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MILLE·VIAE·DUCUNT·HOMINES·PER·SECULA·ROMAM

FROM NOT THE EDITOR

First, a Happy New Year to all of our readers. Here's to whatever 2022 throws at us. We've a bit of a bumper edition of a newsletter this time; hopefully it will while away some dreary winter days and also inspire you for your own adventures this year.

In this issue we have the ever-busy David Ratledge with more about the Longdendale roads, and a chunk on Stanegate, for which Dave Armstrong has written a complementary piece. David also presents news of a very big gradient-reducing zig-zag on the road over Croasdale Fell in Bowland.

Meanwhile Anthony Durham makes some suggestions about Iter XIII based on place-name evidence, and Marilyn Neil neatly demonstrates what can happen when you start researching one thing and it leads in an entirely different direction. It's also a good demonstration of exactly how much research material is on line these days.

With our Association growing we are intending holding an AGM early this year to advise and involve you, the members, in the objectives and management of what we are trying to achieve. Date and format TBA.

Thank you, of course, to our current contributors. If you have anything you'd like to submit, contact Dave Armstrong.

Enjoy the newsletter. Hannah Collingridge

IN THIS EDITION

RRRA Projects; Latest Updates

Other Road news

RRRA Projects, update

Longdendale, RR715(x) - an update

From David Ratledge

Introduction

The alignment of the Roman road from Manchester to Melandra was finally located in 2020 (Buckley and Ratledge) and was found to pass around one mile to the north of Melandra fort. The obvious conclusion was that this road was targeting a destination through the Longdendale valley. It was not just a local road to Melandra. Note: This road has now been issued with the number RR715(x) by the Roman Roads Research Association. The Manchester to Melandra Roman road was previously recorded as

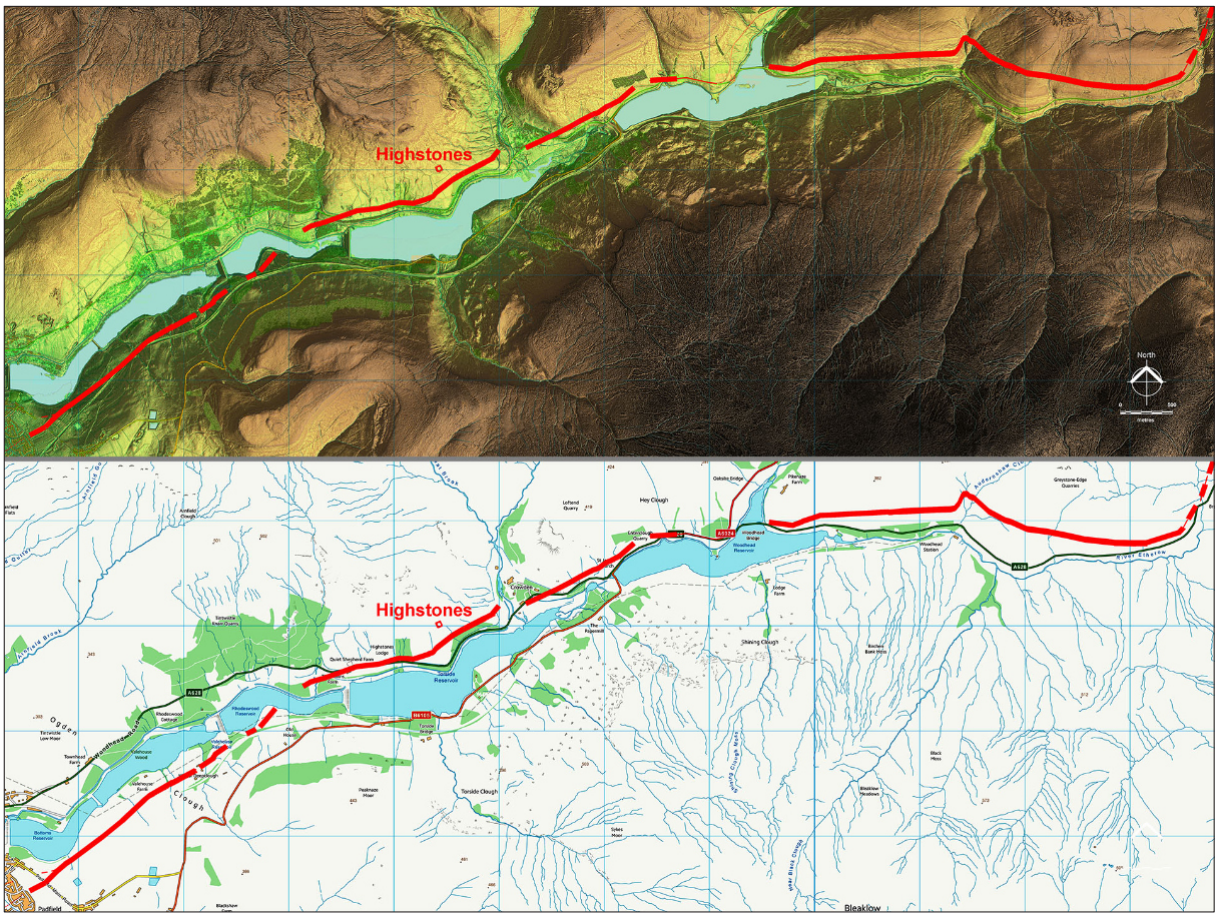

Figure1: The route of the Roman road through the Longdendale valley. There are some interpolated stretches (shown dashed) but generally the course is mostly secure now.

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Longdendale, RR715(x) - an update, cont.

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RR711 based on Margary's somewhat confusing description. That number is better now considered as pertaining only to the Melandra to Buxton Roman road.

The Route

The road was first spotted in the lower part of the Longdendale valley by Glossop and Longdendale Archaeological Society (SK02879 96733 & SK03277 97029). At that time lidar coverage was incomplete and they suggested the road most likely would have left the valley and headed north towards Holme. The release of National Lidar Programme data (full coverage and of higher quality) has enabled the route to be more accurately located and also indicates that it continued the full length of the valley before it headed over Windle Edge and into the upper Don valley.

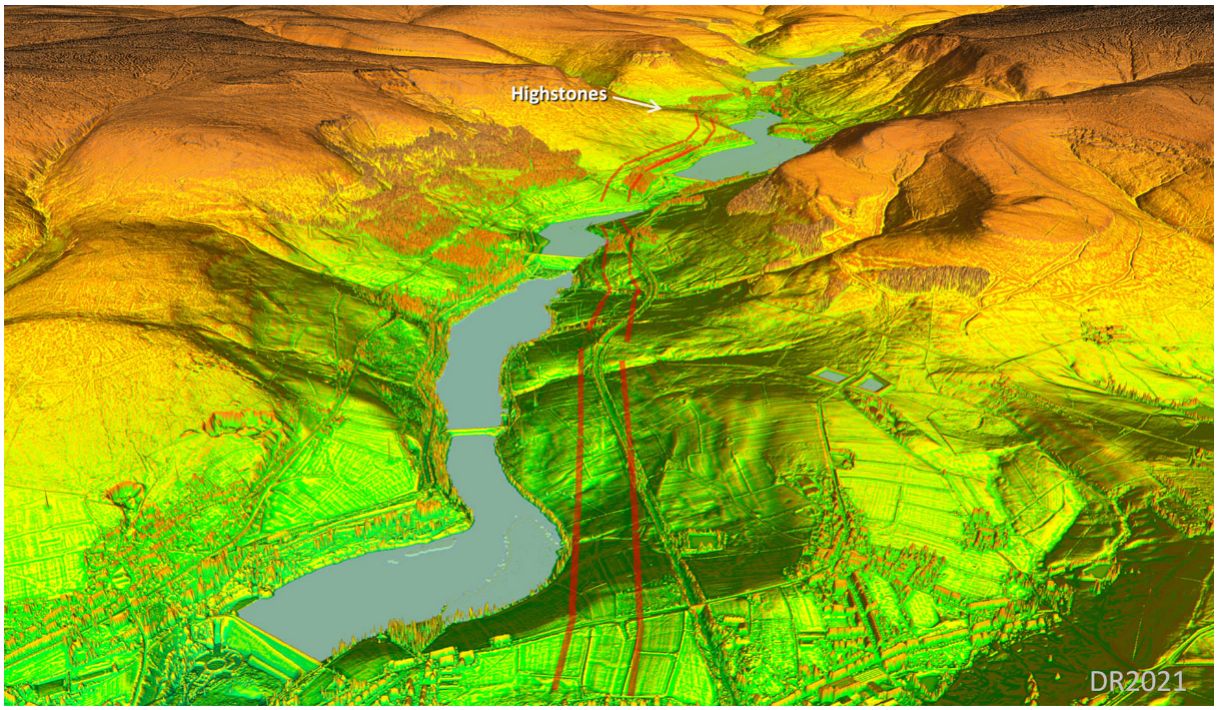

Figure 2: Oblique lidar view looking east into the valley. The location of Highstones fortlet afforded excellent views up and down the valley.

Despite all the reservoirs constructed along the valley, we are fortunate lidar reveals the probable point where the road crosses from the south side of the valley to the north (SK2832 98154 & SK05164 98435). It could easily have been lost under the reservoirs

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Longdendale, RR715(x) - an update, cont.

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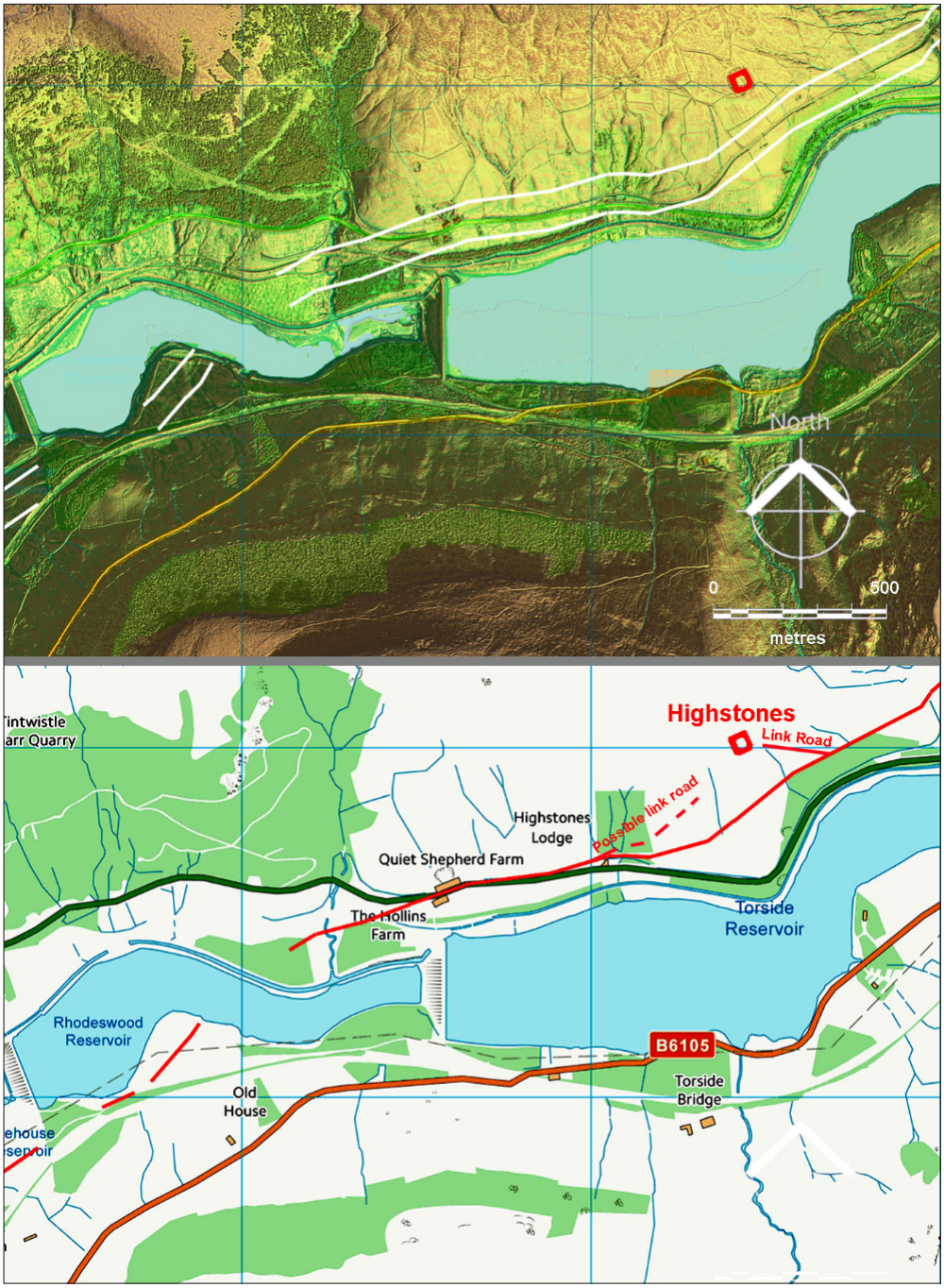

