

THE NORTH DOWNS MAIN TRACKWAY AND THE PILGRIMS' WAY

By IVAN D. MARGARY

I. INTRODUCTION

This trackway is one of the most important in Britain, certainly the most important in south and south-east Britain, because it was the main route by which early Man could penetrate readily into this island from the Continent, and indeed he probably began using it before the separation of the island had occurred. The early peoples were nomads, driving their cattle with them, and a route along the relatively open grassy Downs would have been ideal for their needs. By this route they reached Wiltshire, the great centre of early Man in this country, and, though we know nothing of their actual movements, it can be assumed that subsequent waves of immigrants and individual traders would continue to use the route and thus establish tracks along it.

It must be clearly understood that a prehistoric trackway of this character was in no sense a made or aligned road, such as Roman roads were. Its course was conditioned entirely by local features of geology and geography, and it is these which we must study if we wish to understand its formation. Thus the illustrations are intended to show the *position* of the trackways relative to the ridges and escarpments along which they run, rather than the tracks themselves.

The survey of this route was undertaken in order that the Ordnance Survey maps might in future mark the trackways as 'Ancient Trackway' throughout their courses, whether forming part of the Pilgrims' Way or not, and I most gratefully acknowledge the help of their Archaeology Division in providing six-inch maps of the whole route. The criticisms which I make of certain exceptional parts of the alleged route of the Pilgrims' Way hitherto shown are, of course, no reflection upon any present or recent members of the Division, for those routes were so marked from the earlier days of the Survey when no trained archaeologists were employed there.

Some years ago the late Dr. G. B. Grundy provided the *Archaeological Journal* with very valuable regional surveys of ancient trackways, and in dealing with Hampshire and Wiltshire he included this trackway, right on into Kent, as Route 40 of his series there.¹ He appreciated the dual nature of the route, as a ridgeway and a terraceway, but regarded Canterbury as its natural termination, which is, I think, wrong, for the route is clearly leading to the Channel coast, as it is hoped now to show. The special importance of this route seems to justify giving it a detailed independent survey instead of leaving it on record as an offshoot of one of the many trackways of Hampshire.

¹ *Arch. Journ.*, lxxv (1918), 164.

The traditional use of a large part of this route by the Pilgrims' Way, usually following the course of the terraceway but occasionally the ridgeway also, has attracted quite a number of writers. Hilaire Belloc's survey¹ is the best known and the most important contribution; others by Albert Way,² an important officer of this Institute in its very early days, and by Edwin Hart³ upon the Surrey portion, also deserve mention. More recently, too, papers by Dr. W. Hooper⁴ and F. C. Elliston Erwood⁵ have sought to disprove the reality of any serious pilgrim traffic along the route. But all these were interested in the medieval use of the road (although Belloc constantly refers to the habits and characteristics of prehistoric tracks) and entirely ignore the ridgeway save where the Pilgrims' Way follows it.

II. GENERAL CHARACTER OF THE ROUTE

The geological structure of the Weald is well known (Fig. 1). The strata rise upwards from both north and south, forming a dome whose central axis would lie along the Forest Ridges in the centre of the Weald, but denudation has removed the central portion of the upper strata entirely, leaving a series of steep escarpments facing inwards towards the Weald, of which those of the North and South Downs are best known. The ancient Wealden rivers continued to cut their way downwards through the surrounding Chalk whilst this denudation was going on, thus forming the steep-sided valleys through the Downs that we still see.

It happens that the rivers of the South Downs form much more serious obstacles than those of the North except the River Medway, the largest of them all. Moreover, the South Downs end on the coast much farther to the west where the Channel is wider. The map shows clearly that the North Downs provide the better route, and a wonderfully direct one, from the narrowest part of the Channel to the central Chalk lands of Wiltshire. It is this route that we shall now examine.

It has already been said that the route is a dual one, formed by a ridgeway and a terraceway. This dual form is often found in trackways along such escarpments, and the terraceway, usually situated near the line of springs at the foot, is often called a 'summer-way' because it was usable in the drier seasons.⁶ In this case, however, the reverse of this seasonal use was more probable. It happens that the summit of the North Downs is frequently capped with a deposit known as 'Clay-with-flints' which renders the tracks along the summit very wet and sticky in rainy weather. Moreover, the southward-facing escarpment causes the terraceway at its foot to be very hot in summer, when movement along the ridgeway would have been greatly to be preferred.

¹ *The Old Road* (1904).

