THE EVIDENCE OF SAXON LAND CHARTERS ON THE ANCIENT ROAD-SYSTEM OF BRITAIN.[1]

By G. B. GRUNDY, M.A. D.Litt.

It is necessary to give some general introduction to the subject with which it is proposed to deal; but that introduction shall be as brief as possible.

The charters which will be quoted are in the collections of Kemble and Birch.[2]

The inquiry was taken up originally with a view to discovering whether these charters threw any light on Roman Britain. There were many who could speak with authority on Roman Britain, but who had no first-hand knowledge of the charters. Those who were acquainted with the charters had solved the topography of only a very few of them, and had furthermore very little knowledge of Roman Britain. Under those circumstances it is not surprising that both sides had agreed that there was very little information of the kind sought for to be extracted from the documents.

It soon became apparent that the task was of infinitely greater magnitude than had been anticipated. There were considerable preliminary difficulties. In the first place it was quite impossible to solve the topography of the charters without collecting the field-names of the regions concerned. It took several months of work in the diocesan registries of Oxford and Winchester to collect the thousands of field-names required for the elucidation of the charters of the counties of Hampshire and Berkshire. Then it was necessary to have all the sheets of the six-inch maps of those counties in order to enter the field-names upon them. The cost of the maps for those two counties alone was over £40. The Treasury granted the maps at the very kind request of Sir Charles Close, the director general

[1] Read before the Institute, 7th February, 1917.

[2] Indicated hereafter by K. and B. with the number of the charter in their respective editions.

of the Ordnance Survey, the agreement being that the Survey should be furnished with information obtained in the course of the work.

It will now become clear why inquirers have fought shy of this department of investigation. Even after all these instruments had been obtained, the task of solving the topography of many of the charters was so heart-breakingly difficult that it was often laid aside in despair.

Another great preliminary difficulty arose from the fact that the charters are in many cases either wrongly, imperfectly, or insufficiently identified in Kemble and Birch. There are ninety reputed charters of Hampshire. Of these thirty are correctly identified by Birch, who is as a rule much more correct than Kemble. Twenty-three are unidentified by him ; four are wrongly identified ; thirty-three are imperfectly identified. Of these ninety charters it has proved possible to define the boundaries of seventy-one, and to define partly those of eight others. There has been failure in eight cases, of which, however, there is reason to believe that six have been wrongly attributed to Hampshire. The remaining three are not Hampshire charters. The reputed charters of Berkshire are seventy-four in number. Of these the boundaries of sixty have been defined and those of six more have been partly defined. There has been complete failure in three cases, two of which, however, have in all probability been wrongly attributed to Berkshire. The remaining five charters, though attributed to Berkshire, do not belong to it.

The various kinds of historical and archaeological information to be obtained from the charters may be summarised as follows :—

(1) The old topography of the regions concerned. (It would be possible to draw up maps of parts of Hampshire and Berkshire which would contain more local sites and names of the Saxon period than there are modern names in the one-inch ordnance map of the same regions.)

(2) The meanings of place-names.

(3) The meanings of certain Saxon terms which have been a matter of doubt, or have been mistakenly interpreted in Anglo-Saxon lexicons.

(4) The methods of Anglo-Saxon surveyors.

(5) The nature of land-tenure and land-law in Saxon times.

(6) The life in England of the Saxon period.

(7) The archaeology and antiquities of the pre-Roman period.

(8) The archaeology and antiquities of the Roman period.

(9) The archaeology and antiquities of the Saxon period.

(10) The beginnings of the road-system of Britain.

The field-names which it has been necessary to collect present, moreover, problems of great interest. But this paper is confined to the last of these subjects—the road-system.

The charters of Hampshire and Berkshire consist of grants, or confirmations of grants, giving either to ecclesiastical corporations or to individuals certain rights of ownership over certain lands. It is, fortunately, not necessary for the present purpose to enter upon the thorny question as to what was the exact nature of those rights. The land granted is usually that of a single village-community; but some charters include the lands of several communities, some only part of the land of a single community. What may be called 'lease' charters, common in the Worcestershire group, are hardly represented in the Hampshire and Berkshire series.

To these documents are attached reputed dates. There is no question but that a large number of the extant copies are much later in origin than the reputed date; but it is probable that they are in most cases trustworthy copies of the originals, at any rate as far as the statements of boundaries are concerned. It is true that some have been copied carelessly, or by people who had little or no acquaintance with Anglo-Saxon. That has of course led to errors; but the errors are rather linguistic than topographical, and can in most cases be corrected without difficulty by any one acquainted with the technical peculiarities of the system and terminology of the Saxon surveyors. The Winchester group relating to Hampshire is in a much more defective state than the Abingdon group relating to Berkshire.

The last preliminary question is as to how the boundaries defined in these documents came into existence.

Very little is known of the earliest settlements of the Saxons, Angles, and Jutes in this country; but everything points to their having taken the form of small village-communities. The sites of the villages were determined by the situation of the best ploughland in the neighbourhood, for the Saxons were a race of agriculturists who dealt with arable rather than pastoral agriculture. The ploughland is the nucleus of the wealth of that original settlement which develops into the village-community. Then there is the mead, the only hay-land of the time, consisting of the nearest water-meadows. In the case of the mead, that of upland communities might be a long way from the nucleus of the village lands—might even be a plot altogether separated from them. This is the most usual origin of the detached parts of parishes, so common a feature even on the modern map. But round the nucleus of ploughland was what must have been originally an indefinite area of waste land, supplying pasturage and usually, but not always, timber. This was the 'leah.' While the communities were still small there would probably be no necessity for separating the waste near one village from that of a neighbouring community; but as population grew and the rights on the lea became more valuable, the question of encroachment would arise, so that it became necessary to lay down the limits of the lands enjoyed by individual communities; and it is these limits which are defined in the charters dealt with in this paper.

There is no evidence available so far which throws any light on the question whether these boundaries were already in existence before these surveys were made, or whether they were then laid down for the first time; but it is highly probable that in the majority of instances the boundaries already existed as at least customary limits, not perhaps recorded in any document. In some instances, in regions of late settlement, it may have been necessary to make an absolutely original definition and survey of the boundary.

It is on the ancient road-system of England that these documents throw most light.

In order to make the question of the English road-system quite clear it is necessary to mention certain

broad facts with regard to the construction of roads. In the first place the construction of any system of through-roads in any country involves a very large expenditure of public money, an expenditure so large that only the wealthiest states can afford it. It was infinitely more expensive before the days of Macadam. In modern times the cost has been much diminished by the cheaper and increased production of instruments used for road-making, and by improvements in the implements themselves. It has also to be borne in mind that the average wealth of civilised states of the present day is infinitely greater than that of the wealthiest states of ancient or mediaeval times. Yet the old difficulties can be illustrated in modern Europe. It is only of recent years that the states of the Balkan peninsula have begun to develop any system of through-roads, and it is only in Bulgaria that the system has made much progress. Moreover these roads have been made for military rather than for economic reasons. Greece has been obliged on the score of expense to procced very slowly. Again, till within a few years ago—and it may be the case now—the only semblance of a made road between Adrianople and Constantinople was composed of the surviving fragments of the old Roman road. The only made road in Greece of ancient times was the Sacred way, a narrow roadway, paved with blocks, covering the twelve miles from Athens to Eleusis. There was no road available for wheeled vehicles even across the isthmus of Corinth until the emperor Hadrian improved the Skironid way. Greece was far too poor to make roads, and what was true of Greece in ancient times was true of the states of Europe in the middle ages. Any one who has any doubts on the subject has only to read the accounts of coach journeys in England so late as the beginning of the eighteenth century. The packhorse supplied largely the means of inland traffic in such lands, and rivers like the Thames, even before they were canalised, were much used for the purpose.

