

HISTORICAL EVIDENCE FOR ROMAN ROADS IN N.E. DERBYSHIRE

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THIS article records some of the results of research into Roman roads in north-east Derbyshire and south Yorkshire. The work began in an attempt to find evidence for the course of the Roman road heretofore known as Rykniel Street, along the line originally proposed by the bishop of Cloyne and most recently supported by Margary.¹ No strong evidence was found for this particular route, but it became apparent that there was evidence for other routes in N.E. Derbyshire, and Cockerton and Cameron have suggested this.² "Names (containing) Old English *straet* 'Roman Road' . . . speak of a Roman road running past or through the place. Such names give help in determining the line of Roman roads or often even tell of such roads that are now unknown";³ investigations proceeded on the assumption that this quotation applies, though probably with less conviction, to field-names as well as to place-names, and the work done by the Viatores in the Midlands has shown the validity of the assumption.⁴ Finally, study of an area bounded by the county boundary on the north and east, Pinxton and Alfreton in the south, and Chesterfield and Unstone on the west, was made, and all the relevant tithe awards, enclosure awards, the Fairbank Collection, and deeds consulted. Much of this work was carried out in the Sheffield City Library,⁵ and at all times field-work has followed documentary work, sometimes in unrewarding conditions.

Where a National Grid reference is given in this article, the sheet letters SK are assumed, and all these references have been checked for accuracy on the 6-inch scale maps. Open-cast coal-mining has been widespread in N.E. Derbyshire, so that much on the maps and on the ground has been obliterated. The more important items have been marked on the map by means of symbols (fig. 15).

I. *Northwards continuation of the Roman road from Little Chester, Derby, to Wingerworth*

Roman finds in the Chesterfield vicinity are rather scanty. If there was a

¹ I. D. Margary, *Roman Roads in Britain*, II, 1957, 143-5.

² R. W. P. Cockerton, in *The Derbyshire Countryside*, nos. 33-5; 37-9 (January 1939—July 1940); K. Cameron, *The Place-Names of Derbyshire*, 1959, xviii.

³ E. Ekwall, *Oxford Dictionary of English Place-Names*, 4th ed., 1960, xxxi.

⁴ The Viatores, *Roman Roads in the South-East Midlands*, 1964, *passim*.

⁵ The Local History and Archives, and General Reference departments were used, and the patient staff there were ever-ready to help.

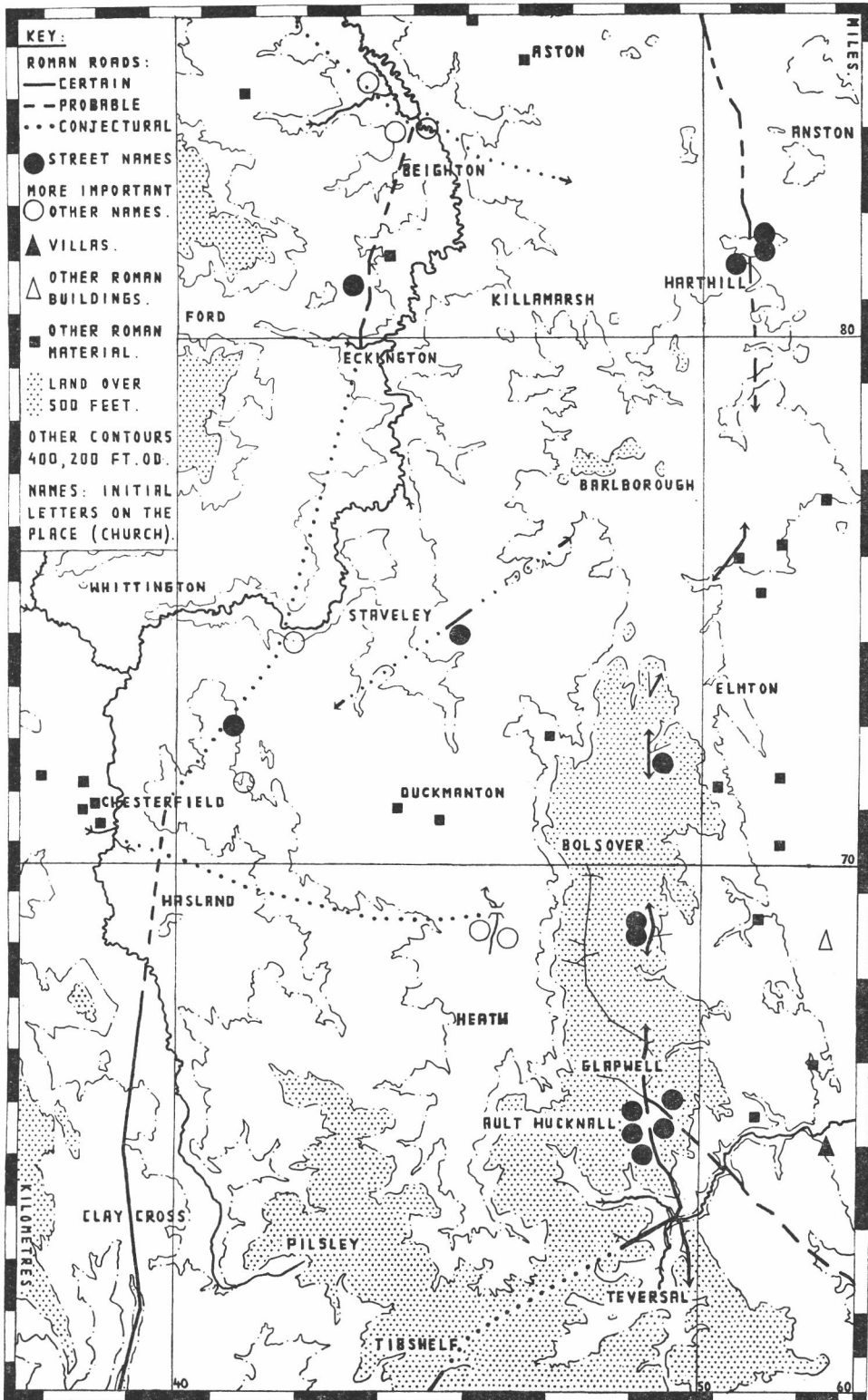


FIG. 15. Map of N.E. Derbyshire showing Roman roads, principal place-names and finds of Roman material.

Roman settlement in Chesterfield, and a Roman road went to it, then this road would not cross the river Rother into Hasland, in which direction the last excavated sections are unavoidably pointing. Cameron⁶ reads "Chesterfield . . . Open country near or belonging to a fortification", and this could mean that the "fortification" was some distance away.⁷

In the past, no reference has been made to any crossing of the river Rother. But this "brook", as the bishop of Cloyne calls it, downstream from Whittington/Newbold, would not be so easy to cross at any point and in all seasons, and a ford across the river would be valuable.

The presence of "Streetfield(s)" in Eckington (Mosbrough) has often been noted,⁸ but no attempt has been made to explain why this name occurs close to, but not on, the route through Ridgeway. Are there, in fact, two roads running in the same direction? The evidence seems to indicate only one.

