

ANCIENT HIGHWAYS OF DEVON

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GENERAL NOTE

The counties the ancient highways of which have been already dealt with in previous papers¹ are all of them regions of which a considerable number of charters of Saxon times survive. The surviving charters of Devon and Cornwall are very few in number and give hardly any reference to ways or tracks in the lands of the village communities to which they refer.

LOCAL TRACKS

In point of fact the absence of such information does not detract greatly from the evidence on ancient highways in the two counties of Devon and Cornwall. The information as to the nature of the tracks in the lands of the village community of the Saxon period is repeated again and again in the surveys attached to hundreds of extant charters, and, did the modern world possess charters for every parish in England, the information to be obtained from them would be merely a continual repetition of the information contained in the charters which are extant. Local tracks are sometimes called *weg's*; 'ways', sometimes, when they link up with a local track of a neighbouring parish or parishes, are called *herepath's*, 'highways'. The *weg's* cited refer for the most part to tracks along the balks between the groups of strips of ploughland, tracks called very frequently in the charters by the specific names *maereweg* or *mearcweg*, 'boundary way'. To recognize them in a modern parish it is not necessary to go back to a Saxon charter. A modern local road which bends at right angles is an old boundary way, and the modern inquirer into the antiquity of the highways existent in this or that parish can safely assume that the modern roads which take such lines are survivals of tracks of the Saxon age.

¹ Worcester, Gloucester, Somerset, Oxon, Wilts., Dorset, Hants, and Berks.

On the other hand, when there appears on the map of a modern parish a road, lane, or footpath which takes a winding or zigzag course across its lands it originates in a track which developed on the uncultivated land of the parish.

A special kind of *weg* is the *higweg* mentioned not infrequently in the charters, a track leading from the 'mead' or hayland of the community to the village centre.

The only case in which the absence of extant charters leaves a gap in the information with regard to ancient highways is in reference to the word *straet* applied to other than Roman roads, showing that the road to which reference is made had been in some part or parts of it metalled and perhaps straightened in Romano-British times. Had Saxon charters existed in which that term was applied to roads in Devon and Cornwall they would have thrown considerable light on the question whether those parts of the province of Britain had been Romanized to the same extent as the other parts of the province, or whether the old life of the pre-Roman period continued in this south-west part of Britain comparatively free from Roman influence. There is no real evidence of any Roman road having existed in the south part of the county further west than Exeter. In the north the occurrence of the name Stratton, near Bude in N. Cornwall was at one time supposed to indicate that a Roman road passed that way. But it is now believed that that place name is an abbreviated and in a sense a corrupted form of the old name of the place. In the will of Alfred¹ there is a reference to a *Straetneat on Triconscire* which is identified with this Stratton; and the element Strat- is derivable, not from the Saxon *straet*, but from the old Cornish *stret*, 'stream'.

The only other evidence which can have any bearing on the question comes in the first instance from a perambulation of the Forest of Exmoor which mentions a stone called the *Langstone* at Spire Cross² to the W. of the village of Exton. This is said to have an inscription on it, a fact which would suggest a Roman milestone. But information as to the nature of the inscription does not appear to be obtainable;

¹ B. 553. K. 214.

² See road 115.

and as evidence the report of the inscription is too vague for any conclusion to be drawn from it.¹

On the whole the verdict on the evidence of the existence of a Roman road through N. Devon must be not proven and, perhaps, not probable.

Reference has been already made in the remarks introductory to the road system of other counties to the frequent existence of short ridgeways in parishes. If the parochial roads be described on the basis of their *raison d'être* then these ridgeways do not form a special class in the classification. Any one of the types of road mentioned above would make use of a local watershed if it happened to run in the right direction.

Herepath, 'highway', in its generic sense meant a road which formed a more or less through line of communication. It is applied now and then in the Saxon charters to ridgeways and Roman roads. In a more specific sense it is applied to roads formed by the linking up of parochial roads thus forming a line of communication through at least more than one parish. But they were unmade tracks all the same, and mostly impossible or very difficult to traverse in the wet season of the year.

As far as the ancient purely local tracks are concerned, all knowledge of which at the present day is based on the evidence of the charters, absence of evidence from Devon and Cornwall is, then, not important because the evidence on the subject from the charters of other counties makes it quite certain that the parochial road system was the same everywhere throughout England as far as the types of road are concerned.

Apart from the lack of charter evidence the whole question of the main lines of communication westwards through Devon and Cornwall, but especially through Devon, is a matter of some uncertainty. That there was a continuation of the great Somerset ridgeways, Roads 83 and 110, is certain. In the extreme W. of Somerset the line follows the N. watershed of the basin of the Exe, a watershed which runs comparatively

¹ The evidence of the existence of an inscription was furnished me by a friend who is not likely to make statements not founded on fact.

But he did not know what the nature of the inscription was, and I have not been able to obtain any information on the matter from other sources.

close to the N. coast of the county. But from the county boundary between Devon and Somerset the watershed makes an abrupt turn S. between the watershed of the Exe basin and that of the Taw and Torridge, for the Taw rises in the N. part of Dartmoor. After that comes the watershed between the Taw-Torridge basin and that of the Tamar, and as the latter, though flowing into the English Channel, rises within a few miles of the shores of the Bristol Channel, the watershed again bends back on itself and runs N. for many miles. If the great ridgeway to the west followed the main watershed of Devon it must have taken a very circuitous route indeed. This route will be taken later (Road 1) as one continuous line of communication, and the question whether it could have been the through ridgeway will be discussed.

It has been already said that the question whether a Roman road ran through the N. part of the county towards the west is a matter of dispute. Furthermore the line of the great Foss Way after it enters the county is difficult to determine. It is curious that the line of this great road which is so clearly marked from Lincoln to Ilchester and for some miles beyond should thereafter become obscure.

It is unfortunate that these difficulties arise with regard to two routes which were the most important lines of communication in the county. Furthermore, if a Roman road existed through the N. part of the county, it must have been of great importance for communication with Cornwall.

In Devon more than in any county the ancient road system of which has been dealt with hitherto, the old ridgeways have been adopted for the lines of modern roads. In Cornwall the phenomenon is still more noticeable. There it is due to the fact that the valleys are very steep sided, and a rainy climate increases the difficulty of negotiating the waterlogged ground near streams and rivers.

Dartmoor and the Road System

The question of the part played by Dartmoor in relation to the ancient highways of Devon is difficult because it is impossible to say whether the present

fragmentary roads and tracks on that great stretch of moorland represent all the lines of communication which were ever used by those who had to traverse the region or parts of it. No conclusion can be drawn from the case of Exmoor where long stretches of ridgeway occur at the present day and some vanished lines of communication are still traceable by the lines of tumuli and other remnants of antiquity. Exmoor is a land where the rises and falls of surface are very seldom steep and outcrops of rocks on the watersheds such as would impede the would-be passenger along them hardly exist. In the case of Dartmoor conditions which contrast with these are frequent. Hence at the present day not a single ridgeway of any length survives as a track on the moor, and those which do survive do not afford the modern inquirer any justification for assuming that they are the fragmentary survivals of former ridgeways of importance as main lines of communication in South Devon. There is not at the present day the slightest sign that the main watershed of the moorland which runs, roughly speaking, from ESE. to WSW., over what is more or less the middle of it, was ever a line of highway.

Yet, unless the numerous hut circles and numerous tumuli marked on the Ordnance map are largely evolved from antiquarian imagination, there must at some age have been a relatively large population on the moorlands. Their habitat suggests, however, that they were refugees from the domination of some race which had subdued the lowlying regions of the county; and that, so far from encouraging, would discourage passage through the region. If so, through tracks would not be formed.

There is also the question as to the part played by bogs as obstacles to passage. They are not like marshes confined to the valley bottoms. Their existence is not like that of marshes conspicuous to the eye. To the wayfarer they are traps of a very dangerous and often of a deadly character. They are certainly deterrent to the traveller who would pass through regions in which they exist. The presence of bogs in the region of the Cornish Tors N. of Liskeard and W. of the Lynher River has undoubtedly prevented

the formation of tracks across what would otherwise have been a region easy to traverse.

The only argument in favour of any hypothesis that there existed a through track from E. to W. over Dartmoor is the fact that the watershed of the county to the N. of the moor is of such a very tortuous nature. But that consideration is far too weak to overcome that to be derived from the absence of any traces of such a track. It does not therefore seem possible to assume that such a track has existed in any age, historic or prehistoric.

Abbreviations

In the descriptions of the courses of the old highways the following abbreviations are used:

- mr., modern road.
- t., track.
- fp., footpath.
- By., boundary.
- Co. By., County Boundary.

ROAD I

The Ridgeway along the Main Watershed

Before discussing the question whether this great track was ever used throughout as a continuous line of communication in ancient days it will be well to describe its very intricate course so that the reader may be able to form for himself some idea of its nature.

