

GENERAL MAP.

(The network of contemporary tracks in the Downland area is not shown.)

A ROMAN ROAD FROM BARCOMBE MILLS TO THE WEST, THROUGH STREAT AND HASSOCKS

BY IVAN D. MARGARY, F.S.A.

DISCOVERY. The finding of this road was due to my endeavours, commenced in 1933, to get definite evidence of the Roman road which, it was realized, must have existed in the near vicinity of Streat for that village to have received its name.

The late Mr. A. Hadrian Allcroft had indicated a line of lanes and footpaths continuing north-westward from the Stoneham Farms, north of Lewes, across the Ouse at Hamsey, past Warningore Farm, and so to the neighbourhood of Streat as a probable Roman road, and attention was first directed to this. The route crosses highly cultivated land of a naturally very stony character which would make the recognition of scattered road metal almost impossible, yet it does seem a fairly clear line as far as Warningore Farm, some two miles south-east of Streat. Beyond this, however, there appear to be no definite traces, and in any case the alignment would pass about half a mile south of the village.

Looking at Streat from the south one cannot fail to be impressed by the dominance of the little ridge on which the village stands, and it seemed worth exploring the possibility that a Roman road had been laid along this ridge, which, being formed by the Greensand stratum, is roughly parallel with the main escarpment of the Downs and offers a raised route on suitable soil for a considerable distance. Lanes and footpaths still follow, more or less, the course of this ridge; some adhere closely to the Roman alignment as it is now known, while elsewhere (notably between East End, Ditchling, and Streat) they wander considerably from it. The lane between Plumpton Cross and East Chilington diverges southward to serve the

church and then regains the alignment in part of Chapel Lane. Farther east, at St. Winefrede's, two curiously shaped narrow fields lie along the line and gave traces of a buried metallated surface; but the most distinct clue in this eastern portion of the line, and the first to be examined, was at Wickham Barn, about a mile to the north of Cooksbridge Station, where a distinct agger was clearly traceable in the field north-east of the farm buildings, right upon the alignment, and proved to be a solid layer of flint metallating. Another valuable find, which remained hidden till a much later stage of the work, was made west of Streat, no less than 750 yds. of the almost complete agger being found on Hailey Farm.

While this line was still only on trial it was observed that at Hassocks it coincided with half a mile of parish boundary past Hassocks Cross-roads, and that this also joined up at the sandpit with a western branch Roman road whose existence had been noted by the late Mr. J. E. Couchman, F.S.A.¹ He had only dealt very briefly with it in the neighbourhood of the sandpit at the time of the excavation of the large Roman cemetery there, but the map accompanying his paper in *S.A.C.* showed the course of the road through Danny Park and by Bedlam Street to the Hurstpierpoint-Muddleswood road. The latter part of this road west of Bedlam Street is a magnificent cambered turf agger, the best visible portion still remaining on the whole route.

I therefore examined the ground on the western continuation of the Bedlam Street alignment, which was found to coincide with the line of Horn Lane over Oreham Common and with another lane west of Wood's Mill, Henfield, which actually led close to Streatham Farm where the Adur was crossed. This name was in itself highly significant, but, in addition, distinct remains of the metallated agger were found on this line at Terry's Cross and near Shaves Farm. West of the Adur there is a line of old lanes along the continuation of the ridge by Upper Wickham Farm and Wappingthorn.

It was thus clear that the road through Streat was an

¹ *S.A.C.* LXVI. 47.

important cross route parallel with the Downs, no doubt linking up the settlements on the lower ground fringing the Weald. It must, however, be understood that the road was probably of less importance than those already known which radiate from London. The metalling everywhere is much less substantial than that of the Edenbridge-Lewes road, and it has been a matter of real surprise to me that such definite remains of the relatively thin layer of flints can still be traced.

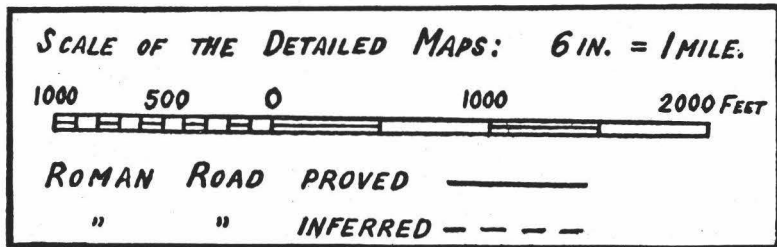
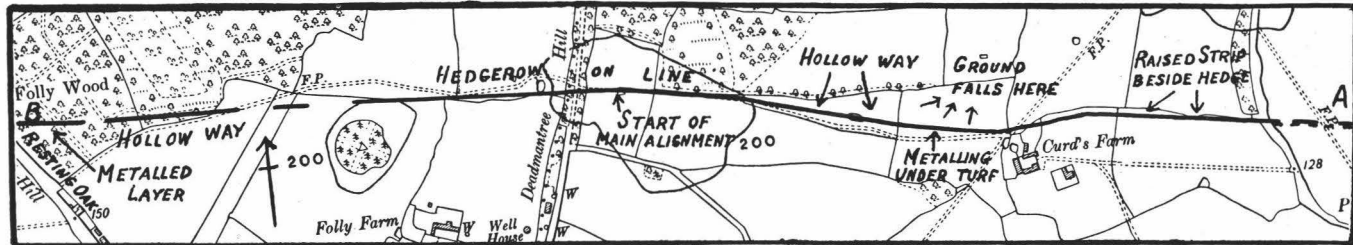
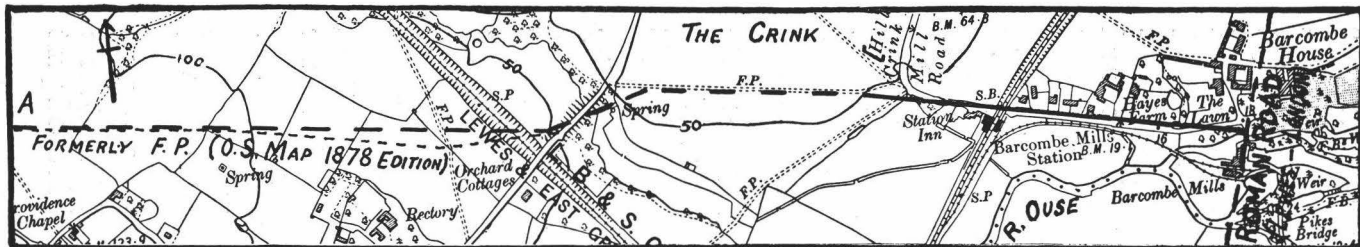
Too much stress cannot be laid on the importance of the excavation of sections in an investigation such as this, where the proof of the road depends upon a succession of small pieces of evidence along an alignment, some of which, like old lanes and lines of hedgerows, are not themselves Roman work though they may be valuable evidence of a Roman alignment. At some points, however, the road is left buried more or less intact, and if sections can be dug and a real road surface disclosed and measured at even two or three well-chosen points, it is not only extraordinarily heartening to the investigator, but also provides definite evidence in a form which can be safely preserved in the literature for future information.

It is particularly gratifying that Couchman's earlier observations on the road at Danny have been so abundantly confirmed, as owing to the unmetalled state of the agger near Bedlam Street some doubt had, quite properly, arisen as to whether it could really be a Roman road. The striking remains of the metalled agger through Shaves Wood, only a mile farther west on this alignment, are alone sufficient to set all such doubts at rest.

I should like here to express my thanks to all those owners and tenants who gave such ready permission for the examination of the remains on their land.

DETAILED SURVEY. It will be found more convenient to give the description of this road from east to west, and, accordingly, the course of it on the map strips must be followed *from right to left* throughout.