The most northerly excavated sections of this road lie in Wingerworth, south and north of Mill Lane.⁹ It is concluded from these that the Roman road went on to cross the river Rother in the area 394681 and then travelled to the top of the hill to fall into the present road through Hasland. However, in the Hasland enclosure award (1780) orders are given for this road to be newly laid out, although it may represent the successor of a previous way,¹⁰ and it is bounded on the west, in part, by "Ancient Enclosures". On the enclosure award map, the continuation of the line of this road cuts through the north-east corner of Hady Wood (397712); the north and east boundaries of this wood were the township boundaries. Apart from a "dole in Green or House Close" (39656965) marked on the tithe award map (1850), there are no other clues to the course of the road near here, and coal was being mined in the Hady area at least as early as 1632.¹¹

The fields to the south of Dobbin Clough Farm look interesting, but there used to be a coal mine to the south of the farm, and there is waste scattered all over the fields around here. However, the Tipton tithe award map (1840) shows a track, leading from the aforesaid corner of Hady Wood, to well to the east of the present farm house. That there was a route near here in medieval times is suggested by the name "Cross Field" for the field at 398713, as now, which might perhaps refer to a lost cross by the wayside.¹²

From the Hady Hill area northwards, the course would surely be dictated by its destination on the banks of the river Rother. Careful search was made in the Fairbank Collection and in the tithe awards for Whittington, Brimington and Staveley, even to the extent of finding the name for each field on

⁶ Cameron, 231.

⁷ The example of Lichfield may be cited here. A. L. F. Rivet, in *Town and Country in Roman Britain*, 1958, writes on p. 150: "*Letocetum* (Wall) was evidently intended as the centre of a *pagus* (or territorial subdivision, p. 66) . . . That territory was . . . attributed to it . . . is suggested by the survival of its name as one element in that of Lichfield, two miles to the north . . ." The same could apply to Chesterfield. See appendix for suggestions about the site of the fortification.

⁸ Cameron, xviii, 251.

⁹ R. H. Oakley, *D.A.J.*, LXXV (1955), 144-9.

¹⁰ See the plan of 1633-7 in the Bagshawe Collection, no. 287.

¹¹ Deed no. DDP 61/3 in the Portland Collection, Nottingham.

¹² The phrase "as now" means that the feature concerned was the same when the latest 2½-in. O.S. maps were published (but not necessarily now).

or near the river, and there are no field-names for any ford downstream from Lockoford, Tapton, except one in Whittington parish and one in Staveley parish. The river crossing near Dixon's Lock, Brimington, is comparatively recent, and at Smithy Bridge, to the west of Staveley Works, only bridge names survive. There was no tithe award made for Whittington, but in the Fairbank Collection there are several plans which, between them, cover a large part of the parish. On one¹³ are marked three (or 4) fields called "Ford Meadows", which lie south of New Bridge Lane, downstream from the junction of the rivers Rother and Whitting; 392738 will serve as one grid reference for them all, and further consideration will be given to these later.

In the Staveley tithe award (map 1841) there are three fields called "Shackles Forth". This name seems to be the successor to the "Shattleforth" and "Shottleforth" meadow mentioned several times in a list of 1639,¹⁴ but despite the consultation of medieval documents for Staveley, no earlier reference has been found. However, it seems a peculiar fact that apart from a small area east of Renishaw (Eckington), the river Rother is everywhere used as a township or parish boundary, downstream from Chesterfield, except in one place, and that is Staveley; it would seem that there was a crossing of the river Rother in this parish at a very early date.¹⁵

Therefore, a suggested route would be from the road at the south end of Green Lane,¹⁶ through "The City" (the curious name given to the houses here), to the Brimington Common road near the top of Furnace Lane, and then down the hill to cross the Trough Brook near the present road bridge, rising and turning slightly north again to the crossing at Shackles Forth, wherever this might have been. All this is surmise, but the Brimington/Tapton township boundary used to run south-westerly from Grove Road to Dark Lane (404721),¹⁷ and the parish boundary on the west edge of Parker's Wood, Staveley, is also suggestive. Any route to the river Rother from Hady Hill involves crossing quite steep valleys, but that suggested is graded fairly easily. There is one more piece of evidence of potential importance. In the tithe award for Brimington are two fields called "Nether Long Shut" and "Upper Long Shut";¹⁸ these fields with the same number and in the same position are discussed in the history of the township by Brailsford:¹⁹ "Two fields (nos. 30 and 40) are called "Nether Long Street" and "Upper Long Street" . . . It is probable that the fields named "Street" . . . are the oldest field-names existing . . .". Apparently, these forms of the name were taken

¹³ Plan no. Whit. 1L, dated 1801.

¹⁴ Hardwick MSS. no. 29a in Chatsworth: "A Survey of the Lordship of Staveley, Anno Dom. 1639".

¹⁵ Judging by their boundaries, the three fields on the tithe award map retained the same shape as they had when the Chesterfield Canal was made in 1777: there was no indication of a crossing or any road or lane in the vicinity leading to a crossing. The National Grid references for the fields, 42307450, 42157450, and 42057460, are marked by one circle on the map. Their numbers in the tithe award were 99, 101, and 134.

¹⁶ Green Lane is an old lane. It keeps more or less to the top of the ridge, and could be an old branch off the route suggested; this lane is also considered later.

¹⁷ On the Brimington map for the tithe award, 1840.

¹⁸ Their Grid references are 41207275 and 41007270, and one symbol marks their position on the map.

¹⁹ V. Brailsford, *A History of Brimington*, 1938, 56.

from a map of 1840, as Professor Cameron has very kindly pointed out,²⁰ adding the comment that "The form Long Street is *certainly* a good one, even though the same field is called Long Shut on the tithe award . . . There is absolutely no doubt about Long Street here". No earlier references have been found, but the name is also interesting since Long Street suggests a good length of straight road.

Northwards from the river, the next piece of substantial evidence occurs in the parish of Eckington, where east of the village of Mosbrough are the "Street Fields", also marked on the plan. Very few documents for the medieval period in Eckington have been found, and the earliest reference to this field-name seen so far dates to 1635:²¹ "Streete Feild . . . One selion therof in the same Feild cont. twoe Roodes lyinge upon a furlong there called the Longe Streete between the land . . . on the South and the land . . . on the North and buttinge upon the High Streete towards the East and upon the Swayenhouse peece . . . towards the West". Other references, to "Street Gate", occur in 1650 and 1691,²² but an extract from the Eckington manor court roll for 1728 has the interesting entry: "a close called le Tenn Roods . . . abutting upon the highway called Street Gate on the east; . . .". Plans in the Fairbank Collection help to elucidate these references. One plan of 1773 shows land in the "Street Field",²³ and the south part of these fields (along Hollow Lane) is divided up into numerous very narrow strips, running east to west, for the whole width of the present "Street Fields" (from the B6053 to Streetfield Lane). (See fig. 16.) Immediately to the west of these are the "Swain House Pieces", in between Hollow Lane on the south and "Naw Hill a Common" on the north. Another plan²⁴ is accompanied by a survey dated 1796, and these demonstrate two fields named "Ten Roods", which are now in one, at 43808080. This shows that the B6053 at this point was called "Street Gate" in 1728, and the evidence from the documents and plans quoted suggests that the "High Street" is the same as the "Street Gate". (Gate from *Gata*, which is Old Norse for road or way.)