It is a continuation of Road 110 of the Somerset series¹ and it happens that this Devonshire part of it almost doubles back on its course in Somerset at the point where the latter reaches the Co. By. on Exmoor close to Wood Barrow (OM1) $1\frac{3}{4}$ m. NE. of Challacombe village, which is about 6 m. SSW. of Lynmouth.²

It runs from the barrow along the Co. By., mr., for 8 m. to Sandiway Cross (OM1), a long $1\frac{1}{2}$ m. N. of Twitchen village which is about 5 m. NE. of South Molton. A line of modern road runs all along this part of it. The fact that it was chosen as part of the Co. By. shows that it was an important and probably well-used track at the time that the By. was laid down.

¹ *Arch. Journ.*, xciv, 257.

² The earlier part of its line coincides with that of road of the

Somerset series because it happens to form the Co. By.

At Sandiway Cross it enters Devon. From the Cross S. by E., mr., for 4 fur. (8 m. 4 fur.). Then E., mr., for 4 fur. (9 m.) to where Twitchen Barrow (OMI) stands just N. of the road. Then ESE., mr., for 4 fur. (9 m. 4 fur.) to crossroads at White Post (OMI). Then S. by W., mr., for 7 fur. (10 m. 3 fur.) to crossroads on Round Hill (OMI). Then E. by S., mr., for 3 m. (13 m. 3 fur.) to where West Anstey Barrow (OMI) stands near the road. Then E. by S., mr., for 1 m. 2 fur. (14 m. 5 fur.) to where Anstey Barrow (OMI) stands near the road. Then E., mr. for 6 fur. (15 m. 3 fur.) to Five Crossways (OMI). Then in a general direction S. by W., winding mr., for 2 m. 6 fur. (18 m. 1 fur.) to crossways about $\frac{1}{2}$ m. S. of Oldways End (OMI), having left East Anstey village about $\frac{1}{4}$ m. to the W. Then SW., mr., for 1 m. 4 fur. (19 m. 5 fur.) to crossroads just NNW. of Wiston (OMI). Then first SSE. and later S., mr., for 2 m. 1 fur. (20 m. 6 fur.) to where a tumulus (OMI) close to the road. (More than $1\frac{1}{2}$ m. of this section is a parish By.). Then S., mr., for 5 fur. (21 m. 3 fur.) to crossroads at Two Gates, 1 m. ENE. of Rackenford village. Then E., mr., for 7 fur. (22 m. 2 fur.). Then in a general direction S., mr., for 7 fur. (23 m. 1 fur.) to crossroads near Gibbet Moor Farm (OMI). Then S. by W., and later S., mr., for 3 m. (26 m. 1 fur.) to crossroads at Mudford Gate (OMI). Then S., along same mr., for 3 fur. (26 m. 4 fur.) to crossroads. Then W. by S., mr., for 1 m. 5 fur. (28 m. 1 fur.) to crossroads 1 m. N. of Puddington village. Then S., mr., for 1 m. (29 m. 1 fur.) to Puddington village. Then WSW., mr., for 2 m. 2 fur. (31 m. 3 fur.) to where Berry Castle, a camp, stands a short distance S. of the road. Then WSW., same mr., for 1 m. 1 fur. (32 m. 4 fur.) to crossroads at Beech Hill (OMI). Then S., mr., for 1 m. 3 fur. (33 m. 4 fur.) to crossroads about 1 m. SE. of Morchard Bishop village.

Here the modern road goes on S.; but the old ridgeway turned to get round the head of a stream.

Then ESE., by a lane, and later t., for 7 fur. (34 m. 3 fur.) to a point $\frac{1}{4}$ m. N. of Rolstone Barton (OMI). Then S., no t., for 2 fur. (34 m. 5 fur.) to Rolstone Barton (OMI). Then S. by W., winding lane, for 1 m. (35 m. 5 fur.) to meet the main road

near Frostland (OMI). Then S. by E., mr., for 4 fur. (36 m. 1 fur.) to Newbuildings (OMI). Then WSW., mr., for 1 m. 6 fur. (37 m. 7 fur.) to Copplesstone (OMI). Then W., mr., for 1 m. 4 fur. (39 m. 3 fur.) to a point $\frac{1}{4}$ m. N. of Clannaborough hamlet (OMI). Then S., mr., for 4 fur. (39 m. 7 fur.) to crossroads $\frac{1}{4}$ m. N. of Appledore (OMI). Then W., mr., for 4 fur. (40 m. 3 fur.) to crossroads $\frac{1}{4}$ m. E. of Collaton (OMI). Then S. by W. for 1 m. 3 fur. (41 m. 6 fur.) along winding lane, running by Wolson Barton (OMI) and then crossing the railway to a point $\frac{1}{4}$ m. S. of it. For $\frac{3}{4}$ m. this section forms a parish By. Then W. by S., lane, over Hill Down (OMI) for 6 fur. (42 m. 4 fur.) to meet the main road coming down S. from Bow village. Then S., mr., for 6 fur. (43 m. 2 fur.) to crossroads 3 fur. SSW. of Spestos (OMI). Then W., mr., for 6 fur. (44 m.) to crossroads 3 fur. N. of Week (OMI). Then generally S. by W., winding mr., via Spreyton village for 3 m. 5 fur. (47 m. 5 fur.) to crossroads at Brandis Cross (OMI). Then W., mr., for 1 m. (48 m. 5 fur.) to crossroads at an ancient cross (OMI). Then S. along a wavy line for 7 fur. (49 m. 4 fur.). This section is a parish By. for $\frac{1}{4}$ m. Then W., mr., for 6 fur. (50 m. 2 fur.). Then generally SW. along a wavy lane for 4 fur. (50 m. 6 fur.) to West Week (OMI) where there is an ancient cross.¹ Then S. by E., mr., for 6 fur. (51 m. 2 fur.) to Clannaborough (OMI), near Throwleigh. Then SW., t., for 7 fur. (52 m. 1 fur.) up the slope to Dartmoor.

The main watershed now runs deep into Dartmoor. For many miles it is not marked by any track of any kind, and it is quite impossible to assume that the ridgeway passed along this part of the watershed, in fact the probable assumption is that it did not.²

¹ An ancient cross is a very trustworthy sign of an ancient road. Such crosses were usually put up at crossroads.

² I add in this note a description of the line of the watershed in case any local archæologist cares to examine it to see whether there are any old tracks along it which are not marked in OMI.

From the point last mentioned SSW. for 7 fur. to the top of Kennon

Hill (OMI). Then WSW. for 7 fur. to the top of Hound Tor (OMI). Then SSW. for 2 m. to Hanging Hill (OMI). Then W. for 3 m. 3 fur. to Amicombe Hill (OMI). Then NNW. for 2 m. 3 fur. to Corn Hill (OMI). From this point a modern road or track begins to mark the line of the watershed; but this is more probably a remnant of a ridgeway running N. from Plymouth (see road 45). Thus the line of watershed devoid of any track is $9\frac{1}{2}$ miles long.

The line of watershed may be said to issue from Dartmoor at Meldon near the junction between the railway to Bude and the main line (OM1). If Road 1 did really pass through Dartmoor then the further course of it in Devon is as follows. (It will be well to take a new series of mileage.)

From Meldon, $2\frac{1}{2}$ m. S.W. of Okehampton it went NW., mr., running close to the railway for 6 m. 4 fur. (6 m. 4 fur.) to some barrows called Three Barrows (OM1). Then NW., mr., for 4 fur. (7 m.) to where a barrow called Hender Barrow (OM1) stands by the road. Then NNW., mr., for 1 m. 6 fur. (8 m. 6 fur.) to Halwill junction (OM1). Then N., mr., for 1 m. (9 m. 6 fur.) to where the road crosses the Torrington railway. The W., no t., but the line preserved for the greater part of the way by a parish By., for 2 m. 2 fur. (12 m.) to meet the modern road on the W. edge of Moccombe Wood (OM1). Then N., mr., for 1 m. 3 fur. (13 m. 3 fur.) to crossroads at Dunsland Cross (OM1). Then W., mr., for 2 m. (15 m. 3 fur.) to Anvil Corner (OM1). Then N. by W., mr., for 2 m. 5 fur. (18 m.) to Holsworthy Beacon (OM1). Then WNW., winding mr., for 2 m. 1 fur. (20 m. 1 fur.) to crossroads at Youldonmoor Cross (OM1). Then NNW. and later W., mr., for 6 m. 5 fur. (26 m. 6 fur.) to a point on the Hartland-Bude road, close to the hamlet of Woolley (OM1).

The ridgeway has now entered the extreme NE. angle of the county of Cornwall. Its further course will be given in the notes on Road 1 of that county.

Assuming that it was a continuous line of road through the county its total length within the county, including the trackless line on, and the piece of track on, Dartmoor belonging probably to the Plymouth ridgeway was 90 m. 4 fur.