Figure 3: Lidar image and OS Opendata map showing the road switching from the south side of the valley to the north and then passing Highstones fortlet. Both the fort's easterly link road and the possible one to the west are also marked on the map.

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Longdendale, RR715(x) - an update, cont.

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and their associated works. This is a different location to that previously suggested by the Glossop and Longdendale Archaeological Society.

Once on the north side of the valley the Roman route passes Highstones, previously suggested as a possible Roman fortlet although the Derbyshire HER is less certain. However, there can be no doubt now about Highstones. Lidar clearly shows it to be a Roman fortlet with a southern entrance plus a suspicion of a western one although this could be a modern disturbance. It is a well chosen spot with extensive views both up and down the valley. The fortlet would have needed a connection to the main Roman road and the link road up to it is visible (SK06566 98994). There a faint traces of a possible link road to the west.

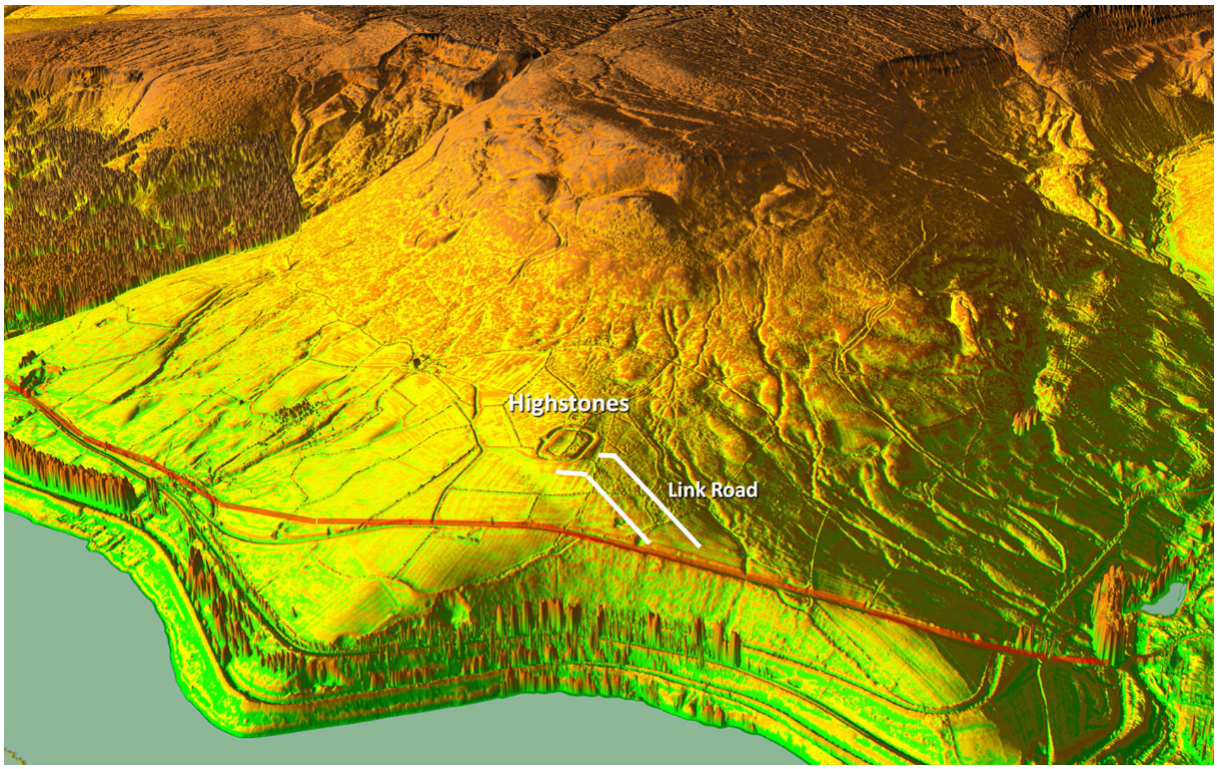

Figure 4: Oblique lidar image of Highstones fortlet. The southern entrance is obvious but the western one is possibly a later disturbance as the rampart does not appear to have a corresponding gap in it.

Beyond Highstones, distinguishing the Roman line from all the other roads and tracks that have threaded their way through the valley over many centuries is not at all straight forward. However, once past Crowden, the unmistakably Roman alignment seems to have survived relatively unscathed (SK07255 99215 - SK07620 99382 –

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Longdendale, RR715(x) - an update, cont.

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SK07930 99544 – SK08129 99666). Beyond this stretch the visible evidence is more intermittent so the route shown is best regarded as the most likely. It appears to pre-date the many others plus it does have several Roman characteristics i.e. a series of straights, a long steady climb and upstream crossings of side streams. Parts were no doubt upgraded in the turnpike era but upgrading on top of a Roman line was fairly common.

Conclusion

We now have a reasonably certain course for this road, RR715(x), from Manchester, through Longdendale, over Windle Edge, along the upper Don valley and as far as Hoylandswaine, at which point lidar currently has an annoying gap.

RRRA Projects, update

Iter XIII of the Antonine Itinerary

From Anthony Durham

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Introduction

Drawing straight lines on maps is dangerous. You risk sinking into the swamp of fruit-and-nuttery that surrounds Ley Lines or Astro-Archaeology. To be fair, the men who originally set those hares running (Alfred Watkins with *The Old Straight Track* and Gerald Hawkins with *Stonehenge Decoded*) were intelligent authors raising interesting questions. More recently, Graham Robb, in *The Ancient Paths*, has claimed that Celtic Druids surveyed long lines across Europe.

All that explains why I am nervous about suggesting that another Roman road may have run uncannily straight over a distance of 80 miles. Also, one should not lightly accuse the standard book on Roman place-names by Rivet and Smith (1979) of being badly wrong. However, here goes.

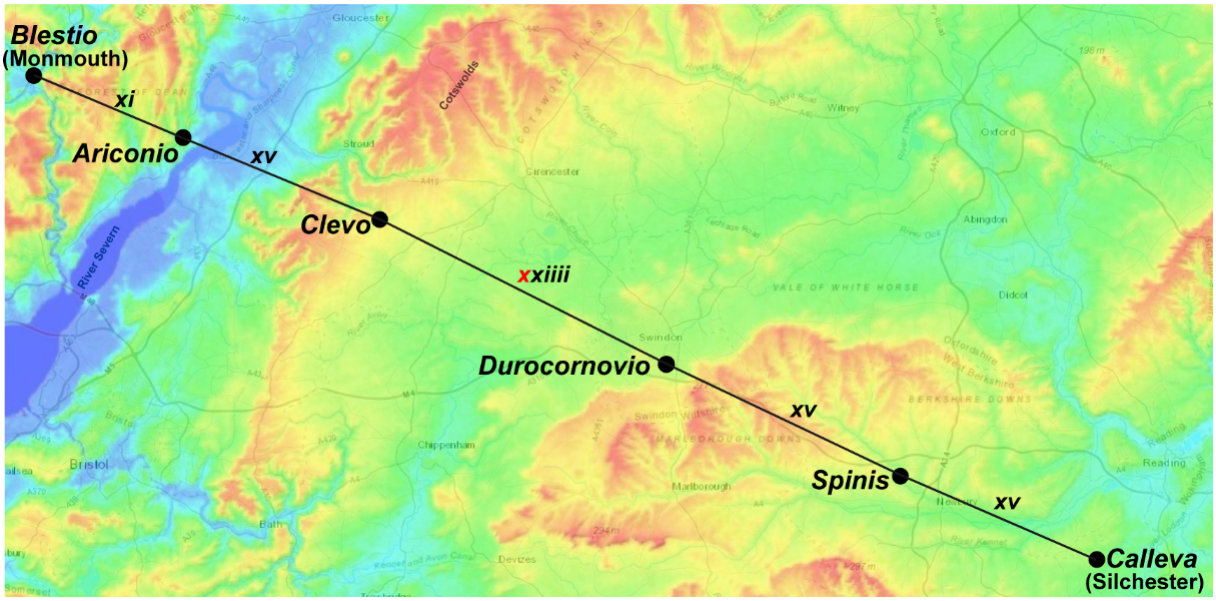

Figure 1: map showing the straight section of iter 13 in the Antonine Itinerary. The colours to indicate elevation are from topographic-map.com

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Iter XIII of the Antonine Itinerary, continued

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The route of the Iter XIII

The two end points, at Monmouth Roman fort and Silchester Roman town, are well established, but where should the four intermediate stops be placed on a modern map 1900 years later? None can yet be located precisely, and the large sizes of my black blobs understate the uncertainties (of a mile or more) in exact locations.

And here is the original information from the Itinerary, set out as a table. Column one shows Roman place names (as written, not shifted into a nominative case) and column two shows the reported distance in Roman miles (1.48 km) from the place above. Columns 3 to 5 show my suggested interpretations. Modern distances are as the crow flies, with little attempt to follow exact paths on the ground.

Roman Name	Distance (Roman)	Distance (Modern)	Marker Point	OS Position
Blestio	0	0	Monmouth	SO511127
Ariconio	xi	11.5	Blakeney	SO671070
Clevo	xv	15.3	Avening	ST879979
Durocornovia	xxiiii	24.5	Wanborough	SU207825
Spinis	xv	15.6	Speen Junction	SU407709
Calleva	xv	16.3	Silchester	SU634624

Considering all the uncertainties, the agreement between Roman and modern distances is very good, provided we make one small adjustment to the data: add a Roman numeral *x* (shown in red on the map and the table) to make *xiiii* into *xxiiii*. Loss of a single character during manuscript copying is a common error elsewhere in the Itinerary. This is much simpler than the alternative proposed by Rivet and Smith, that an entire line was lost during copying.