The total of this information is that the street is the B6053 when east of the Street Fields, and the plans show that all this road from the west end of Pipworth Lane, Eckington, northwards was bounded by old enclosures on both sides. It is not too large an assumption to make that all this road from Eckington to Halfway represents the Street, and is, therefore, suggestive of the course of a Roman road. However, work on the section between the river Rother at Shackles Forth and Pipworth Lane has produced no indications of such a road, but the course as drawn on the map is easily graded, yet occupies a fairly commanding position, and crosses the stream near Toadpool Farm at the same point as an old lane marked on the Fairbank plans but now gone. The area around this crossing has been disturbed by industrial

²⁰ Personal communications, dated 29/9/65 and 6/11/63. See also the mention in Cameron, xviii.

²¹ Deed no. 933, Wheat Collection.

²² Extracts from the Parliamentary Survey of the manor of Eckington, 1650, published in T. W. Hall, *Descriptive Catalogue of the Edmunds Collection*, 1924; the Eckington manor court roll was published in the same volume. The 1691 references are contained in the Wheat Collection no. 1027.

²³ Eck. 34S.

²⁴ Eck. 8L, and the survey is MB 178. The fields called "Ten Roods" are numbered 1768 and 1769.

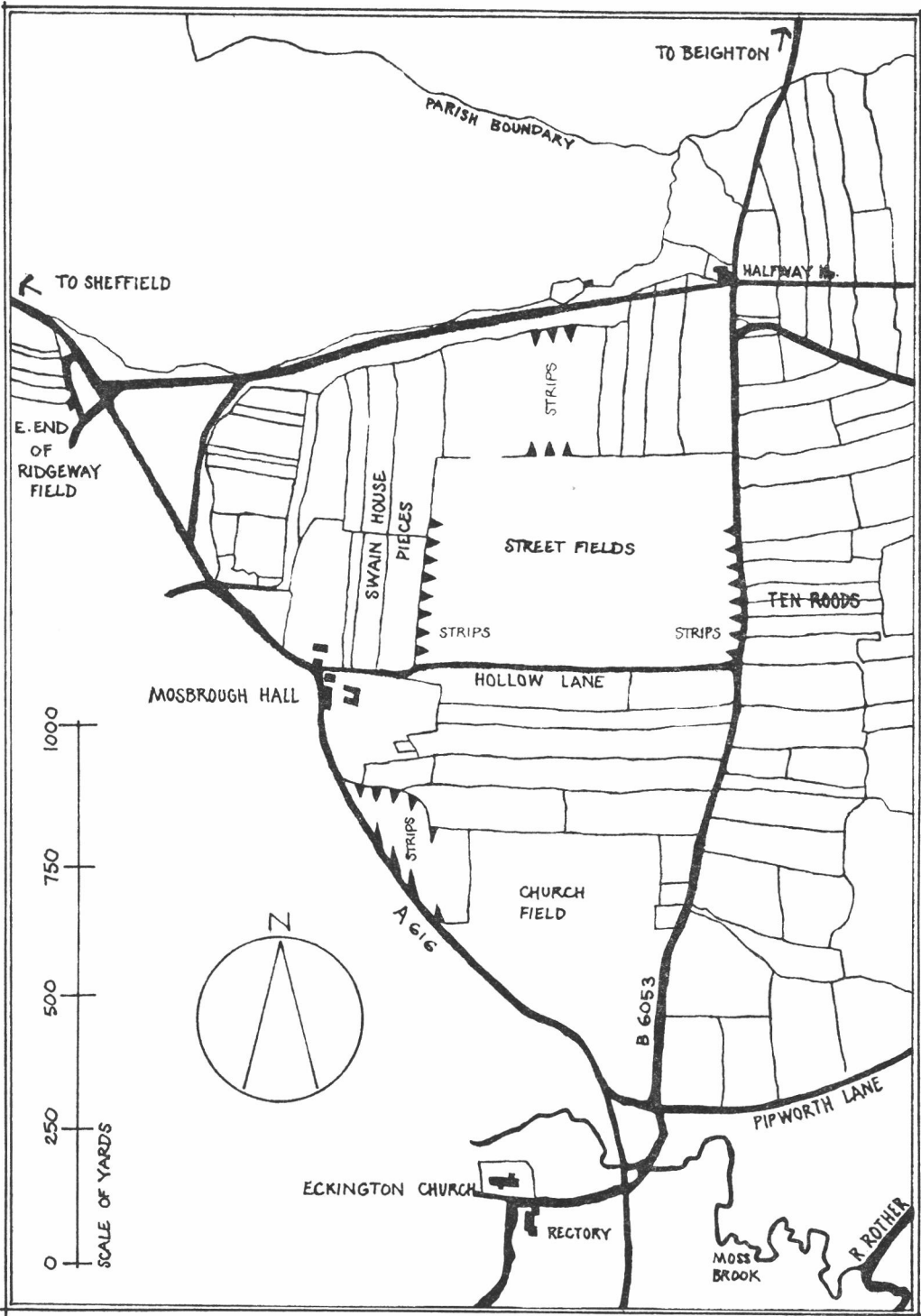


FIG. 16. Map of the Street Fields, Mosbrough.

working, but there is a disused ford of uncertain date, which appeared by probing to have a hard base. The main road to the east of the village of Eckington, as far as the boundary of Renishaw Park, was newly laid out as a diagonal across common land on the enclosure maps, but it was almost certainly preceded by an earlier track.²⁵ It is significant, too, that the old route from Renishaw to Mosbrough went into Eckington and out again to cross the Moss Brook, apparently at a ford, at the point where the present B6053 crosses the same stream.

From Halfway northwards there is no more evidence, except that in 1778 the way from Mosbrough to Killamarsh involved a short stretch of the Beighton road by Halfway House, showing that the latter road was of some antiquity. A likely route from Halfway would go just to the east of Waterthorpe farm, but the descent to the Shire Brook would be very steep. A series of field-names in the Fairbank surveys for the enclosure of Handsworth involving a "Stone Ford" across the Shire Brook seems to be no help.²⁶ However, the present position of a Roman road at Halfway, and another excavated Roman road on Brinsworth Common travelling southwards,²⁷ might indicate that the river Rother was to be crossed somewhere in the Beighton/Woodhouse area, and there is some slight evidence to support this:

(a) There is an interesting map of Aston-cum-Aughton in the Sheffield Library, of which the date is unknown except that it is pre-1766 enclosure.²⁸ This shows the roads on Wales Common, and one of these travels almost straight WNW to ESE, but its east end is a little doubtful and the road is not marked to the river on the west.²⁹ The present Waleswood Hall seems to be marked near the west end of the road as drawn.