Barcombe Mills is a settlement on low ground, and the true alignment to Hassocks was evidently laid out from Deadmantree, or Folly, Hill, the first well-defined part

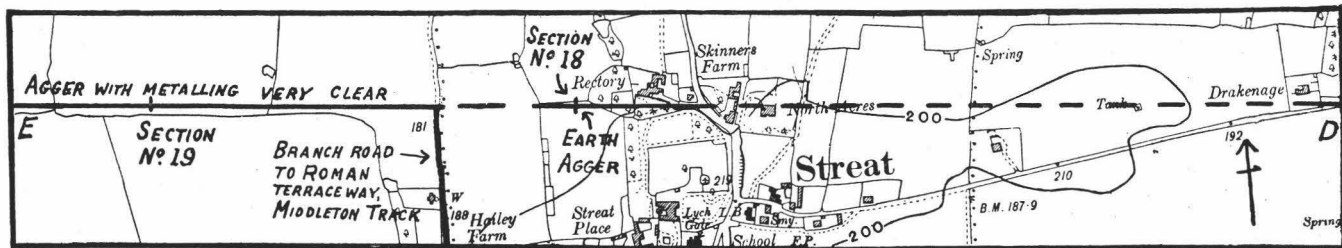
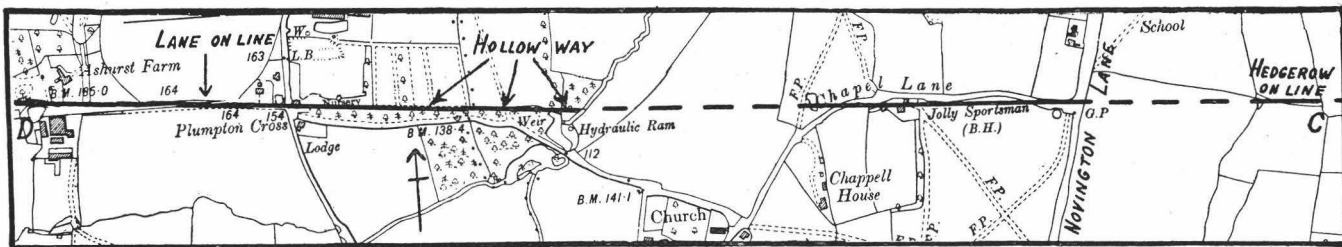
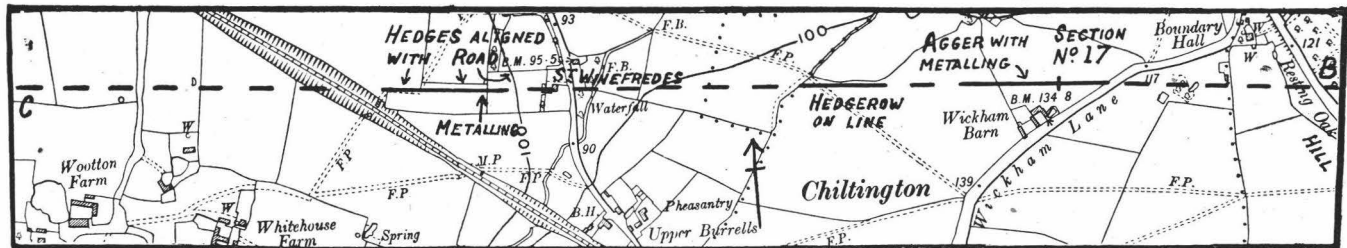


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of the Greensand ridge and about one and half miles west of Barcombe Mills. East of Folly Hill there is a slight deflection southward from the true line, but it only amounted to about 200 yds. at the most.

The road from Barcombe House to the railway station represents the first part of the Roman road, which, as explained above, took off from the Lewes-London road at the first point reached on the west bank of the River Ouse. A footpath continues the line of this road across a square field of sandy soil called The Crink, but apart from the modern gravelling of the path no metalling can be traced, though there are indications of a roadway terrace at the east end. At the west end a steep little valley must be crossed, but unfortunately the railway cutting and a road embankment make it difficult to see any traces there. Beyond the railway the line crosses the Rectory fields, and on the old edition of the 6-inch maps a footpath is shown on this line. The soil is very stony, and there are no certain traces now until Curds Farm is reached. Running west from the Hamsey-Barcombe Street lane, and upon the same line as before, is a hedge-row with a slightly raised strip along its south side. It passes to the north of the farm and is continued by a row of old trees on a slight ridge beside a track which soon enters a narrow enclosed strip with old hollow ways cut in it. This brings the road to Folly Hill, where the true alignment to Hassocks commences. The first part of the road here is represented by a hedgerow and footpath as far as Folly Wood, where the path now leaves the line, but a broad hollow track inside the wood still remains on the alignment. As the Chailey road is approached the old hollow ways that once formed part of this northward road cut across it, but between them and the modern road distinct traces of the flint metalling still remain. It should be noted that public footpaths at one time followed the whole line from Barcombe Mills to this point, though they are now in part lost.

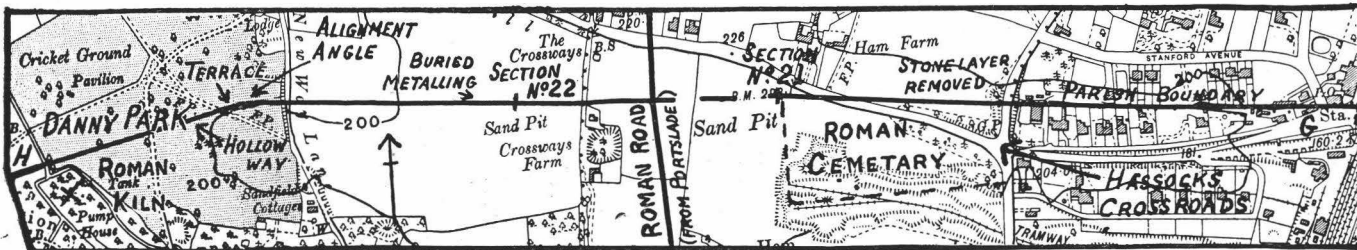
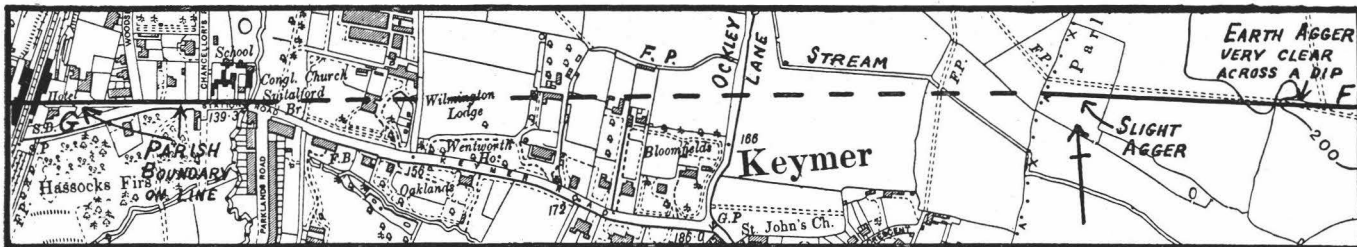
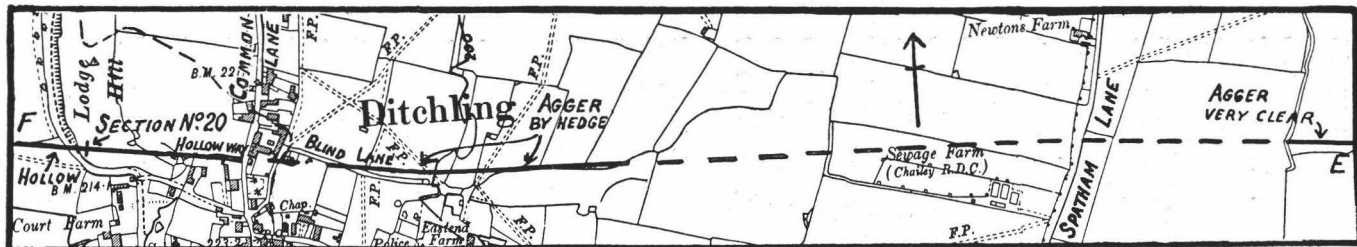
The alignment crosses Resting Oak Hill (the Chailey road) 70 yds. south of Boundary Hall and soon crosses Wickham Lane. Here, behind Wickham Barn, the first



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undisturbed remains of a buried metalled surface and a clearly visible raised agger were discovered. The agger can be traced from the lane to the western hedge, which it cuts 200 ft. north of the farm buildings, and for a short distance into the next field, while farther west a short length of hedgerow follows the line. Section No. 17 was opened just north-east of the farm and disclosed a solid layer of the local flint 27 ft. wide and 6 in. thick.