Iter 13 is not the same as RR453, which leads to a Severn crossing between Arlingham and Newnham. That route appears to rest only upon an article by the magnificently named Wellbore St Clair Baddeley (1930), about “late and secondary” Roman roads, but there is no reason to doubt that people could travel into the Forest of Dean that way, especially in medieval times.

The idea that *Ariconio* was the early iron-making site at Weston-under-Penyard was first spelled out in 1805, but it had been gestating for a century before that as antiquaries started to grapple with the geography of Roman Britain. What made investigators accept that location was the similarity of *Clevo* to **Glevum* (Roman

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Iter XIII of the Antonine Itinerary, continued

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Glebon Colonia, now Gloucester). Rivet and Smith knew that their language advisers could not translate either *Ariconio* or *Clevo*, and that there were problems with the Roman mileages, but still they felt bound by established wisdom. So they suggested that one whole stage had been left out of *iter* 13 during manuscript copying. Their proposed restoration of the missing line produced a route looping north via Gloucester.

Here I propose an alternative route, which is geographically much more logical, but not yet defined well enough to suggest precisely where to dig for a Roman road bed. Its logic depends on maps and early place names, which can be checked by referring to my *Roman Era Names* website. Onward links should then lead to background information about each place, linguistic analyses of its name, and parallels elsewhere. Salient details follow here, often skipping over logic that is on the web.

Blestio fort was probably the first Roman outpost beyond the Severn, named because it blazed a path towards Wales like a blister or *βλαστος* (*Blastos*) 'sprout'. Its marker point from which distances were measured was perhaps outside the fort by the river bridge, where one might imagine seeing a "Welcome to *Blestium*" sign. At the other end of *iter* 13, ***Calleva*** is related to Latin *calvus* 'bald' and has relatives in later English place names referring to relatively bare high ground. There too, the distance-zero point might have been outside its town walls.

Ariconio*'s* initial *Ar-* has at least eight possible meanings to consider. On balance, the best is 'bend', as in arch and Latin *arcus* 'bow', because modern Arlingham is right where the River Severn executes a horseshoe bend. On the other bank lies Awre, whose name arose by metathesis (dancing consonants) of Old English *arwe* 'arrow'. One might expect rivers called Arrow (4x in Britain plus 2x Yarrow, with 4x *Arve* or similar in France) to be arrow-straight, but in fact their common feature is to be seriously wiggly.

The ending *-conio* appears to indicate a river harbour, being related to Latin *coeo* 'to come together' and *cuneus* 'wedge', like modern cone. It also shows up in *Viroconium*, upstream on the Severn, where the name's first element resembles French *virer* 'turn' and English veer, referring to the river's serious meanders near there. A dozen other places where a Roman road met a river have an element K-vowel-N (or similar) in their name: examples include Kenchester, Kennetpans, Kenninghall, Knettishall, Coneygar, and *Cunetio*, plus Coundlane on the Severn.
Forest of Dean iron-makers surely needed a port to shift their heavy product, but the banks of the Severn and the courses of its feeder streams have shifted so much over the centuries that there is no obvious location for *Ariconio*. In general, ancient river ports lay up a creek off the main channel, so a good guess is up Brim's Pill towards

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Iter XIII of the Antonine Itinerary, continued

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Blakeney, whose church is where I mark *Ariconio* on the map. Once again, the site of *iter* 13's Roman ferry port might easily be over a mile away.

Clevo is very similar to the Roman name of Gloucester, *Glebon Colonia* etc, so it would help to know what ancient **Glevum* meant, and why its vowel E later changed to O. The distinctive landscape feature of Gloucester is that multiple channels of the river Severn merge into a single channel. Therefore, *Clevo* can plausibly be attributed to an ancient root **gleubh-* 'to tear apart, to cleave', with clove among its many descendants.

For *Clevo*, my best guess for a point on the map to fit *iter* 13's mileages is the church at Avening, but once again the Roman site could lie at least a mile away. It is even possible that the name has survived to this day, as a calque translation, at nearby Nailsworth. Its first element comes from Old English *nægel*, a translation of Latin *clavus* 'peg, small stake, locking bar', which may have been used as a geographical term, judging by other places in Roman Britain: *Clavinio*, *Olcaclavis*, *Clausentum*.

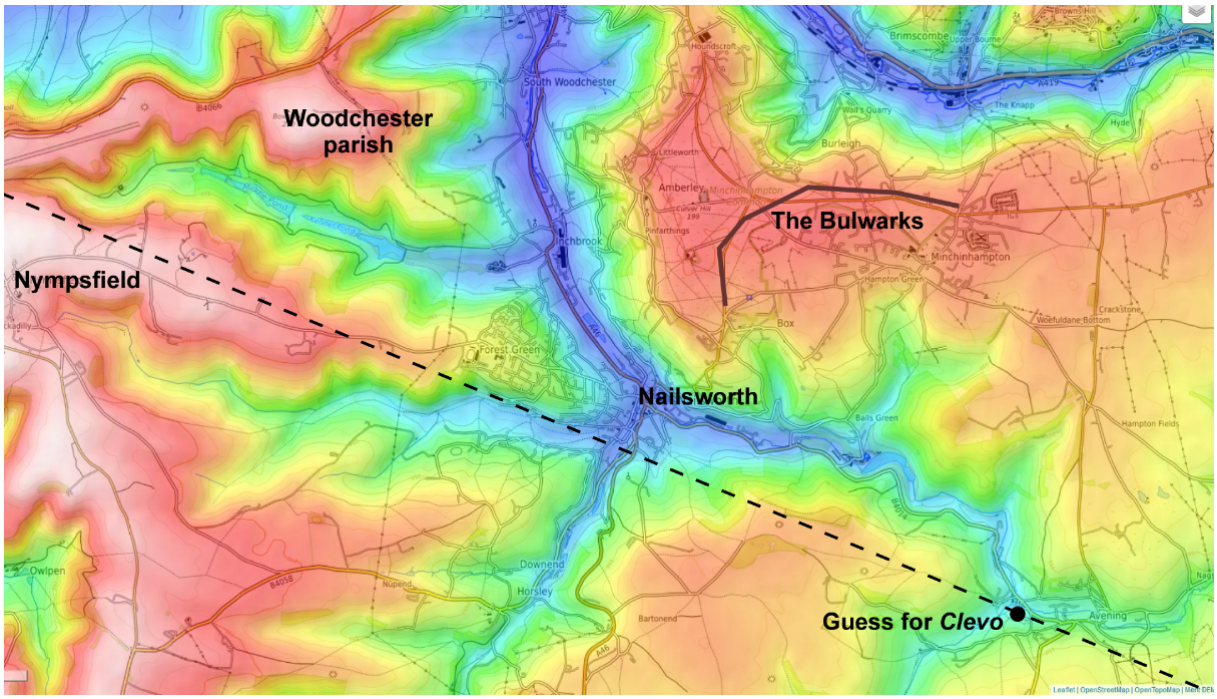

Figure 2: larger scale map, dashed line indicating hypothetical route. The colours to indicate elevation are from topographic-map.com

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Iter XIII of the Antonine Itinerary, continued

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That whole area of the southern Cotswolds, where it is crossed by *iter* 13, contains many clues to the activities of ancient people, including megaliths such as Hetty Pegler's Tump and the Tingle Stone. Nympsfield owes its name to a lost *nemeton* (sacred place set aside for the gods), with parallels galore across Europe, including *Vernemetum*, *Nemetotatio*, and *Medionemeton* in Roman Britain. Woodchester is famous for its Roman villa with a fine mosaic. And there is a huge post-Roman dyke known as The Bulwarks.

Jim Storr has shown that in Dark-Age fighting almost all important Roman traveling routes in Britain were blocked with long ditch-and-bank fortifications. The Bulwarks look as if they are defending territory around Stroud (occupied in Roman times by people called *Dobunni*, but later called *Hwicce*) against aggressors, who would have been west Saxons moving up from the Thames in a push towards Gloucester.

Dark-Age dykes suggest that a Roman travel route was nearby (not necessarily intersecting), but they can also explain why a road's physical structure was not maintained. The next leg of *iter* 13, east of the Cotswolds, crosses territory that was much fought over. According to the Anglo-Saxon Chronicle, a battle at *Deorham* in CE 577 gave the west Saxons control over Bath, Cirencester, and Gloucester. Modern historians still argue over the location of *Deorham*.

Durocornovio was the *Duro-* 'central place, transport hub' of some people called *Cornovii*. Tribal names are often misrepresented as markers of ethnic identity, whereas they mostly just described the inhabitants of a particular geographical area. In this case the reference is to a bendy river, something like **coro-navis*, which might be the modern Churn through Cirencester, or, more likely, the whole drainage basin of the upper river Thames. Rivet and Smith guessed that *iter* 13 passed through Nythe Farm, north-west of modern Swindon, but the Roman route towards Silchester appears to run further south, through Old Swindon, and passing beside an ancient stone circle, discovered in 1894.

A river name Dorcan, traceable back to the CE 900s, might preserve a memory of the Roman name *Durocornovium*, in much the same way as Dorchester-on-Thames (just 25 miles away) might preserve a lost name like *Duronovaria*. As a spot to mark on the map and fit the mileages of *iter* 13, I have chosen the church at Wanborough, whose burial ground is shaped rather like a Roman camp, on top of a hill that might have been a sighting point for laying out the road. Once again, the true Roman-road rest stop might be a mile away, or more.

Spinis obviously looks like Latin *spina* 'thorn, or similar-shaped object', but the modern place called Speen is more than 5 km east of where *iter* 13's mileage figures indicate.

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At that location two Roman roads merged into one, as shown by some work a century ago by OGS Crawford and others. There is nothing conveniently marked on the map there, between Wormstall and Sole Common, so I have named it Speen Junction.

Conclusion

In conclusion, some questions. Is it coincidence that this route lines up so straight between the two main Roman iron-working areas of the Kentish Weald and the Forest of Dean? Or that extending it would reach the gold mines of Pumsaint? Can anything be read into its bearing, angled north of west by as much as midsummer noon is above midwinter noon? Was *iter* 13 really the first line of Roman military communication across the river Severn, so that its extension, bent south towards Usk and Caerleon, came after the fort at Monmouth?

I have never knowingly set foot in this region, and this article originated by serendipity. An ongoing research project into the geographical names of Roman Britain reached the elements *Vindo-* and *Venta*, whose core meaning turned out to be 'valley bottom', i.e. the floodplain of a meandering river, which creates flat land on which people can best grow crops and raise cattle. One among hundreds of names containing that element is Ptolemy's Ουενικονες (*Wenicones*) people, who lived primarily around the river Tay, below Perth. That is what prompted a critical look at *Ariconio*.

Also, this article is accidentally forced to anticipate some of what will go in a later, longer article. Useful lessons can be learned from surveying all places across the Roman Empire where a particular name element was used, and looking for any common feature in their local topographies. Such work leads to a depressing conclusion: historians and linguists have done a lousy job with hundreds of geographical names that have survived from Roman times.