(b) An open circle on the river Rother on the map represents the "Castlesteads", Beighton, to which there is a reference in 1608, and of which Glover³⁰ says in 1833: "Within half a mile of Beighton on the East bank of the Rother is some ancient earthworks, supposed to be . . . Roman". Fairbank,³¹ in 1792, marks the "Castle Steads", and north of them, east of the river, wrote "Beighton Castle" in ink, with what might be a crude sketch of the remains in pencil underneath the ink; in 1818, Fairbank³² gives the names "Great Castlesteads" and "Little Castlesteads" for fields then surrounded by water, now largely obliterated,³³ at 44678382 and 44808390, and the first edition of the 6-inch O.S. map shows two fields north of the river

²⁵ Fairbank ERo. 151R is a clear demonstration of old and new roads in 1778.

²⁶ The Handsworth enclosure award, enrolled 1806, is amongst the Arundel Castle Muniments (A.C.M. S 69). The maps were "Drawn by W. & J. Fairbank, 1805", and the "ford" field-names were in the vicinity of 425840.

²⁷ D. Greene, *Trans. Hunter Arch. Soc.*, VII, pt. 2, 1952.

²⁸ Map no. MD 3516.

²⁹ Likewise, the present B6053 is not marked to the river from the north-east. The east end of the Wales Common road is probably at 472839, on or near the present, later, road.

³⁰ S. Glover. *The History and Gazetteer of the County of Derby*, pt. 1, Vol. II, 1833.

³¹ Fairbank MB 31, p. 15.

³² Bei. 1L, a copy made in 1818 of the enclosure award map, 1796.

³³ The piece of river immediately to the south of these is that at which the road on MD 3516 appears to be aiming.

loops, south of Wragg Lane, called "Castle Stead".³⁴ The conclusion drawn from this information is that there was a feature known as the "Castlesteads", which may have been a fortified dwelling, possibly (but unlikely in view of the situation) a Roman camp, which was very close to the crossing point of the roads marked on the pre-1766 map, showing that this crossing was of some importance, and perhaps of early date, the fortified place being founded to control it.

(c) The enclosure map also shows four fields which are called "Causeway Meadows",³⁵ and these lie between the Ochre Dike on the north-west (south-east of the station site), and the river on the east. Further, the 1840 edition of the 1-inch O.S. map reads "Stratfield", which appears to apply to that part of Beighton west of the road bridge across the river Rother.³⁶

(d) Another reference which may be of assistance is also represented on the map. The fields in the angle formed by the Shire Brook and the river Rother at their junction are called ". . . Heap o' Stor(r)s", and the road alongside the railway line, now called Junction Road, used to be known as "Long Storrs Lane" and its course has not been much altered by later developments. (Several Fairbank plans contain this evidence, and the changes in the fields may be observed in these).³⁷ Even if "Storrs" has not replaced "Stones" during the passage of time, the word itself is derived from the Old Norse *Storð*, meaning "brushwood". Miss Greene³⁸ in her excavation of a number of roads on Brinsworth Common found that the earliest road was laid over marshy ground on a mat of brushwood; there could be a connexion here. There may also be some link between this reference and the next, found in Hunter's *Hallamshire*, which quotes a certain Mr. John Shortridge.³⁹ "In 1847, when I was contractor for the railway through Sheffield to Retford, and the branch from Woodhouse Junction to Beighton, my foreman, William Stevens, pointed out to me a certain paved road which I had no doubt was of the Roman period, having seen several of the same character. The road is to be found a few chains to the north side of Beighton Station, and passes under the embankment at a very oblique angle, about eighteen inches below the surface, and was discovered in cutting the side ditches to the said embankment".⁴⁰

³⁴ Map E 12M in the Sheffield Library is a copy of part of this map, and its date is 1847-57. A National Grid reference for the name is 447841.

³⁵ The fields are nos. 571, 2, 3, 9, and there is a reference in 1608 to "Cawsie meadowe"; Cameron (211) derives this from *Caucie* which is Old Northern French for "Embankment".

³⁶ Map E 47M is one copy of this map in the Sheffield Library. The "d" of the word "Stratfield" is at 442839, and an open circle has been drawn on the accompanying map to represent this.

³⁷ The lane is on Han. 52L, Han. 51S, and FB 83, pp. 24-5 (1776-98). The fields are on Han. 56L, 52L, 53S, 45S, and FB 10 (1756-1828). All are on map 12 in the enclosure award with the names of the fields given in the survey. There is also a "Green Gate Lane" in Woodhouse, near here (430849), which A. H. Smith (*The Place-Names of the West Riding of Yorkshire*, I, 1961, 166) equates with the "verdam viam" mentioned in a deed of 1314, which itself gives no further information of use.

³⁸ D. Greene, in *Trans. Hunter Arch. Soc.*, VI, pt. 4. Miss Greene was the first to discuss the route in this area, near the railway line, in any detail.

³⁹ J. Hunter, *Hallamshire*, 1869 ed., 23 n. The footnote is quoted in full, since extracts tend to be misleading, and not all its information is appreciated.

⁴⁰ This note is appended to the sentence "There has been so much cultivation in the country between Rotherham or Templeborough and Chesterfield, that it is perhaps unreasonable to expect to find any remains of the ancient high-way." This note was written 100 years ago!

Rightly or wrongly, from these observations the conclusion is drawn that the Roman road from Templeborough travelled in the same direction as last seen on Brinsworth Common for about $1\frac{1}{2}$ miles, then turned south-east and passed under the line of the railway from NW to SE at an oblique angle to a point near 446840 where it crossed the river Rother and climbed up the hill to Waleswood Hall, perhaps approximately on the course of Wraggs Lane. The final destination of this road would be Littleborough on the river Trent, and this could be the route to this area of north Derbyshire and south Yorkshire from Lincoln, perhaps built at an early date.⁴¹ When the route from Little Chester (Derby) was completed from the south, it would find a road to the Templeborough area already made and it would fall into this road at, or near, the ford across the river Rother. Hence the Roman route from Halfway would follow the present line generally to the junction near Causeway Meadows. The road through Swallow Nest to Aughton is not necessarily Roman, although on the map in Ogilby (1675), the portion running south-westwards from Swallow Nest is labelled "To Derby",⁴² and parts of this road are marked very straight on the pre-1766 map.