It has been already seen that it is a question whether the main Devon watershed ever formed a continuous line of communication through the county. Watersheds are naturally devious; but there is no stretch of main watershed in England that is so devious as this one. Outside the Dartmoor area it is almost throughout traversed by modern roads. Of the 52 m. 1 fur. of the line before it reaches Dartmoor

51 m. 7 fur. are marked by modern roads or tracks. Of the 26 m. 6 fur. after Dartmoor 24 m. 4 fur. are marked by modern roads.

In passing through the county by this route the wayfarer would, as has been seen, traverse over 90 miles. Yet the point where it enters the county and the point where it leaves it are only 32 miles apart.

It is perfectly true that in the days before made roads the use of ridgeways was forced on wayfarers who had to travel in any other than the dry season for anything more than a very short distance; and even in the dry season departure from the ridgeway was only possible in certain cases. Any attempt to make a big cut off or a detour was certain to be faced by serious difficulties in the shape of what would now be regarded as inconceivably bad tracks or in the shape of deep and often untraversable ground in the neighbourhood of streams. Modern field drainage has greatly modified this difficulty, and modern made roads are not beset with quagmires. It is almost impossible at the present day to realize how bad those quagmires near the rivers and streams could be; still land very much resembling them may be found near rivers at the present day, e.g. the Itchen and the Test.

As to the unmade tracks of the time, the parochial tracks of the village communities, those only can realize what they were who have had experience of the tracks on the lowlands of south-east Europe in wet weather.¹

But, considerable as the detours are in the main ridgeways of other counties, there is no approximate parallel to the detour which would be involved in the use of this ridgeway as a through route. It is probable that the through route used in the passage through was Road 2. But before leaving Road 1 it must be noted that the road makers of modern times adhered to nearly 80 out of the 90 odd miles of its length, i.e. to nearly the whole of it outside Dartmoor.

¹ I can myself remember a not unimportant road near a house in which I lived in Cheshire which, owing to dispute as to the responsi-

bility for its repair, fell into such a state that it became unusable for wheeled vehicles.

ROAD 2

Possibly the main through Ridgeway of the County

This enters the county at the point where Road 1 begins, i.e. where the great Somerset ridgeway (Road 110)¹ enters Devon at Wood Barrow, which is about $4\frac{1}{2}$ m. S. of Lynmouth. The first few miles of its course do not survive in the form of any modern track, but the watershed as it runs W. is covered by a remarkable series of tumuli which would not be likely to be there if they were not originally near the line of a prehistoric highway.

Followed the watershed, no t., first WNW. and then WSW., and then W. for 4 m. 2 fur. (4 m. 2 fur.) to crossroads on a very narrow watershed $1\frac{1}{2}$ m. SW. of Parracombe village. On this section are tumuli etc. on or close to the old line at the following intervals measured from Wood Barrow: at 3 fur., Longstone Barrow (OM1); at 6 fur., the Long Stone (OM1); at 1 m. 4 fur., Chapman Barrow (OM1), a name showing the use of the line by traders; at 2 m. 2 fur. tumuli (OM1); at 3 m. 1 fur. Holwell Barrow (OM1) and tumuli (OM1) about $\frac{1}{4}$ m. S. of the line.

Then WNW., mr., for 1 m. 3 fur. (5 m. 5 fur.) to Silkenworthy Knapp $\frac{3}{4}$ m. NE. of Kentisbury village. Then W., mr., for 1 m. 7 fur. (7 m. 4 fur.) to where tumuli (OM1) just S. of the road. Then W., mr., for 1 m. 5 fur. (9 m. 1 fur.) to crossroads at Berry Down (OM1) 1 m. 5 fur. S. by W. of Combe Martin village. Then S., mr., for 1 m. 7 fur. (11 m.) to a point where a tumulus (OM1) near the road. Then SE., mr., for 5 fur. (11 m. 5 fur.) to Bowden Corner (OM1). Then S. by E., mr., for 5 fur. (12 m. 2 fur.) to a road meeting just S. of Ashelford (OM1). Then S. by E., mr., for 1 m. 5 fur. (13 m. 7 fur.) to a road meeting just S. of The Warren (OM1). The latter part of this section seems to have been a dry weather track of the ridgeway. The usual line may have passed down the comb of the ridge to the E. of the modern road.

Then S., mr., for 6 fur. (14 m. 5 fur.) to road meeting at Shirewell Cross (OM1). Then SW., winding mr., to a road meeting just N. of Brightlycott (OM1).

¹ *Arch. Journ.*, xcvi, 283.

From here the southern of the two roads which run from near Brightlycott to the Barnstaple-Ilfracombe road was probably the dry weather track of the line of ridgeway. The real ridgeway ran along the comb of the ridge just N. through a camp on the hill to the Ilfracombe road. Distance 1 m. (15 m. 5 fur.). Then SSW. along the Ilfracombe road for 1 m. 1 fur. (16 m. 6 fur.) into Barnstaple.

At Barnstaple the ridgeway crossed the Taw, and that was certainly a cause, and possibly the original cause, of the growth of Barnstaple to a size greater than that of the neighbouring village communities.

After crossing the Taw the ridgeway on its way to the W. had to cross the Torridge. Torrington is the lowest point on the Torridge which is crossed by a ridgeway, and from Barnstaple to Torrington a ridge-way leads. The curious course of the Torridge, which doubles back on itself, is such that its uppermost feeder rises within $\frac{1}{2}$ m. of the north coast at Clovelly.

From Barnstaple, then, the old way proceeded SW., mr., for 3 m. 1 fur. (19 m. 7 fur.) to certain crossroads about $1\frac{1}{2}$ m. S. of Fremington village. Then S., winding mr., turning E. at the last moment, via Loveacott Green (OM1) for 3 m. 3 fur. (23 m. 2 fur.) to the village of Alverdiscott. Then S. by E., slightly curving mr., for 2 m. 1 fur. (25 m. 3 fur.) to Hunshaw Cross (OM1). Then WSW., mr., for 2 m. 3 fur. (27 m. 6 fur.) to Torrington (OM1) (a tumulus (OM1) about $\frac{1}{4}$ m. W. of the road at this point) where the ridgeway crossed the Torridge.

After crossing the Torridge runs S., mr., for 3 m. (30 m. 6 fur.) to crossroads about 1 m. NE. of Peters Marland village. Then W., winding mr., for 3 m. 7 fur. (34 m. 5 fur.) via Rivaton (OM1) to crossroads at Stibb Cross (OM1). Then WNW., winding mr., for 4 m. 1 fur. (39 m.) to crossroads ENE. of Narracott (OM1). Then N. by E., mr., for 1 m. 5 fur. (40 m. 5 fur.) to crossroads close to Cranford (OM1). Then N., mr., for 6 fur. (43 m. 1 fur.) to Bucks Cross (OM1) on the Bideford-Hartland road. Then W., mr., for 2 m. 4 fur. (45 m. 5 fur.) to crossroads at Clovelly Dyke (OM1). Then first SSW. and later W., mr., for a total of 2 m. (47 m. 5 fur.). Then SSW., mr., for 4 fur. (48 m. 1 fur.) to Higher Welsford (OM1). Then

SW., no t.¹ for 4 fur. (48 m. 5 fur.) to Welsford Moor (OM1). Then S. along the main Bideford-Bude road for 2 m. 4 fur. (51 m. 1 fur.) till it meets near Wolley (OM1) the end of road 1 just inside the Cornwall By.

It will be seen that the passage of this road through the county is 40 miles less than the route taken by Road 1, always supposing that that was a through road.

If Road 1 is to be rejected, as perhaps it must be, as a possible through road in continuation of the great E. and W. ridgeway of the S. of England, then this Road 2 is the only possible alternative. In its course between Barnstaple and the Cornish By. it follows a line which is circuitous in both a major and a minor sense; yet, for the greater part of its length, it is represented by modern roads.

The passage of two rivers at Barnstaple and Torrington respectively is not to be taken as an argument against its use as a through road. It is part of the great ridgeway through South England which crosses the Stour at Blandford in Dorset, the Avon at Salisbury, the Wey at Guildford, and the Mole at Dorking. In all these cases ridges approach the rivers at either side. This eliminates deep miry ground alongside the rivers, and, as the rivers have in these places cut through the hard core of a ridge, makes the river bottom firm for a ford, and probably the depth of the river less than at other places. Other ridgeways pass rivers at Winchester and at Lewes.

On the whole it looks as if this Road 2 ought to be definitely accepted as the Devon section of the great road to the West.

ROAD 3

Branch Ridgeway to Bideford

Leaves Road 2 close to Bucks Cross (OM1) about 3 m. ESE. of Clovelly. Runs ENE. for $7\frac{1}{4}$ m. following throughout the Hartland-Bideford road to Bideford.