Try doing statistics on a reference book, such as Rivet and Smith (1979). Notice how historical linguists can almost always suggest a meaning for an ancient place name if archaeology has already established its location. It would be contentious to spell out where those meanings are balderdash and irrelevant to my statistical point. What matters is how often the academic "establishment" has used a name's meaning to show where to look for it – almost never. The extent of that failure has been concealed by the huge amount of nonsense that is regularly repeated as dogma.

Four types of intellectual laziness have bedevilled the study of ancient names:

1. claiming, without solid evidence, to know who created those names;
2. over-estimating how many places were named from persons and gods;

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Iter XIII of the Antonine Itinerary, continued

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3. not facing up to the inherent fuzziness of the evidence; and
4. not looking closely at maps.

Time will tell if this article has risen above average, by finding a real signal among all the noise. It has described a route, not a road, thereby laying down a challenge for those who are expert at finding physical evidence of Roman highway engineering. At the very least, it points to some attractive places to take country walks and for armchair Lidar warriors to look at. Happy hunting!

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Watkins, A., *The Old Straight Track: Its Mounds, Beacons, Moats, Sites and Mark Stones* orig. printed 1925

www.romaneranames.uk for the author's further discussions on place-names mentioned in the text.

Editor's Note: readers may also like to refer to Watts, V. (ed.), The Cambridge Dictionary of English Place-Names, *Cambridge University Press, 2004, and the continuing work by the Institute for Name-Studies within the University of Nottingham. I would also note the variety of languages which have come to form place-names within the UK need to be carefully distinguished.*

RRRA Projects, update

The Eastern Stanegate

From David Ratledge

Introduction

For those who avidly study the Ordnance Survey's Hadrian's Wall Map, the eastern end of the Stanegate, Margary RR85a & b, has always represented a puzzle. This important early cross country road obviously linked Carlisle with Corbridge and yet there is a considerable missing stretch from Fourstones/Warden Hill to Corbridge. The final section of the OS route is to the north of Warden Hill and ends at the River North Tyne, well short of Corbridge and a long way off the direct route to it. Would the Romans have deviated so far off a direct route (fig 1)?

Figure 1: The locations of the places mentioned in the text are shown and the relationship between Fourstones and Corbridge is evident from this map. The Ordnance Survey route for the Stanegate is shown in red. Mapping is © OpenStreetMap contributors.

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The Eastern Stanegate, continued

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My involvement began in 2017 when John Poulter (author of *The Planning of Roman Roads and Walls in Northern Britain*) got in touch to see if we could resolve the road arrangement there. John had predicted at the 2012 Arbeia Conference that the Stanegate, heading west from Corbridge, would most likely have gone via St John Lee Church at Acomb. He was interested to know if lidar would support this. The initial lidar data was somewhat incomplete but we were able to form some ideas for the Stanegate's most likely course. A route via St John Lee and also the Stanegate's (later) relationship with Chesters Fort were starting to look logical. The delivery of the National Lidar programme in this area provided higher quality data and plugged some of the gaps. It more or less confirmed what we suspected.

The Route of the Stanegate

Coming from the west, to my eyes the Stanegate route had always looked sensible as far as Fourstones. The latter's significance is that it is located on a northern loop in the River South Tyne and represents the best route to Corbridge without having to bridge that river. Only beyond here could the road then target Corbridge. However, the OS depicted line at Fourstones becomes less direct with what appears to be a series of unnecessary and untypical changes of direction before heading to the north side of Warden Hill. So having reached Fourstones and the loop in the South Tyne the OS route doesn't do what would be expected i.e. aim for Corbridge.

What does lidar reveal? There are two features worth considering. First, the start of a road-like *agger* does appear to exist (despite obvious ploughing) heading north-east from Fourstones – this is part of the OS route (NY88735 68080). Secondly on the north side of Warden Hill composite lidar imagery does show a linear feature whereas the National Lidar Programme data does not! This not absolute proof that this second section did not exist as ploughing between the dates of the two lidar series could have destroyed those traces. However, I should add that the composite data lidar visible feature here was not overly convincing as a major Roman road. It was more like a farm track.

Going back to basics, when the Stanegate was surveyed and constructed Hadrian's Wall and Chesters did not exist. The purpose of the road was to get to Corbridge. Looking at the relationship of Fourstones and Corbridge then a route north of Warden Hill does not seem to make a lot of sense as it is by no means the shortest route (fig 1). But that *agger* like feature heading north-east from Fourstones is not easily ignored and you can see why previously it was believed to be part of the Stanegate. Let's park that for a moment and consider a direct route from Fourstones to Corbridge.

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The Eastern Stanegate, continued

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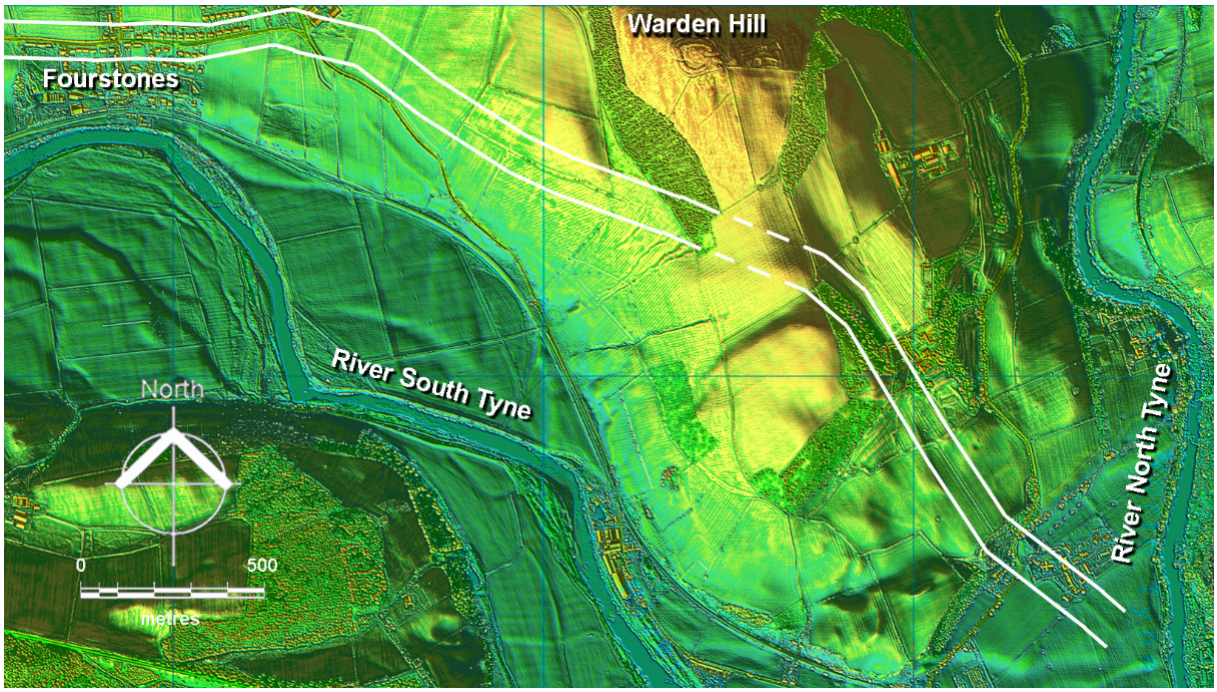

Figure 2: Traces in the lidar imagery of a road heading south-east from Fourstones – just as would be expected if a direct route to Corbridge had been constructed. Base Lidar data is © Crown Copyright 2021.

Instead of turning north-east at Fourstones, a road to Corbridge would be expected to angle around the River South Tyne's loop there and then head south-east. Lidar does indeed show evidence (between NY89701 67752 & NY91509 66346) of just such a probable road heading over High Warden and dropping down to the village of Warden (fig 2). This would position the road on the west bank of the River North Tyne, just north of its confluence with the River South Tyne, and opposite St John Lee church. That would fit with where John Poulter had previously suggested the Stanegate was likely to be heading east from Corbridge.

Looking at the lidar imagery for any traces west of Corbridge once again a route to St John Lee church looks very obvious. The visible evidence is somewhat intermittent with a few gaps at Anick but overall this looks to be the Roman line (fig 3). This route of course would pass through the early Red House site that predated Corbridge itself. In reality there would have been little alternative for the Roman road surveyor to take his road any other way.

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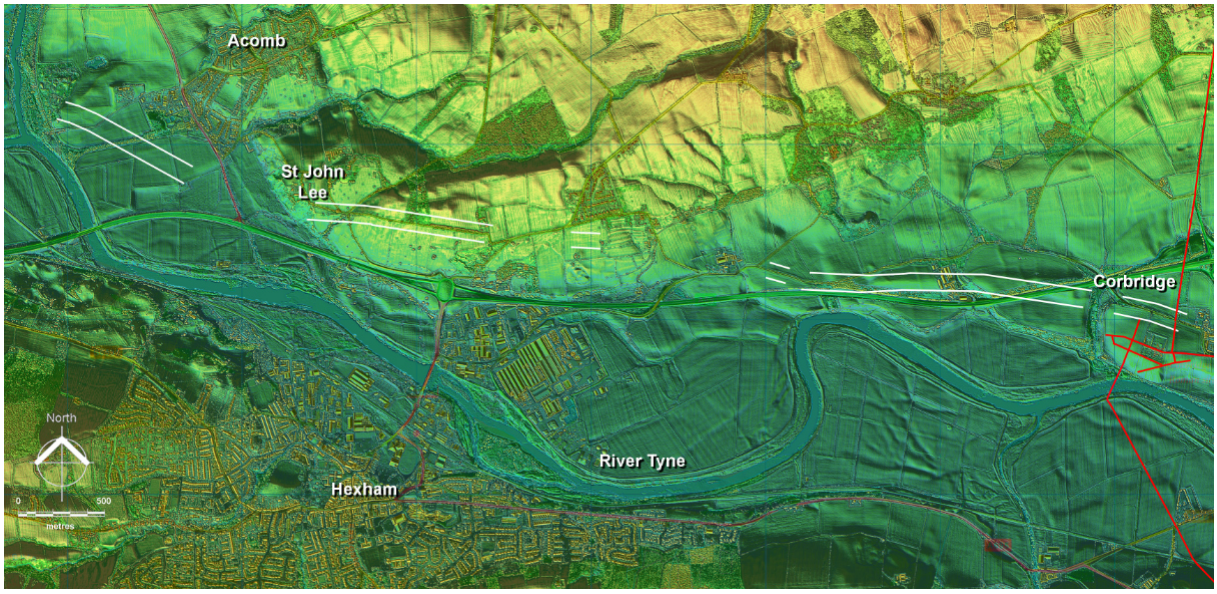

Figure 3: The evidence west of Corbridge is reasonably convincing for a route via St John Lee Church with traces visible beyond the church heading for a crossing the River North Tyne. Base Lidar data is © Crown Copyright 2021.

We therefore have the bones of the likely route of the missing section of the Stanegate road from Fourstones to Corbridge. But what about that *agger* like feature, the one we parked, that headed north-east at Fourstones?

The Arrival of Hadrian's Wall and Chesters Fort

The Stanegate was to exist in isolation for around 50 years. The construction of Hadrian's Wall and Chesters Fort, north of the Stanegate, would require a rethink of the Roman road network. What would have been needed were connections from the Stanegate up to the new frontier. In this case connection(s) to Chesters and its crossing of the River North Tyne, which surely must have been a key strategic location, would have been essential.