So far, no attention has been paid to any other possibilities for the course of the road northwards from the Chesterfield area. Consideration of these will begin with an extract from Lysons⁴³ where the bishop of Cloyne is discussing the Roman roads in the county: "The Country people have a tradition . . . ; but I am more *inclined to think* the Roman road continued exactly on its old bearing on the *west* side of the river, leaving Whittington on the left, through West Handley and Ridgeway to the Roman camp on the banks of the Don, while . . ." (My italics.) The bishop of Cloyne could not have known that the road would be found to point over the river Rother, south of Chesterfield, as it does at the present time — his last sighting-point was further south. However, the road could still go on his suggested route if it kept to the west of the ridge on the east of Chesterfield, and then dropped down again to cross the river further upstream than suggested above. For instance, the ford already mentioned at or near the river junction could be used, perhaps involving the old and originally rather straight lane in Whittington parish known as "Sallow Lane".⁴⁴ A northwards continuation is obscure, but it would have the merit of passing through West Handley. Alternatively, a crossing at or near the present bridge near Dixon's Lock, which is recent since it is not marked on the Brimington tithe award map, might be proposed, the route then passing up the dip in between West Handley and Middle Handley, east

⁴¹ The conjectural line on the map is continued only as far as Wales, since there is no evidence for any further progress. However, a likely route is south of Kiveton, and through Shireoaks or Gateford to Forest Lane, Worksop. A crossing of the river Ryton near Ranby, and the river Idle in Retford, probably would follow, since the road past Gringley, leading to Thieves Lane, is straight and forms a parish boundary. Several possibilities present themselves from here eastwards, but Retford Gate seems the most reasonable, and the lane between North Leverton-with-Habbleshthorpe and Coates is called "Street Lane" even on the current 6-in. O.S. map. In any case it is likely that the important Roman ford at Littleborough was used by more than one road, since the river Trent could not be forded below here.

⁴² J. Ogilby, *Britannia* . . . , I, 1675 (1675), plate 48.

⁴³ D. and S. Lysons, *Magna Britannia, V, Derbyshire*, 1817, ccxi.

⁴⁴ This lane, at 392745 for example, appears on several documents in the Fairbank Collection; perhaps the best is MB 531.

of Binkley Wood, and west of Marsh Lane, although the Eckington enclosure maps show the road on Lightwood Moor as newly laid out. Both routes avoid the ravine west of Park Gate Farm. Or, a turn to the east could be made after the river crossing, as proposed by the Ordnance Survey on the basis of observations from air-photographs. Their line passes very close to the Hagge, Red Lodge and Marsh Farm, but has the serious disadvantage of steep ascents near Marsh Farm and on the north side of the Moss Brook.

South of the river Rother, both Green Lane and the south end of Petty-close Lane, Tapton, appear to be well sited for a road along the ridge, and the township boundary at 400726 was straight in 1849 as it is now. The lane past Ivy House Farm was also marked on the tithe map, and the fields to the east of it were known as “. . . Storrs”,⁴⁵ whilst northwards from here the Brimington part of the tithe award showed a field called “Ridge Flatt”, as now, at 404742. On the ground, a route in this direction is probably the most attractive, south of the river, but in this area especially open-cast coal-mining will have irrecoverably removed any traces of it. Six fields in Tapton were called, in the 1849 tithe award, “Part of Millwright Road”; the reference is obscure, and the map marked no road here.⁴⁶ Also of rather doubtful meaning is “Causeway Close” at 396719, marked on a Fairbank plan of 1771 (Ches. 25L); this name seems to apply to the track on the southern border of the field. The road in Hollingwood estate in Staveley parish is to be seen in the enclosure award, dated 1782, where as “Upper Smithy Road” it is laid out new on Hollingwood Common along part of the west boundary of it.

All these should tie up with a route which is “associated with the place-names Ford, Ridgeway, and High Lane”,⁴⁷ but here there must be a difference of opinion. Much field-work has been done on this route for a possible Roman road. No traces were found, but instead was gained the impression of a difficult cross-country route along a “switch-back”, with few advantages.⁴⁸ If one stands on top of the hill, on the Roman road, north-west of Catcliffe, and looks southwards, one may notice that a small group of houses stand in a dip in the ridge on the horizon — these houses are at High Lane, near Ridgeway. The name Ford, marked on the map, has an obvious meaning, although the country round here is especially difficult for any fairly evenly graded road, as it is also on the Shirtcliffe Brook, further north. The name Ridgeway is suggestive, but at 419815, for example, is part of “Ridgeway Field”,⁴⁹ and this field is mentioned in 1652-3 in the same position,⁵⁰ north-west of Mosbrough village. The name appears to apply to the old bridle-way which is indeed a way along the ridge, and the village name must be associated with this. High Lane, too, is suggestive, but in 1796

⁴⁵ Seven fields had this word in their names, three being east of the other four.

⁴⁶ National Grid references are 395727 for three; 394727, 395728, and 395729.

⁴⁷ Margary, 144.

⁴⁸ See the *Victoria County History, Derbyshire*, I, 1905, 245, n. 3, for Professor Haverfield's feelings about this route.

⁴⁹ Fields numbered 1565-7, 1569, 1570-2, and 1575 are “Ridgeway Field”. See Eck. 8L and MB 178, dated 1796.

⁵⁰ Deed no. 1014 in the Wheat Collection: “the over part of Ridgeway Feilde . . . abutting uppon . . . a certayne Comon there called Mosbrough More towards the North . . .”.

Fairbank calls the *road* at 409819 "High Lane", and in 1828 shows "High Lane" at 400822 — meaning, surely, that the present B6054 is the high lane.⁵¹

The bishop of Cloyne was only "inclined to think" that the Roman road came this way. The present writer sees this as a guess (which, all the same, may have been supported by some evidence the bishop has not given us), and envisages only one route from Wingerworth northwards — that through Eckington. The evidence, such as it is, that is contained in the documents has been set out at length, so that any pointers to the further course of this known Roman road may be gathered up profitably and used. At one stage in the work the conclusion was reached that no Roman road had ever been built between Chesterfield and Eckington, but it now seems probable that somewhere there was a road of some sort.

II. *A possible road running east from Chesterfield (The "Buckbridge Street")*

The main evidence for this is a charter in the British Museum, inadequately published by Jeayes.⁵² Peter, son of Roger Coty of Calow, surrenders to Hugh, son of Alan of Duckmanton, "totum ius quod habeo in terram et communem pasturam inter has divisas scilicet de angulo crofti Wille del Wude versus orientem usque ad Horeputtis . . . , et sit per les Horeputtis usque ad altam stratam que ducit de Cestrefeld usque ad Buckebrighe, et sit per altam stratam usque ad le Bromyfordesike, et sit per le Bromyfordesike, usque ad croftum prænominati Wille del Wude versus occidentem, et sit per croftum dicti Wille usque ad prædicatum angulum versus orientem. Tenendum . . .". Judging by the persons named in the transaction and acting as witnesses to it, the date will be about the middle of the 13th century. Some important points ought to be noted: apart from the description of the grantor and receptor, no location is given; there is no indication of the area of the land and common of pasture being surrendered; although the description is thorough, south and north are not specified.

Nevertheless, the phrase "altam stratam" is unusual for a king's highway (see for instance the Glapwell Charters quoted below), and it is fairly safe to assume that the "High Street" represents an embanked, straight (Roman) road. Study of the documents for this region for the names "William Wood Croft", "*les Horeputtis*", "Buckbridge", and the "*Bromyfordesike*", has been successful for the second and third.