It is of course to the Romans that the idea of the through-road system of western Europe is due; but it is significant that their highways are of military, not commercial, origin. It is also quite certain that even Rome with all its wealth could not have afforded to develop

its road-system to any great extent had it been necessary to undertake the construction as a special department of state expenditure. It was the Roman army which made the roads. In the time of the republic this was not a standing army, and therefore even in Italy the development of the road-system stopped under the republic at the irreducible military minimum; and outside Italy only two great military highways were made—a not very satisfactory one through southern Gaul connecting Italy with the west, and the great Egnatian way from Dyrrhachium through Thessalonika to the eastern empire. It was with the creation of the standing army of the period of the empire that the development of the road-system began to proceed apace. It was necessary to keep the legions employed in time of peace, and road-making was a good means of keeping them out of mischief. Thus the process of road-making became relatively cheap, for the army had in any case to be maintained and paid. It would have been strange if the Romans with their large experience had not improved and cheapened the construction of made roads. It is unnecessary in a paper of this kind to refute the popular superstition that all Roman roads were paved in the sense that a street is paved at the present day. In this country pavement must have been very rare, and mostly employed in cases of steep ascents where the traffic would be liable to damage an ordinary road-surface. In their usual method of road-making in this country the Romans seem to have only just missed anticipating Macadam. Sections which have been cut of various Roman roads in Britain show that the general type of structure was a surface of gravel or fine broken stone on a base of large stones, the latter being sometimes laid in careful and regular fashion, sometimes in a less methodical way. The continued presence of the fine material on the surface leads to the conclusion that these Roman highways were kept in repair to the end of the Roman occupation, and to the further conclusion that parts of them, at any rate, were not much used in Saxon times. In southern Britain they cannot in the last centuries of the Roman occupation have been much used for military purposes; and they can only have been maintained because they had become commercial highways. The lines of nearly all the main

Roman roads in this country are known. They are comparatively few; but it would be natural that the Romans or the Romano-British, in the course of the centuries of the Roman occupation, appreciating the advantages of the made road, should seek to apply the system, in part and in patches at any rate, to other existing non-Roman highways, and especially to the ridgeways. These Saxon charters show almost conclusively that this natural development of the idea of the made road did actually take place in this country.

From the time of the departure of the Romans to the middle of the eighteenth century no attempt was made, save in very exceptional circumstances, to construct through-roads, or even to maintain those which already existed. The Roman art of road-making seems to have been forgotten. Road-making or road-repairing degenerated into the mere casting down of rough stones on to a more or less unprepared surface. On this plan monasteries every now and then constructed local roads from their buildings to their lands. There is a record of one of the early Norman kings making a road through Alresford between the two capitals of London and Winchester; but it can never have been more than an old trackway improved by this rough process. The Canterbury pilgrims from the south and west resorted to the Pilgrims' way, one of the old pre-Roman ridgeways of southern England. To those ridgeways too the packhorse traffic resorted. At every ascent on the ridgeways of the downs of southern England may be seen the deep grooves which had gradually been cut in the surface by the pack-animals as they dug their feet into the ground in climbing the hill. The packhorse road from Penrith to Ambleside was till quite recent times the line of the old Roman High street, itself on the line of a pre-existing ridgeway which rises to a height of 2,500 feet between the two places. Pilgrims and packhorse-drivers did not climb these hills because they liked them, but because the road-system in this country had practically reverted to the conditions of pre-Roman times, when the ridgeway was the most convenient highway. Early in the eighteenth century wheeled traffic between Preston and Wigan followed, where it could, the metalling of

the old Roman road, and, where that gave out, took to the fields.

These general facts have been mentioned because they must be appreciated in order to understand the significance of the evidence of the Saxon charters.

It would be quite impossible to deal within the limits of a single article with the whole of the geography of the old road-system of Berkshire and Hampshire. It will be used merely to illustrate the beginnings of the English road-system, and especially of the through-road system of this country.

The Saxon vocabulary shows that the Saxons, like many more or less primitive races, were very fine in their distinctions between objects which came within their limited experience. Their distinctions were much finer in this respect than is customary in the language of the present day.[1] Darwin remarks on this characteristic in the vocabulary of the Indians on the islands off the coast of Chile. Also the Saxons did not employ synonymous terms. Hence the different terms applied by them to roads and tracks imply different characteristics.

The original generic term seems to have been 'weg,' way or track, which occurs many hundreds of times in the charters; but there are signs that its meaning was becoming specific, implying what we should call

[1] In the course of solving the topography of the charters I have been able, by identifying the denotation of the terms employed, to get some fairly accurate idea as to the finer distinctions between their various meanings. A few examples will illustrate how fine were the distinctions made by our primitive forefathers in topographical nomenclature. We speak of a 'brook' or a 'stream.' The Anglo-Saxon employs quite a number of words to distinguish between the various types of streams. 'Broc,' brook, is the most generic term. 'Lac,' still used in Hampshire in the form 'lake' to denominate a stream, means a stream of sluggish current. It is frequently employed of the backwaters of rivers. 'Rith' is a small brook, and 'rithig' a still smaller one. 'Baec' is used of those streams so common in the hollows of the chalk districts, which only run in peculiarly wet weather. 'Floda,' flood, is used of a stream of the same type, but of larger and more striking volume, and especially of those phenomenal springs which burst out of the chalk at intervals of several years. Three 'flodas' are mentioned in the Berkshire charters. They are all springs of this kind which are active at intervals at the present time. 'Ea,' literally 'water,' is used of a stream of the size of a river. 'Burn' or 'burna,' bourne, is used of a brook of noticeably large size.

Then, again, natural features so insignificant that we should hardly notice them and to which we should not give special names, are again and again mentioned in the charters, such, for example, as little hollows in hillsides and so forth.

Generally speaking, the vocabulary of Anglo-Saxon topographical terms tends to illustrate the tendency of the observation of a limited experience to be more minute than that of a larger one.

a by-track, side-road, or an occupation-road.[1] In only a few cases is it applied to great highways, and then nearly always with an attribute, such as the proper terms 'Ichenilde weg,' Icknield way, 'Lunden weg,' London way, or the common terms 'Hi-weg,' hay-way, 'Hrycg-weg,' ridgeway.

The terms applied to through-roads are :—

(1) 'Hrycgweg,' ridgeway, i.e. a road which follows the comb of a ridge. Perhaps its most essential characteristic is that it follows a watershed.

(2) 'Straet,' a made road. In the charters the name has already come to be applied to the streets of towns, e.g. those of Winchester and Romsey.

(3) 'Herepath,' literally army or military way. But it has the meaning of through-road, and may be applied to any kind of through-road, though it is generally applied to through-tracks of Saxon origin.

With regard to the use of these terms in the Hampshire and Berkshire documents the statistics are as follows :—

	Berks.	Hants.
'Hrycgweg' . . .	9	4
'Straet' . . .	10	29
'Herepath' . . .	12	34

[1] 'Maer-weg' or 'gemaer-weg,' boundary-way, is a very common landmark in the surveys. Experience of the charters has led me to the conclusion that 'maere' and 'gemaere' are used in a special sense, i.e. of a particular class of 'boundary.' A boundary is again and again described as passing 'along gemaere.' This cannot, of course, be the boundary defined, for otherwise the expression would be tautological, and the Saxon surveyors were by no means so unskilled as to employ definitions of such topographical futility. In this connexion 'maere' and 'gemaere' are used of the 'balks' or uncultivated strips which separate the 'furlongs,' as they came to be called in later times, i.e. each group of strips of ploughland. The use of the term 'maere' and 'gemaere' for such boundaries is after all quite natural, when one considers that in the original Saxon settlement in this country, the only definite boundaries would be those of the ploughlands. Inasmuch as these various strips in each group were in various ownerships, an occupation-road was necessary in order that each owner might be able to get at his strip without damaging the property of others; and, consequently, a 'weg' or track developed along the balk dividing one furlong from another. In some of the parishes of Berkshire these occupation-roads are still called 'meres.' It is remarkable that in the Hampshire field-names this term has not survived. In Hampshire these roads are usually called 'drove-ways.' The contrast suggests that in Hampshire cattle-breeding was a more prominent feature of agricultural economy than in west Berkshire. This too is suggested by the charters of the two counties in the following way. When 'maere' or 'gemaere' occurs as a landmark in a boundary it implies that the ploughland of the village community extended at that point to the limits of its land. In the Berkshire charters such a state of things is more frequently indicated than in those of Hampshire.