If we accept the suggested direct route to Corbridge then that *agger* feature heading north-east at Fourstones could now start to make some sense. It is the best and most practical point for a branch road off the Stanegate for traffic coming from the west to connect to Chesters. Supporting this is the geophys at Chesters indicating a road heading south-west from the site. This can only be the other end of the road we are now postulating from Fourstones. Lidar does indicate enough (to my eyes) intervening clues to support this route. Note that the OS Hadrian's Wall Map does show a

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The Eastern Stanegate, continued

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(different) link to Chesters but I could see nothing in the lidar imagery that supported the route depicted.

But what about traffic from the east, i.e. Corbridge? A road up the east side of River North Tyne would be the logical route. The modern A6079 through Acomb and Wall fits the bill and there are a two or three of lidar clues where the modern road wanders off line. The first is south of Acomb and perhaps the least secure (NY93000 65800). The second is at High Barns (NY91892 68000) and the third, a very convincing one, north of Wall village taking a direct route across fields to the Roman bridge site at Corbridge (NY91584 69355).

The Roman road network, post Hadrian's Wall, is now taking shape. Originally there was just a direct Stanegate road to Corbridge. Added to this, 50 or so years later, were the two connecting roads to Chesters (fig 4).

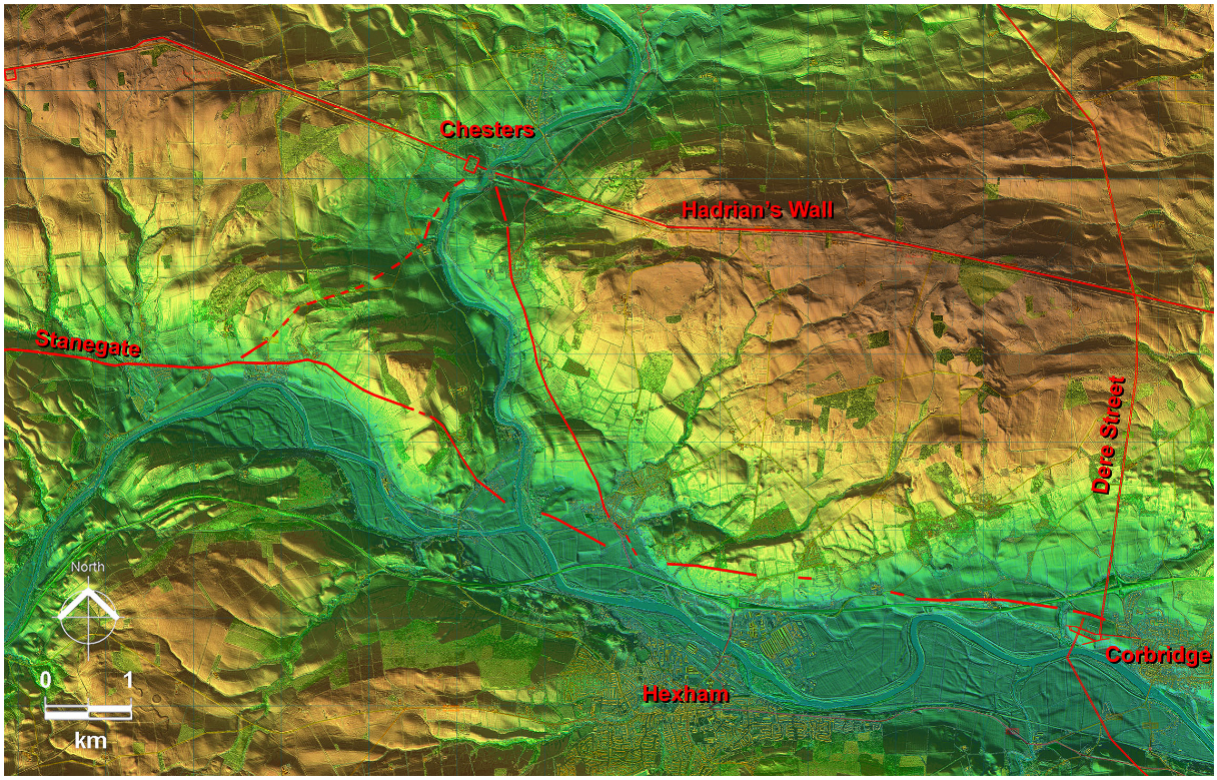

Figure 4: The Roman Road network to the west of Corbridge in the post-Hadrian's Wall's era. Base Lidar data is © Crown Copyright 2021.

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The Eastern Stanegate, continued

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Conclusion

The Roman road network to the west of Corbridge now looks much more logical and practical. It would have provided the necessary direct connections between the important sites located there. This solution also provides a possible explanation of why the Stanegate was previously thought to pass around the north side of Warden Hill. The road north-east from Fourstones, previously assumed to be the Stanegate, is far more likely to be a later branch road to Chesters.

My thanks are due to John Poulter for his ideas, advice and help with this research. He is writing a much more detailed and thorough review of the interpretation of these findings and their ramifications, but it is unlikely that this will be published until next year.

RRRA Projects, update

The Stanegate North Tyne Crossing

From Dave Armstrong

David Ratledge's informative preceding article, prompted by the interest of John Poulter, has rightly brought the issue of the eastern end of the Stanegate, Margary RR85a, into focus. It has puzzled local researchers over many years how this road, that all conceivable logic suggests must extend at least as far as Corbridge, progresses past Fourstones, crosses the North Tyne, and finally reaches Corbridge.

This article is intended to complement and add to David's discussion, not conflict or contradict, by adding in supplementary information to some of the queries raised by him.

The Stanegate is known to be present under the modern road, the B6319, from Newbrough towards Fourstones, being observed from the difficulty of digging through it during the laying of a water main in the 1950's (Wright, 1958, 316). But it was seen to veer to the north east approximately at the junction with the service road to Frankham Farm, NY 88430 67914, and was clearly not under the modern road some 30 yards east of the junction. An onwards route around the south side of Warden Hill does look the most logical option of heading towards Corbridge but if so the connection at Fourstones is not under the B6319. The course shown by OS mapping taking a north eastern course off the B6319 is based upon MacLauchlan's observations, (1858, 30 - 1) is confirmed by two sections made by Eric Birley here in 1932 (Wright, 1936, 201) along the line of the modern footpath that shows a clear lidar *agger* indication.

There may be an alternative route around the south side of Warden Hill without the distinct climb and descent over the hill. Lidar indicates an *agger* like linear feature on the south side of the B6319 south east of Fourstones. Selkirk (2001, 271) observed a continuation of this alignment further south. If either alignment around the south side of the hill is present a junction off the known road position at a point further north near where Birley cut his sections and back through Fourstones, while appearing odd, may be how it was achieved.

Onwards from Birley's confirmed road locations, the OS route around the north of Warden Hill is based on numerous sections cut by Wright (1936, 201 - 5 with additional work, Wright, 1939, 140 - 7). Despite severe plough damage this route was further confirmed and slightly extended towards the North Tyne in the 1970's (Sockett, 1973, 241 - 3). This route therefore is clearly a Roman road but its further course and destination is not obvious to us now.

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Stanegate North Tyne Crossing, continued

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Linkage to the fort at Chesters, numbered RRX056 by the OS, is based on observation by MacLauchlan (1858, 27 - 8) and a section cut by Clayton (1882, 217) on the west bank of the Tyne about 100 yards from the fort's south gate. This appears to be heading towards the Stanegate at Fourstones to the south-west but as David points out there is no clarity of its route beyond Clayton's excavation and the line plotted by the OS is speculative after Walwick Grange with only possible glimpses visible in lidar.

David's suggested route from the east bank of the Tyne through St. John's Lee to Corbridge appears to be a logical course and closely matches the thoughts and mapping of the OS surveyors along with the observations of Selkirk (2001, 273).

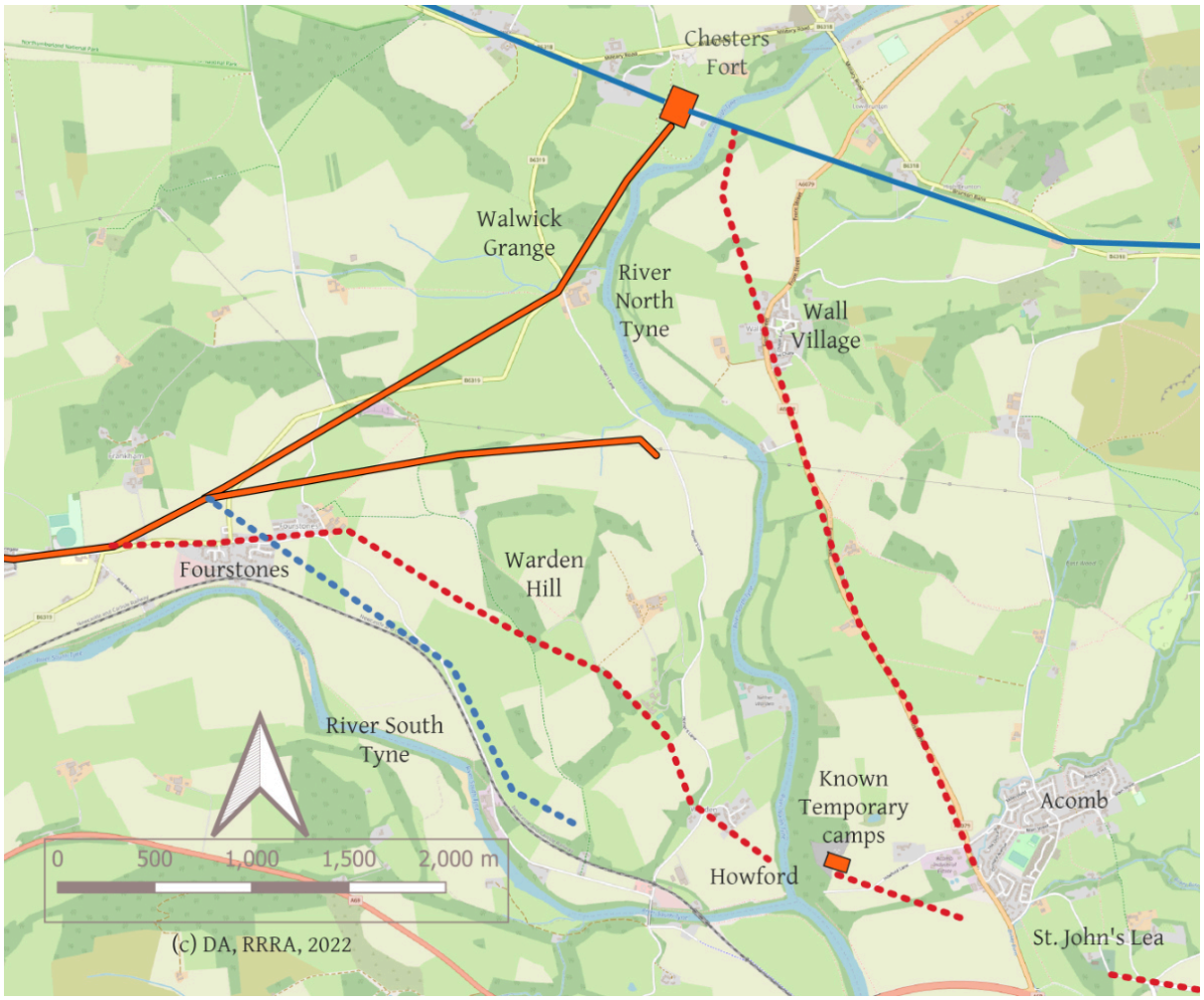

Fig. 1, The Stanegate North Tyne crossings. Known roads in red solid, David Ratledge proposals in red dotted and alternative south of Warden Hill route in blue dotted. Hadrian's Wall in blue solid with the Military Way running just to its rear.. Map data © OpenStreetMap Contributors 2020, made available here under the Open Database License (ODbL) v1.0

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Stanegate North Tyne Crossing, continued

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Analysis

Where does this leave us in determining the route (Figure 1)? Clearly this was an important cross country route for the Romans across various phases of the frontier in this area. They would require a reliable all weather crossing for the Stanegate of this significant river, which, even now with a level of regulation and control provided by upstream reservoirs, is still notorious for its rapid rising and violent spates. A number of times each year a ford would become safely impassable for days, presumably an unacceptable operational problem. Routes around the south of Warden hill lead towards the known historical fording point at Howford just to the north of the confluence of the North and South Tynes. This is known to have been the crossing point of the medieval Carelgate route that ran between Newcastle and Carlisle. That the Romans also crossed at or near Howford is given more credence by the existence of a number of aerial photograph indications of temporary camps on the east bank, but despite extensive searching by local researchers, there are no remains of a substantial bridge.