In the field behind Upper Burrells there is no trace, but a short hedgerow from a stream to Chiltington Lane marks the line, which passes exactly through the house St. Winefrede's, and west of it there are traces of a metalled layer in the curiously shaped narrow field, which appears as though it may once have formed part of a wide green way. Hedgerows 150 yds. to the north of Wootton Farm also follow the line, first on one side and then on the other as far as Novington Lane, where Chapel Lane, East Chiltington, takes up the line for 370 yds. before curving south to the church and then north again to resume the alignment 500 yds. farther west. East of Plumpton Cross the lane has an ancient hollow way along its north side, and it is noteworthy that this ignores the southward deviation towards the church and is clearly traceable eastward on the alignment down to the stream. The alignment is closely followed right over Plumpton Cross and for 470 yds. to Ashurst Farm, where the lane to Streat diverges very slightly southward. This lane has been straightened in modern times and attention has thus been diverted from the true Roman alignment to the line of lanes and footpaths on the south side of Streat Church and by Hailey Farm to East End, Ditchling. Actually the alignment runs slightly north of the top of the ridge, through North Acres and up the drive of Streat Rectory, in the garden of which the agger still appears to exist, while it is very distinct in the field just beyond as a wide cambered bank along the south side of a hedgerow. Section No. 18 was dug here and showed the bank to be of made soil, very firmly compacted, about 20 ft. wide, but no metalling remained. Just west of this the agger is clearly traceable as an irregular raised strip



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for 750 yds. along the north side of a hedgerow in the meadows of Hailey Farm, and here Section No. 19 showed the metalling intact, 23 ft. wide and 4-6 in. thick. The agger is particularly well seen as a low swelling in the ground on approaching the alignment from Hailey Farm, for it is in the open field and away from hedgerows at that point.

It should here be mentioned that the lane running southward past Hailey Farm and Middleton connects with the Roman terraceway, Middleton Track, which leads to the top of the Downs on Streat Hill, just above the Jubilee Plantation, and is thus most probably a branch Roman road.

The alignment, continuing westward, crosses Spatham Lane at the sewage works, and no further traces remain till near Eastend Farm, Ditchling, where hedgerows and then an old sunken lane, Blind Lane, indicate it. Traces of the earthen agger are visible beside the hedgerow just north of Eastend Farm, and beside the eastern end of the lane, where the soil on the agger when newly tilled has a distinctive light-brown hue. At its western end Blind Lane has suffered diversion, but originally it continued direct into Common Lane, and westward the old sunken lane is again traceable just north of Rowles Croft to the foot of Lodge Hill. I find that a tradition still exists that this line of old lanes is 'the old Roman road', and that it used to run right through to Streat.

The southern slope of Lodge Hill is furrowed by hollow ways, the forerunners of the existing lane to Oldland Mill, but between them and the lane the Roman metalling still remains, and Section No. 20 was opened there. A layer of flint 3-6 in. thick and 9 ft. wide was uncovered, showing very distinctly against the red sand of Lodge Hill.

Westward there are distinct remains of the earth agger in the Court Farm meadows, first across a hollow beside a hedgerow, and as a low embankment across a small field adjoining the Keymer boundary, with a footpath following the line to this point. Beyond a marshy strip the line is almost exactly taken up by a field boundary

which is now a stream bed ; this is straight and does not look of natural origin, and it is possible that it may be a hollow way which has become waterlogged, especially as its course west of Ockley Lane, Keymer, is continued by a footpath. The hollow way would, of course, have been merely the successor to the Roman road, and it is perhaps best to regard the course of this as uncertain there. The line is, however, soon clearly indicated by the Keymer-Clayton parish boundary from Spitalford Bridge, up Station Road, through the railway station, and along an old boundary bank to the Burgess Hill road 70 yds. north of Hassocks Cross-roads.

The continuation of the line west of the crossing just cuts through the south-east corner of a field on Ham Farm now partly built upon, and no trace remains, but the farmer, Mr. Broad, an old resident, informs me that in this very part of the field there was a layer of stone different from the soil elsewhere which some years ago was grubbed up to facilitate ploughing. Taken with the other evidence I think this may be treated as a significant indication. The line then crosses the Hurstpierpoint road almost opposite Ham Farm, and here it borders the great Roman cemetery which was disclosed in the sandpit to the south of the road. In the small strip of undisturbed land between the pit and the modern road, opposite Ham Farm, there is a very distinct layer of flint exactly resembling the road surface disclosed elsewhere. Section No. 21 was dug here with test hole extensions, and the stony layer, which is very regular and about 4 in. thick, was found to extend for at least 80 ft. from the pit to the road-side hedge. A few scraps of Roman pottery were found just on the surface of the stones. About 550 ft. west of this is the point where Couchman traced the cross-road north and south, and the commencement of the westerly road. Sections of these roads are still clearly visible in the sides of the pit, that on the westerly road being just east of the bungalow Glencove, and 50 ft. north of Crossways Farm Cottage. The occupier of Glencove, Mr. Payne, assisted in the removal of the metalling of these roads at the time when Couchman saw them,