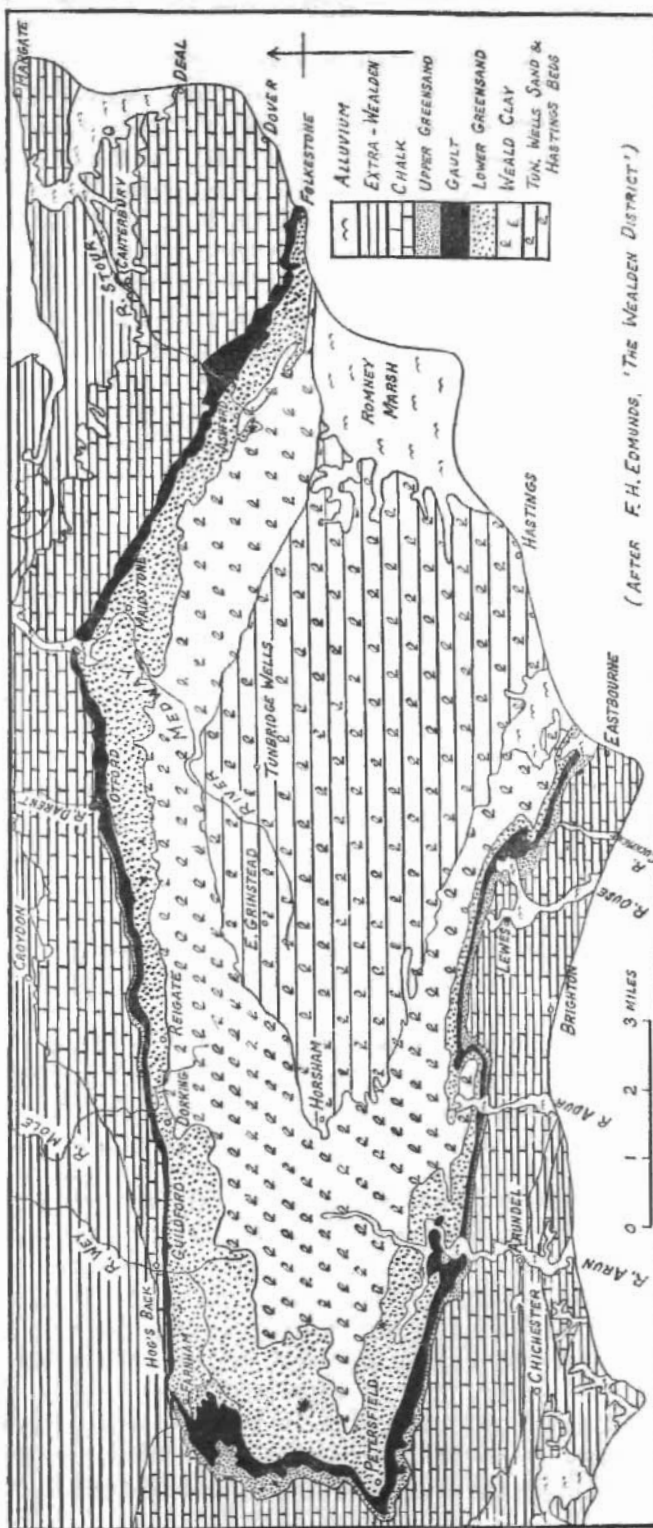
² Included as an appendix in Dean Stanley's *Historical Memorials of Canterbury* (1855).

³ *Surrey Arch. Coll.*, xli (1933), 1.

⁴ *Surrey Arch. Coll.*, xlii (1936), 47.

⁵ *Arch. Cant.*, xxxvii (1925), 1.

⁶ G. B. Grundy, *Arch. Journ.*, lxxv (1918), 71; also C. F. C. Hawkes, *Proc. Hants. Field Club*, ix (1925), 324.



(AFTER F.H. EDMUNDS, 'THE WEALDEN DISTRICT')

FIG. I

Thus it is probable that the earliest trackway followed the crest, at a time when security of look-out was more vital than the avoidance of wet feet, but that eventually the terraceway route, avoiding the sticky summit and keeping upon the clean Chalk near the foot, was formed also. This has to keep close in to the foot of the range because another sticky stratum, the Gault Clay, lies parallel with it just below the Chalk, forming a very wet belt of land in the vale below.

The escarpment is monotonously regular for long distances, especially in Kent, and for mile upon mile these two trackways can be traced along it, looking absurdly close to each other upon the map, although they are, in fact, very differently circumstanced. The terraceway borders well cultivated land, passing large prosperous farms and villages, the latter usually situated in the vale a little way below the track; the ridgeway, on the other hand, lies in country which is still very much wilder and less cultivated, often heavily wooded, with poor scattered hamlets sometimes situated at a considerable distance from it, along narrow lanes running down the combes to the north, a bleak and rather unfriendly land for the passing traveller, and this is probably the reason why so much of it went out of use in later times. In Kent parish boundaries follow the ridgeway for long distances, but it is somewhat remarkable that the terraceway never seems to have served this purpose, perhaps because it lay too near the villages, and the top of the escarpment was the obvious boundary to choose.

It would be tedious to give a description of the whole of each route from Farnham to the coast, a distance of just 100 miles, and it is intended here only to mention their general features and then to deal with certain local problems that arise. Full details of the routes have been recorded upon the maps deposited with the Ordnance Survey for their use.

West of Guildford (Fig. 2) the ridgeway follows the well-known Hog's Back, an ideal example of a ridgeway with the open grassy-topped ridge falling away in steep slopes on both sides. East of Guildford (Fig. 3), past the view-point of Newlands Corner, to Ranmore Common, Dorking (Fig. 4), the track is known as the Drove Road, a rough, often grassy, trackway running through scrub and woodland close to the edge of the escarpment, and looking indeed very much as it must have done in those early times (Pl. IIIA). Where it has not become a modern road, as on Box Hill and near Caterham (Fig. 5), Woldingham and Tatsfield, it is this kind of lane or green trackway (Pl. IIIB) that can be followed for long distances, although in Kent it often degenerates to a footpath, and occasionally loses its right of way even where still traceable as a cart-track in fields. The views from it are always magnificent, reaching far away into the Weald (Pl. IIIC), and in this it is vastly superior to the terraceway, the widely-known Pilgrims' Way, which, though cosily bordering farms and villages, is apt to be rather tame by comparison.