An engineered bridge with a roadway is known where Hadrian's Wall crosses the north Tyne at Chesters. This bridge was initially constructed to a narrow width, carrying just the wall (Bidwell & Holbrook, 1989, 12 – 13 plus Figure 11). Rebuilt on a much grander and substantial scale, it later included a roadway over the river (*ibid*, 44 – 7 plus Figures 36 & 37). This rebuilding, dated to c.AD160 (Bidwell, 1999, 119 - 20) may have been to give continuity to the Military Way, RR86b, behind the Wall as the ramp at the west end does align to the minor east fort gate. Alternatively it may have (also?) facilitated a reliable all weather crossing for the Stanegate. Even though the west ramp from the bridge seems aligned on the fort rather than into the *vicus*, it could have been connected to the link found by Clayton and, with some bypassing of the fort through the *vicus,* meet up with the Military Way to form a Stanegate route across the river. The route plotted by David Ratledge down the east side of the river through Wall village would be an extension of this meeting up with the more direct route utilising a Howford ford crossing. But what of the route that has been clearly established around the north side of Warden hill? Excavation by Wright and Socket showed that this took a distinct turn to the south when approaching the river. This may have been to follow the modern Homers Lane towards Warden and the Howford crossing or alternatively, having a sharp bend, could have been the start of a zig zag descent towards a river crossing, which has also never been located despite extensive searching near Wall village.

Milestone evidence

Further evidence and possible clarification of the route can be inferred from a Stanegate milestone, RIB 2299. Discovered in a group of five on Crindledykes Farm

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Stanegate North Tyne Crossing, continued

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near *Vindolanda* to the west (Collingwood Bruce, 1886, 132 - 3) one stone indicates that it was placed fourteen miles to an unspecified destination. Wright, (1940, 119) considered the distance to the anticipated terminus at Corbridge and the implications of that to the potential route. At that time it may not have been fully realised that the Chesters bridge had a roadway so that option wasn't considered and a conclusion was made, perhaps unsurprisingly, that his recently excavated route round the north of Warden Hill was a close fit to the distance. The milestone was erected by Severus Alexander in the early third century, after the Chesters bridge was enhanced with a roadway - the milestone could be equally as applicable to that route as well as the shorter possibilities around Warden Hill.

Digitally plotting this distance along the Stanegate in GIS comparing the three alternative routes to the centre of Corbridge gives 13.7 Roman miles for the routes round the south of Warden Hill, 14.4 miles for the OS route across the north of Warden Hill taking a direct river crossing and 15.8 miles following the route to Chesters bridge with the suggested route down the east bank. An additional factor in this may be that the Romans measured distances to the limit of a civil area rather than the centre as we do. If this is so in this instance, it would seem that the route to the south of Warden Hill is too short to be reflected by this milestone. Depending on where the limit of the Corbridge town was, the route utilising Chesters bridge could work but that the OS mapped route round the north of Warden Hill is still probably the best fit.

Summary

None of these three routes have been confirmed right through. There is still work to be done, but if they are all present they could be sequential to each other, the bridge crossing point at Chesters being made to eradicate the uncertainty of being able to ford the river at Howford and/or opposite Wall village. And once that is solved there is the even bigger puzzle of locating the surmised Stanegate route from Corbridge to the east.

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RRRA Projects, update

Proposed Roman or older routes along the South Downs between Winchester, Chichester and Arundel, and cross-routes from the south coast towards the north

From Marilyn Neil

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Introduction (in Normandy)

This research offering on possible Roman routes in the South of England has been evolving in a roundabout way since around 2008. My original attempts to find information stemmed from curiosity about the early archaeology of the area where I live in the Calvados Department of Normandy, so I have to begin with a quick apology that the next couple of paragraphs will look like a complete digression, but I suppose they show that you can start looking for one thing and end by finding something completely different. I am situated a few kilometers north of the Pilgrims' Route to Mont St Michel in Brittany. This mediaeval route is now a *Grande Randonnée*, popular with walkers, but its western part appears to have possibly evolved from a prehistoric route (*route d'etain*) used in the Bronze Age for transporting tin imported from Cornwall. Tin ingots were shipped across from Cornwall to Brittany, then onwards to the River Seine and further north through this area. Many high-quality pieces of bronze work have been found close to the tin route, and are on display in local museums. People using this long-distance way and carrying valuable tin and bronze goods probably did not want to risk travelling alone, and they would have been joined along the way by others with different materials and goods to trade. My home is also close to several sites where *Cinglais* flint was mined, and I wanted to discover if I live close to a detour for collecting the flint from the mines before re-joining the walking caravan on the tin route.

Initially sourcing information about any prehistoric routes in Calvados proved difficult and I couldn't find anything published online to support my idea. Old routes across the local, hilly terrain might, I thought, perhaps have continued to exist as Roman roads or river crossings at towns with Roman/Gaulish-origin names, so again I looked but in Calvados found only the *Chemin Hausse,* a Roman road which runs south-eastwards from Vieux-la-Romaine, (*Aregenua*), near to Caen. These days my French is a lot better and more recently I've found additional material, but back I decided then to put

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Proposed routes along the South Downs, cont.

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my efforts with Calvados to one side and look at England, where at least language was no hindrance.

Moving the research to England

I decided that if perhaps I could trace the oldest routes and the known Roman ones, I might start to see patterns in settlement and maybe in the movement of goods and resources. It was straightforward to find a list of Ancient Trackways on Wikipedia, (1), and early on I came across the mapping work done by Keith Briggs (2) with the known Roman roads in England. Yes, there was information, but how to plot the routes, large scale, together with any supporting details of settlement, Roman activity and anything else I could think of?

Things don't always go in a straight line like Roman roads. I was stumped and stalled, but in 2019, while visiting my sister in Warwickshire, she was grumbling about an intrusive-sounding planning application for a site on the country lane where she lives. I had the idea of looking online if there was anything of archaeological or historical value nearby which could be used to fend off the bulldozers and came across the National Library of Scotland (NLS) site, maps.nls (3). Switching between their old Ordnance Survey maps showed all sorts of details not included on the more recent ones. If I combined these three sources I might be able to see the bigger picture. But how could I plot all the routes large enough to see them clearly and record all the details?

I did nothing else until March 2020 when Covid-19 was suddenly upon us. French lockdown meant travel distances being limited, curfews, lockdown and, occasionally when permitted, an attempt at social life with a few others living equally quietly. I'm retired too, so there was now plenty of time to pore over maps and while away *confinement* then! I came across and joined the RRRA while searching for Roman roads again. It seems that everybody with an interest has been doing something! Updated lidar results covering more extensive areas were added to the National Library of Scotland (NLS) site (3), the Exeter University project led by Dr Chris Smart *Understanding Landscapes* has had a huge response from the public, as did the Ramblers Association with their *Don't Lose Your Way* project (4). Now, in 2021, the Historic England site Aerial Archaeology Mapping Explorer (AAME) (5) provides yet another way to look for features. So much information about ancient routes and the places they connect is now available, but you just can't choose an area and fit it all onto one map.

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Proposed routes along the South Downs, cont.

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Mapping

One day I remembered I had a couple of current road maps which I could copy and stick together to make one big area then plot all the Roman and prehistoric routes on that. Luckily the red was low on the printer which damped out all the A roads, but allowed me to see the hills and rivers and was clear enough to find place-names. Rather over-excited, I copied, and stuck together the whole of Central and Southern England, marked up the Roman roads, including all of Ivan Margary's, Roman Villa sites, Roman Camps, British Settlements, ancient tracks, hillforts, banked features like Grimsdyke and Wansdyke. Anything I could find I crammed down, checking with the different maps on the NLS site for information about sites and finds. What soon became glaringly obvious were the gaps where there are no recognized Roman roads.

Large Roman towns such as Bath (Aquae Sulis) or Silchester (*Calleva*) all appear to have roads coming out of them like the spokes of a wheel, radiating in all directions, sometimes as many as six or seven. Winchester (*Venta Belgarum*) was one such candidate, with nothing in the north-east to south-east sector. A road had been suggested running north-east, but the actual course towards Farnham or Aldershot is not proven, (though there are many Roman buildings and finds in this area), and the South Downs leading towards Chichester (*Noviomagos*), Arundel and the south coast were empty.

The area I had initially plotted was far too large to manage for "looking in the gaps" so I decided to be selective and try tracing a South Downs Route, Roman or earlier, out of Winchester (*Venta Belgarum*) and look at its place within the surrounding terrain. 2020 proved to be the ideal time with several new information sources becoming available online. Using the sources given above I have traced a possible route between Winchester and Chichester, and on to Arundel and Littlehampton, together with potential cross-routes over the South Downs connecting the harbours of Chichester, Portsmouth (Portchester Castle, *Leucomagos?*), and Bitterne (*Clausentum*) with the interior. The availability of 2020 lidar on the NLS site facilitated this work enormously all along this proposed South Downs Route as it shows areas now covered by woodland to be an almost continuous area of Iron Age/Roman agricultural development. This was not looking like a quiet backwater in BCE100; I think it was absolutely heaving!

I began with the South Downs Route, but soon became convinced that there were other routes crossing or joining it, giving access from the coast into the hinterland of the South Downs and beyond, and very likely linking with other, known Roman roads. My working method was to choose a start point, usually a place-name, Winchester

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Proposed routes along the South Downs, cont.

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rather obviously for the South Downs Route, and bring up the relevant section of the OS 1955-61 map on the NLS site, set up for viewing double screen. This map has much less "clutter" than the more recent maps and satellite views with no motorways, vast industrial estates obscuring the routes out of town (which might just be Roman), and a lot less housing! A good number of archaeological sites are also marked, and the known Roman roads are shown clearly as dotted lines. From the OS 1955-61 map I could plot known Roman roads onto my home-made map, trying to mark their course as accurately as possible, all in a nice Roman Empire purple felt-tip pen, and give them the Margary numbers if they had them. Then, broadly speaking, I would take a virtual walk along the route, with the right hand screen showing LIDAR for the terrain, noting changes of direction, heights, place-names, (even the *Coldharbours* which the professionals seem to hate, but I'll give you my excuse for that later), Roman and other sites, and grid reference numbers. The information stash grew quite fast and soon became unwieldy as notes, so I opened spreadsheets for each separate route I wanted to trace. Later I did a bit of self-congratulation for this because it gave me a base for cross-referencing the routes, and adding in information from new sources like Historic England's AAHE site once they came online.