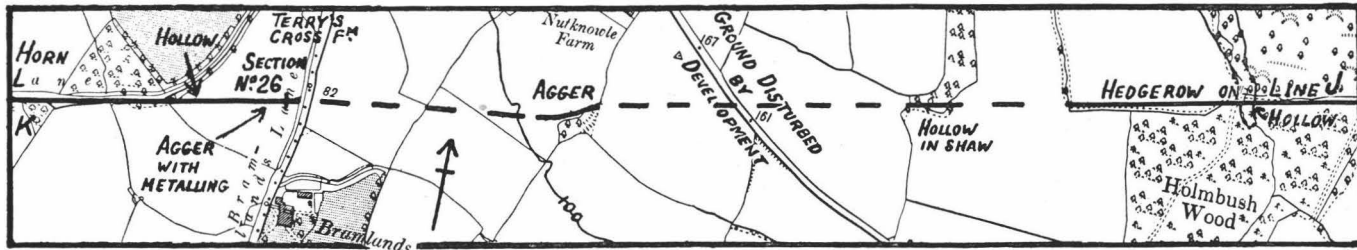
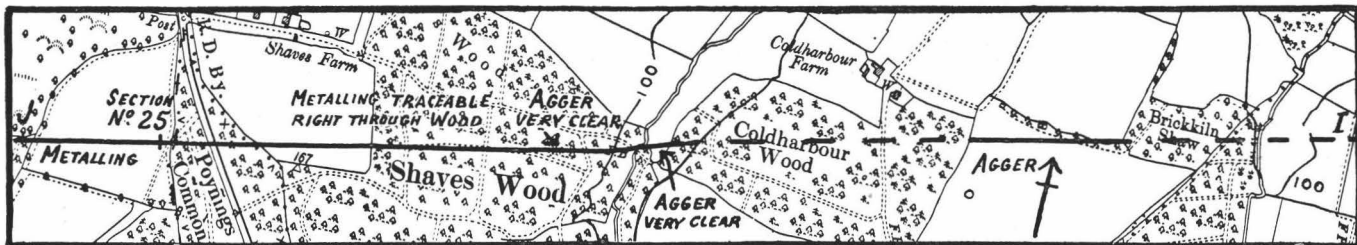
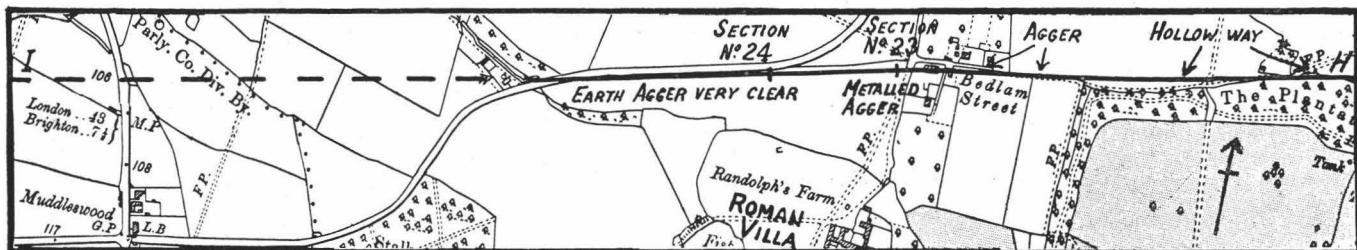
and he says that whereas the southerly road was about 18 ft. wide (Couchman says 24 ft.) and the metalling over 12 in. thick in the middle, the westerly road was quite thinly metalled, as I have found elsewhere.

These roads are quite definitely proved, but in addition there is the mysterious road¹ found north of Ham farmhouse, traced across two of the meadows in a direction from north-east to south-west, and said to have been 40 ft. wide and 3 ft. thick. This must have joined the other roads near the crossing, and it is possible that the wide stone layer disclosed by Section No. 21 was a kind of *place* at or near the road junctions and the cemetery.

The sandpit has recently been extended into the field between Crossways Farm and Danny Park, and the northern edge of the pit just touches the side of the westerly road, showing a distinct longitudinal section of the metalling. It was thought desirable to prove the character and width of the road here, and Section No. 22 was therefore dug 100 yds. west of the farm lane. The metalling extended 11 ft. from the edge of the pit and was 3-6 in. thick. Surface soil had accumulated to the rather unusual depth of about 20 in., and in the lower part of this and on top of the metalling much Roman pottery mainly of third- and fourth-century date was found, together with a piece of iron slag. It was more abundant near the north side of the road and suggests that occupation of some sort might be looked for there. No surface traces of the road appear in this field, but the ploughman had noticed a stony layer across it in the direction of Danny just on this line.

The line enters Danny Park about 150 yds. south of the lodge, and a slight camber in the turf may mark the agger, though it is stoneless. It is here on the top of a small but rather prominent hill from which alignments to east and west were evidently laid out. The eastern alignment to Folly Hill, Barcombe, is so closely followed that, save at Ditchling, where the steep Lodge Hill causes a deviation of about 200 ft. southward, the greatest variation is only about 100 ft. Lodge Hill lies

¹ R. W. Blencowe, quoting Rev. E. Turner, *S.A.C.* xiv. 177.



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right on the alignment and no doubt formed an intermediate sighting-point. The westward alignment is about 15° more to the south and was clearly aimed at a point on Chanctonbury, the Ring being ahead (very slightly to the right) all the way to Streatham Farm, and the alignment is adhered to almost more accurately than before.

The course of the road as far as the Danny drive is clearly indicated by a slight terrace on the shoulder of the hill, which changes to an overgrown hollow way farther down the slope. A raised strip approaching the stream just north of the copse may perhaps be part of an earthen agger; Couchman mentions a Roman building,¹ probably a pottery kiln, having been found in this copse. Across the stream a very clear but derelict hollow way carries on the line to Bedlam Street, on the north side of The Plantation; it was formerly in an enclosed lane, but the northern hedgerow was removed and a slight rise in the ground marks its course, which is the probable track of the Roman agger.

At Bedlam Street the agger remains as a very distinctly raised strip and the cottages stand on it, while west of the lane to Randolphins Farm (where there was a Roman villa²) it is still a striking cambered turf bank 40 ft. wide, as previously mentioned. Section No. 23 was dug 54 ft. west of the lane and showed a layer of flint metalling 13 ft. wide and 3 in. thick, upon a made-up layer of stony loam 12 in. thick. Farther west it had previously been ascertained that the agger had no metalling upon it. This was confirmed by a hole dug in the crown at Section No. 24, which was measured primarily to record the surface appearance of the agger as it is particularly fine there. A layer of clay 15 in. thick at the centre was found to compose the agger, which is here on a firm sandy loam subsoil, and in view of the similar earthen agger found at Streat (Section No. 18), and on Roman roads elsewhere, notably Ermine Street south of the Humber,³ it must, I think, be admitted that earthen aggers suitably made and maintained did sometimes form part of a Roman

¹ *S.A.C.* LXVI. 34.

² R. W. Blencowe, *S.A.C.* xiv. 177.

³ Codrington, *Roman Roads in Britain*, p. 127.

road. In this case it is of course possible that a layer of metalling had been removed for use on the adjacent modern road, but, if so, the surface profile of the agger has suffered remarkably little damage.

The continuation of the alignment crosses the main Reigate-Brighton road 240 yds. north of Muddleswood cross-roads, but no traces can be seen there. It then passes through a small wood, Brick Kiln Shaw, and at the south-west corner of this a hedgerow with an old sunken track beside it is on the line. As the road crosses the large meadow east of Coldharbour Wood the agger becomes faintly visible especially when viewed from the north-west corner of the field. It passes diagonally through the wood, 70 yds. south of Coldharbour Farm,¹ with traces of the flint metalling visible. At the south-west corner of the wood the agger is conspicuous as it crosses a narrow strip of meadow to the stream, and from this point it can be clearly traced right through Shaves Wood, mostly as a definite raised strip with much of the flint metalling still remaining, and especially distinctive here as the road is crossing a belt of heavy clay land quite devoid of stones.

The road passes 200 yds. south of Shaves Farm, cuts through the northern tip of a wood, formerly Poynings Common, and enters a field, once ploughed but now overgrown and derelict, in which the metalling shows particularly clearly where it has been scattered by the plough upon the clay soil. Probing showed that in places the metalled layer was still solid, and Section No. 25 was therefore dug 50 ft. west of the Poynings Common hedge, disclosing a flint surface 18 ft. wide and 3 in. thick, laid upon a very distinct layer of red sand 5 in. thick, which had clearly been brought from the Greensand ridge to make a firm bottom for the road where it had to cross the clay land.