The terraceway is so well known already that we need only call attention to its normal position close to the foot of the steep escarpment,

foot of the Hog's Back, for this is the only dry route avoiding marshy ground on both sides. The road from Winchester, considered to be the Pilgrims' Way, joins it in Farnham.

At Whitewaysend there is a choice of two routes, the Hog's Back and another ridgeway, almost equally convenient, which follows a line of little hills along the parallel stratum of the Greensand, through Seale, Puttenham, Compton, St. Catharine's, The Chantries, and St. Martha's to Shere. It is the latter which has retained the tradition of the Pilgrims' Way. There is no terraceway along this part below the Hog's Back, possibly because the Sand Ridgeway provided a close and convenient alternative. Where this route crosses the Wey, St. Catharine's Chapel stands as a conspicuous ruin upon a high bluff above the river, presenting some striking architectural features to be discussed later.

After leaving Guildford (Fig. 3) the terraceway can be clearly seen diverging very gradually from the main ridgeway on Pewley Hill and slowly descending the escarpment until it reaches its normal position near the foot below Newlands Corner (Pl. IVA), which it then follows continuously past Shere and Gomshall right on to Dorking and Reigate. The sand ridge, on the other hand, dies away near Shere (being replaced by other sand ridges farther south towards Leith Hill) and its ridgeway cannot therefore continue. This has caused much confusion with writers upon the Pilgrims' Way, and hence with the Ordnance Survey in attempting to mark its course here. It happens that just before the sand ridge ends it comes very close to the Chalk, at Weston Wood by Albury (Pl. IVB), and there is here a most convenient linking ridge, only 300 yards long, by which the traveller could readily cross to the terraceway, and *vice versa*. Everyone, including Belloc and Hart, seems to have overlooked this important link. It is likely, of course, that for local reasons travellers may have continued into Shere when they wished, but it would not have lain upon the main, or prehistoric, route. The line adopted by the Ordnance Survey around the *south* side of Shere and Gomshall for the Pilgrims' Way, not even approaching Shere Church, is quite out of character and should be disregarded.

Gomshall—Box Hill (Fig. 4)

Ridgeway and terraceway are quite clear right on to the neighbourhood of Dorking; the ridgeway is known as the Drove Road on the top of Hackhurst Downs, then traverses the grassy length of Ranmore Common and becomes a lane past the mansion of Denbies, north of the house, descending a gentle spur of the Downs to the ford on the River Mole, now marked by stepping stones, from which a track ascends directly up the shoulder of Box Hill by a steep scramble: the terraceway follows its normal course along the foot of the escarpment till this dies away near Dorking Town Station, where it has to follow a minor spur towards another ford on the Mole at Pixham, between Dorking and Box

Hill, after which it is the normal terraceway clearly traceable right on to Reigate.