Still working from NLS, once I was done with the OS 1955-61 map, I went to the OS 1888-1913 map, and some large towns took on quite a small, rural appearance. This map shows place-names and, more usefully sometimes, old road names which have now disappeared, and the closed or vanished footpaths which the Ramblers Association are trying to register, which sometimes help to fill a gap in the route. All the while I was checking against LIDAR, and satellite, just trying to make sure that I wasn't recording a water tank or some WW2 installation as Roman. There were also considerably more Roman and other sites to add to the spreadsheets. Once I had extracted anything I thought I could from these NLS maps, I moved on to looking at the others and the OS 1940-77 map especially gave yet more details of Roman sites. Finally I checked to see if any local websites, like archaeological groups or history societies, had any other details of finds and added them in to the spreadsheet mix. When cross-checking local websites for any work done by others to trace a South Downs Roman road or if there were records of any archaeological finds to support the proposed route, I came across the work of the North East Hampshire History and Archaeological Society (NEHHAS). This group is highly qualified and active and ongoing with their researches. I found that the Roman road research work, and some excavation, on the South Downs Route's Hampshire section had already been done by NEHHAS, but my tracing did generally correspond with theirs and so I left it on my spreadsheet as I first found it and continued with the West Sussex section on to

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Proposed routes along the South Downs, cont.

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Arundel. The RRRA site mentioned its existence in the Antonine Itinerary too, as Iter VII and William Stukeley (1725) wrote of it, but somehow it was always left off the map, even by Margary!

In all I traced and broke my findings down into 9 Proposed Routes which are listed here, and recorded as individual spreadsheets, including those where I still think there is some work to do.

1. South Downs Route – Winchester (*Venta Belgarum*) to Arundel via Chichester (*Noviomagos)*

> Note: the alternative lowland route, on RR420 via Wickham, meeting RR421 in vicinity of Bedhampton, thus connecting the ports along the south coast as far as Chichester, then by a recently confirmed route, RR153 to Arundel.

2. A link between RR422, south-west of Winchester, a River Itchen crossing at Twyford, meeting RR420 at Morestead and then continuing on the course of Belmont La, Stakes La, and Corhampton La to the River Meon crossing at Exton

> Note: a short spur goes north-eastwards from Morestead, aligning with Temple Valley, and emerging where the road east of Winchester, the modern A31 ceases to be straight and follows the “Pilgrim’s Way”.

3. A connection at Lane End Down on the South Downs Route, running south-westwards, possibly to Bitterne (*Clausentum*)?

4. Another route connecting with Bitterne (*Clausentum)* via Salt Lane? – more work needed.

5. A connecting route from Bitterne to Curbridge on known RR (no Margary number), then via Bishops Waltham to Exton.

6. Chichester Harbour then Emsworth going north, then splitting:

> a). Emsworth NW B2148 as far as Horndean
>
> b). Emsworth NW B2148 towards Rowlands Castle
>
> c). Emsworth NE to West Marden
>
> d). Emsworth NE to Walderton, Stoughton Down/Stoughton and meeting RR151 Chichester (*Noviomagos*) to Silchester (*Venta Belgarum*)

7. Chichester city (*Noviomagos*) to South Harting.

8. South Harting to Newbury (*Spinis*).

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Proposed routes along the South Downs, cont.

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9. Still "under scrutiny": searching for possible routes in other directions out of South Harting to connect with RR M151, and any connection between Milland on RR151 and Coldwaltham on Stane Street, RR15.

References to the maps used are included at the end of this article.

I am cautious about calling the routes I found definitely "Roman" because with all the other features showing up on lidar, they are possibly older or connect areas where there are older patterns of activity, notably Iron Age field systems and hill forts for example. They link areas which are considerably rich in resources: salt, iron, wool, flint, fish, grain, clay for pottery-making; the list goes on. These seem to be the resources the Romans wanted to exploit in Britain, which makes a case that somebody was already digging them up or making them before the Romans arrived.

I feel that in setting myself this project I've gone some way to pulling together a number of threads which aren't usually discussed at the same time. A 19th century local Roman Villa excavation, for example, was not usually reviewed in the context of the Romano-British routes or settlements nearby, or which people or resources might be being transported around the wider area, and we only normally see records of coin finds, but we have no idea where the safe places were to keep the big payments. While looking at the cross-routes over the South Downs and down to the coast, it became apparent that several ports and river estuaries were in use, and these routes were laced between them.

Something else is missing from the equation. The English Channel has weather and winds which can change very quickly, as well as large tidal rises, and any ship crossing it from France might have to run for shelter on the inbound tide into the closest harbour having a safe entry passage without rocks or sandbanks to run aground on. The result was that this boat could be forced into a harbour which wasn't the original intended destination, but with these suggested cross-routes, and a suitable communication system (beacons, post-riders?) everything could be redirected inland. This is important because they ultimately connect with some of the most important Roman roads including Stane Street to London, and the road to Silchester. Known Roman roads as well as some of my proposed routes meet at the upper navigable reaches of the rivers flowing to the coast (Itchen, Hamble, Chichester Harbour's multiple channels, Arun) etc. These rivers have all been navigable in the past, so these portage points, the places where good are moved from river boat to road, have contributed to the network.

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Proposed routes along the South Downs, cont.

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Conclusion

Unfortunately I made some questions for myself which I can't answer, so there is not going to be a conclusion to this article in the sense of a neat summary. I'm hoping some readers might like to take on a few tasks, but I hope they will be enjoyable. When I added all the Roman Villas, Buildings and Finds sites, the villas and buildings looked quite evenly distributed close to my new-found routes, so now I question if, rather than the upgraded farmhouses of British landowners wanting the best things a Roman lifestyle had to offer, some were management centres for agricultural and other goods being moved across the area, with secure areas or strong-rooms for the security of valuables and possibly coinage. They are never right on the roads, always a short distance away, as if to ensure that nobody will just drop in from the road. The "Camps" are also relatively evenly placed. Are these places exactly what they say they are, intended not for military use, but as overnight safe shelters or collection/assembly points for travellers and drovers with their animals? Lastly, a number of areas within the area covered show up as large, generally ovoid spaces, and modern roads go around them, for example Street End, just to the North of Bishop's Waltham, Winchester. The roads surround several fields, with no finds noted, but Historic England AAME records the space as containing multiple later-prehistoric/Roman field boundaries. Are the landscape features indicative of an *oppidum* at this location?

Presentation of the proposed South Downs Route and the others is difficult because of the volume of detail. I have recorded them as separate spreadsheets with grid references for points on the routes and all other features found, and links for other online sources are also included. Originally I hoped that some experienced and keen walkers in the area with enthusiasm for things Roman might try walking sections of them in real time and looking for evidence on the ground, or maybe visiting sites if they are open to the public. If others have more information which I have missed, I should be pleased to add that too to build the bigger picture. It's November now, and I don't think sending RRRA members out onto the South Downs on a misty afternoon without thinking more about their safety is a good idea, so I am now converting the spreadsheets into individual walking routes with reference to up-to-date maps, starting with the Chichester to South Harting route, and of course with the warning that some sections of footpath following the old tracks are now closed. In addition, considerable stretches are now under modern roads and not always safe on foot, so anyone trying this out, please keep it safe and legal.

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Proposed routes along the South Downs, cont.

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References

Internet map links - click on the title to be taken to the relevant page:

(1) Wikipedia Ancient Trackways

(2) Keith Briggs' website

(3) National Library of Scotland online map collection

(4) Ramblers Association 'Don't lose your way campaign'

(5) Historic England Aerial Archaeology Mapping Explorer (AAME)

For further details about the spreadsheets mentioned by the author, you can contact Marilyn by email.

RRRA Projects, update

The Roman Road over the Bowland Fells

From David Ratledge

There is no doubt that Lancashire's most spectacular Roman road is the one that crosses over the Bowland Fells. To do so it first makes a long climb through Croasdale from above Slaidburn, skirts around White Hill attaining a height of over 1400 feet before descending into the upper reaches of the Hindburn Valley. The route was known with reasonable precision or so we all thought. The very recent release of Lidar data by Defra for these fells has thrown up several corrections and one big surprise. A surprise that leaves anyone who has walked this route (me included) scratching their heads as to how we all missed it.

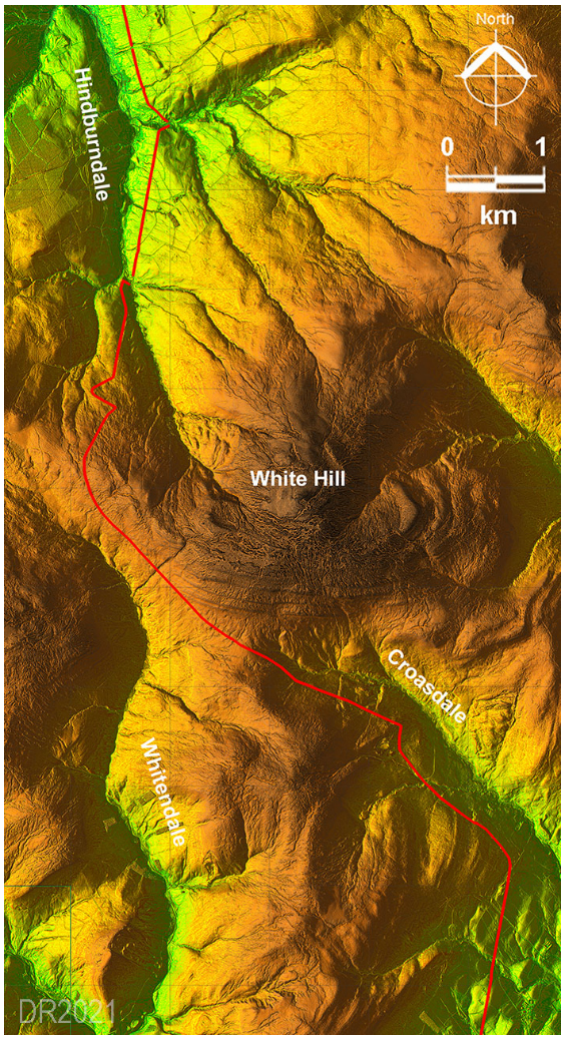

Fig. 1, The full route through Croasdale. Lidar data, Open Government licence v3.0 unless otherwise stated © Crown Copyright 2020

This road over the fells is part of what is probably the Roman's main route to the north on the west side of the Pennines. It runs from Manchester to Kirkby Thore in Cumbria via Ribchester, Burrow-with-Burrow and Low Borrowbridge. The part we are considering here is the central 10 miles or so of the Ribchester to Burrow section.