¹ The modern road at this point departed from the old line of ridgeway in order to cut off a corner on the line of road from Bideford to

Bude. Otherwise the modern road adheres very closely to the ridgeway except just before it reaches Bude.

ROAD 4

(*See Map*) 8 m. 2 fur.

Tumuli to the W. of the line.

ROAD 5

Branch of Road 4 (see Map)

ROAD 6

The Ilfracombe Ridgeway (see Map)

The survival of its line as a modern road is remarkable because for 7 m. it runs side by side with, and close to, the modern Ilfracombe-Barnstaple road. It is also remarkable that, though it gets within 2 m. of Barnstaple, there is no branch ridgeway connecting it with that place.

ROAD 7

The Morthoe Ridgeway (see Map)

ROAD 8

Link Ridgeway (see Map)

ROAD 9

Branch Ridgeway (see Map)

ROAD 10

Trentishoe Ridgeway (see Map)

Holdstone Barrows $\frac{1}{4}$ m. W. of the line.

ROAD 11

Branch Ridgeway (see Map)

ROAD 12

Branch Ridgeway

This old way is of some importance because it afforded communication between an old camp and the great ridgeway road 2 at a point about $\frac{3}{4}$ m. ENE. of

Westland where that road is not represented by a modern track. It ran N. by W. along a fp. for 6 fur. to the mr. from Lynmouth to Barnstaple, which it crossed, leaving on the way a tumulus just W. of the fp. Then NNW., mr., for 1 m. 6 fur. (2 m. 4 fur.) to a point just W. of the camp called Voley Castle (OM1). The old road went probably through the camp, not round it as the modern road does. Then N. by E., mr., for 7 fur. (3 m. 3 fur.) where it gives out.

ROAD 13

The North Coast Ridgeway

This road extends into Somerset, and is Road 106 of that series. In Devon, starting from Lynmouth, it runs E., mr., for 4 m. 2 fur. to the Co. By. at County Gate (OM1). Measured from Lynmouth there is an earthworks upon it at 1 m., a tumulus close to it at 3 m. 1 fur., tumulus at 4 m., and furthermore at 3 m. 5 fur. a short branch ridgeway runs NNE. from it to Old Barrow (OM1), which is a camp.

ROAD 14

The Martinhoe Ridgeway (see Map)

N.B.—Two tumuli on or near its course.

ROAD 15

The Loxhore Ridgeway (see Map)

N.B.—Leads to the camp called Castle Roborough (OM1), S. of Loxhore.

ROAD 16

Branch Ridgeway (see Map)

Might perhaps be taken as a southern continuation of Road 12.

N.B.—Group of tumuli, a single tumulus, and a camp on or close to the line.

The numerous remains of antiquity near the road suggest that, though it was not a through road, it was of some importance in early times.

ROAD 17

The High Bray Ridgeway

Leaves Road 1 at Mole's Chamber (OM1). Ran WSW., mr., for 1 m. 5 fur. (1 m. 5 fur.) to Five Crossways (OM1), where tumuli on the road. It is probable that the old line of the ridgeway passed through Shoulsbarrow Castle (OM1), a camp, and that the modern road in that part is on the dry weather line of it. Then S., mr., for 2 m. 2 fur. (3 m. 7 fur.) to High Bray village.

ROAD 18

The Whitefield Ridgeway (see Map)

N.B.—Two tumuli on it.

ROAD 19

(See Map)

ROAD 20

(See Map)

N.B.—Tumulus on it.

ROAD 21

The Molland Ridgeway (see Map)

ROAD 22

(See Map)

ROAD 23

The Chulmleigh Ridgeway

Leaves Road 1 just N. of Wiston (OM1) which is 1 m. 3 fur. E. of Knowstone village. Runs SW., mr., for 1 m. 2 fur. (1 m. 2 fur.) to Knowstone Inner Moor (OM1) where is a tumulus on the line. Then W. by S., mr., for 1 m. (2 m. 2 fur.) to Beaples Moor (OM1). (Here Road 23A branches off, a ridgeway running W. along mr., via Rose Ash (OM1) and Hilltown (OM1) to Mariansleigh village and just beyond. Length 5 m. 6 fur.) Then SW. for 1 m. (3 m. 2 fur.) to a point on Great Ash Moor (OM1) where a tumulus $\frac{1}{4}$ m. SE. of the road. Then SE., mr., for

6 fur. (4 m.) to where a road to Meshaw branches off W. (This road is a short ridgeway.)¹

Then SW., mr., for 1 m. 3 fur. (5 m. 3 fur.) to cross-roads on Meshaw Moor (OMI), near Gidley Arms Inn (OMI). Two groups of tumuli S. of the crossroads. Here road 23C runs off (see Map). Then first WNW. and later W., mr., for 3 m. 7 fur. (9 m. 2 fur.), Little Mesham Moor (OMI) and Medsbury Moor (OMI) to Garland Cross (OMI). (Here Road 23D branches off. See Map.) Then S. by W., mr., for 3 m. 2 fur. (12 m. 4 fur.) to Chulmleigh.

ROAD 24

Oakford Branch Ridgeway (see Map)

ROAD 25

Washfield Branch Ridgeway (see Map)

N.B.—Tumuli just S. of the road.

ROAD 26

Local Ridgeway (see Map)

ROAD 27

The Uplozman Branch Ridgeway (see Map)

RIDGEWAYS OF SOUTH-EAST DEVON

ROAD 28

Ridgeway to the South Coast. The Sidmouth Ridgeway

This is perhaps the most important ridgeway of SE. Devon. It connects the great ridgeway of Southern England with the coast at Sidmouth. It left the great Ridgeway (Road 83) of Somerset² at North Down (OMI), 1½ m. N. by W. of Otterford village. Ran S. by E. and then S. by W., mr., for 3 m. 6 fur. (3 m. 6 fur.) to Stopgate (OMI) 1 m. NNW. of Yarcombe village. Then SSW., mr., for 2 m. 2 fur.

¹ In the space between this branch and roads 23 and 23A. are five ridgeways each at most a few furlongs long. This is not taken as an exceptional phenomenon, but as a good example of a common

phenomenon illustrating the fact that in early times men were naturally and necessarily led to follow watersheds even in very short traverses from place to place.

² *Arch. Journ.*, xcvi, 262.

(6 m.) to a point 7 fur. ESE. of Upottery village, where a branch, Road 30, runs off due S. Then S. by W., mr., for 5 m. 5 fur. (11 m. 5 fur.) to crossroads $1\frac{1}{4}$ m. SE. of Honiton where a branch ridgeway runs off SE. Then in a S. direction, mr., for 2 m. 5 fur. (14 m. 2 fur.) to a road meeting 1 m. SSW. of the village of Farway where a branch ridgeway goes off NW. Two groups of tumuli just W. of the road near this point. Then S., mr., for 5 fur. (14 m. 7 fur.) to Roncombe Gate (OMr) where tumuli just E. of the road. Then S., mr., for 5 fur. (15 m. 4 fur.) over Broad Down (OMr) where tumuli just E. of the road. Then S., mr., for 1 m. 5 fur. (17 m. 1 fur.) to crossroads 3 fur. S. of Kings Down Farm (OMr). Then SW., mr., for 3 m. 3 fur. (20 m. 4 fur.) to Sidmouth.

As a modern highway this road is remarkable for its lonely course. For the first eighteen miles of it there is no village or hamlet and scarcely a house on it. Whether in ancient times it had any economic significance as a line of communication between the great ridgeway and the coast it is impossible to say. Its preservation as a highway throughout suggests that in medieval times it may have been used for the passage of sea traffic inwards and outwards.

ROAD 29

An alternative of Road 28 (see Map) 13 m. 1 fur.

ROAD 30

Branch Ridgeway to Axminster (see Map) 9 m.

ROAD 31

The South Coast Ridgeway

This is a continuation of a very remarkable Dorset ridgeway, Dorset Road 39.¹

It has run many miles through Dorset before arriving at Lyme Regis. Starting the description of it from that place its course W. is marked for 2 m. 3 fur. (2 m. 3 fur.) by mr. to crossroads $\frac{3}{4}$ m. ENE. of Rousdon village.² Then W. along a minor mr.

¹ See *Arch. Journ.*, xciv, 195.

² This part of it is called a Roman

road on the Ordnance Map—which it almost certainly is not.

through Rousdon village for 3 m. 1 fur. (5 m. 4 fur.) to a point close to the coastguard station (OMr) at the mouth of the Axe.¹ Then, after crossing that river, it went along the shore at Seaton. After that it must have climbed the local watershed inland. Possibly, but not certainly, the road running NNW. from Seaton over Seaton Down Hill (OMr) which reaches the main road a short distance W. of Manor Farm (OMr). Total length of the road so far 7 m. 2 fur.