Speaking generally, these three forms of roads belong to three different periods in the history of our country. The 'hrycgweg' belongs to pre-Roman, the 'straet' to Roman, and the 'herepath,' save where the term is applied to a 'hrycgweg' or a 'straet,' to Saxon times.

The name 'ridgeway' still survives on our maps, but it is at the present day only applied to prominent examples of that type of road, e.g. the ridgeway which follows the comb of the downs in west Berkshire. The first thing which appears from the charters is that the name was much more freely used in Saxon than in modern times. This is easily explained by a consideration of the origin of this type of road. All sorts of guesses have been made as to what that was. As a fact, even the modern map is decisive on the point in question. Ridgeways are watershed ways, that is to say, ways which avoid as far as possible the passage of streams. They are admittedly the earliest form of through-road in this country. They avoid even the smallest streams. The difficulty would be not so much the passage of a small brook, but the traverse of the deep and perhaps waterlogged land in its neighbourhood. The comb of a ridge, on the other hand, afforded hard, firm going. Even such ways, however, could not always avoid the passage of the larger rivers, and these were traversed by fords. Two conditions enter into the practicability of fords, the depth of water and the nature of the bottom. Where two ridges approach a river on either side, it means that the river has originally cut its way through a ridge, i.e. through hard material. Therefore its bed will be harder, and its depth probably less than at other parts of its course where such conditions do not prevail. And so the line of a ridge, even where it abutted on a river, afforded the best line for a primaeval road. If one is struck by the comparative frequency of ridgeways in Saxon documents, one is much more liable to be struck by the number of modern roads which represent and are on the lines of these old ridgeways. The modern systems of roads in two counties of such markedly contrasted physical characteristics as Cornwall and Lincolnshire illustrate this. From Bodmin to Redruth the modern main road of Cornwall follows the main watershed of the county; and beyond Redruth the road from that

place to Marazion follows the same line of watershed. Moreover, more than half the important modern roads of the county which branch off north and south from this main line are watershed ways, that is to say ridgeways. In north Lincolnshire the ancient ridgeways are all but completely represented by modern roads. There is the great ridgeway running north from Lincoln to the Humber at Winteringham, with a branch ridgeway running to Alkborough. There is also the very remarkable ridgeway running north from Baumber through the Roman station at Caistor to South Ferriby on the Humber; and a similar road traverses the comb of the ridge which stands between this and Louth.

The same phenomenon is apparent in Kent, Sussex, Dorset, and, in fact, in all the counties of England where the ridges are not rocky and serrated. It is only in mountainous regions with rocky serrated ridges that ridgeways become rare.

Not all the 'hrycgwegs' mentioned in the charters are ridgeways of any length. Names were very local in those days; and a road which passed along the comb of a ridge for even a few miles of its course might be called 'hrycgweg' by the inhabitants of that particular district, But the majority of the roads called 'hrycgweg' in the charters belong to the long lines of communication of primaeval times.[1]

In the Berkshire charters the term 'hrycgweg' is applied:—

(1) Six times to the well-known ridgeway of the

[1] In the six-inch ordnance map occur, of course, many names not found on the one-inch map. If these sheets be examined, it will be noticed that the name ridgeway is not uncommon at the present time. In Hampshire I have come across three instances of its use:—

(1) Near Lymington, where the reference is to the south end of the great ridgeway which follows the east watershed of the river Avon, and still can be traced northward as far as Chute in Wilts. where it meets another ridgeway running east and west along the comb of the north downs, and also the Roman road from Winchester to Cirencester.

(2) On the north edge of Shirley by Southampton, where the reference is to a ridgeway which still exists to a large extent. It went, generally speaking, along the western watershed of the Itchen and curved round to cross the Test at Romsey, eventually joining the above-mentioned ridgeway.

(3) Ridgeway farm, north of Whitchurch and near the Roman road from Silchester to Old Sarum, is so called from a branch of the great ridgeway of the north downs. This branch leaves the main ridgeway near Kingsclere and runs south-west towards Whitchurch.

It is remarkable that some of the oldest town sites in England, such, for instance, as Winchester and Romsey in Hants, and many others elsewhere, are situated where ridgeways crossed rivers.

Berkshire downs. (The road is once called 'herepath.')[1]

(2) Once to the Faringdon-Wantage road at a point where, after leaving Faringdon, it passes for some few miles along the comb of a ridge.[2]

(3) Once to the unimportant, and probable always unimportant, road which passes along the comb of Boar's hill just south of Oxford.[3]

(4) Once to a short stretch of road in Peasemore parish, just south of the downs.[4]

In the Hampshire charters it is used :—

(1) Once of the very remarkable ridgeway which passes east and west across the county from the neighbourhood of Petersfield to Winchester and beyond.[5]

(2) Once to a branch of this ridgeway which runs north along the ridge of Westbury near West Meon.[5]

[1] Abingdon Cartulary, no. 49: B. 801, K. 1151, B. 431, K. 246, B. 796, K. 1148, B. 908, K. 1172. This ridgeway passes all along the comb of the ridge of the Berkshire downs and extends west, and later south along the downs of north Wilts. At its east end it descends to the Thames at Streatley. It almost certainly crossed the river there, and continued north-east up the comb of the Chiltern range, where it is still for the most part represented by modern roads, as far as Cambridgeshire. Perhaps its most noticeable part on the Berkshire downs is that where it crosses the valley along which the Newbury-Didcot railway runs. It adheres rigidly to the low watershed of this valley. The river Pang, or Pangbourne, first appears above ground under ordinary circumstances several miles down this valley near the village of Compton; but just south of the watershed of the valley is a great intermittent spring which bursts forth at periods averaging about seven years, and forms a temporary upper course of the stream. This is the 'Flod aet Swinweges Slo,' 'intermittent spring of the slough of the Swineway' of the Blewbury charter, B. 801, K. 1151.

[2] B. 683, K. 357. This ridgeway descends into the valley of the Ock, where it ceases altogether to have the character of a ridgeway. It was evidently a road to Wantage.

[3] K. 1283. This road went to join the road from Oxford to and beyond Boar's hill, a road variously called 'Portweg,' 'Town way,' 'Port straet,' 'Town straet,' and 'Hig-weg' (hay-way). See later.

[4] B. 892, K. 430. This was certainly only a short stretch of road along the comb of a short ridge.