First those route corrections. These are on the long ascent from Croasdale. The Roman line is much more direct than the modern track, today usually referred to as the Hornby Road. There are 5 main deviations – SD69050 55653, SD68724 55887, SD67967 56772, SD67255 57076 & SD66565 57520. The latter is by far the longest. Lidar, being precision height data, also gives us an accurate summit height for the road of 1420 feet. It would have been a few feet higher had the Romans not decided to excavate down for a level platform for their road.

But what about that big surprise? This occurs on the northern decent. After a curving change of direction at the summit the road

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Roman Road over the Bowland Fells, cont.

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Fig. 2, The big zig-zag. Lidar data, Open Government licence v3.0 unless otherwise stated © Crown Copyright 2020

heads down for the Hindburn Valley and modern Ordnance Survey mapping shows a typically straight alignment. How wrong could we be. There follows a totally unknown superbly engineered double zig-zag. First a very short one to the right (east) before immediately crossing sides for a huge zig-zag to the left (west). This makes a short curving turn at its extremity before returning to the main straight alignment. Lidar indicates that the Western zig-zag has survived in excellent condition. It is perhaps the best I have come across. This is not to be confused with the known zig-zag the bottom of the descent. Well it was known to everyone except the Ordnance Survey.

In hindsight we should have realised that the "new" upper zig-zag would have been needed to ease the gradient there. It is by far the steepest section on the whole crossing - just walking up it was very hard work. Measuring the slope shows a straight line would have had a gradient of 1 in 6. We now know from elsewhere that a maximum gradient of around 1 in 10 was generally preferred for Roman traffic. My excuse for not spotting this previously is at this altitude the road is masked in peat but I did miss a clue. A photo I took when walking this road years ago clearly hinted that the road was

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Roman Road over the Bowland Fells, cont.

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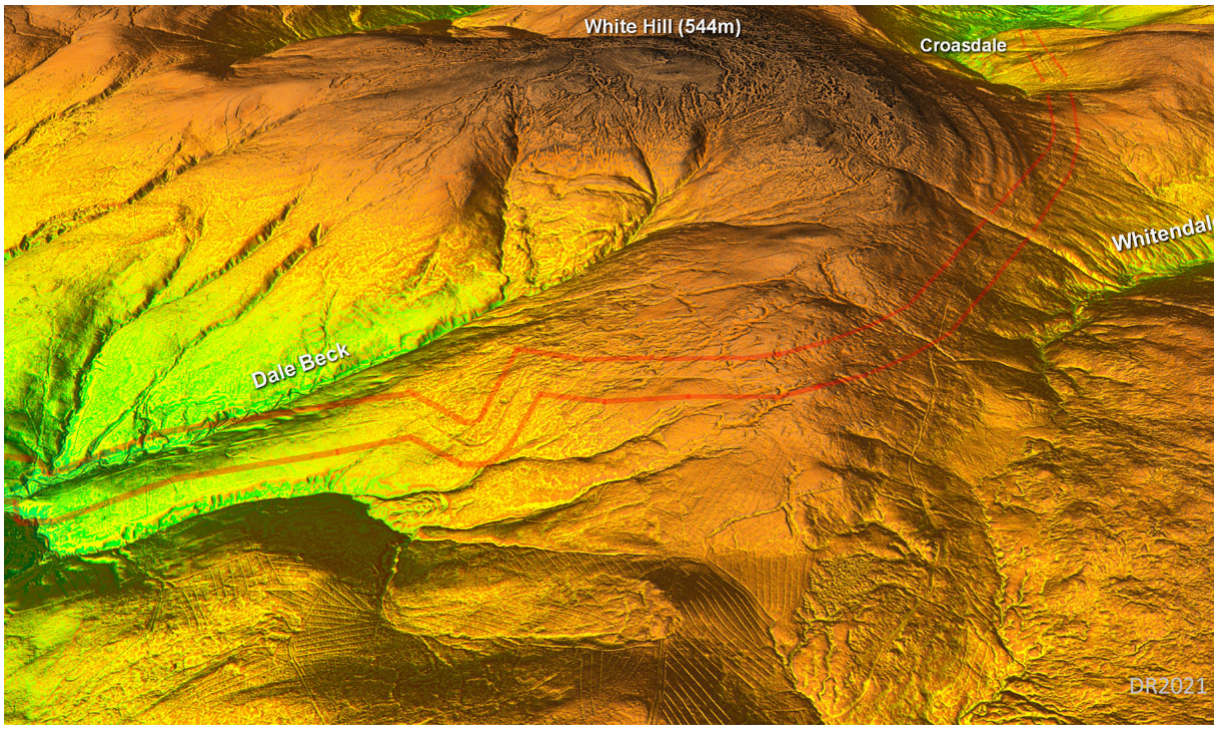

Fig. 3, Lidar 3D image of the big zig-zag on White hill. Open Government licence v3.0 unless otherwise stated © Crown Copyright 2020

not on the accepted line but I never thought such a huge deviation could have existed, particularly one that had not been spotted before.

The walk along this road is highly recommended. I always used to suggest doing it south to north as going the other way involved that steep northern climb. Perhaps using the zig-zag that recommendation is no longer valid! Many more images of this road and the new zig-zag are available on my website www.twithr.co.uk I have also made a video flyover of the crossing and this is available on Youtube: https://youtu.be/BqfpFWtWqXY

Other Road News, bits and pieces

RRRA AGM

From Dave Armstrong

Our Association was created over five years ago growing out of the personal interest of Mike Haken and Hugh Toller. Initially the membership was quite small and centred in Yorkshire. How we have blossomed since then and continue to do so. We have over 450 members in *Britannia*, other parts of the Roman Empire and internationally. This has prompted the thought that we need to share more of our workings with you, the members, to seek your endorsement to help progress and further develop our objectives.

To this end we are intending holding a Zoom AGM early this year.The intent is not to discuss archaeological details but what the Association's objectives are and how we achieve them. We will be mailing out to you more details, supporting documents, and an agenda with a Zoom invite once we set a date. We are open to ideas and offers of help, please contact Mike directly at mike@romanroads.org.

New RRRA Group for Cumbria

From Chester Forster

A new group of the RRRA has been set up in Cumbria, centred in Carlisle. The group was formed following the discovery of a hitherto unknown section of an east-west Roman road adjacent to the line of the known north-south Carlisle-Crawford road (Margary RR7f).

The road was uncovered during excavations of a bath house which, it is postulated, may have been the summer palace of the Emperor Septimus Severus when he came to Britain in 208 to pacify the Northern Tribes. Some 300 volunteers were involved in the five week long dig at Carlisle Cricket Club as a precursor to the building of a new pavilion above the flood levels of the River Eden.

At the end of the dig (the third on the site in four years) many of the volunteers expressed disappointment that the site was to be filled in and many were enthusiastic for further exploration to be carried out. As a result, names were taken and a meeting to set up the group took place in Carlisle Castle in November attended by Chairman Mike Haken who delivered a talk on "What is a Roman Road."

The initial aim was to have six or eight interested people but by the end of the inaugural meeting the numbers had swelled to 40 and more are still joining. This has changed the dynamics of the group from a few interested souls meeting as an ad-hoc group into a more formal organisation. A series of events is being planned during the year and it is hoped to coincide something to coincide with the 1900th anniversary of the building of Hadrian's Wall.

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Other Road news, bits and pieces, cont.

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It was hoped that the initial project would be to geophiz the cricket pitch to which tacit approval had already been obtained but due to an idiot sub-editor on a local newspaper describing the project as a "dig" many members of the cricket club were understandably horrified and launched a scathing attack on "these people" (the RRRA).

This has led to a reappraisal of the situation and it is now hoped that the initial project will be something to coincide with the Hadrian's Wall 1900th anniversary celebrations.

The initial project will double as a training programme for volunteers using the Geophiz machinery of the RRRA but field walking and general landscape observations are also planned. Anyone interested in joining the group is asked to contact Chester Forster at chesterforster1@tiscali.co.uk or phone on 01228 527010 or 07711 119329.

Roman Road Excavations by the North East Hampshire History and Archaeology Society; Field Archaeology Branch

Held on Bank Holidays - Easter to August 2022

Near Exton (A32) for Chichester Road

Experienced and novice excavators from outside the Society are welcome. Minimum unaccompanied age is 16, but younger children with an adult are welcome. There will be training available, and a training manual can be purchased.

All excavators will have the opportunity to experience the main tasks associated with an excavation under the supervision and guidance of a member of the Society.

All persons attending the excavation will be required to join the Society for insurance cover, cost £10. Novice excavators will be required to join the Society, and purchase the training manual cost £6.

Persons participating in the optional training exercise will be charged an additional £70 and must purchase and read the training manual at £6. To complete the exercises you are likely to need to book for at least 5 days in total between March & September - though you can carry this on to next year. Those helping with a site set-up will have a discount on the training fee.

A training course of five modules is available. They cover: Site Layout and Recording, Excavation, Surveying, Finds Processing, Geophysics and new Roman Road methods. They consist of instruction and exercises. You need to book for at least 5 days to complete the course - but you can carry it over to next year.

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Other Road news, bits and pieces, cont.

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Excavation underway from potential Site of Clausentum near Exton in Hants

Excursions can be arranged in the evenings to sites on the Roman Roads or other features with pub suppers after.

Reports and publications are available.

Experienced and novice excavators welcome.

For further details contact Dr Richard Whaley, Field Works & School Director

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Other Road news, bits and pieces, cont.

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Email: nehas@whaley.me.uk

Contact No: 01252 548115, 07599 875708 www.nehhas.org.uk

Editors Note: While we want to aid and assist others who are seeking to achieve more knowledge of Roman roads, please be aware that NEHHAS are an organisation independent from our Association with membership requirements, their own methods and standards that will be different from our own. Those who may be interested in taking up the NEHHAS offer should satisfy themselves in this regard, this advert should not be construed as our endorsement but a helping hand to a similar organisation that RRRA members may be interested in.

New release of lidar data

From Dave Armstrong

As pointed out by David Ratledge in his Bowland road article in this newsletter, there has been a recent release of lidar data by DEFRA through the National Lidar Programme for England. As with other NLP data this is by 5Km square tiles for DSM and DTM projections. The extent of this recent release plus previous releases can be viewed via this page (select NLP in the right hand drop down menu). Tiles can be downloaded from this portal and developed in the usual way through QGIS. As yet I haven't detected any of the pre-processed lidar sites having caught up with this data but hopefully they will soon for those who don't process their own images. I also hope that similar releases will come for Wales and Scotland to increase their coverage. As ever, if publishing images derived from this data you must appropriately cite the copyright as; *Open Government licence v3.0 unless otherwise stated © Crown Copyright 2020*

Hadrian's Wall 1900

From Dave Armstrong

2022 marks the 1900th anniversary of Hadrian's famous decree that a wall should be built to '*separate the Roman's from the barbarians'* (with apologies to our members who currently live north of it). Billed as one of the UK's biggest home 'staycation' attractions this year, the anniversary is to be marked by a Festival series of events from now right through to *Saturnalia* in December, listed here having a breadth appealing to those of all ages and associated interests. Of particular note is a face to face conference at Newcastle University at the end of January. If you are interested, the Festival is open for others to add in additional activities or events.

Road at Doynton villa, Gloucestershire

From David Brear

David has spotted this information in the Association of Roman Archaeology magazine detailing a small, perhaps local connecting road to a villa site at Doynton in Gloucestershire. Not much information is provided about the road. Does anyone know any more details of it its construction and where it may be connecting into?