

THE PILGRIMS' WAY AS IT PASSES THROUGH  
THE PARISHES OF GODSTONE AND TAN-  
DRIDGE.

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HAVING lived for three years at the foot of the chalk hills in the parish of Tandridge, in Surrey, my interest was excited by the uncertainty which existed as to the course taken by the Pilgrims' Way through that parish and the parish of Godstone, and I was led to devote a little of my leisure time to its investigation.

The true course was known to the westward, where it crosses the back of what is called "White Hill," and to the east, where it crosses Titsey Park, and a little distance to the westward of it; but the intervening space, of some four miles, seemed uncertain; and as the conjectural course laid down by the ordnance survey passes mainly through slippery Galt clay, it struck me as hardly likely to be correct; the object in carrying the road along the escarpment of the chalk apparently being to keep it on firm and dry ground.

It is clear, however, that the old way varied much in its level; for, while the known positions on White Hill are on the top of the Downs, those in Titsey Park are at their foot; both, however, are on the *Chalk* or *Firestone*.

This length of the escarpment is somewhat peculiar, owing to the frequent promontories and recesses which vary its line; and these irregularities must have caused some perplexity in arranging, in old times, the line of

the road; for, if it followed round the hills at any given level, it would have become exceedingly circuitous.

We know that at Titsey it was at the *foot* of the hills, and for some distance to the westward the face of the hills is so steep as to be, to say the least, inconvenient for it to ascend them. The line I have adopted from varied evidence, continues at the lower level till it approaches the promontory formed by Tandridge Hill, which it gradually ascends, though not to its full height. After crossing this hill, it descends into the deep recess which divides this promontory from Godstone Hill, and, in winding round its sinuosities, ascends the last-named hill almost at its back, in the depression leading to the Caterham Valley; and, passing across the promontory formed by Godstone Hill comes out again to the front just beyond it westward, and a little further on joins the portion of the way which is well known in or near War Coppice, close to the camp (or other ancient earthwork) in that wood, passing on from thence at the back of White Hill, near the Harrow Inn.

In some parts of this course the road is readily traced; in *one*, it is cut through by a vast chalk-pit; in another it is still used as a road; but, in others again, all traces of it have vanished, though the peasants tell you without hesitation that it passed that way. I have, in the accompanying map, marked the course which I think the road took, and will now give the arguments and evidences on which I have founded my opinion.

In sketching (in red lines) the imagined course of the Pilgrims' Way, I have adopted that already shown in the ordnance survey from the west of Map to A, and from K to east of Map. Of the former, I had obtained independent evidence from Willey Farm to A, and of the latter, I had independently arrived at (about) the point K. From A to K I have ventured to adopt a different line. My grounds are as follows: I was made acquainted by Mr. Cæsar Winter, who works the sand-quarry in Godstone village, with a man who professed to know



the true course of the road. By him (or by both) I was assured that the Pilgrims' Road passed through the grounds of Woodland House, but had been obliterated when those grounds were laid out. He walked with me through Upwood Scrubs to the brow of hill at E, near which he began to point out the road in patches, but intersected by chalk-pits, especially across the ploughed field from A to chalk-pit B, and also from C to D. I afterwards thought I traced it from D to E, through the copse. The same man (corroborated afterwards by a man who works in chalk-pit above Godstone quarry)<sup>1</sup> assured me that the existing road up the opposite slope of Tandridge Hill, from G to H, was a part of it; and that in the interval it passed somewhere beneath Winder's Hill.<sup>2</sup> Another wholly independent witness told me that it emerged from Upwood Scrubs, near F.

Here I must leave my witnesses, and take a course of my own; for they took it for granted that, on reaching the wood on Tandridge Hill, at H, the road continued, as at present, round the back of the wood. This struck me as impossible, as it would lead so high in the hill as to seem inconsistent with its descending again to Titsey Park. I was at the time too unwell to go up this hill, but, after viewing it often from below, I told my son (who had investigated the matter with me) that I was sure he would find a trace of the road through the wood from H. He explored this, and to our great interest found the clear line of the old road, with its hedge-row trees remaining, but its course grown over with bushes, from H to I; the latter point being just above "The Dell," at the side of Tandridge Hill Lane. Nothing can be clearer than this line of road, though too thickly overgrown to allow of one's walking actually along it: there is a modern path just above it, from

<sup>1</sup> I think his name is Atkins; he lives in one of the cottages near Quarry Farm.

<sup>2</sup> The course below Winder's Hill to F is obscure, and it is possible that it may have avoided the deep dell to the west of that hill.

which it is readily seen all along.<sup>1</sup> From I the course is less marked, yet there seems some indication of a line of possible road leading across the fields, &c., towards K, where I believe indications are known to exist.

<sup>1</sup> I think no one who would take the trouble to follow this old road through the wood can fail of arriving at the same conclusion : to myself it was the more convincing, as I had, before finding it to exist, come to the conclusion that it *must* be there.