[5] This road (see later) is called also 'herestraet,' 'straet,' and 'herepath.' It is one of the most remarkable of the ridgeways of England. It is a continuation westwards of a ridgeway which went all along the south downs of Sussex. It enters Hampshire south of Petersfield, and runs now as a green way over Butser hill and along the ridge in the south part of the large parish of East Meon. Near the south-west angle of that parish, not far from the hamlet of Coombe, it begins to branch along the combs of various branches of the main ridge. The first branch went due north along the ridge of the hill on which Westbury park, near West Meon, now stands. This branch is also called 'Hrycgweg' in one of the various Meon charters, B. 1319, K. 597. The south part of this branch ridgeway is still represented by modern roads; but in Westbury park the line of it, though probably traceable, is not nowadays represented by a road. At the north end of the ridge and of Westbury park it crossed the Meon river, which at this point is merely a small brook. Northward, beyond the river, it was continued by two lines of road in Saxon times, of which one was in all probability the track or road used in pre-Saxon days, now represented by a straight footpath which runs to Peake farm in the north-west part of East Meon parish, continued further north by another straight line of footpath which runs from

(3) Once (in a doubtful reference) to a road which was evidently an important ridgeway running through Long Sutton near Alton.[1]

the farm mentioned to a point about a furlong west of Privett church. From here it went for a short distance along a line not now marked by a road to join. somewhere close to Privett station, another ancient road coming from West Meon. The use of the word 'straet' (see pp. 94-100), together with the straightness of the line of field-paths above mentioned, suggests that the part of the road north of the Meon river had been romanised in Romano-British times. Later, as it would seem, a variant course was taken by the continuation of the road to the north of Meon river, for the piece of road somewhat west of the field-path, running up the west boundary of West Meon, is called a 'herepath,' through-road, in the charter B. 1200, K. 535.

The main ridgeway after throwing off this branch goes south of the head of a great combe formerly called 'Seoles-cumb,' Selscombe, towards the camp on Old Winchester hill. Before arriving at the camp it throws off a branch along a ridge running due west towards the Meon river at Meonstoke. This branch is not mentioned in the charters.

The main ridgeway then proceeds towards the camp, but does not actually traverse it, for it is bending north at this point. But in former days when it came opposite to the camp it threw off a branch which actually went through the camp, crossed the Meon river at a ford called Shawford in the tithe-award, and 'Sceald-ford,' shallow ford, in the charter B. 758, K. 1131, and then climbed the great ridge which runs to Winchester. In this part of its course this branch of the ridgeway is spoken of as a herepath in B. 758, K. 1131.

After passing near the camp at Old Winchester hill, called the 'Eorthburh,' earthen-camp, in the charter B. 755, K. 1131, the main ridgeway once more divided at a point about two-thirds of a mile north of the camp, one part of it, the main track, going down to the ford over the Meon river at Warnford. Thence it followed the comb of the great ridge to Winchester. At the present day the road from Warnford to Winchester, after it reaches the top of the ridge, is evidently for the most part on the line of this old ridgeway. In a Kilmeston charter, B. 1077, K. 1231, it is called 'herepath,' through-road. This ridgeway crossed the Itchen at Winchester and continued along the ridge to the west of the town. The first few miles of the Roman road from Winchester to Old Sarum was made upon it. The Roman road and the ridgeway part some miles from Winchester, and from this point the ridgeway is represented by a modern road. Thence its course must have taken it along the ridge and later over the Test to join the great ridgeway which went from Lymington to Chute in Wiltshire (see note 1, p. 89).

Going back to the place where the ridgeway branches two-thirds of a mile NNE. of the camp on Old Winchester hill, a branch leads due north which must have crossed the Meon river at West Meon. The angle between this branch and the main ridgeway which has just been described is bisected by the boundary of West Meon parish; and the charter B. 689, K. 1107, describes this boundary as passing 'between the two ways.' After crossing the Meon river at West Meon this road went along what is now the line of the modern Fareham-Alton road to Privett station. In the south portion of this part of its course it is called 'herepath,' through-road, in the charter B. 377, K. 1031, and in the north portion is called 'straet,' made road, in the charters B. 377, K. 1031 and B. 1319, K. 597, indicating that it had been 'romanised' in this section of it.

[1] This road begins on the east as a ridgeway. The name 'ridgeway' occurs on it in the modern six-inch map of Surrey, just outside the Hampshire border about one mile WSW. of Farnham. When in its passage west it reaches a point near the hamlet of Well in the parish of Long Sutton, it divides into two branches. As a true ridgeway the one branch goes first along the watershed between the basins of the Wey and the Loddon; then along this between the Loddon and the Itchen; then along this between the Itchen and the Test. For the greater part of this distance it is represented by modern roads. In this part of its course it has gradually bent round from west to north. As far as modern roads are concerned, the traces of this ridgeway give out just before it reaches the Roman road from Silchester to Winchester in the neighbourhood of Dummer, near Basingstoke. But there is no reason to doubt that it continued north, over the low watershed between the sources

(4) Once to the great ridgeway which ran east and west along the down south of Kingsclere, and penetrated deep into Wiltshire.[1]

A caveat must be entered with regard to the Berkshire ridgeway. In all save the most recently issued sheets of the ordnance map this road is called the Icknield way, and it is assumed that it is a Roman road. The Berkshire charters, and for that matter the tithe-awards, show that the name Ichenilde was never applied to it in Saxon times nor the name Icknield in the local nomenclature of the middle of the nineteenth century. In the charters 'Ichenilde weg' or 'Ichenilde straet' is applied to the Streatley-Wantage-Ashbury road, now called the Portway, which runs along the north slope of the downs at a short distance below, and parallel to, the ridgeway. There is not any evidence that the ridgeway was Roman, or that it

of the Loddon and the Test, near Oakley, a few miles west of Basingstoke, and went to join the ridgeway along the crest of the downs which run south of Kingsclere. (For this ridgeway see the next note.)

The road which branches off from the ridgeway is described in note 3, p. 102.

[1] B. 674, K. 1102. This ridgeway is, as has been said, a continuation of that described in the previous note. At its eastern end it must have come up from the Loddon-Test watershed at Oakley near Basingstoke, probably along the line of the modern road through Wootton St. Lawrence to Upper Wootton. Hence it went along the present road from Upper Wootton through Ibworth to Hannington, and beyond that by the track which leads to the summit of White hill to the south of Kingsclere. From here to Ladle hill, two miles west, the old ridgeway is merely represented by a sheep-track along the comb of the down. On Ladle hill it passed close to the camp which is called in B. 674, K. 1102, and in B. 787, K. 1145, 'Meresbyrig' (the camp of the pond). Between Ladle hill and the next hill to the west is a deep valley. The watershed of this valley is not in a line between these two hills, but at Seven Barrows, about one mile south. The ridgeway bent south at Meresburh along the ridge of Ladle hill and crossed the valley at Seven Barrows. It is represented in this part by a modern road or track. At Seven Barrows the ridgeway forked. One branch went NNW. up Beacon hill, and passed just west of the camp which is called 'the burh aet West Cleran' in B. 674, K. 1102. West Clere is the modern Burghclere, the modern name being evidently due to the existence of this camp. At this part of its course the ridgeway is called the 'Wic herepath' (highway of the outlying farm) in B. 787, K. 1145, and B. 1051, K. 1225. This branch then went over Sidown hill to the Three-Legged cross on the present Newbury-Andover road, where there stood formerly a tumulus called 'Hildan hlaew' (Hilda's low) in B. 905, K. 1170, in B. 1051, K. 1225, in B. 1080, K. 1235, and in B. 624, K. 1091. In B. 282, K. 190 the tumulus is called 'Hythwald hlaew.'

The alternative branch, starting from Seven Barrows, after going west for half a mile, turns NNW. up the long southern ridge of Sidown hill along a modern line of road. In this part it is called 'via publica' in B. 282, K. 180, and 'straet' in B. 1080, K. 1235, the latter term implying that it had been romanised in this part. It joins the former branch at Hilda's low, i.e. at Three-Legged cross.

From this point the ridgeway continues along the high down past Walbury camp to and beyond Inkpen beacon, where it bends south-west with the ridge and strikes the line of the Roman road from Winchester to Cirencester near Tidcombe. and also the line of the great ridgeway which runs from Lymington to Savernake (see note 1, p. 89).

had been romanised in any form. There is conclusive evidence that the Portway had been romanised.