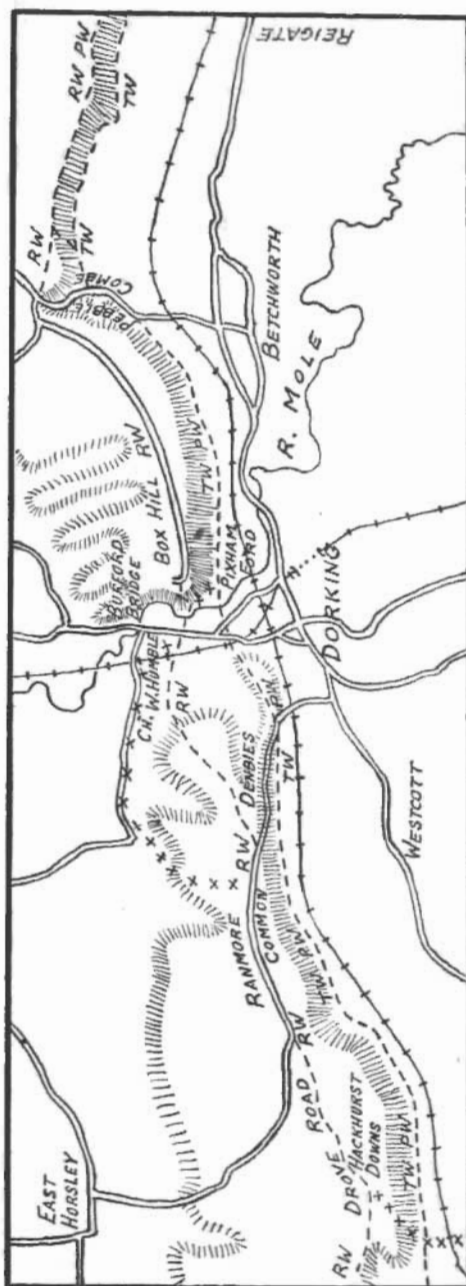


FIG. 4

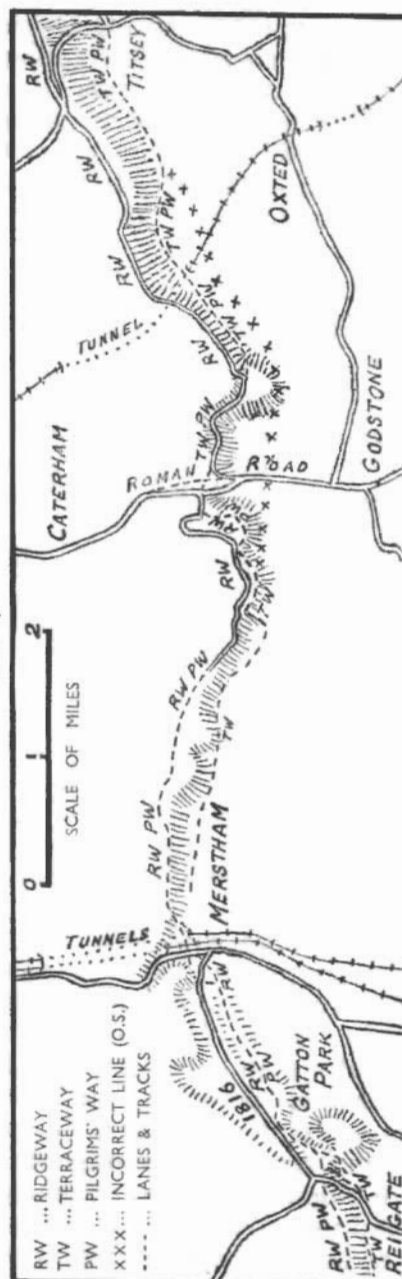


FIG. 5

A curious divergence of the Pilgrims' Way is shown by the Ordnance Survey here. After the loop at Shere previously mentioned, they take

it up an old track ascending the escarpment of Hackhurst Downs near Gomshall to join the Drove Road ridgeway, then after following this to Ranmore Common they turn it suddenly to the north to follow a rambling set of footpaths down the northern slope of the Downs to West Humble, returning thence to the stepping-stones ford and the terraceway beyond. All this is entirely at variance with the character of the route and has probably arisen solely from an idea that the little ruined church at West Humble (and possibly, too, this curious placename) must have been connected with the pilgrims. Belloc very rightly rejected this divergence outright, and it should be disregarded as a part of the main route.

Box Hill—Titsey (Figs. 4, 5)

From Box Hill to Walton Heath the ridgeway is used as a road, but at the head of Pebble Combe it is lost for a short distance in the grounds of The Hermitage, after which it is a footpath or lane all the way to Colley Hill above Reigate. The terraceway below is traceable throughout, although now little used as a track, and the Pilgrims' Way tradition seems attached mainly to the ridgeway here.

East of Reigate Hill a bold spur projects from the escarpment, and to avoid having to encircle this the terraceway here joins the ridgeway, which is clearly traceable through Gatton Park, north of the house and church. It is here on the course of the older road from Reigate Hill to Merstham, the present road along the park boundary having been constructed only in 1816, yet it is on the latter that the Ordnance Survey have marked the Pilgrims' Way! The route through the park lies along a minor ridge, for the main escarpment here makes a wide sweep to the north and we only meet it again at Merstham. Here the original lay-out has been greatly confused by quarrying and the construction of great roads and railways. Beyond all these the ridgeway (Pl. IIIB) and terraceway can be traced again, the former carrying the Pilgrims' Way tradition, and they were connected to the Gatton Park ridgeway by tracks passing north and south of Merstham Church, of which traces still remain in the gardens there.

At White Hill, near Caterham, the escarpment becomes very precipitous and indented, with sharp spurs; the terraceway therefore rises at this point to join the ridgeway round the top of Gravelly Hill, goes across the Caterham-Godstone main road (and former Roman road) just on the crest of the ridge, and so on to Ganger's Hill north of Godstone. Here ridgeway and terraceway divide again, the former continuing as a road past Woldingham to Tatsfield, while the terraceway, marked first by a derelict lane through a wood and then by a line of hedgerows or field boundaries, skirts the top of Oxted Tunnel entrance and the lower side of the chalk-pit workings, reaching its normal position at the hill foot there.

In this section, between Gravelly Hill and Titsey, occurs another strange Ordnance Survey course for the Pilgrims' Way. For some reason now quite unknown, they show it in straight lengths like Roman road alignments, traversing quite impossible country, much of it on the sticky Gault Clay well away from the escarpment, and at the Gravelly Hill end ascending directly the exceptionally steep escarpment there. This course could only have been inserted by persons lacking all knowledge of the true meaning and character of the ancient trackway.

Titsey—Otford

Just beyond Titsey we enter Kent, and from here until we near Folkestone there is little that calls for comment except at the river crossings. Ridgeway and terraceway continue for many miles, the latter well known as the Pilgrims' Way (Pl. VA). The ridgeway is sometimes obstructed, but is generally a lane or footpath, and very frequently in Kent it carries a parish boundary.