West of this field the line is taken up by a series of hedgerows with a track beside them, past Holmbush

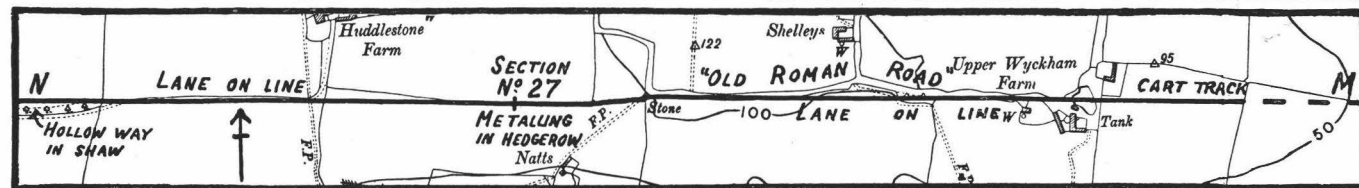
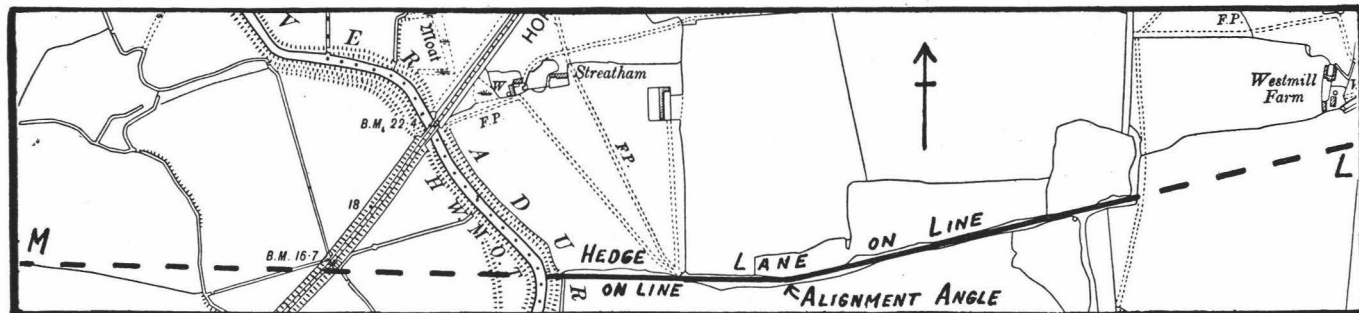
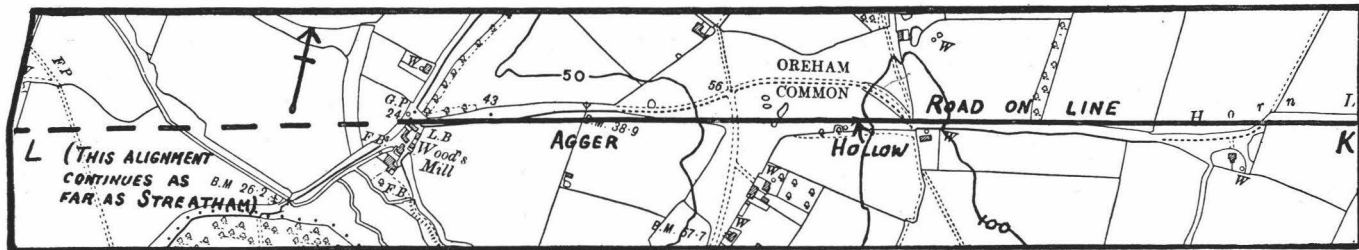
¹ What a good example of the association of the name with Roman roads this would formerly have been considered, but it is no longer permissible; see *Place-names of Surrey* (English Place-name Society, vol. XI), p. 406.

Wood for 470 yds., and then again, beyond a small field, by a short length of old track in a shaw. It then crosses the Henfield road about 250 yds. south-east of Nutknowle Farm, where the ground is now much obscured by recent development. Traces of a raised strip descending the hill towards Bramlands, about 200 yds. south of the farm are, however, visible, and in the field south of Terry's Cross Farm, between Bramlands Lane and Horn Lane, the agger is distinctly traceable. At first it is a raised strip, and Section No. 26, dug 60 ft. west of Bramlands Lane, showed the flint metalling undisturbed, 13 ft. wide and 2 in. thick, but as it approaches Horn Lane, which is on lower ground, it sinks into a very slight cutting and so joins the lane, which here takes up the exact alignment. Horn Lane makes an abrupt wriggle at one point, as though from the crown to the side of the old agger, but maintains the general line to Oreham Common, where it now deviates northward over the common to avoid a boggy patch, the older line being clearly marked by a deeply sunken hollow way right on the alignment. Beyond the Common the lane rejoins the line and a trace of the actual agger may perhaps still appear in the southern hedge there. The alignment is thus well marked for just a mile.

At Wood's Mill all traces disappear for 950 yds. across an alluvial flat, but the exact line is then taken up by a lane north of Newhall Farm which leads direct to the River Adur 300 yds. south of Streatham Farm. This is an ancient site and was formerly of importance, although its situation now looks extremely remote. It was presented to the Church by King Osmund in 770 and gave its name to a manor of the Bishop of Chichester. A moated site adjoining it is thought by Cartwright¹ to mark the position of Earl Warbold's castle previous to 770, and the Roman road crossing would explain its importance.

Just before leaving the higher ground to descend to the river the lane makes a slight but definite northward bend of 15° and the final 350 yds. point exactly to the

¹ Dallaway, *History of Sussex*, vol. II, pt. II (by E. Cartwright), p. 267.



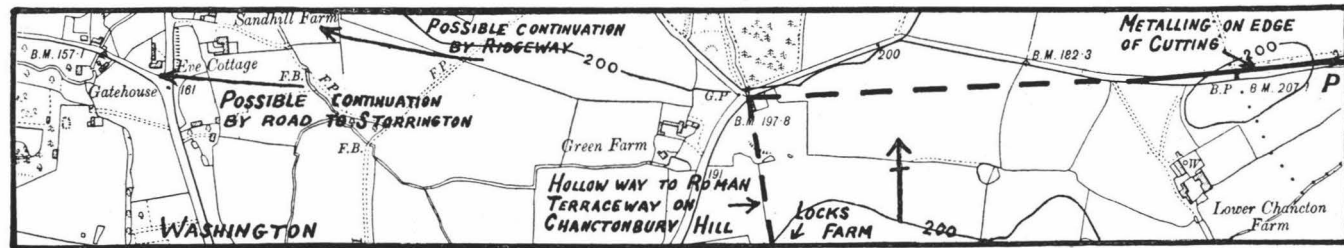
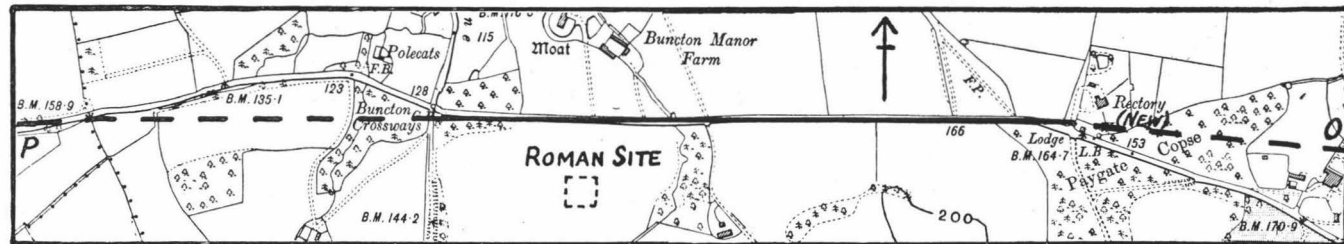
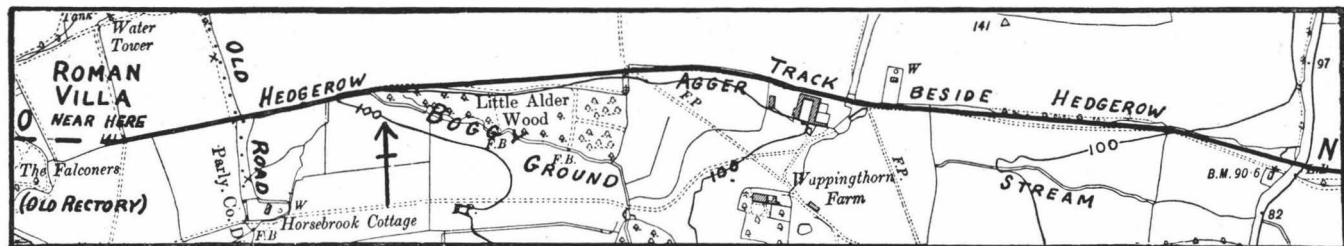
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line of lanes at Upper Wyckham Farm on the ridge overlooking the western bank, which form the alignment of the road farther west. The change of direction was necessary if the ridge was to be followed. The river has been embanked and now occupies the extreme eastern limit of the flood-plain at the crossing-place, but the low ground is only about 500 yds. across on the direct alignment, and no other crossing for over a mile upstream, or $2\frac{1}{2}$ miles downstream, offers such good approaches.