The Portway has been referred to as parallel to the ridgeway. This leads to the consideration of another type of primaeval road which may be called the Summer way, a variant of the ridgeway. The relation of the Portway to the ridgeway in Berkshire is reproduced in the case of other remarkable ridgeways in the country. The ridgeway which runs up the Chilterns to the north of the Thames is accompanied by a parallel road running along the lower slope of the range. This lower road is also called the Icknield way in the modern map, and there is warrant for this name in an Oxfordshire charter from the neighbourhood of Princes Risborough. Considerable doubt has been expressed as to its claims to be a Roman road. Probably it is not a Roman road in the sense that the Watling Street is, but is a romanised road in the sense that the Portway of Berkshire will be shown to be, and especially parts of it have been straightened.

Again in Lincolnshire there is the striking ridgeway which runs due north from Lincoln to the Humber. Parallel to it, on the lower slope of the ridge, runs the Roman road. It is probable that this road follows the general line of a road which bore the same relation to the Lincolnshire ridgeway that the Portway does to the ridgeway of Berkshire.

It has been necessary to anticipate matters by calling these roads summer roads. The probability is that in summer, when the upper parts of the streams ran dry, traffic did not climb to the ridge-top, but took a line of easier gradient along the lower part of the ridge-slope. These roads which are parallel to the ridgeways should therefore be attributed to the pre-Roman period.[1]

It is remarkable that the lines of what we call ridgeways are dotted by what we call camps. The formidable

[1] As a fact nearly all the great ridgeways which traverse ridges of any considerably height had their correspondent 'summer roads.' The ridgeway above Kingsclere (see note 1, p. 92) had as its summer way the Wolverton-Kingsclere-Sydmonton-Burghclere road. Its continuation over Inkpen beacon has a corresponding road through East Woodhay, West Woodhay, Inkpen and Shalbourne. The road through Long Sutton (see note 3, p. 102) was probably the summer way of the ridgeway (see note 1, p. 91) to the south of it. Wherever a ridgeway traverses a high ridge you will almost always find near the foot of the ridge an ancient road pursuing a roughly parallel line.

character of the enceintes of these camps, and the discoveries made in them by excavation, show that they were not camps but permanent centres of population—the 'cities' of a pre-Roman period. These sites were determined by the ridgeways, i.e. they were taken up with a view to blocking what were probably at the time the only through-roads of the country. It is not, of course, the case that all these camps belong to that period. The Saxon charters themselves would correct any such mistaken impression. The charters use 'burh,' with its oblique case 'byrig,' to denote such camps; but the Saxons themselves were builders of 'burhs' in the early days of their settlement, and probably too in the times of the wars with the Danes. Some of the 'burhs' mentioned in the charters are almost certainly of Saxon origin. But the camps on the ridgeways were in almost all cases pre-Saxon, and probably pre-Roman in origin. Some archaeologists have supposed that the ridgeway is a form of road which was brought into existence by the fact that the chief centres of population were on the hills. It is fairly certain that the opposite was the case; in other words that the sites of the pre-Roman towns were determined by the fact that the only available through-tracks and trade-routes lay along the watersheds. Hence the ancient town sites on the ridges and on such points of the courses of rivers as were approached by ridgeways from either side. In the pre-Roman period the roads determined the sites of the centres of population; in the Roman and Saxon periods the sites of the centres of population began to determine the lines of the main roads.

Finally of the ridgeways it may be said that the Saxon charters do not give any evidence as to whether the Saxons did or did not recognise them as roads belonging to an age anterior and to a people different to their own. After all, their own new trackways had come into existence several centuries before these charters were drawn up; and the distinction between them and the pre-existing ways, other than those of Roman construction, would have vanished from the memory of man.

The exact significance of the word 'straet' in Saxon documents has been much disputed. That it means a made way of some kind is beyond doubt; but the making

must have been of some kind such as would attract the notice of a people who were not roadmakers. Also, inasmuch as they almost invariably applied the name to Roman roads, there is a certain presumption that the making was of a Roman type.

It will be well to take a list of the recognised and conjectured Roman roads in Berkshire and Hampshire, and to cite the references to them in the charters.

BERKSHIRE.

Recognised Roman roads :—

(1) From the station at Speen near Newbury to Cirencester : called 'herepath' once.[1]

(2) The Silchester-London road : 'straet' once ? 'Loddere straet,' beggars' street, once ?[2] In a tithe-award it is called by the remarkable name of 'the Welsh road.'

Conjectured Roman roads :—

(1) The Portway from Streatley by Wantage to Ashbury : called 'Ichenilde weg,' Icknield way, five times ; 'Ichenilde straet,' once.[3] In tithe-awards it is called Ickleton way.

Roman roads believed to have existed in former times :—

(1) From Dorchester by Streatley to Silchester : called 'straet' twice. A 'straetford' on the Thames near Dorchester is also mentioned.[4]

(2) Silchester to Speen : called 'herepath' twice.[5]

Roads called 'straet' in the charters, but not hitherto supposed to be Roman :—

(1) From Oxford over Boar's hill in the direction of Wantage, the old highway from Oxford to Wantage :[6] called 'Portstraet' once; also called 'Portweg,' town-way, once ; and 'Hiweg,' hay-way, twice.

[1] B. 1227, K. 1265.

[2] B. 895, K. 431. The identification is almost, but not quite, certain.

[3] Ichenilde weg : B. 601, K. 1080, in Compton Beauchamp parish : B. 801, K. 1151, in Aston Tirrold parish ; B. 1183, K. 1273, in Harwell parish ; B. 908, K. 1172, in Compton Beauchamp parish (twice). Ichenilde straet : B. 687, K. 1129, in Uffington parish.

[4] B. 864, K. 1161 (twice) ; Straetford : B. 810, K. 1154.

[5] B. 802, K. 1152 and B. 675, K. 1103.

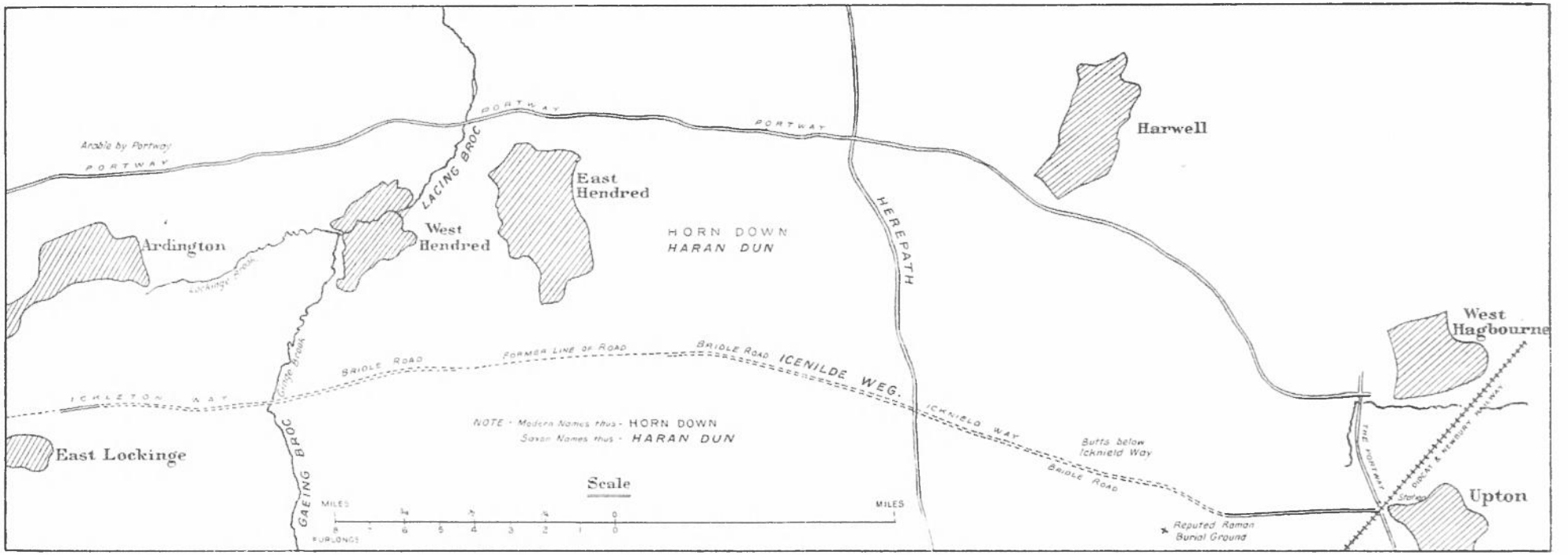
[6] Portstraet : B. 906, K. 1171 ; Portweg : K. 1283 ; Hiweg or Higweg : B. 906, K. 1171 and B. 1002.