Then W. along the line of the Colyford-Sidmouth road for 3 m. 5 fur. (10 m. 7 fur.) to where it meets the line of Road 28 at crossways 3 fur. S. of Kings Down Farm (OMr). There are two earthworks each about 3 fur. N. of this section of the road. It then coincides with Road 28 as far as Sidmouth. There is no trace apparent at the present day of any continuation of the road beyond Sidmouth.

ROAD 32

Axminster Branch Ridgeway

See Road 17 of the Dorset series.²

ROAD 33

The Foss Way in Devon

It will be well to include in this discussion the reputed Roman road from Dorchester to Exeter.

The course of the great Foss Way, peculiarly well marked from Lincoln to a few miles beyond Ilchester in Somerset, becomes, as far as detail is concerned, a matter of doubt and difficulty after it enters Devonshire. Codrington³ is definitely of opinion that it did not go direct from Ilchester to Exeter, but to a point close to Axminster, where it met the Roman road from Dorchester to Exeter by which, of course, communication with Exeter was established.

The editor of the map of Roman Britain, published by the Ordnance Survey, marks the line of the Foss

¹ In the Dorset notes I suggested that this road crossed the Axe at Colyford. I have definitely renounced that conjecture. It would mean the passage of two rivers, a course which no ridgeway

would take if some other line were existent. Moreover the map does not give any ridgeway running up to the banks of the river at Colyford.

² See *Arch. Journ.*, xciv, 281.

³ *Roman Roads in Britain*, p. 268.

Way as going direct from Ilchester to Exeter, but with a dotted line, indicating uncertainty, in the middle section of it. He also marks a branch of it going down to Axminster, with a possible continuation to Seaton. He marks the alleged Roman road from Dorchester to Axminster and beyond with a dotted line, Collingwood¹ makes the Foss Way run to Seaton, not to Exeter, but ignores the difficulties which arise when an attempt is made to trace its course from Dinnington in Somerset to Seaton, a distance of $15\frac{1}{2}$ miles.

Turning to actual evidence on the modern map it may be said at the outset of this statement of it that it does not lead to any *definite* conclusion. Still it may be cited in order that those who read it may have the opportunity for forming their own views on the subject. Also the evidence, even if undecisive, is interesting. It shall be stated as briefly as possible.

I. *Ancient (Roman) Evidence*

The alleged Roman road from Dorchester to Exeter is part of Iter ('Route') XV of the Antonine Itinerary for Britain. It comes from London through Old Sarum, near Salisbury. The last few items are as follows: SORBIODUNUM (Old Sarum, near Salisbury): VINDOGLADIA, XII, i.e. 12 Roman miles from Old Sarum: DURNOVARIA (Dorchester) VIII: MURIDUNO, XXXVI: ISCA DUMNONIORUM, XV.

There is something wrong with the stated distance from Old Sarum to Dorchester. In the Itinerary it is 20 Roman miles or a little less than $18\frac{1}{2}$ English miles. The actual distance is about 38 English miles. It is quite evident that one stage at least has been omitted from this part of the route.²

ISCA DUMNONIORUM is undoubtedly Exeter.³

It will be seen that in the Itinerary the distance between Dorchester and *Isca* is 51 Roman miles, i.e.

¹ "Roman Britain," vol. 1 of the *Oxford History of England*, p. 91.

² Such omissions are found elsewhere in the extant copies of the Itinerary.

³ It has been suggested by one editor of the Itinerary that it might be Seaton. But *Isca* is a latinized

form of that Celtic river name which appears in SW. England in the forms Exe, Axe, and Usk. Cf. *Isca Silurum* on the Usk. It could not be Seaton. Merely as a name it might be Axmouth. But Axmouth will not fit in with the distance between Dorchester and *Isca Dumnoniorum* given in the Itinerary.

a little less than 47 English miles, the actual distance being about 50 miles.¹ Taking the distances given in the Itinerary as what they are—approximate—the discrepancy is comprehensible.

It is plain on this Roman evidence that there must have been a Roman road of some kind between Dorchester and Exeter. The question is what has become of it, a question all the more strange because the lines of the other Roman roads radiating from Dorchester survive in an easily traceable form at the present day.

Attempts have been made to trace this Roman road west from Dorchester. Codrington,² starting from Dorchester, assumes that the road running W. from Dorchester to Eggardon Camp (OMr) is a Roman road.³ As a fact it is a ridgeway which had been Romanized, as parts of many ridgeways were. It makes four turns between Dorchester and the camp. But those turns are due to the line taken by the watershed, and Roman roads ignore watersheds. But the first part of the road out of Dorchester, that to the first turn, roughly 3 m. long, is probably part of the actual Roman road. Codrington says that Stukeley tells us that this road to Eggardon Camp was in his time called the ridgeway, and that the original ridge remained. By 'ridge' Stukeley means obviously the 'agger' of a Roman road, and he supposes that the name ridgeway was applied to this road because of the existence of this agger, which is almost certainly a wrong derivation of the road name. Again this ridgeway, where Romanized, would show traces of an agger. Roman engineers took a direct line between the termini of the road they were making. If this road, as assumed, went to Axminster, then if carried to the neighbourhood of Eggardon Camp it would have been carried well out of the direct line between Dorchester and Axminster.⁴

¹ Axmouth is only 30 miles from Dorchester. So it cannot be identified with *Isca Dumnoniorum*.

² loc. cit., p. 314.

³ It is dealt with in detail as Dorset road 38. *Arch. Journ.*, xciv, 191.

⁴ On the constructive side of the question of the course of this Roman

road and indeed of the Foss Way, I do not feel in a position to make anything of the nature of *positive* suggestions. The evidence is always uncertain and in many cases conflicting. But with regard to this section of this road I would say that, had I the time, money, and opportunity to examine the question on

As to the line taken by the Roman road between Eggardon Camp and Bridport, Codrington, following his sources of information, makes the road leave the camp about $\frac{1}{2}$ m. to the N., and then going first WSW. and later W. follow the line of a lane, go by Yondover (OM1), just outside Lode village, and then WSW. along a lane to meet the modern main road about $\frac{3}{4}$ m. outside Bridport, and then along that road through Bridport main street. An alternative course suggested for this part of the road ran across the fields to join the Bridport-Dorchester road a little more than 2 m. short of Bridport.

To assume that this twisting line of lanes and roads marks the line of a Roman road is impossible.

But further evidence adduced by Codrington demands more serious consideration. He says that a writer named Davidson¹ reports that 'when the old road was broken up' (in this neighbourhood) 'it was seen to be composed of a bed of large flints laid on the substratum of chalk, with a thick layer of small stones on the top, the whole being almost as compact as a wall'.

This looks certainly like a piece of Roman road making, and would seem to indicate that someone did cut the line of a former Roman or Romanized road in this neighbourhood.

In the next section, from Bridport, to Charmouth, the Roman road is said to have run along the modern road W. of Bridport till just beyond Chiveock village, then over Chardown Hill and Stonebarrow Hill (OM1), via Coldharbour, and then down a lane followed by a parish By. for 2 m. to the river Char. Chardown Hill and Coldharbour are about $\frac{1}{2}$ m. S. of Morecombe-lake (OM1). The lane is a winding one going down to the Char at Newlands Farm. It is true that the parish By., follows the windings of the lane; but that is because it is part of the ridgeways 10A and 39 of the Dorset series of roads. Had that By. been determined by a Roman road it would have been straight. Here

the spot I should pay close attention to the piece of modern road which runs in an almost straight line from a point about $\frac{1}{2}$ m. E. of Kingston Russell for $3\frac{1}{2}$ m. to a point about $\frac{1}{2}$ m. W. of Askerswell. It is in

a straight line with the straight piece of road referred to above which runs W. from Dorchester for several miles.

¹ British and Roman Remains in the vicinity of Axminster, 1833.

again these winding roads cannot be following the line of a Roman road.

The further towards Axminster the attempt to trace the line of this Roman road is carried the less convincing are the would-be proofs that modern roads are along the line.

According to the authorities followed by Codrington the Roman road divided into two branches at Charmouth, one going along the coast and the other to Axminster. The road along the coast is, as far as evidence goes, a hopeless guess.

The evidence for the line taken to Axminster is almost equally unconvincing. It is said to follow the line of what is now the main road from Charmouth to Axminster, which is as a fact a ridgeway,¹ Its course beyond Axminster is said to be indicated by a straight piece of road $1\frac{3}{4}$ m. long, starting about 1 m. W. of Axminster. This is again part of a ridgeway, Road 30 of the Devonshire series. After that it is said to follow the windings of this ridgeway for several miles. Davidson speaks of the traces of a Roman road having been seen on this road at Moorcox Hill (OM1), $\frac{3}{4}$ m. ENE. of Widworthy village. If this report can be trusted then it is probable that these traces are remnants of the road of Iter XV. But the modern road from Axminster to Honiton cannot in any real sense represent the line of any Roman road. Beyond Honiton the traces of a Roman road are plain. But that will be taken into consideration in relation to the Foss Way. Why this particular Roman road should have vanished from the map when the other Roman roads in Dorset are so plainly marked is inexplicable.