No certain traces remain on the ascent from the valley, but a cart track in the field east of Upper Wyckham Farm is on the alignment, and a field boundary has approximately occupied it all the way up from the river. West of the farm the line is marked by an old lane which is still traditionally known as a Roman road, and this is continued for over two miles by a series of hedgerows and lanes passing Huddleston Farm and Wappingthorn. In the hedgerow south-east of Huddleston a distinct layer of stone can be seen, and I was informed by the farmer, Mr. Cross, that a large portion of the southern side of the wide bank had been cut away to enlarge the field, and that much stone had been found in it. This was strikingly confirmed by Section No. 27, which showed a small but most clear and definite remnant of the layer of flint metalling in the south side of the existing bank, although this was otherwise remarkably free from stone, as are also the fields just there.

Where the Partridge Green-Steyping road crosses the line a slight bend is made to the north of Wappingthorn, whereby the stream east of the house and an awkward piece of boggy ground to the west are avoided and the road is kept on higher ground. The deviation at the most is about 500 ft. off the alignment. Hedgerows follow this all the way, and between Wappingthorn and Little Alder Wood there is a distinct raised strip, 18 ft. wide and some 2 ft. high, which has all the appearance of an agger though it has received some modern material on top. Passing along the northern edge of the wood the hedgerow line crosses a derelict sunken road,¹ with

¹ S.N.Q. I. 3. Mentioned as part of a possible alignment to Rowhook.



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a parish boundary along it, and heads for Wiston Old Rectory, which is on the true alignment again. Remains of a Roman building (villa?) were found here in 1848, just north-east of the Rectory,¹ while only recently another Roman site has been discovered south-east of Buncton Crossways.

Beyond this point it must be agreed that little definite evidence has been found. The high road to Washington runs in the same general direction west of the Rectory as far as Green Farm; for half a mile to Buncton Crossways it is straight and about 200 ft. north of the general alignment, then after a slight bend it comes on to the true line just on the top of the hill by Lower Chancton Farm. The modern road goes over this hill in a cutting, and on the northern bank can be seen traces of a stony layer near the original surface; it has been much disturbed by trees, but where best preserved it appeared in a test-hole section to be a compact layer of flints 7 in. thick. If this can be accepted as an indication of a metalled surface, it is older than the present cutting and by its relation to the alignment previously described can, I think, be reasonably taken as evidence of a continuation of the Roman road through this point with the modern road roughly on its line.

There is no doubt that two Roman terrace-ways² descend the escarpment of Chanctonbury Hill towards the north-west, and a hollow way connecting with the western and more important of the two can be clearly traced past Lock's Farm and up a line of hedgerows direct to Green Farm, where it would join our alignment, and there must have been some such connexion.

West of Green Farm there are two alternative routes, but no traces of definitely Roman work can yet be shown on either of them. The most obvious continuation would be by way of the present road to Storrington, although no traces can be seen in the fields between Green Farm and Sandhill Farm which form such a marked gap in this line of roads. The Storrington road now looks far

¹ W. Figg, 'Remains of a Roman Building', *S.A.C.* II. 313.

² Curwen, *Prehistoric Sussex*, p. 123.

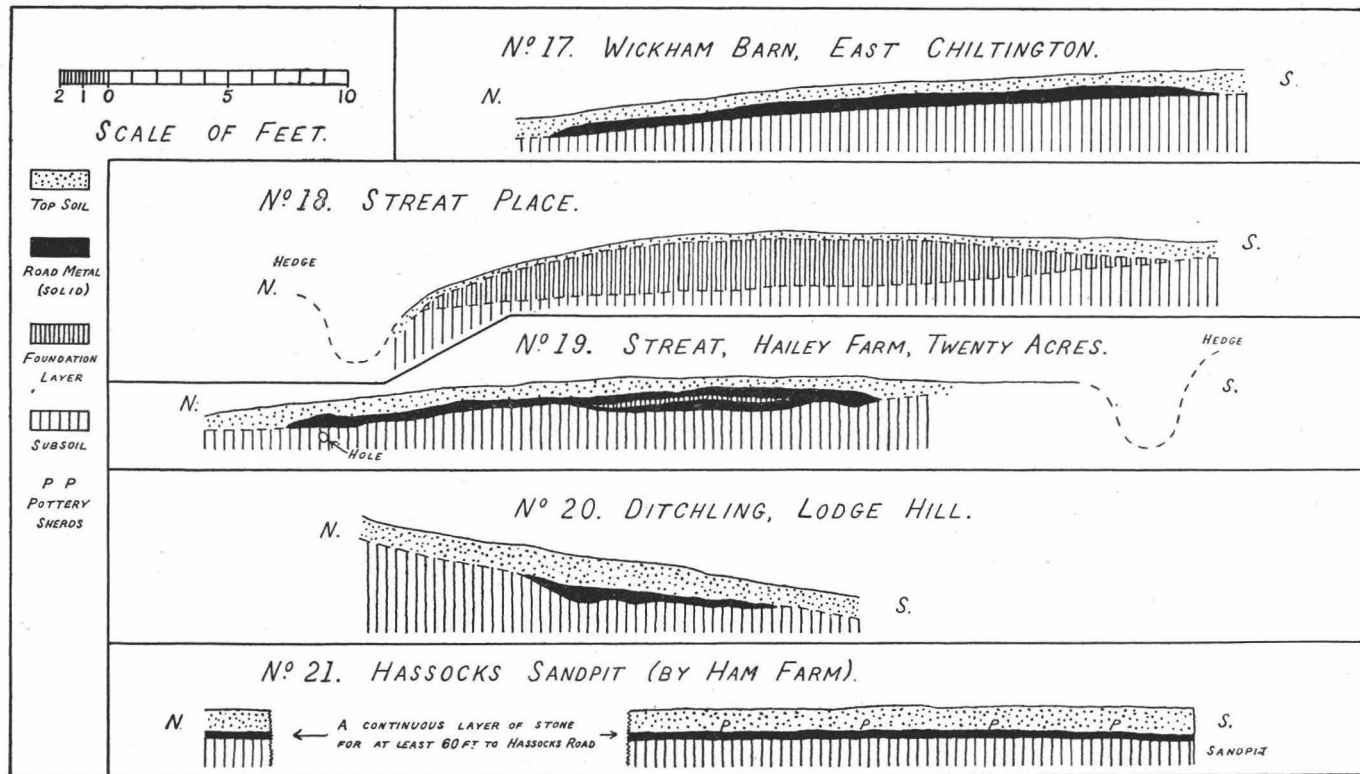


FIG. 1.

from straight, but would fit tolerably well to a general alignment from Storrington back to East Clayton Farm, with a slight bend thence to Green Farm, bearing in mind that the older road ran close to Sandgate House and along the southern edge of Sullington Warren before it was diverted to its present course in 1825. Beyond Storrington this route would connect just west of Fryern with the old road, most probably Roman, which runs north-west by Wiggonholt,¹ through Redford and Lickfold to Marehill, and thence north along a straight alignment of lanes over Broomershill to Stane Street just north of Codmore Hill, through a district notably full of Roman remains.