The River Darent at Otford is only a small stream, and the terraceway route appears to have crossed the valley directly, although this brings it on to the Gault for about a quarter of a mile. Close to it stand the ruins of Archbishop Warham's Palace. The ridgeway, however, made a separate crossing about a mile to the north, at Filston Hall. An old trackway can be traced from the ridge east of Pol Hill down to the crossing, and beyond it a direct line of hedgerows carrying a parish boundary leads straight up to the main ridge again at Greenhill Wood, above Otford on the east, and thence as a track, broken in places but traceable by field boundaries, on by Cotman's Ash and Wrotham Hill.

The Medway Crossings (Fig 6)

Ridgeway and terraceway are readily traceable right on to the great gap in the Downs through which the Medway, largest of all the Wealden rivers, flows, and again beyond it along the monotonously regular escarpment to Eastwell near Ashford, just before the Stour crossing. The gorge of the Medway is like a great Λ pointing to the north, for the escarpments recede on each side towards the Weald. Thus the crossing of the valley is only a mile or less at Cuxton-Borstal, but 3 miles or so at Snodland-Burham, measuring between the escarpments. Crossing the river itself must have presented much greater problems to the primitive traveller than any of the other rivers met with on this route; the others are small fordable streams, but the Medway is tidal and so much larger that it seems doubtful if it could have been crossed, save perhaps at exceptional periods of low water, without the use of a raft or boat. Moreover, it is usually bordered upon one or other bank by marshy ground on which landing would have been difficult.

It is this close relation of mud and chalk which caused the neighbourhood of the river here to become infested with enormous cement works

whose chalk-pits have swallowed up whole areas of the riverside land, including many traces of ancient history, so that we have to seek for ancient trackways around works, sometimes themselves derelict and overgrown, and among pits often half-a-mile long. 'Cement-land' is the only really unpleasant area on this route.

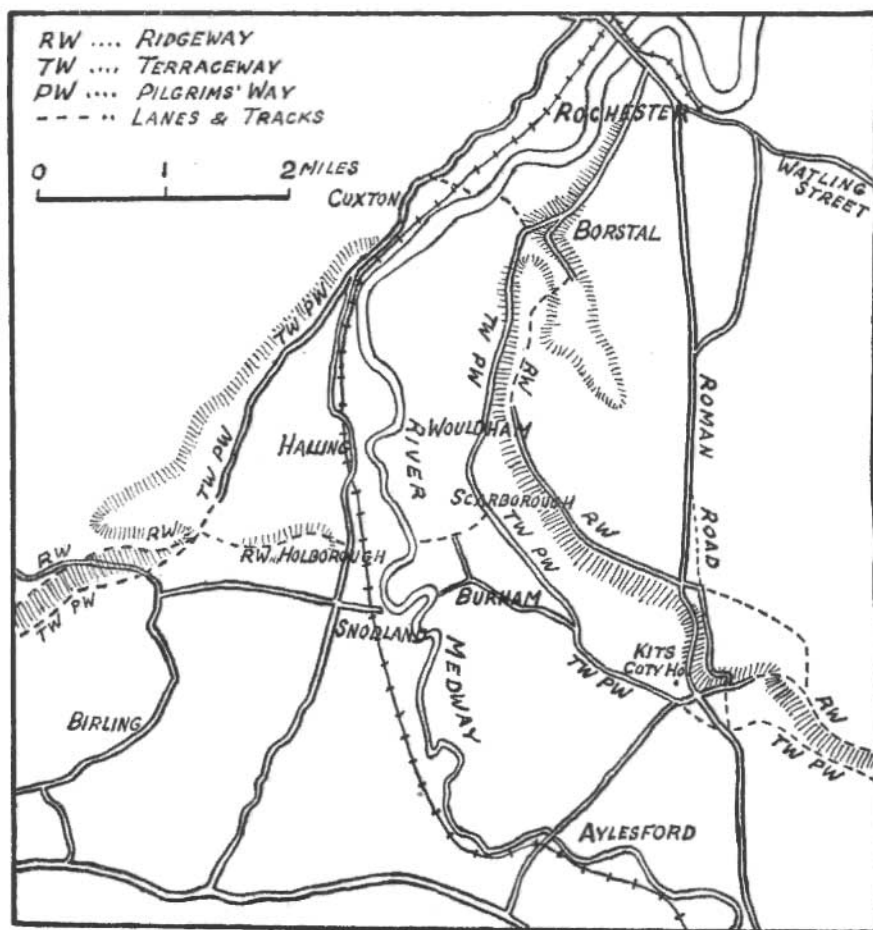


FIG. 6

It is quite plain that our normal terraceway continues northward below the escarpments on both sides of the river. The main ridgeway descends to join the terraceway near the southern mouth of the gorge, coming down a spur of Birling Hill, on the west, as a very well-marked hollow way, and doing the same at a convenient combe in the escarpment on the east near Blue Bell Hill. A branch ridgeway also runs along the top of the eastern escarpment to Borstal, and a similar one can probably be traced along the western one to Cuxton. But where was the crossing?