There is just one possible explanation which, however, may not seem very convincing.

The routes laid down in the Antonine Itinerary are not so much military as trade routes. At the time at which the Itinerary was drawn up the Roman roads of the empire were of more importance for trade than for military purposes. Also the Saxon charters show that in the later part of the existence of Britain as a Roman province the Romans did improve the ridgeways and saltways by road making in parts of them

¹ Added to the Dorset series as road 17.

which were bad or very circuitous. Was this Iter XV from Dorchester to Honiton a ridgeway which had been Romanized as being an important trade route? There is a ridgeway for the whole distance between the two towns. Beyond Honiton there is no ridgeway to Exeter. Hence a Roman road was made *de novo*.

THE FOSS WAY

The Roman road just discussed has this bearing on the course of the Foss Way, viz. that there are those who hold that the Foss Way went via Axminster to Seaton and not direct to Exeter as has been commonly supposed, and that it depended on the Axminster-Honiton-Exeter line of road for communication with the Roman station at Exeter.

It will be seen on reference to the map that the line of the Foss Way is unmistakable from Ilchester as far as Dinnington, 3 m. NW. of Crewkerne. After Dinnington the line of the Foss Way as far as Honiton—for it is quite certain that it passed either directly or indirectly from the first to the second of those places—is most uncertain. The Ordnance map attaches the name Foss Way to a piece of more or less straight modern road which would leave the great ridgeway of the Blackdown Hills (Somerset, Road 83) 3 fur. NW. of the church (OM1) at Cricket St. Thomas. On that piece of road is a hamlet named Street (OM1). Were this name known only in its modern form it might suggest, but would not necessarily imply, the presence of a Roman road. But the place is twice mentioned in Domesday Book under the names *Estrat* and *Strat*, and these old forms make it almost certain that the place stood on, or close to, a Roman road. Therefore a belief in the Roman origin of this piece of modern road may be assumed to be well founded. But whether it was the Foss Way or a branch of that road is a question dependent on further considerations, of which the first is the course of the Foss Way and possibly of some branch of it to the S. of Dinnington.

Codrington¹ seems to identify the line of the Foss S. of Dinnington with the lane called Nash Lane (OM6) which runs in a more or less straight line with

¹ *Roman Roads in Britain*, p. 269.

the line of the Foss Way after that road has made a turn of a few degrees E. at a horizon point just S. of Dinnington. The lane might indeed be on the general line of a Roman road without adhering closely to it. It joins the Blackdown ridgeway 5 fur. SSE. of Cudworth village. The Roman road would then follow a straight piece of the ridgeway for $1\frac{1}{4}$ m. to where the road to Street, already described, leaves it.

But there is one piece of evidence, not apparently noticed by the authorities which Codrington followed, which suggests that this lane between Dinnington and the ridgeway is not the course of the Foss Way, but of some branch of it.

About $\frac{3}{4}$ m. W. of this lane the one-inch Ordnance map marks a stream called Stretford Brook. The six-inch map goes further and marks the actual Stretford at a point where a lane crosses the brook a long $\frac{1}{2}$ m. SE. of the church (OM1) at Dowlish Wake. Those who have an acquaintance with English place names will know that Stretford and its variant Stratford, wherever they occur in the rest of England, are on known Roman roads. If so, then it seems almost certain that this Stretford was on a Roman road, and, if so, that must almost certainly have been the Foss Way. If it was, then all that can be said is that there is no modern road between Dinnington and the Blackdown ridgeway which can be on the line of a Roman road passing through this Stretford.¹

On such contradictory evidence it is not possible to express any opinion as to the line taken by the Foss Way between Dinnington and the Blackdown ridgeway.

Reverting to the piece of Roman road by Street it will be noticed that the modern road turns aside from the line of the Roman road just before it reaches Street (OM1) and seems to come back to it a short $\frac{1}{2}$ m. S. of that place. Thereafter a more or less straight line of modern road runs through Perry Street (OM1) and on to the Co. By. at a point a long $\frac{1}{4}$ m. WNW. of the hamlet of Chilson (OM1). Then there is a short gap where the modern road is not on the line of the Roman road though near to it. But from Tytherleigh (OM1) about 1 m. SSE. of Chardstock

¹ This is another example of the evidence on the Roman roads in tantalizing contradictions which the SE. Devon affords.

village a more or less straight modern road¹ runs for some distance. Thus there is evidence of a Roman road from the Foss Way as far as Axminster. Some authorities hold that this is the Foss Way, and that at Axminster it joined the Roman road coming up from Dorchester, and went on as one road through Honiton to Exeter.

But there is also another view to the effect that the Foss Way proper went on to Seaton. This is founded on the fact that a tile of the Second Legion has been found at Seaton.² Against this is the complete absence of any trace of a Roman road between Axminster and Seaton.

The evidence for the existence of a Roman road from Dinnington to Axminster seems on the whole satisfactory; but whether this was the Foss Way or a branch of it is uncertain.

Between Honiton and Exeter the line of the Roman road survives in an unmistakable form in various places. From Honiton a straight piece of modern road runs WSW. for 7 m. to a crossing of the River Tale $1\frac{1}{4}$ m. NNW. of Ottery St. Mary. This is almost certainly the line of a Roman road.

The same modern road goes on for $2\frac{1}{2}$ m., but not in a straight line. This section cannot have been built on the line of the old road. Then comes another straight piece 2 m. 1 fur. long as far as Rockbeare village, which must be on the old line. After that the modern road from Rockbeare to Clyst Honiton and from there through Whipton to Exeter, though it does not adhere to the line of the Roman road, must follow its course very closely.

As far as Roman roads in this country are concerned this comparatively limited district comprising the

¹ 'More or less straight' applied to a modern road does not imply that the modern road is not on the *general* line of a Roman road. The modern roads and tracks which follow the general line of the Foss Way through Warwickshire make frequent slight turns at quite short intervals, and probably diverge in places anything up to 50 yards from the line of the Roman road. Probably the users of the road in medieval times found parts of it much cut up and decayed,

and preferred at such places to form new tracks a few yards on either side of the Roman line. The Roman road from Manchester to Preston remained till relatively recent times the highway in use between those places. But it is recorded that users took to the land on either side when the old structure of the road was so cut as to make its use inconvenient or even impossible.

² Collingwood, "Roman Britain" (*Oxford Hist. Eng.*), p. 91.

extreme SE. of Devonshire and the extreme SW. of Dorset presents difficulties the like of which are not to be found in the rest of the old province of Britain.

Such solutions as have been suggested here are purely tentative for the very good reason that the evidence does not justify positive conclusions.

These suggested solutions are :

(1) That there is on the whole fairly good evidence of a Roman road running from Dinnington to Axminster ;

(2) that it cannot be said whether this was the Foss Way or a branch of it ;

(3) that the evidence of this road having passed on to Seaton is very slight ;

(4) that, as Iter XV of the Antonine Itinerary is a record of a trade route and not of a military highway, the road from Dorchester to Honiton may never have been a Roman road properly so called but a ridgeway (which still exists) which had been, like many other ridgeways, Romanized by metalling bad sections of it ;

(5) that the occurrence of the name Stretford in the neighbourhood of Dinnington does suggest that that the Foss Way did continue S. along a line direct to Honiton, but that this can be no more than a suggestion in view of the fact that no modern road between those places is on anything resembling the line of a Roman road ;

(6) that the evidence for a Roman road between Honiton and Exeter is satisfactory.

(A map of the roads referred to in this discussion will be found on p. 151.)