(2) The old Oxford-Faringdon road, a ridgeway: called 'straet' twice, and 'herepath' once.
(3) A road, now partially disused, called in Farnborough parish Old Street lane: called 'straet' once; also called 'Staniht-weg,' stony way, twice, and 'herepath' twice. It seems to have run to the Roman station at Speen.

It may be convenient to discuss these Berkshire roads before taking those of Hampshire.

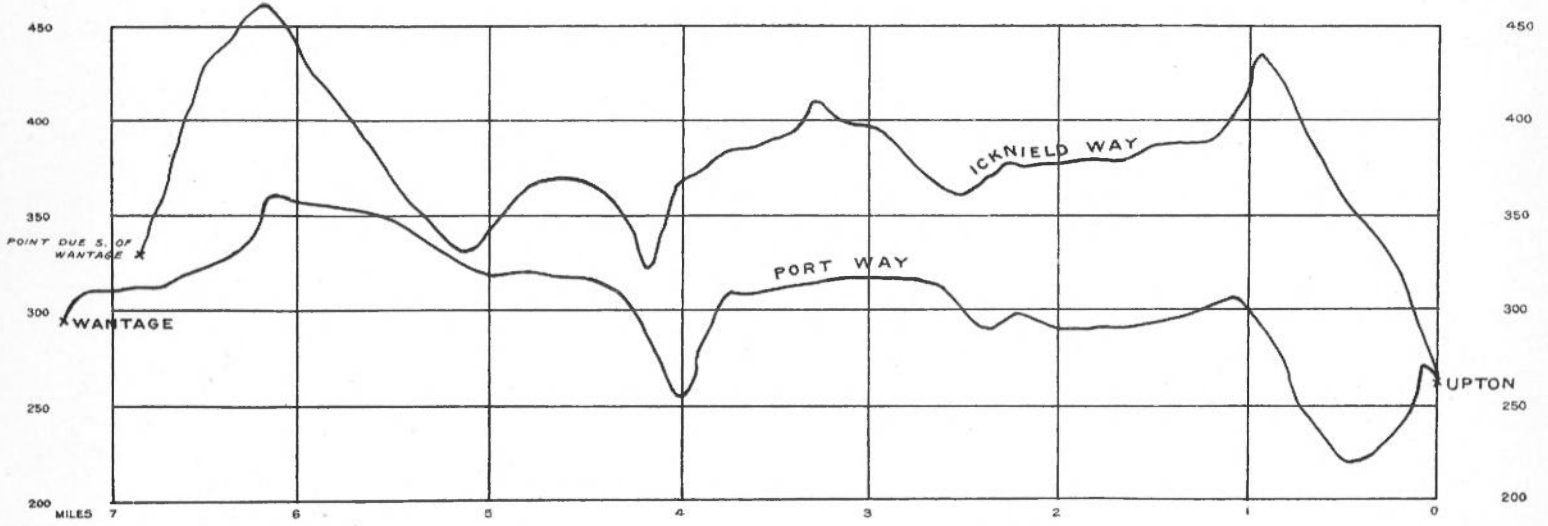
In the first place it is necessary to state an important thesis, namely, that besides the recognised Roman roads in this country, there existed in the Roman period native tracks, forming through lines of communication, which had been metalled in places, probably in peculiarly bad places, in the Romano-British age. These may be called romanised roads. The general evidence of the charters points to this, in that the term 'straet,' when applied to a road other than a recognised or conjectured Roman road, is almost invariably used in reference to a ridgeway or its parallel summer-way. That is the general evidence. The particular evidence with regard to the Portway of Berkshire is more explicit, in fact it is so explicit that it may, perhaps, be regarded as a crucial instance in support of the thesis.

On looking at the course of this road from Streatley by Wantage to Ashbury it will be seen that it runs along the lower part of the northern slope of the downs. It never descends to the flat ground of the Vale of White Horse, but follows to a certain extent the contours of the projecting ridges. This is most marked in the part of it west of Wantage. It is consequently very irregular in line, contrasting strongly in this respect with the proverbial straightness of the Roman road, yet this road was called in Saxon times by the name Ichenilde, and in one instance Ichenilde straet, a name of a type which in Saxon nomenclature is associated with Roman roads and with Roman roads only. Furthermore it was of the type which has been called summer-way, i.e. pre-Roman in origin. But interest attaches especially to a particular stretch of it. When in its course it reaches Upton, it bends north, and from there to Wantage it describes the arc of a circle. To make the matter quite clear it may be well to take it in the order of the experience of the present writer. The



THE PORTWAY AND ICKNIELD WAY BETWEEN UPTON AND WANTAGE.

PLATE II.



CONTOUR PLAN OF THE PORTWAY AND ICKNIELD WAY.

To face page 97.

Ashbury group of charters was first examined. In them it was evident that 'Ichenilde straet' or 'weg' was identical with the present line of road. The lands of this Ashbury group lie west of the arc. A Blewbury charter was next examined, in which also 'Ichenilde weg' referred to the present line of road. This charter dealt with lands east of the arc. On proceeding to examine a Harwell charter, the natural expectation was that the landmark 'Ichenilde weg' would refer to the Portway as it appears on the map. But everything in this charter pointed to the 'Ichenilde weg being what is now a mere cart-road which branches off from the Portway near Upton, which in Harwell parish is nearly a mile south of the Portway. A few months later an examination of the tithe-award of Harwell showed that the cart-road was there called Icknield way. Later still in the tithe-awards of Lockinge and Ardington the name Ickleton way was applied to a small piece of road in a straight line with the road in Harwell, and also in a straight line between Upton and Wantage. The two pieces of road were, moreover, connected by a right-of-way.

There cannot be much doubt as to what had happened. This old piece of road between Upton and Wantage, which is the chord of the arc which the Portway makes between those places, is a piece which had been made, and straightened too, after the Roman fashion with a view to shortening the more circuitous route by the arc. The map will show exactly what is meant.

Here then is a road which, though not originally Roman, has been romanised; and the traces of its romanisation are plain to see.

Three of the Roman roads of Hampshire and Berkshire are partly on the lines of old ridgeways. The road from Winchester to Old Sarum follows a ridgeway for the first few miles of its course from Winchester. The very remarkable bend in the road from Winchester to Cirencester which occurs at the head of the Hurstbourne valley follows the line of a ridgeway. This is the one marked instance in this country in which the Roman engineers made a great divergence from the straight line in order to avoid peculiarly steep gradients. The Roman road from Speen to Cirencester follows a ridgeway for many miles of its course from Speen.