A further continuation westward through Parham, either by Rackham and Amberley, where a line of old road is traceable along this very suitable ridge, to Bury and West Burton on Stane Street, or else by Greatham to Coldwaltham (a less attractive route), is also a distinct possibility, but no definite evidence for a Roman road there is so far available.

An eastward route from Wiggonholt is hinted at by P. J. Martin² in his account of Stane Street:

'It may not be in print, but some archæologists among whom we may reckon Douglas . . . and Cartwright, the historian of Sussex, have been of the opinion, and it is a tradition of the country, that another road took off eastward from Hardham, forded the river at a place called Stoney River to Wiggonholt, and afterwards was carried on towards Steyning.'

Cartwright does mention this,³ and we may therefore feel that some tradition exists for a Roman road on or near the line here described.

The alternative route west of Green Farm is more in the nature of a ridgeway than an aligned road, though it is very direct. Starting from the Washington-Rock road 80 yds. north of Sandhill Farm, the track makes an easy ascent to the ridge west of Rock, and then takes an almost straight course along the southern edge of Washington Common and Heath Common, with com-

¹ S. E. Winbolt, *S.N.Q.* III. 38.

² *S.A.C.* XI. 139.

³ Dallaway's *History of Sussex*, vol. II, pt. II (by Cartwright), p. 282.

manding views first northward and then southward. The soil is sandy and the going very good, but there are no certain indications of Roman work, though the track is doubtless an old one. At the south-west corner of Heath Common it turns north-west, and is continued in a direct line first by a straight parish boundary for 630 yds. and then by a derelict road beside Water Lane to East Wantley Farm, where it comes into an area containing a number of old lanes, roads, and footpaths which *may* quite possibly be traces of ancient road alignments, bearing in mind the intense occupation already found near Hurston Warren and Wiggonholt.

It will be best, I think, to leave the continuation of the road west of Green Farm an open question for the present, until more is known about the occupation and development of the Hurston area.

CONSTRUCTION. Details of the form of construction shown by the sections that were examined must now be considered. It has been thought desirable to continue the series of reference numbers for the sections consecutively with those of the Edenbridge-Lewes road, as this may facilitate reference in future discussions on these and other Roman roads in Sussex; no suggestion that the roads are a continuation of the same route is thereby implied.

Wickham Barn, East Chiltington (Fig. 1, Section No. 17). The agger shows very distinctly here, and a section opened just north-east of the farm buildings disclosed a solid layer of metalling composed entirely of the local small brown flints under about 6-12 in. of top soil. The thickness was 7 in. at the crown, tapering off towards the edges, and the width appears to be 27 ft., though a little of this may be due to scattering. On either side of the road the subsoil is quite soft, and the line of metalling is intact from hedge to hedge across the field in a position which bears no relation to the present farm or tracks.

Streat Place (Fig. 1, Section No. 18). A raised strip about 25 ft. wide, on which the turf grows finer than elsewhere in the field, runs beside a ditch and hedgerow,

with a distinct camber towards the ditch and a slight fall to the level of the adjacent field. A section cut across the agger showed a very thin layer, 3 in., of top soil, under which lay a uniform mass of very firmly compacted soil, 2 ft. thick, on the normal subsoil. The soil here and on Hailey Farm is somewhat difficult to describe, having some of the properties of clay when wet and of a loam when dry. At the time of digging, the ground was dry and the surrounding subsoil could readily be dug with a spade, yet this layer of made soil was so hard that a pick was needed to break it up, although when it had been removed the subsoil beneath proved to be of normal softness. No traces of a metallated layer could be seen, and it seems clear that a carefully consolidated earthen agger formed the road at this point, though only a short distance westward on the same line the agger is definitely metallated.

Hailey Farm, Twenty Acres (Fig. 1, Section No. 19). The metallated agger is traceable here for a long distance, and the section opened near the middle of this stretch showed, under 8 in. of top soil, an undisturbed layer of flint metallating 23 ft. wide, and generally 3 in. thick, though on the southern half of the road there seemed to be a definite lower layer of stone indicating perhaps a sinkage and repair. The agger was probably made up with soil from the low strip adjoining it on the north, but this could not be clearly determined in the section. A curious feature was discovered just at the edge of the metallating on the north side, a clean round hole 5 in. in diameter running parallel with the road, 32 in. below the present ground level and just below the level of the metallating. A withy inserted in the hole could be freely pushed up it for a length of 10 ft. eastwards and 6 ft. westwards, and small fragments of wood were pulled out by this means. At first it was thought that this might have been a drain, but it seems more probable that the hole represents the outline of a piece of timber, perhaps placed there as a kind of kerb during construction, which has since rotted away.

Ditchling, Lodge Hill (Fig. 1, Section No. 20). No clear

surface trace of the road remains in the field on the southern slope of the hill, but a stony layer could be felt on probing. A section was dug there, and disclosed a very distinct layer of flint metalling for a width of 9 ft., the thickness being 6 in. near the centre and thinning off to about 3 in. at the edges under 12-16 in. of top soil. The road formed a terrace here, and the inner edge of the metalling showed up very plainly against the stoneless sandy subsoil of the hill-side, while the outer edge had scattered somewhat, but it seems probable that the normal width had been reduced here, as is often the case on the Downs when the Roman terrace-ways are cut on steep hill-sides.

Hassocks Sandpit, by Ham Farm (Fig. 1, Section No. 21). Just opposite Ham farmhouse a strip of ground remains undisturbed between the sandpit and Hassocks Road, and in the edge of the pit traces of a layer of flints can be seen. A section was dug here for a distance of 24 ft. northward from the pit, and showed a uniform layer of stone 4 in. thick under a foot of top soil, which was also proved by further test holes to extend some 60 ft. farther to the road-side hedge. It is difficult to prove that this layer is not of natural origin, but it is a fact that many small fragments of Roman pottery were found close to the surface of the stones and even pieces of ancient red brick among them, while the appearance of the compact layer of flints was exactly similar to the road surfaces of definite width found elsewhere.

Hassocks Sandpit (west end) (Fig. 2, Section No. 22). In the north-west corner of the sandpit a similar exposure of a layer of flints can be seen, and a section dug there showed the road surface intact for a width of 11 ft. from the pit edge, probably a few feet having been destroyed by it. The northern edge of the road was quite distinct, and the metalling varied in thickness from 6 in. at the centre to about 3 in. at the side. Top soil had accumulated to a depth of about 20 in., and in the lowest part of this layer the soil was particularly dark-coloured and contained a considerable quantity of Roman pottery fragments, which were most abundant near the northern

edge but occurred right across the section, near or on the road surface.

The pottery found here and in the previous section was submitted to Mr. C. F. C. Hawkes, British Museum, for inspection. He reported that nearly all of it was definitely of third- and fourth-century types, most of it rough grey or red ware, with some finer pieces of true New Forest ware. Most of the fragments were very small, but the following were large enough for the forms to be identified: No. 82, dish rim, hard grey ware; 92, similar, rim of plate; 103, complete foot of cup, hard red ware; all these are third or fourth century. No. 98, flanged vessel in rough but fairly thin hard red ware, imitation of Samian form 38, fourth century; 107, rim of vessel, in greenish-grey, very fine New Forest ware, second half of third century. Two small fragments of real Samian ware were identified, No. 111 as Samian form 31, mid-second century, and 112 as first century.