Belloc discussed this in great detail,¹ admitting that at least four points could lay some claim (though one, Aylesford, lay too far south and in the Gault Clay land to be seriously considered), and this may well be agreed. He gave a list of the principles governing the choice of a crossing by prehistoric tracks, such as shortness of the traverse, a good view of the crossing from each side, a suitable ford, a spur leading down to each bank, etc., which are valuable and correct. But in applying these to the problem here he was, it seems, ultimately too much swayed by the presence of religious buildings quite unconnected with prehistoric considerations, and this led him to decide exclusively for the Snodland-Burham crossing. No doubt this crossing was much used by later traffic, but its approach from the west lies on the Gault for half a mile, it ignores the useful Chalk ridge parallel with it on the north which gives a dry footing to a point not far from the river at Holborough, and the river at Snodland has steep muddy banks and a wide zone of marsh on the Burham side. The Holborough ridge, on the other hand, has an obvious trackway along it from the very point where the ridgeway on Birling Hill comes down to the terraceway, and this ridge is the continuation, in subdued form, of the main escarpment. A large Roman tumulus stands beside it just above Holborough.² A similar track leads up the eastern slope from the Medway to join the terraceway there at a farm called Scarborough.

But why then should the terraceways continue north? The reason may well be this. Below Halling, near Holborough, the river widens into a tidal estuary, though sheltered, and with *firm ground* right down to the water on *both* banks, especially near Cuxton and Borstal. If a raft or boat had to be used in any case, it might well be easier to use this where firm ground gave good landings on either bank, even if this involved a somewhat longer water crossing. A much better view of the whole crossing can be had from either shore there too. Altogether, this is a crossing to which, it seems, Belloc did not give sufficient consideration, especially as he mentions that traditionally it was said to be a favoured crossing.

To sum up, the existence of the terraceways on either bank indicates that traffic did go farther north than the Snodland-Burham or Holborough-Scarborough crossings, although these must have been in use too, and the probability is that different crossings were used from time to time as conditions of the river bed and tidal water varied. It would be misleading to point to any one spot as '*the crossing*.'

Westwell—Wye (Fig. 7)

Beyond the Medway gorge ridgeway and terraceway resume their normal courses, continuing again for many miles, above Boxley with its once famous Abbey, Lenham and Charing. The ridgeway is here

¹ H. Belloc, *op. cit.*, 241 ff.

² *Arch. Cant.*, lviii (1946), 68.