ROAD 34

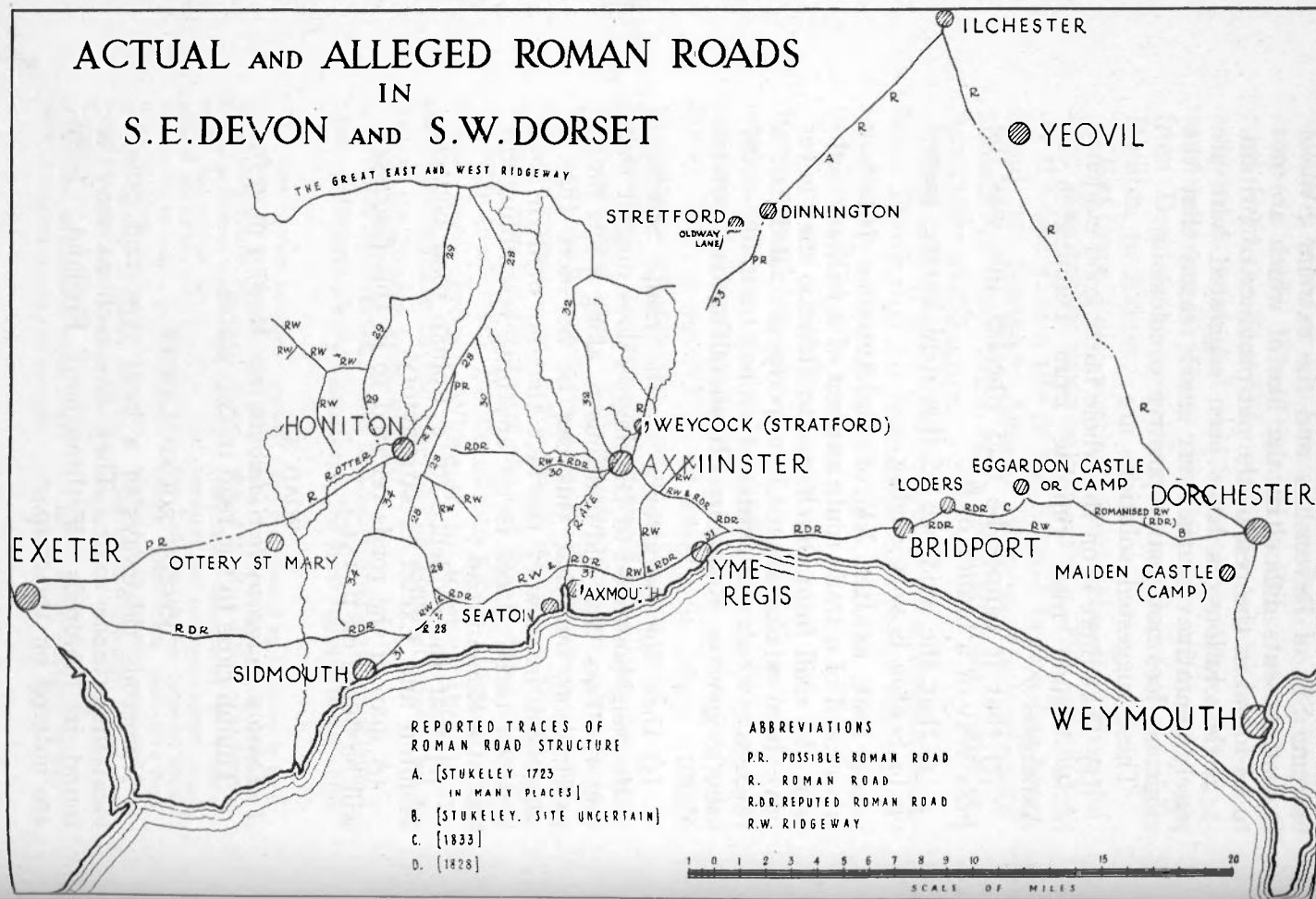
A Honiton Ridgeway to Sidmouth (see Map) 9 m. 3 fur.

Tumuli close to the road in two places.

REGION ROUND EXETER

Numerous ridgeways of a local type and purely local importance exist. They are such as may be found in hundreds all throughout England. They are entered on the map.

ACTUAL AND ALLEGED ROMAN ROADS IN S.E. DEVON AND S.W. DORSET



ROAD 35

The Bampton-Tiverton-Silverton Ridgeway

From Bampton runs E. by S., mr., for 7 fur. (7 fur.) to Sparkhayes (OMI). Then S., winding mr., via Van Post (OMI), Landrake (OMI), Hone Hill (OMI) through the park of Knighthayes Court (OMI) to Tiverton, 5 m. 6 fur. (6 m. 5 fur.). Leaves Tiverton, running S. by mr. from the E. end of the town for 4 fur. (7 m. 1 fur.) to where a large camp called Cranmore Castle (OMI) stands just W. of the road. Then S. by E., mr., for 1 m. 4 fur. (8 m. 5 fur.) to crossroads at Burrow Corner (OMI) 1 m. N. of Butteleigh village. Then E., mr. and parish By., for 5 fur. (9 m. 2 fur.). Then S. by E., mr. and parish By. for 4 fur. (9 m. 6 fur.) to Birchen Oak (OMI). Then S. by E., mr., for 2 fur. (10 m.) to where a camp stands E. of the road. Then generally S., mr., for 2 m. 2 fur. (12 m. 2 fur.) to crossroads $1\frac{1}{4}$ m. W. by N. of Bradnich. Then WNW., mr., for 7 fur. (13 m. 1 fur.) to crossroads. Then generally S. by W., mr., for 1 m. 4 fur. (14 m. 5 fur.) to Silverton, leaving a camp a few hundred yards to the W.

Five unimportant ridgeways branch off from it (see Map).

ROAD 36

An East Devon Ridgeway

This is a curious ancient highway. It begins at the coast at Budleigh Salterton and runs N. for many miles, represented for its whole length by modern roads. It might have been expected to link up with some of the great ridgeways in the N. part of the county, but, as a fact, it comes to an end, so far as it is traceable, in the middle of nowhere.

Starting from Budleigh Salterton runs W. by N. along the line of the road to Exmouth for 1 m. 3 fur. (1 m. 3 fur.) to where that road crosses the railway. This road is a parish By. Then NW., mr., for 1 m. 5 fur. (3 m.) to where there are tumuli close to the road. Then NW., mr., for 2 fur. (3 m. 2 fur.) to crossroads on Lymptone Common (OMI). Then NE., lane or t., for 3 fur. (3 m. 5 fur.). Then N. by E., mr., for

1 m. 4 fur. (5 m. 1 fur.) to where there is a camp (OM1) close to the road. Then generally N. by E., mr., for 2 m. 1 fur. (7 m. 2 fur.) to crossroads at Halfway Inn (OM1) on the Exeter-Dorchester road. Then N. by E., mr., for 6 fur. (8 m.) to where a tumulus just E. of the road. Then N. by E., mr., for 2 m. 5 fur. (10 m. 5 fur.) to crossroads on the Exeter-Ottery St. Mary road. Then N. by E., mr., leaving Talatan village $\frac{1}{4}$ m. to the W., for 5 m. 6 fur. (16 m. 3 fur.) to a point nearly 2 m. due W. of Broadhembury village, where as a ridgeway it gives out.

ROAD 37

The Crediton-Exeter Ridgeway (see Map) 12 m. 4 fur.

This ridgeway, which evidently crossed the River Yeo at Crediton, was important because it linked up Exeter with the great ridgeway Road 1 at New-buildings, and so with the great E. and W. ridgeway Road 2 (OM1), 2 m. WNW. of Sandford, which is $1\frac{1}{2}$ m. N. of Crediton.

ROAD 38

The Teignmouth Ridgeway

Branched off from Road 37 at the crossroads $\frac{1}{4}$ m. N. of Heath Cross (OM1) $1\frac{1}{4}$ m. N. of Whitestone village, which is about $3\frac{1}{2}$ m. WNW. of Exeter. Ran SSW., mr., for 1 m. 2 fur. (1 m. 2 fur.) to about 3 fur. ESE. of New House (OM1). For $3\frac{1}{2}$ fur. this section is a parish By. Then SE. very winding mr. for 1 m. 5 fur. (2 m. 7 fur.) to Longdown (OM1). The whole of this section is a parish By. Then S., mr. for 1 m. (3 m. 7 fur.) to where Cotley Castle (OM1) stands just W. of the road. Then SSE., winding mr., through North Wood (OM1) and Lower Wood (OM1) for 4 m. 2 fur. (8 m. 1 fur.) to cross roads on Great Haldon (OM1). This section is a parish By. for 1 m. Then ESE., curving mr., over Great Haldon for 7 fur. (9 m.) to crossroads on the Exeter-Teignmouth road. Then S. by W., mr., for 1 m. 6 fur. (10 m. 6 fur.) over Harcombe Moors (OM1) to crossroads where the Exeter-Newton Abbot road branches off from the Exeter-Teignmouth road. Tumuli about 3 fur. NNW. of this point.

Then S. by E., mr., for 2 m. 4 fur. (13 m. 2 fur.) to where Castle Dyke (OM1) and certain tumuli are E. of the road. Then S., mr., for 1 m. 1 fur. (14 m. 3 fur.) to crossroads. Then first E. and later SSE. for 1 m. 6 fur. (16 m. 1 fur.) along the line of the main road to Teignmouth. (The high road to Dawlish which branches off from this section is a branch ridgeway.)

It is probable that the ridgeway crossed the River Teign at its mouth, presumably by a ferry—and was continued by a ridgeway running down the coast to Torquay.

At Babbacombe there is a camp (OM1) about $\frac{1}{4}$ m. E. of the road.

ROAD 39

The Powderham Ridgeway (see Map)

ROAD 40

A Ridgeway from Exeter westward

It is just possible that this was an important ridgeway connecting Exeter with Road 1, and through that with Road 2, the great E. and W. ridgeway. But that is not certain. If the road was really a continuous ancient highway then its length was 15 m. 7 fur.