It is now necessary to say a word or two about the road, twice called 'straet,' which may be a part of the missing road from Dorchester to Silchester.[1] The 'straetford' mentioned in connexion with it was a ford over the Thames at the point where the Brightwell-Sotwell boundary abuts on the river, just one mile south-east of Dorchester. From here a perfectly straight piece of road, now in part no more than a cart-track, runs to the top of the ridge, about 1¼ miles away, on which Brightwell barrow stands. At the top of the ridge it turns through a slight angle (an almost invariable peculiarity of Roman roads in passing over a ridge which forms a horizon for a large stretch of country), and then goes in a straight line for another 1¼ miles almost due south through Brightwell village to the hamlet of Mackney. Hence it continues in the same straight line, but as a mere cart-track, through the marshy land south of Mackney, coming to an end about half a mile south of the hamlet. It is then pointing direct on Streatley. There is much reason to suspect that this is the missing road. It has been conjectured that from Dorchester it went along the north bank of the river, and crossed it at Streatley. To do this it would have had to make a great detour round the river bend at Wallingford. It is more probable that its Roman makers, finding a convenient ford at the 'straetford' close to Dorchester, almost on the direct line to Streatley, chose, as was their wont, the direct route.

Until it reaches Buckland, a little more than twelve miles from Oxford, the modern road from Oxford to Faringdon is not on the line of the old highway between the two places. The old road went up Cumnor hill somewhat east of the line of the present road. It then crossed that line, and went through the villages of Cumnor, Eaton, Appleton, Longworth, and Hinton Waldrist. Its course throughout is marked for the most part by modern roads, but the line has in places degenerated into field-paths. This old road was a ridgeway, following strictly the watershed between the Thames and the Ock. It is called 'straet' both in the Besselsleigh and the Appleton charters; and its extension beyond Faringdon towards Swindon

[1] See note, 4, p. 95.

is once called 'herepath.' The modern road, where it does not coincide with the ancient, is not a ridgeway, but cuts the headwaters of the brooks flowing into the Ock. The evidence of the charters seems to mean that in Appleton and Besselsleigh this pre-Roman ridgeway had been 'made,' i.e. romanised. In its passage northwards it must have crossed the Thames close to, or at the site of, the modern Oxford. And this leads to the suggestion that, whatever view may be taken about the existence of some centre of population on the site of Oxford in Romano-British times, it is highly improbable that the ford or fords there which were so important in Saxon times were unknown and unused in Roman days.

But there is another road called 'straet' which also came up from the south to the fords at Oxford. The evidence about this road is not quite so clear, and there is a topographical gap in it. The matter may be stated first in general terms. There is reason to believe from the evidence of the charters that there was a track which led from the fords at Oxford across the Ock and the downs to the Roman station at Speen near Newbury. The northern part of this track corresponded with the line of the road from Oxford over and beyond Boar's hill, which was, till quite recent times, the highway from Oxford to Wantage. This road is called 'Portstraet' in a charter referring to the part of it just south of the summit of Boar's hill. This part of it is also called 'Portweg' (town-way); and the part of it north of the hill is twice called 'Hi-weg' (hay-way), the latter being a purely local name due to its having been the road by which the people of Wootton carried their hay from their mead on the Thames more than two miles from the village. Going southwards this road is pointing to the ford over the Ock at Garford, the lowest ford on that river above the large marsh which was on its lower course. Its line is pointing towards Wantage. Whatever may have been the case in Saxon times, it is probable that in Roman times it did not go to Wantage, but, after passing the ford, bent round in an easterly direction, and that, after a gap of what is now about four miles, its course is taken up by a road which can be traced in the charters from Hendred to Speen.

In Ginge this latter road is called 'herepath.'[1] It went south over the downs to a place called in the charter 'Wegagemyth' (meeting-place of roads),[2] now called Land's-end. Thence it went south to Speen, being called in various parts of its course 'Staniht weg,' stony way, (twice),[3] 'straet,'[4] and 'herepath.'[5] Only parts of it are now in use; but the whole line of it is clearly marked on the modern map. In the Farnborough tithe-award it is called Old Street lane. The use of the term 'straet,' together with the fact that it leads directly to the Roman station at Speen, suggests strongly that it was a pre-Roman track which had been made in parts in Roman times. The part of it called 'straet' is almost dead straight for more than two miles, but is now little more than a cart-track.

THE HAMPSHIRE ROADS.

The statistics of the Hampshire roads are as follows:—

Recognised Roman roads:—

(1) Roman road from Winchester to Silchester: called 'straet' five times, and never by any other name.[6]

(2) Roman road from Silchester to Old Sarum: called 'straet' seven times, and 'eald straet' (old street) twice: not called by any other name.[7] A 'mil-gemet' (milestone), probably the fourth from Silchester, is mentioned in this road.[8]

(3) Roman road from Winchester to Cirencester: called 'straet' three times, and 'herepath' once.[9]

(4) Roman road from Winchester to Old Sarum: not mentioned in the charters. As a fact only one boundary in the extant charters, and that in the peculiar charter of Chilcomb, abuts on it.

[1] B. 981, K. 1194.
[2] B. 633, K. 343.
[3] B. 633, K. 343 and B. 892, K. 430.
[4] B. 866, K. 1164.
[5] B. 900, K. 1169.
[6] B. 625, K. 1094; B. 596, K. 332; B. 1076, K. 1230; B. 468, K. 1054; B. 389, K. 1033.
[7] B. 625, K. 1094. A 'straetleah' by this road is also mentioned in the same charter: B. 763, K. 1136; B. 974, K. 1187; B. 674, K. 1102 (twice); B. 624, K. 1091 (twice); B. 597.
[8] K. 673.
[9] B. 1076, K. 1230; B. 473, K. 1055. B. 629, K. 1096 (herepath) B. 620.

(5) Roman road from Winchester to Bitterne, near Southampton: called 'straet' once.[1] The 'ad Lapidem of Bede'[2] refers probably to a milestone on this road, and may survive in the Saxon Stanham, the North Stoneham of the present day.

(6) Roman road from Bitterne by Porchester to Chichester: called 'straet' once.[3]

(7) Roman road from Dorchester (Dorset) to Old Sarum: called 'Suenestrete,' where the first part of the name is probably the personal name Sewenna. The road forms part of the western boundary of the county.[4]

Conjectured Roman roads:—

(1) Winchester to Porchester direct: not mentioned.[5]

(2) Bitterne to Old Sarum: called 'straet' twice.[6]

Roads called 'straet,' but not known as Roman:—

(1) A long straight piece of field-path from near West Meon running for several miles to a point close to Privett. This field-path is a continuation of a ridgeway over the comb of the ridge of Westbury: called 'straet' once.[7]

(2) A short stretch of the Fareham-Alton road in Privett: called 'straet' once. This is possibly a continuation of the last-mentioned road. A little further south a short stretch of this Fareham-Alton road is called 'herepath.'[8]

(3) A branch of the last road north of the village of Privett: called 'straet' once.

(4) The great ridgeway to the south of East Meon:

[1] B. 692.

[2] Bede, *Historia Ecclesiastica*, iv, 16.

[3] B. 707, K. 1111.

[4] B. 817.

[5] I doubt very much whether there was a Roman road along this line. It is marked in the six-inch ordnance map, which moreover indicates that there are traces of the 'agger' of the road in the neighbourhood of the village of Upham. I examined this part of the supposed road. I could not find any traces of an agger, nor even any line of old road-metal on the surface of the ground.

[6] There seems to be no doubt that a Roman road did go along the line of this piece of road. It branched off from the Roman road from Winchester to Bitterne at or close to Swaythling. It crossed the Test a little north of Redbridge. Whither it went from that point is uncertain. Codrington (*Roman Roads of Britain*, p. 296) thinks that it went south to cross the Solent to the Isle of Wight. I am inclined to think that it went to Old Sarum. But there is no real evidence as to its course after passing the Test.

[7] Described in note 5, p. 90.