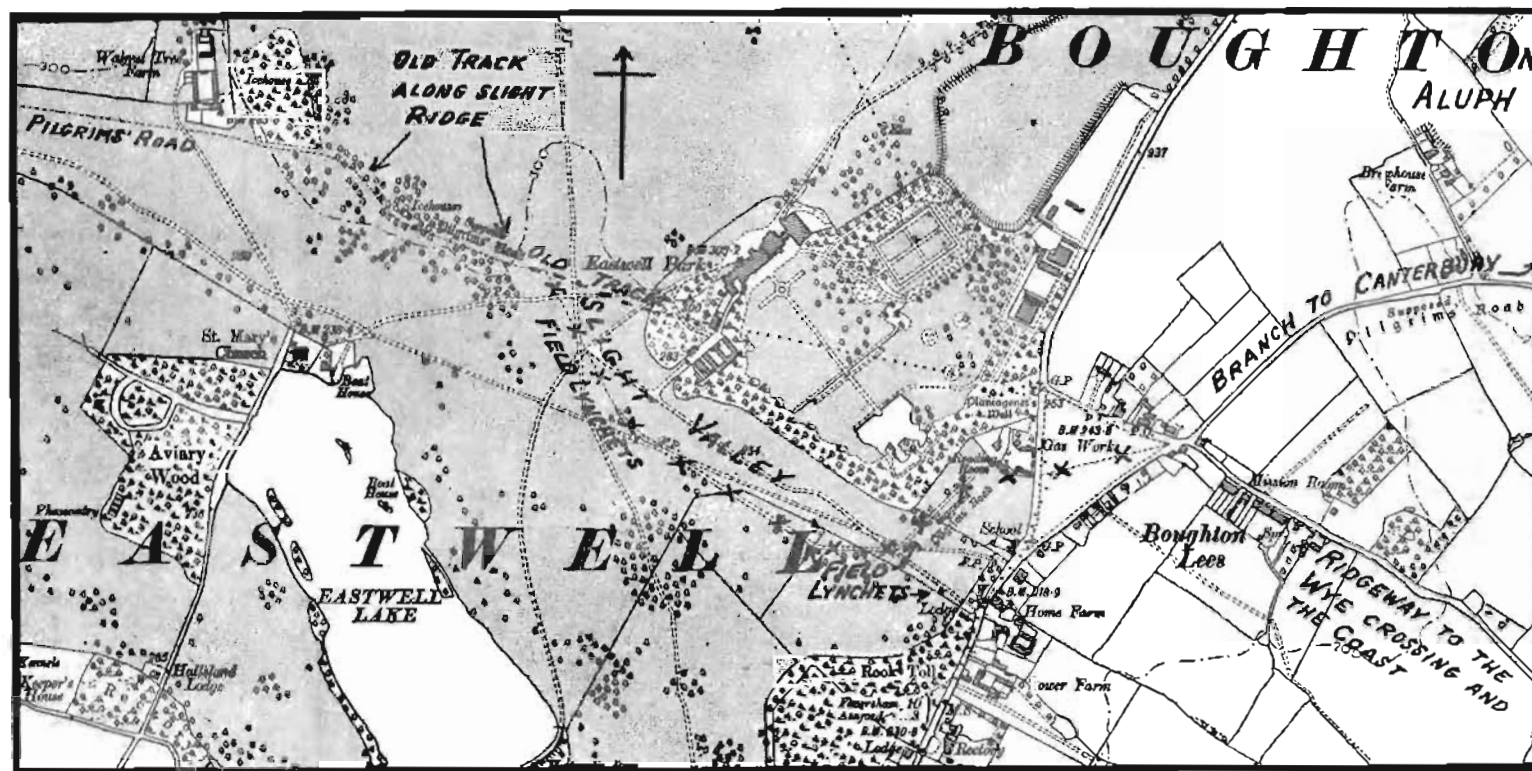


FIG. 7

(Reproduced from the Ordnance Survey Map with the sanction of the Controller of H.M. Stationery Office, Crown Copyright reserved)



A. THE RIDGEWAY : THE DROVE ROAD, LOOKING E. TOWARDS NEWLANDS CORNER



B. THE RIDGEWAY : LOOKING W. TOWARDS MERSTHAM



C. THE RIDGEWAY : LOOKING NW. ON WYE DOWNS

PLATE IV



A. TERRACEWAY (*below*) AND RIDGEWAY (*in bushes above*) W. OF NEWLANDS CORNER,
VIEWED FROM THE SAND RIDGE



B. WESTON WOOD AND THE LINK RIDGE (*left centre*) FROM NEWLANDS CORNER.
TERRACEWAY IN LOWER FOREGROUND, SAND RIDGEWAY (*Pilgrims' Way*) BEYOND



A. THE TERRACEWAY : LOOKING W. NEAR TATSFIELD ACROSS THE LOWER SPURS OF THE CHALK



B. THE TERRACEWAY : LOOKING NW. NEAR BRABOURNE



A. ST. CATHARINE'S CHAPEL: S. SIDE. NOTE THE UPPER DOORWAY (*in blocked centre window*) DESIGNED TO OPEN INWARDS AND (*seen through the next window*) THE UPPER NORTH DOORWAY DESIGNED TO OPEN OUTWARDS



B. ST. CATHARINE'S CHAPEL: THE LOWER N. DOORWAY WITHOUT STOPS, AND (*above*) THE UPPER DOORWAY OPENING OUTWARDS

very often only a lane or a cart track through fields, sometimes only marked by a line of hedgerows. After crossing the top of Charing Hill it follows a track through Longbeach Wood, and at the eastern end of this, above the village of Westwell, the main escarpment ends in a sharp diminishing spur down the crest of which the ridgeway goes to the very tip of it at Dunn Street (now partly obscured by a chalk-pit), where the terraceway joins it. The track then enters the very large Eastwell Park, following the park boundary bank for some distance, and then going north of the church, along a slight ridge where it is very clearly marked. The main escarpment bears away to the north-east beside the wide valley of the Stour, and the ridge we are following leads directly towards the river at Wye, exactly as did the ridge at Holborough on the Medway or at Dorking on the Mole.

On approaching the mansion of Eastwell (Fig. 7) the track is very plain where it crosses a slight valley and goes right up to the enclosed grounds of the house, on the far side of which, at Boughton Lees green, it is continued by the road to Wye along a slight but definite ridge. There can, it seems, be little doubt that the original track passed right through the grounds. The Ordnance Survey mark a circuitous route here, turning off the obvious track at a sharp angle and following the western side of the slight valley, along banks which appear to have been field lynchets accumulated before the park was formed, turning again at a sharp angle near the eastern gate of the park towards Boughton Lees, an improbable and unnecessary deviation.

At Boughton Lees the route to Canterbury, the Pilgrims' Way, branches off at right angles towards Boughton Aluph, Godmersham and Chilham, its position suggesting that it is indeed a branch, whereas the main route goes straight forward along the slight ridge towards Wye and the coast.

Wye—the Coast (Figs. 8, 9)

Beyond the Stour the road continues its direction straight through Wye to the foot of the escarpment of Wye Downs, where the same dual track of ridgeway (Pl. IIIc) and terraceway (Pl. Vb) forms again, exactly similar to those we have followed for so long. After a few miles, however, at Brabourne Downs, the ridgeway descends again to rejoin the terraceway in order to cross the big circular combe of Stowting. Beyond this the terraceway continues in its normal position through Monks' Horton, Postling, Frogholt and Pean, but the escarpment is here very deeply indented and the ridgeway keeps well away from it after Stowting, taking a more direct course, mainly followed by modern roads, through Etchinghill and Paddlesworth, coming out to the edge of the escarpment again only near Hawkinge. The escarpment, so well seen behind Folkestone, is very steep here, and so, after Pean, the terraceway climbs to the crest and rejoins the main ridgeway just behind Round Hill near Hawkinge.