ROAD 41

The Start Point Ridgeway (see Map)

It was 15 m. 6 fur. long, but not very important as far as can be seen.

ROAD 42

The Kingsbridge Branch Ridgeway (see Map)

ROAD 43

The Dartmouth Branch Ridgeway (see Map)

N.B.—Holwell Camp close to it.

ROAD 45

The Newton Abbot Ridgeway (see Map)

Although over 5 m. long it ends a little short of 2 m. from where it began.

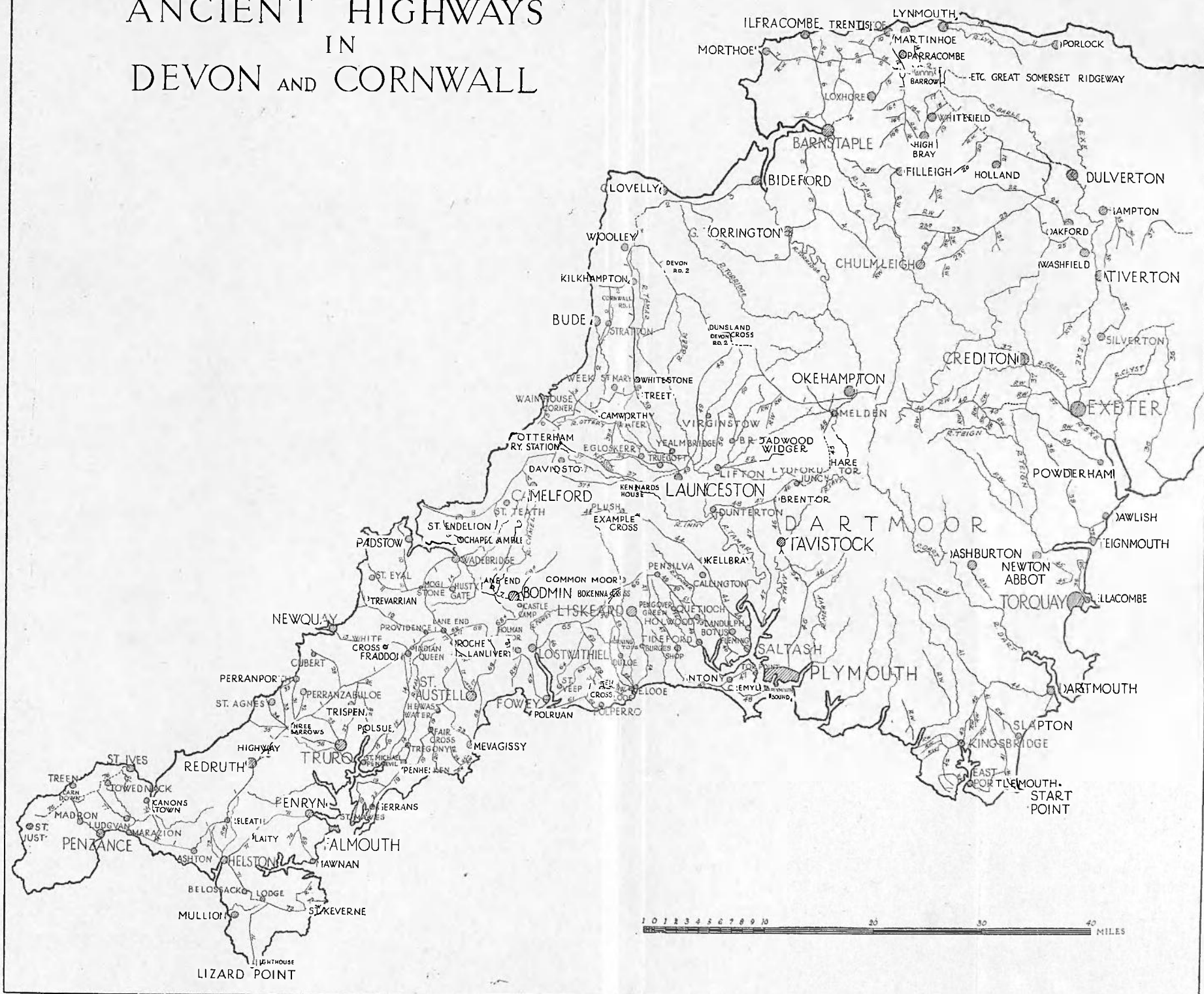
ROAD 46

The Plymouth Ridgeway

This is a possible line of ridgeway connecting Plymouth with the ancient highway running E. and W. through southern England. It leaves Plymouth by a line of mr. running N (2 m. 1 fur.) to crossroads at Crown Hill (OM1). Then first NNE. and later N. by E., mr. for 6 m. 1 fur. (8 m. 2 fur.) to crossroads 5 fur. S.W. of Yelverton. It then runs NW. for 2 m. 6 fur. (11 m.) over Roborough Down to what must have been a crossing of the River Walkham about 3 fur. SW. of the hamlet of Grenofen (OM1). The valley of the river is here very steep-sided, and there would consequently be very little bad land in its neighbourhood. Across the river the road first runs N., then WNW., and later NNW., via Rixhill (OM1) for 2 m. 1 fur. (13 m. 1 fur.) to Tavistock, crossing the River Tavy just before reaching the town. From Tavistock it runs, mr., almost due N. for 4 m. (17 m. 1 fur.) to Brentor. Then NE. for 2 m. 5 fur. (19 m. 6 fur.), mr., to a very narrow watershed where the railway lines join at Lydford Junction. After that the line is conjectural and perhaps not very convincing as no modern roads or tracks pass along part of it.

This conjectural line of road can be easily followed on the one-inch map. From the watershed near Lydford junction its course is marked by a fp. running ESE. for 7 fur. (20 m. 5 fur.) to the top of Black Down. Then its course is taken up by another fp. which runs NE. for 1 m. (21 m. 5 fur.) passing close to a tumulus. After that still NE., no t., for 6 fur. (22 m. 3 fur.) to the summit of White Hill (OM1) passing tumuli on the way. Then E. by N., no t., for 1 m. 2 fur. (23 m. 5 fur.) to the summit of Hare Tor, passing near a tumulus. Then N. by E., no t., for 2 m. 4 fur. (26 m. 1 fur.) over Rattlebrook Hill and Great Links

ANCIENT HIGHWAYS IN DEVON AND CORNWALL



N.B.—The lines marked RW. on the map are ridgeways of which the details need not be given.

Tor to the summit of Woodcock Hill. Then NW., no t., for 7 fur. (27 m.) to the summit of Corn Ridge. From that point its course is marked by a track which runs up N. by E. for 2 m. 2 fur. (29 m. 2 fur.) to Melden, a hamlet close to where the railway to Bideford joins the main line from Plymouth to Exeter. There it links up with the second part of Road 1 by which a traveller could reach Road 2, the great E. and W. ridgeway.

ROAD 47

Ridgeway of the Watershed between the Tamar and the Tavy Rivers (see Map) 13 m. 2 fur.

ROAD 48

Dunterton Ridgeway (see Map) 3 m. 5 fur.

ROAD 49

A Link Ridgeway (see Map) 12 m. 6 fur.

ROAD 50

Ridgeway of uncertain importance (see Map) 10 m.

A tumulus, Hender Barrow, Foxhole Barrow and Upcott Barrow are near the road.

ROAD 51

Branch Ridgeway to Broadwood Widger (see Map)

ROAD 52

The Lifton Ridgeway (see Map) 5 m.

Apparently a local ridgeway. Starts from $\frac{1}{2}$ m. E. of Lifton, 4 m. E. of Launceston. Runs E. by N.

MILEAGE OF THE RIDGEWAYS

It is probable that even those who know the map of England well do not realize the extent to which the ridgeways have survived as lines of communication right up to the present day. This is probably due to the fact that the tracing of the courses of many of them takes much time and trouble.

In Devon the traceable ridgeways at the present day cover 679 miles of which 665 miles or 98 per cent. are represented by modern roads and lanes, and also for a few miles by footpaths. This does not include what may be called the parochial ridgeways, those leading as a rule from the village centre to the other parts of a parish. These, if traced in detail, would prove large in number, but would not add very appreciably to the mileage of the ridgeways of the county because they are generally only a few furlongs in length.

As far as intercourse is concerned the ridgeways were the main features in the life of this country, certainly up to the beginning of the eighteenth, and in many respects till the end of the first quarter of the nineteenth century.

It is possible to draw too wide conclusions from Ogilby's road book of 1675. It gives routes which are not ridgeways; but they are routes for travel, not trade. It is probable that he contemplated summer travel by wheeled vehicles. In the wet season of the year travel along the unmade tracks of his time, rough even in the dry season, must have been almost impossible. Loaded wagons carrying heavy weights could not have made their way along such tracks at that time of year. Packhorse traffic kept to the ridgeways so long as it existed in this country, and they were used for cattle traffic till the time of the making of the railways.