[8] Described in note 5, p. 90.

called 'straet' once: 'herestraet' once: and 'herepath' three times.[1]

(5) The ridgeway along the downs by Kingsclere, and running westwards into Wiltshire: called 'straet' once: 'hrycgweg' once; 'herepath' twice; and 'via publica' once in a Latin document.[2]

(6) A ridgeway and, later, a summer-way running along the hill-ridge north of Alton: called 'straet' three times.[3]

It is very noticeable that in speaking of the recognised Roman roads the charters always, save on one occasion where the term 'herepath' is used, employ the term 'straet': and that exception is in the exceptional Chilcomb charter.

The roads not recognised as Roman which are called 'straet' are in a sense the most important, as involving a question with regard to the Roman road-system as yet unsolved.

[1] Described in note 5, p. 90.

[2] Described in note 1, p. 92.

[3] This is one of the most interesting old trackways in the country. It has already been pointed out that the ridgeway which runs along the comb of the ridge of Alton, crosses the watershed between the Loddon and the Test near Oakley, west of Basingstoke, and runs up to join the great ridgeway of the Kingsclere downs. In fact these two ridgeways are really one. There can be little doubt that this present road is the 'summer road' corresponding to that line of ridgeway. It runs north of the line of the ridgeway so long as that is on the hills north of Alton; but it crosses the line on the Oakley watershed, and henceforth runs south of the Kingsclere part of the ridgeway. Its *raison-d'etre* is obvious: it affords a much more direct line of communication than the corresponding ridgeway; and the few streams which it meets with in its course would present no difficulty in the dry season of summer. It is represented throughout by modern roads.

The course of the road is as follows. It branches off from the ridgeway about half a mile south-east of Well in Long Sutton parish. It then runs through Long Sutton village, and in this part of its course it is called 'straet' in the Long Sutton charter (K. 622). From this point it runs to Four Lanes End, north of Upton Grey, and is called "straet' in the Hoddington (Upton Grey) charter. Hence it runs due west to Polecat corner, and then still due west, leaving Basingstoke about 1½ miles to the north. It crosses the Roman road about ¾ mile south of Worting, and then runs through the south part of Wootton St. Lawrence parish, where it is called in the tithe-award 'the Packhorse way.' It crosses the London and South-Western railway line just north of the junction of the Winchester and Salisbury lines, goes by Oakley station, and from thi point onward west is known by the name of the Harroway, a name which I suspect to be a rationalised form of 'horoweg,' muddy way. Under this name it continues along the lower part of the slope on the north side of the upper Test, leaving Whitchurch about 1¼ miles to the south. It crosses the Hurstbourne stream at Chapmansford. then proceeding wsw. it leaves Andover about 1 mile to the south, and is traceable with certainty to Harroway near Weyhill. Beyond that point its course can only be conjectured; but it is very probable that it followed that of the present highroad from Weyhill to Amesbury.

The first three are probably parts of the same road, which is a continuation of the ridgeway over Westbury hill. The other three are ridgeways or summer-ways. Thus we may say that in the Hampshire documents the term 'straet' is used either of Roman roads or of pre-Roman ways.

A summary of the arguments and conclusions with regard to the word 'straet' suggests the following considerations. It is again and again used of the Roman roads of Hampshire; as a fact it is so used twenty-two times. In only one case is another term, 'herepath' used, and that is used of a road which is three times called 'straet.'

'Straet,' then, connoted in the Saxon mind some quality characteristic of Roman roads, and this quality must have been the metalling. Hence it comes to be used of the paved streets of Romsey and Winchester.

Turning to its use in the case of roads other than the recognised Roman roads, it is noticeable that in Hampshire it is only applied to ridgeways or summer-ways or the immediate continuations of a ridgeway. Perhaps it might be suggested that 'straet' only connoted the idea of a way existent before Saxon times. If so, why were not ridgeways always called 'straet'? Why, for instance, should the great ridgeway of Berkshire never be called by this name? Why should streets in towns get the name? It has already become evident that 'straet' is only applied to *parts* of those roads which are not recognised as Roman; and the reasonable conclusion is that only in parts of them had any process of metalling been applied in Roman times.

Three instances of local straightening have been mentioned, that of the Portway in Berkshire, that of Old Street lane in Farnborough, Berks, and that of the field-path near West Meon, Hants.

Finally it seems necessary to recognise the romanised as well as the Roman road of Britain.

Of the Saxon road-system or track-system a few words must be said. That the Saxons used the pre-existing highways when they were convenient for their purpose goes without saying; but, as has been already remarked, there were many parts of the Roman roads which must have fallen into disuse, or the finer road-metalling would

not be found on their surface at the present day. The fact was that the Saxon had to develop a new system of through-tracks, because the nature of his life was different from that of those who had preceded him as inhabitants of Britain. Agriculture there had, of course, been before his time; but how far it was pastoral and how far arable cannot be said. This, however, is certain that the area of arable agriculture in this country increased enormously with the coming of the Saxons. There are statistics of the area of ploughlands at the time of Domesday. In spite of enormous increase of population, in spite of enclosure acts, the area of land under the plough at that date was much greater than at the present day.

In Somerset the area in 1086 was 577,000 acres, whereas it is now 178,967 acres. In Gloucestershire the area in 1086 was 589,000 acres, whereas it is now 238,456 acres. These are, indeed, extreme instances; but other records point the same way. In 1285 almost exactly nine-tenths of the area of Hawstead in Suffolk was under the plough.

In the Saxon charters such words as 'gemaere' or 'mearc' (a balk) or 'maer-weg' or 'mearc-weg' (ways running along balks) show where the ploughland had reached the boundary. The terms 'hlinc' (lynch), 'ierth-land' (ploughland), 'heafod' (headland), and 'aecer' (a strip of ploughland), when used in defining the boundaries in those charters, indicate the same thing. The ploughland must have become very extensive for it to reach the limits of a parish. Yet about half of the charters of Hampshire and more than half those of Berkshire show that the ploughland had reached some part or parts of the boundaries of the lands with which they deal.

This increase in the area under the plough, and the necessity of living in close proximity to the ploughlands, tended to concentrate population in the low lands, and brought into being new tracks connecting these low-lying communities with one another, tracks which developed in many cases into new through routes. The arbitrary line of the Roman road and the elevated line of the ridge-way did not suit the purposes of the new population. The new tracks had to run regardless of ridges, and consequently could not avoid streams; hence, no doubt, bridge-making and bridge-repair was one of the three items of the

'trinoda necessitas' laid upon the owners of lands. Apart from the new through-roads or 'herepaths' local ways of at least two types developed. There were the 'wegs' which linked some village to some main route near it, such as the Beden weg (the way to Beedon), or the 'tun-weg' (the village way). Then there were the occupation-roads to the ploughlands which developed along the 'mearc' or 'gemaere,' i.e. the broad balks which separated from one another the larger lots of ploughland, the furlongs, as they came to be called in later times. These occupation-roads were still called 'meres' at the time, in the middle of the nineteenth century, when the tithe awards of some of the Berkshire parishes were drawn up. The name does not occur in Hampshire tithe-awards.

It is possible to tell with high probability the origin of a road by noticing the nature of its course on a modern map. A road which runs for a considerable distance in a straight line can have but one of two origins: either it is an ancient Roman road, or it is a very modern road, made at the time of the Road acts of the late eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries. A road which avoids streams and keeps to a watershed is an old ridgeway, and there are hundreds of such ridgeways surviving in the country. A road of very irregular line which does not avoid the streams must have originated in a Saxon 'herepath,' or, it may be, in a local 'weg.' A road which shows a tendency to turn at right angles has developed out of an old Saxon occupation road or 'maer-weg' which followed originally the balks of the furlongs.

Of the particular question of the lines of ancient roadway in Berkshire and Hampshire there is much that might be said, but the purpose of this paper is to deal with the *general* question of the origin of roads in this country.

The course of the roads mentioned should be followed by the reader upon the ordnance maps of the districts, scale one inch to the mile.