(a) The O.S. maps mark "Allpits Farm" near the village of Calow and also "Allpits Plantation", whilst the tithe award for the township of Calow in the parish of Chesterfield (map 1849) gives the name of one field⁵³ as "Orl

⁵¹ Plans Eck. 21S for 1796, and Eck. 7L for 1828.

⁵² I. H. Jeayes, *Descriptive Catalogue of Derbyshire Charters*, 1906. Charter no. 696 is Wolley manuscript i, 88 in the British Museum. Abbreviations in the original have been expanded.

⁵³ Tithe award no. 9, the Grid reference of which is 41257155, as now. The other Allpits names are at 409715, and 413718.

Pits". Professor Cameron has confirmed⁵⁴ that the name "les Horeputtis" is an antecedent of "Orl Pits", which is represented on the map by an open circle.

(b) The Scarcliffe tithe award has one field called "Buckbridge" and Sutton-cum-Duckmanton tithe award (map 1837) has one "Buck Bridge" and one "Buck Bridge Island". Fairbank in 1761 not only has a "Buck Bridge Close", but also marks a bridge across the river "Daw Lee", called "Buck Bridge".⁵⁵ It seems certain, in spite of the Scarcliffe entry, that the modern road bridge at 46106915 is the successor of the "Buckebrighe" in the charter. Accordingly, this has been marked on the map, with a short stretch of the river Doe Lea, the course of which even in Fairbank's time was being straightened.

From these observations one can deduce that the boundary of the land in the charter ran *southwards* from "les Horeputtis" to the High Street; but this road must cross the "Bromyfordesike" (the broom-ford-stream), and whilst there is no other record of the name, there are only two streams in the Calow area which run from north to south. These are the unnamed streamlet and its branch in the vicinity of Cock Alley, and the Hady Brook; it seems that neither stream is large enough to allow the present A632 to be the road concerned, and this surely means that a road further south, running from Chesterfield to Buckbridge, is indicated.

Since no other documents give assistance, the author feels that the evidence from the Wolley charter cannot be pushed any further, and unfortunately there is very little else to support any proposed course, since much field-work in that part of the area not affected by open-cast coal-mining produced no positive results. One entry in the Scarcliffe enclosure award of 1730 might apply to this route, or to the Nottingham Street mentioned below: ". . . shall have one acre . . . in Palterton Church Field lying next under John Hill's ground next Street Gate and also the new Intake and Lane adjoining both lying next before her house under Palterton Green". Likewise, a charter in the Darley Cartulary, H 105, of early Henry III date, may refer to a road near here: ". . . in territorio de Palterton . . . , et unam acram terre et dimidium que tendunt usque ad ueterem viam et . . . , et unam acram terre que se extendit ad magnum uiam de Notingh . . . ". Here the Nottingham Street (Road) is excluded, but the "old way" is still elusive.

A Roman road leading from the Chesterfield area towards the east is certainly an acceptable idea, and it is very interesting that the Ordnance Survey should mark on their map of Roman Britain a Roman road of which the course is certain, branching from the Fosse Way north of *Crococalana* (Brough) to the river Trent at 808613, where remains of a bridge found in the 19th century were probably Roman.⁵⁶ A road probably travelled west

⁵⁴ Personal communication, dated 6/11/63. T. W. Hall, in *Descriptive Catalogue of the Jackson Collection* gives a charter, no. 282, which grants land near "les Orepittes of Primington", cited by Cameron (229) as an earlier record of the modern name. Buck Bridge and "Buckebrighe" are also equated in Cameron (310).

⁵⁵ The actual details are: Scarcliffe tithe award no. 120 at 461687; Sutton-cum-Duckmanton tithe award no. 863 at 460689 as now, and 862 at 461690 as now. The Fairbank sketches are found in FB 19.

⁵⁶ D. P. Dymond, "Roman Bridges on Dere Street", *Arch. Journ.*, CXVIII (1963), 159.

from here, and it is tempting, and not unreasonable, to suppose that this last joined up with the "Buckbridge Street", although there is nothing recorded in the intervening distance of about 20 miles!⁵⁷

III. *A possible road running north-east from Chesterfield*

For this there is one piece of evidence, in the parish of Staveley. In William Senior's survey of Woodthorpe, made in 1611, are two fields, "Stret Close" and "Lane Close", both of six acres, but since then the field boundaries have been altered, and in the tithe award for Staveley their successors are "Far Close" and "Broad Close". The field south of "Stret Close" in 1611 ("Meddle Close") survived unaltered as "Middle Close" in the tithe award, and this helps in the correlation of these findings.⁵⁸ It is almost certain that the lane to the north of these fields was called "Street", although their common boundary was straight from the stream northwards.

The position of this field is, and was in 1611, sufficiently far away from Woodthorpe village for the name not to apply to the village street. Open-cast coal-mining has completely removed the old boundaries, but from the top of the hill here one sees that Bolsover Castle forms a dominant southern landmark, whilst the old ford at Renishaw mill lies on the same alignment to the north. Therefore, the "Street" may have run this way, although it is much preferable to regard the present road, recently slightly straightened, as that concerned. To the south-west, Earning Bridge over the river Doe Lea, Inkersall, and Calow church spire are prominent, and the top of the hill to the north-east, west of Romeley Wood, is directly on the line. It seems clear that the western destination was the Chesterfield area through Calow, avoiding difficult ground (or it is possible that the road ran to the vicinity of Furnace Lane, Brimington, to join road I), but the eastern end must remain obscure through lack of evidence, although a junction with road II on Bondhay Common or a continuation to Shireoaks (Worksop) appears likely.⁵⁹ In fact it is rash to propose a roadway, let alone a Roman road, on a new line based on one piece of 17th-century evidence, and only a black circle and a brief indication of general direction mark this way on the map.

There is one further question which must be discussed. There has never been a satisfactory explanation of the fact that from the end of the 13th century at latest, for about 250 years, there are numerous deeds for the present parish of Thorpe Salvin, Yorks., which refer to "Thorp Rykenild".⁶⁰ The name is sufficiently unusual for it to be practically certain that it is con-

⁵⁷ Except that Rufford and the Sookholme Roman tile-kiln would be passed by such a route. The course of this road in Derbyshire remains highly conjectural, and it is only tentatively, and rather awkwardly, put on the map. It is assumed that Buck Bridge marks the crossing of the river Doe Lea, although it is tempting to join the "Buckbridge Street" with the A617 in Glapwell, involving a crossing of the river further upstream, with perhaps an easier ascent to the top of the ridge. The conjectural course as marked passes through Sutton, keeping to the higher, less broken ground, and Calow Green, and a continuation of this line seems to be aiming for the Midland Railway bridge at the bottom of Lordsmill Street, Chesterfield, where enigmatic remains of old roads were found in 1932. (*Derbyshire Times*, January, February and March 1932.)

⁵⁸ Therefore the Grid references would be 45357460 for "Stret Close", and 45457460 for "Lane Close".