Hurstpierpoint, Bedlam Street (Fig. 2, Section No. 23). A distinct layer of metalling can be felt by probing on the first part of the agger west of Bedlam Street and a section was therefore opened there, although the visible remains are more impressive farther west. The layer of flint was found, under 6 in. of top soil, for a width of 13 ft. and, though very definite, was quite thin, only 2 or 3 in. thick, on top of a made-up layer of stony loam, about 12 in. thick in the centre, which formed the agger.

Bedlam Street (farther west) (Fig. 2, Section No. 24). This section was measured to show the surface profile of the agger at a point where it is still very well preserved as a cambered turf strip about 40 ft. wide. It was known to be unmetalled there, and a test hole dug in the crown of the agger showed, under 6 in. of top soil, a made-up layer of stiff clay 15 in. thick, resting on the hard, sandy-loam subsoil. Clay seems a most curious choice for the purpose, considering the dry subsoil available at the spot, but the agger is so high that it may have kept well drained and thus more coherent than a sandier soil.

Albourne, near Shaves Farm (Fig. 2, Section No. 25). This section, dug just west of the Poynings-Albourne

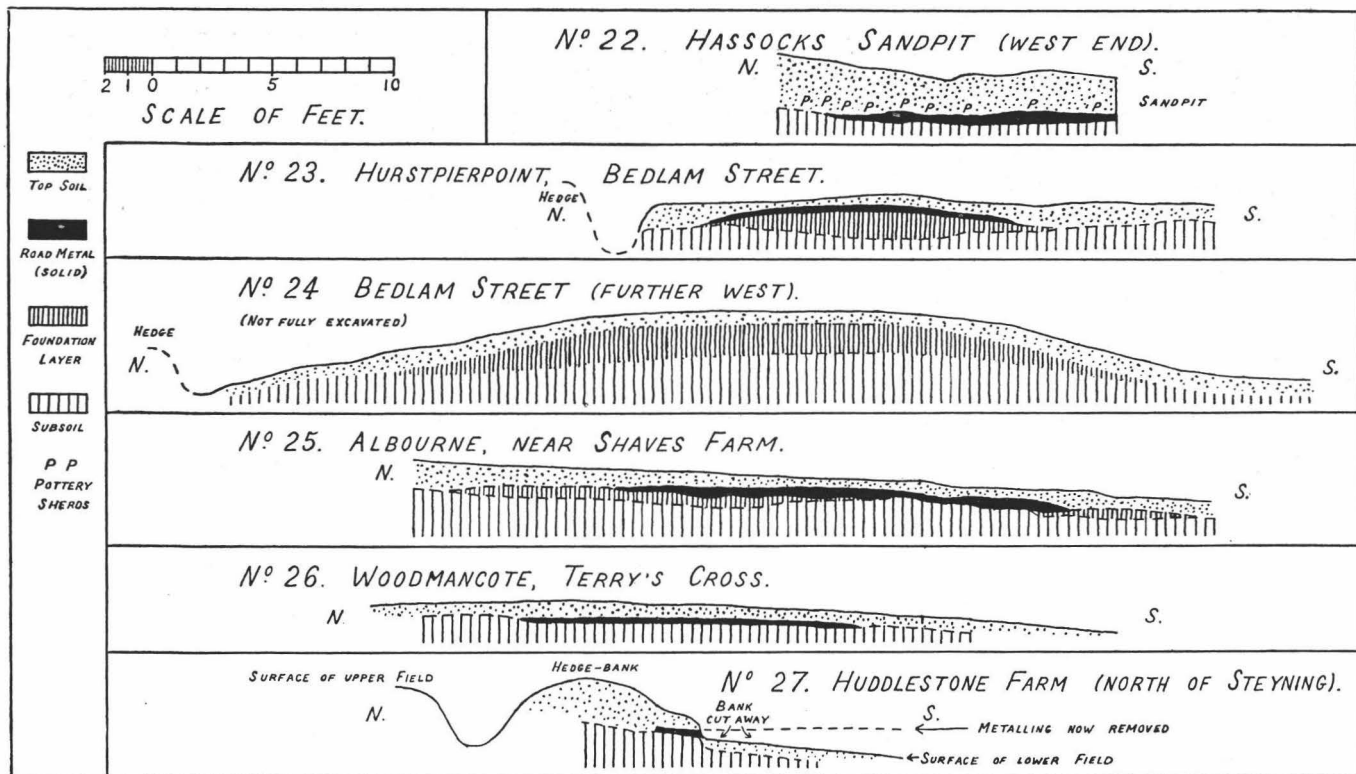


FIG. 2.

road, showed a most interesting adaptation of the construction to meet the need of a firm foundation on the belt of clay which the alignment had to cross there. The subsoil is a very stiff clay quite free from sand or stones, as test holes on either side of the road zone showed, but the metallated layer of flint, 18 ft. wide and 3-5 in. thick, was laid upon a 5-in. layer of red sand evidently brought from the sand ridge beyond. This extended some 7 ft. beyond the metallating on each side and was still a very perfect layer, save for a patch of 7 ft. in the southern half of the roadway where stones and sand had mingled, evidently as a result of settlement.

Woodmancote, Terry's Cross (Fig. 2, Section No. 26). A trace of the agger can be clearly seen crossing the field just west of Bramlands Lane, and a section there showed, under 8 in. of top soil, a very distinct though thin layer of flint metallating, 13 ft. wide and 2 in. thick. It is a particularly valuable indication just there because the subsoil is again clay and quite stoneless, and this compact layer of flints gives definite proof of an old road surface in line with Horn Lane to the west. There was, however, no foundation layer of sand as in the previous section, but the situation is not such a wet one.

Huddlestone Farm (north of Steyning) (Fig. 2, Section No. 27). This section gives an interesting example of the association of Roman roads with field boundaries, and of the manner in which the remains vanish. Only an 18-in. width of the metallated layer still exists, though it can be seen in section along the face of the hedge-bank for some distance. The layer is perfectly definite, 2-3 in. thick, and it is known to have extended to a greater width until dug away in quite recent times, while the rest of the bank is composed of soft, stoneless soil. The road may have remained in use as a track, for a footpath follows it here, but it is clear that the field boundary which it formed had gradually encroached upon it, until it came to be regarded as a wide and useless raised strip which could more profitably be thrown into the adjacent field, and thereupon all but a narrow hedge-bank was removed.

SUMMARY. Definite evidence is given for a Roman road laid out in straight alignments between prominent points on a course cleverly adapted to the ground, and following roughly the Greensand ridge north of the Downs from Barcombe Mills westward at least as far as the neighbourhood of Washington. Its construction is much slighter than that previously noted on the Edenbridge-Lewes road, though similar in width, and the metalling is usually 3-6 in. thick, of the local flint; occasionally it appears to have been unmetalled. The pottery found on it at Hassocks was of late Roman date which, taken by itself, might suggest that the road was also of later construction, but Dr. E. C. Curwen reminds me that we must also give due weight to the large amount of first-century pottery found in the adjacent cemetery. It is therefore quite probable that the road was in existence at that time and may thus be not much later than the Edenbridge-Lewes road, by which, it may be recalled, pottery of first and early second century was found near Wellingham. In that case the pottery was only found on the edges of the road and suggested deposit while the road was still in active use, whereas at Hassocks the later pottery in Section No. 22 lay all over the road surface and suggests that the road was either out of use, or at least ill kept, towards the close of the Roman period.

It may, perhaps, be worth noting that the points where Roman occupation has been found near the road, at Wiston Old Rectory and Hassocks, divide the distance between Hardham and Barcombe Mills into nearly equal portions of 9 miles each, but we have as yet no definite evidence of *mansiones* there.