The ridgeway now bears the name Crete Way (most regrettably modernised by the Folkestone Corporation as Crete Road and Crete Road West in real suburban style), and follows the crest to the junction with the Folkestone-Dover road by the Valiant Sailor Inn. The form of the junction suggests that the main road is the natural continuation of the Crete Way, and very soon the road (the older one) comes right

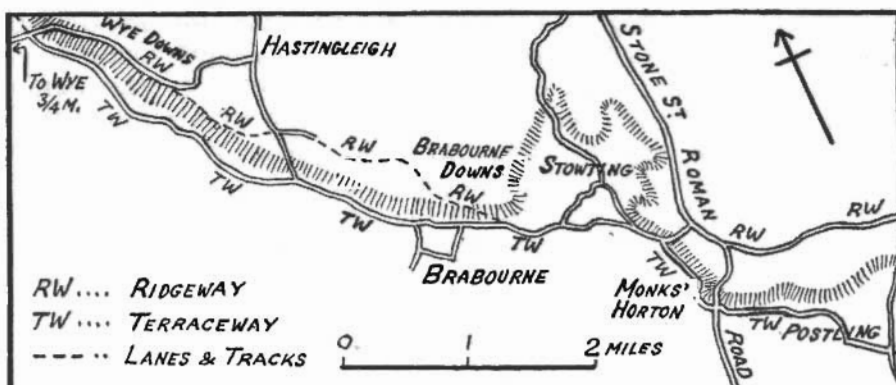


FIG. 8

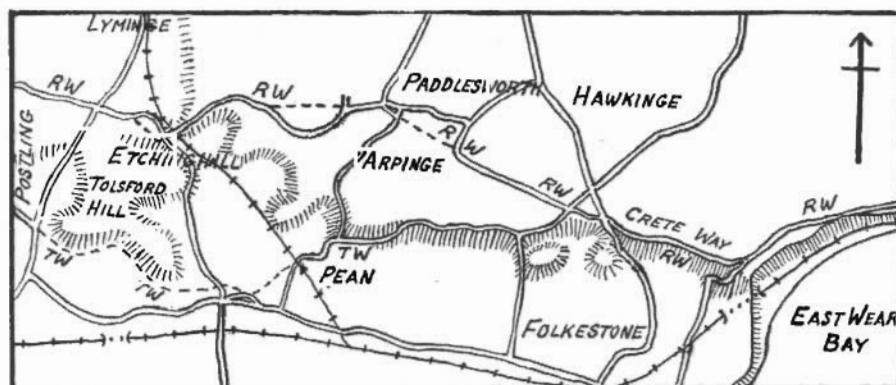


FIG. 9

on to the cliff edge at Capel-le-Ferne. It is impossible to be sure what course was followed here in earlier times for coast erosion has been continuous, but it seems likely that the route would have followed the highest ridge towards some haven at or near Dover, or, earlier still, may have crossed the site of the Channel to the Continent from near this point.

III. THE PILGRIMS' WAY TRADITION

Considerable doubt has been cast recently upon the reality of the alleged pilgrim traffic between Winchester and Canterbury by this route, notably by Dr. W. Hooper¹ and F. C. Elliston Erwood,² though this does not, of course, affect its obvious importance as a *prehistoric* thorough-

¹ *Surrey Arch. Coll.*, xlv (1936), 47.

² *Arch. Cant.*, xxxvii (1925), 1.

fare. Very briefly, the objections are that the name does not appear on any maps before about 1770, that the places now styled Pilgrims' this-and-that had other names previously, that well-known early writers (Lambarde, Camden, Cobbett, etc.) make no reference to it, although its character might have been expected to attract them if then known, that no references to pilgrimages actually using this way can be traced in early writings, and that Kentish bequests to other pilgrimages such as Walsingham are on record, but none to St. Thomas. These are formidable objections which deserve attention, and we can only mention them here, since it is the earlier aspect of the route with which we are mainly concerned. The evidence against is admittedly of negative character, however, and there is one positive factor in favour of the tradition which seems to have been overlooked, and as it is of considerable importance it appears desirable to include it here.

The evidence concerns St. Catharine's Chapel (Pl. VIA), on the bluff above the River Wey near Guildford, about threequarters of a mile from the town, and just where the traditional route crosses the river. A member of this Institute, Thackeray Turner, published an account of this building as long ago as 1890.¹ The building is now a battered roofless shell, but shows signs of having been a finely decorated structure. The feature of striking interest is the number and formation of its doorways, no less than five of them. Turner points out that the west door has the unusual width (for a building of this size) of six feet, and the stone jambs have *no door-stop* except in the pointed arch above. The same anomaly exists in the north door (Pl. VIB), but the south door has the normal stop cut in the stone jambs. Above these two doors were window openings, but these had been blocked and two more doors inserted therein, evidently to give access to some sort of gallery inside. These doors had stops of the normal form, but the strange thing here is that they are designed for the south door to open *inwards* but for the north door to open *outwards*, a most abnormal arrangement, suggesting that they were planned for the passage of numbers of people through the gallery from south to north. Turner considers, too, that the extra wide west door and the absence of stops for both it and the original north door point to the use of movable shutters there, with perhaps a grille inside, so that persons outside could get a view of something within the Chapel.

The whole arrangement clearly suggests provision for the handling of visitors in large numbers, and, although an annual fair was customarily held there, this in itself seems inadequate to account for so remarkable a building. Parties of devout people visiting it frequently seem necessary to explain it, and thus the battered little building may retain vital evidence in support of the pilgrim tradition. This evidence is positive, and critics of the tradition must needs dispose of it to establish their case. So far it has not even been mentioned by them.

¹ *Arch. Journ.*, xlvii (1890), 55.