present little-used road which continues the route straight away indicates Iter ix. It is a water-course road, and probably the Roman road lay just to the east of it, detail being thus arranged for carrying off the water. On the top of the ridge there is a well-defined double elbow, the middle about fifty yards long, quite level, and at right angles to the general course of the road. This way is described as the Packway, between Wangford Cross and Wangford Green. No better arrangement could be made for a good rest before descending what must have been a bad hill. Wangford Green, between Mettingham Castle and the slope of the hill, was all open common till the enclosure of 1817. No trace therefore can be found here, save that land between Mettingham Castle and Wainford bridge is described as "abutting on a certain street called Wangford street." I think, however, that at the north-west corner of the Mettingham Castle property the Roman road appears again, and goes away for Ilketshall S. John's church, with another double elbow before the dip for the little stream which has there to be crossed. There are some suspicious looking pieces of brick in the outer wall of this church. Here the road assumes its most important aspect, and begins to bear the high title of Stone Street.

The church and churchyard of Ilketshall S. Laurence, on the left of the road, stand on an artificially raised platform. At S. Laurence's Green the road is crossed by another, leading to Rumburgh, to the west, which westward road is called S. Margaret's Street ; and eastwardly, avoiding all brooks in a truly British fashion, coming out

<sup>1</sup> Ex. *inform.* Rob. Mann. de Wainford.

on the piece of "Corduroy Road," described by Mr. Edwards in his pamphlet, dealing with the question whether the Waveney ever reached the sea at Lowestoft. The name of Stone Street belongs to the road, even after passing the Triple Plea, when it turns towards the right for Halesworth. The farm called Harley Archer's lies on the left after this turn. Part of it is described in the title deeds as abutting "upon the Queen's Highway, and turnpike road leading from Halesworth aforesaid to Bungay, formerly called Stone Street, or the broadway, towards the south." Broadway farm is on the right of the road. On the other side, the road turns eastward for Holton, but the name of Stone Street no longer belongs to it; a piece of copyhold land hard by being described in the Court Books of the manor of Dame Margaries in Halesworth, as situate in Holton, and "abutting upon the common way, leading from Holton towards Stone Street."

This, however, may have been part of Iter ix, leading down to Holton, and so by the present road, nearly parallel to the river Blyth to Blythford, when the circumstances of crossing are most favourable. I am convinced that I thought too well of Blythburgh.

For the rest of the way there would be an easy course over the heaths to Dunwich.

It appears to me that great efforts were made to deal effectively with the worst parts of the road.

Sticking in the mud time after time between Holton and Ilketshall S. John's and attacked by parties of plunderers when in these straits, the great necessity was to get clear of this middle section of the stage. Hence not only was this grand Stone Street laid down but little redoubts were thrown up at some distance from the route, not as summer camps, but rather to be occupied occasionally when some baggage train was to pass to or from Norwich. Such was Rumburgh, a highly suggestive name. There seem to have been earthworks here, but I am not bold enough to discriminate between them and the foundations of the house of the Augustinian Canons, for the dissolution whereof Cardinal Wolsey procured a bull from Pope Clement VII. Such was the little square rampart round that venerable building known as the Old Minster, while

Alburgh, the great mounds at Bungay and others of British origin may have been turned to useful account.

I have already exceeded the limits of a paper, and will leave untouched for the present the chain of posts connecting this great road with the sea, and the detail by Kelsale, Stratford S. Andrew and Wickham Market to Combretonium, or according to the theory here adopted, Burgh near Woodbridge, and thence Londonwards.