⁵⁹ It is tempting to take this on to Blyth and/or Bawtry; see also Cameron (23).

⁶⁰ Yorkshire Arch Soc. Record Series, LXXXIII and CII, *Yorkshire Deeds*, VII-VIII.

nected with the "Rikenildstrete" first described in the 14th century by Ranulph Higden. In the published edition of his description, all three texts give the course of this road through (*per*) "Lichfield, Derby, Chesterfield, Eboracum, usque ad ostium Tynae".⁶¹ It follows that a road must have travelled between Chesterfield and Thorpe Salvin, and this lends support to a Staveley Woodthorpe route. But Higden gives a fairly full description of the route in the midlands, and his northern course, as well as his southern, is less sure. It is possible, therefore, that a great road in the Chesterfield *area* would be described as going through Chesterfield, and a ridgeway is more likely to be implied than a route over broken country. Perhaps it is preferable, therefore, to suppose that the ridgeway past Bolsover (road IV) was used, and that the Glapwell "Derebistret", also along a ridge,⁶² was the connexion between this and the road commonly called "Ryknield Street". A doubtful late reference to a road across Whitwell Common, with a similar name, may be cited here.⁶³

IV. *A road from Skegby, Notts., to Strafford Sands, Mexborough, Yorks., and possible southern branches*

Only Hunter⁶⁴ has suggested this as a route of a Roman road, although there have been suspicions about it for some time.⁶⁵ Since detailed consideration of the Derbyshire portion of this route will be published by C. H. Lane, the present writer will merely observe that the field-name "Street Close" occurs in the parishes of Ault Hucknall, Pleasley, Scarcliffe, Elmton in Derbyshire, and in Harthill and Thorpe Salvin in Yorkshire, and that these have been marked on the map to show the general line. There are, moreover, many charters and deeds from the medieval period for Glapwell, Pleasley, Scarcliffe and Palterton,⁶⁶ which refer to "streets" in this area, one of which was called the "Nottingham Street"; extracts from a few charters concerning possible branches follow:

Glapwell 16: ". . . et quicquid continetur in cultura de Derebistret. Tenendas . . .". Early 13th century.

Glapwell 36: ". . . et super Dunneshill' unam sellionem que pulsat super culturam de Derebistret, et . . .". Early 13th century. These are the only references to this name. Further help comes from those charters involving land at or near "Dunneshill".

Glapwell 112: ". . . in campo australi . . . , et dimidia acra . . . super Dunsil inter terram . . . et terram . . . et buttante super campum de Routhorn'. Tenendam . . .". Late 13th century.

⁶¹ *Polychronicon Ranulphi Higden . . .*, edited by C. Babington, II, 1860, 46-7. Higden died in 1364.

⁶² Bartholemew's Half-Inch Contoured Map, Sheet 29, and the 1840 edition of the 1-in. O.S. map for Chesterfield and Matlock, show this admirably.

⁶³ H. Garbett, *A Brief History . . . of Thorpe Salvin*, 1958.

⁶⁴ J. Hunter, *South Yorkshire*, I, 1828, vii and 390.

⁶⁵ See, for instance, S. O. Kay, in *D.A.J.*, LXXXII (1962), 40-1.

⁶⁶ The Glapwell Charters were published in this Journal, LXXVI-LXXVII (1956-7); others for this area were published in R. R. Darlington, ed., *The Cartulary of Darley Abbey*, 2 vols., 1945, and a few deeds are amongst the Hardwick Charters kept at Chatsworth. Where a number is quoted, this will be the one used in these publications.

Glapwell H56: ". . . et unam dimidiam acram . . . que iacet super Duneshul inter terram . . . et terram . . . , et abuttat super diuisam inter Glapwell' et Routhorn' et . . .". c. 1250-1275.⁶⁷

From these it seems that there was a road to Derby,⁶⁸ on a hill adjacent to the boundary between Glapwell and Rowthorn, where the latter had a "field". In 1610,⁶⁹ there was the "Northe Ffeelde" of 108 acres in Rowthorn, extending from the village to the eastern boundary, bordering on Glapwell to the north. West of the road to Rowthorn from Glapwell were the "Newlands", which imply that they were not part of a medieval "field". It seems that the Derby road has been lost, or that "Longhedge Lane" (at 489654) represents its course. The *Oxford Dictionary of English Place Names* has the important entry: "OE *Straet, Stret* = Street, Roman Road. In some cases the word may well have been used of a paved road of origin other than Roman". However, the furthest west of the Ault Hucknall "street" field-names in the tithe award (map 1839) is at 487649, and it is the direct descendant of one of the "Streete Closes" marked on the Senior plan of 1610. The three fields around 484648 involve "Forward Yate", and the three fields around 485645 are called "Stan Close".⁷⁰ There is a possibility that these names preserve the memory of a lost road.

The evidence from the charters and tithe awards suggests that Longhedge Lane and the A617 to Pleasley were being called "street" and to take a broader view, reference should be made to the 1-inch O.S. map, sheet 112. The Longhedge Lane route appears to continue at least as far as Skegby, Notts., and thence to the Annesley area, using the old lane and old boundary, marked on William Senior's plan for Sutton in Ashfield, at 506586, west of Sutton Forest Side. The northern continuation has been outlined on the map, and the author has evidence for its probable course in Yorkshire through the parishes of Thorpe Salvin, Todwick, Dinnington, Thurcroft, Bramley, Ravenfield, and Denaby to the ford over the river Don at Stafford Sands, Mexborough, at 498999. This last name is defined by Smith⁷¹ as ". . . a ford which carried the Roman road . . . across the River Don, v. *straet, ford*", and the road continues through Brodsworth and Hampole, after a crossing of the river Dearne, as marked on the Ordnance Survey Map of Roman Britain, 3rd edition, 1956.

The A617 to Pleasley was a medieval "street", but this is at the north-western end of an unusually straight old road at least to Mansfield, Notts., if not to Rainworth to cross the Rainworth Water. From there, the fact that the pig of lead found in Hexgreave Park, Farnsfield, was of Derbyshire origin,

⁶⁷ Further references to "Dunneshill", and variants, occur in charters 14, 15, 79, 80, and 162, whilst "Dunneshildale" occurs in 13 and 35. These add no more information.

⁶⁸ Cameron, 259.

⁶⁹ Plans and Survey made by William Senior of the Estates of the First Earl of Devonshire, in the Devonshire Collection, Chatsworth.

⁷⁰ The actual details are: nos. 686 at 486647, and 687 at 486649, called "Forward Yate"; 688 at 484648 called "Forward Yate Close"; and 662 at 486646 called "Merril Sick Bit and Forward Yate Bit". There are, in fact, four "Stan Close" names: 679 at 486641, 683 at 485644, 684 at 485645, and 685 at 485646. All numbers are those in the tithe award, and the field boundaries of many have been altered since 1839.

⁷¹ Smith, pt. 1, 78; pt. 7, 146.

and a stone-scatter of probable metalling from a Roman road in the present road fork north of Goldhill, suggest a line continuing towards Edingley. Thence, the lane parallel to the river Greet, north and east of Southwell, is presumed to be Roman in origin, if only because its line continued over the river Trent exactly bisects the Roman station of *Ad Pontem* at East Stoke. One may assume, therefore, that the A617 to the north-west of Pleasley represents a Roman road, but although there may have been a continuation to the Chesterfield area, there is no positive evidence for this, since the likely-looking "Stockley Lane", east of the river Doe Lea, was laid out new at the time of enclosure.⁷²

Even if the name "Derebistret" is medieval, it is arresting to be informed that a road in Glapwell was known as the road to Derby. There is a little evidence for a route continuing from hereabouts to the parish of Alfreton, along the watershed through Newton. The first point of interest is the straight old lane which is also the boundary between Blackwell and Tibshelf, two old parishes. This lane, "Newtonwood Lane", runs straight from 452604 for half a mile into Newton, to the south-west, but the present road then continues by turning further west to keep to the north of the Alfreton Brook, after which it joins the A61 road to Derby. In the South Normanton tithe award (map 1840) are several fields called ". . . Stoney-ford", and neither in this award nor in the tithe award for Blackwell, the parish to the north, are any indications of a road or lane or path leading to a ford or crossing over the Normanton Brook near here. The ford would be very nearly on a straight line from Newtonwood Lane, but the stream now runs in a new course as the result of open-cast coal-mining. South-west from here is "Lillystreet Farm", Alfreton; this may be named so after a woman, or could be called that after the Roman road which runs past Pentrich Roman fort (386541). But it might also record the presence of another road passing close by it, although there is no known reference to this name before the 16th century.⁷³

At the northern end of this branch there are two possibilities, as has been mentioned above. One is that from "Dunneshill" the road went to Dunsill,⁷⁴ and then to the top of the hill near "Marlpits", whilst the other takes the Derby road down Longhedge Lane to the river Meden crossing, where it branched off to the south-west up the hill past Newbound Farm as the old way known as "Newbound Lane". The same line would continue to near Marlpits, passing a little to the east of Dunsill, and this is the line which has been proposed on the map. This road has been considered here in some detail since it may form part of "Rykniel Street".

⁷² See Fairbank FB 19, dated 1761.

⁷³ The references given by Cameron (189) do not include the word "Farm", which is also omitted in the entries in the enclosure award for Alfreton (without a map) enrolled in 1816; the latter almost certainly concerned the farm, and not any road. R. Johnson, who has studied the ancient routes in the Alfreton area, has agreed generally with the conclusions drawn about "Derebistret" and the probable connection with "Lillystreet", suggesting a link with the Roman road near Pentrich Roman fort, and that the farm was named after this link.

⁷⁴ The note to Glapwell Charter 162 adds that Dunneshill/Dunsyl, etc. were "? Dunsill near Teversal, to the south of Hardwick Hall". A Grid reference for Dunsill is 469619.

Conclusion

The area under study is a difficult one for a number of reasons. This part of Derbyshire has always been closely settled and intensively cultivated. Much of the country here is on the coal measures, and mining of the coal, practised from early times, has disturbed the ground and left much waste, developing in the last few years to widespread open-cast mining ("outcropping"), which has completely removed all traces of previous human activity. Industry has grown and prospered in this region, canals and railways have been built to serve it, and old villages have become towns, spreading inevitably over the countryside. Therefore, this article represents the results of work which is largely experimental. It uses as its basis the fact that the word "street" in a place-name, and therefore also in a field-name, is perhaps the only record of a lost Roman road. But the road may be medieval, and the method used entirely invalid, so there must be other evidence to support any conclusions drawn from documentary sources alone. However, the evidence has been set out above for four suggested roads, and proof of their Roman origin can only come from field-work and excavation, where this is possible.

Roman finds in the area, marked on the map if an accurate National Grid reference is known, are widely scattered, although there seems to be a concentration of finds along the magnesian limestone ridge; but they are of no real help in determining the line of a Roman road. However, a nucleus of lead-mining, and finds of lead pigs, in the Matlock and Wirksworth regions have been shown⁷⁵ to have an outlet close to Chesterfield, and road II could take their products by land to the Roman legionary fortress at Lincoln, whilst road III would take them by land to Blythe and/or Bawtry, and thence by water down the river Idle, as certainly happened in medieval times. Road I would provide an all-land route to the legionary fortress at York, by using the Spa House, Treeton, Roman road⁷⁶ (which itself surely goes to Bawtry), and then road IV to Mexborough and beyond; in any case, road I links the forts and settlements of Templebrough and Chesterfield, and comprises the northern end of the road from the fort at Little Chester. The needs of the pottery industry at Hazlewood and Holbrook, and the tile-kiln at Sookholme must also be considered, and these proposed roads need not all be contemporary — the Roman occupation here lasted at least 300 years.

Nevertheless, the exercise has been thought worthwhile, and the same technique applied to South Yorkshire has already produced field evidence of a probable (new) Roman road directed entirely by a documentary discovery. As other documents for Derbyshire are found or published, more evidence, whether confirmatory or otherwise, will undoubtedly be produced, and so the work will progress.

⁷⁵ R. W. P. Cockerton, *D.A.J.*, LXXX (1960), 71-9.

⁷⁶ D. Greene, *Y.A.J.*, Vol. 38, pt. 151, 1955.

APPENDIX

A. *Documentary evidence for Roman settlement in the Chesterfield region*

In the Hasland portion of the Chesterfield tithe award, one field, which is amongst the "ancient enclosures" on the enclosure award map, is called "Caster Close" (no. 572 at 400677). This is just to the west of the summit of the hill, below the house "Grasshill". There are no earlier references, but the word could well be connected with the "Chester" element in Chesterfield, and its proximity to the crossing of the river Rother by road I may be noted.

Also in the Hasland portion of the tithe award is one nine-and-a-half acre field called "Brough Close", at 379699; the name "Brough" could be from Old English *Burh*, "fortified place". It must be noted that Brough is a fairly common family name in the Chesterfield area, and that there are eight other fields in the region containing "Brough", namely four in North Wingfield, and two each in Pilsley and Sutton-cum-Duckmanton, to be found in the tithe awards. All are on, or very close to, the parish boundaries, just as the Hasland example is bordered by the township boundary with Walton.

B. *Castle Hill, Eckington*

In all the Fairbank documents there is not one reference to this name, which first appears on the 1840 O.S. map. In fact, the site of the so-called "Roman fort" (see Glover's *History* for this identification) was known as "Bowling Green" in the Fairbank enclosure survey, 1796. The Royal Commission on Historical Monuments have been investigating the name and purpose of this site.

C. *Rampart Closes, Langwith*

Cameron (297) connects these with Roman finds, but it seems fairly obvious that these two fields, which in 1611 were common pasture (in William Senior's survey of the manor of Langwith), were given such a name because the road immediately to the west of them, the A618, is on quite a high embankment, before crossing the rivulet on the north; even the map contours show this feature.

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