ROMAN·ROADS·RESEARCH ASSOCIATION

R·R·R·A

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

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FROM THE EDITOR, HANNAH COLLINGRIDGE

Summer is here and with it the glorious weather inspiring us all to outdoor research. Oh. That might be somewhere else. Still, September is a great month for getting outside, no? If you want some inspiration then Marcus Liddell has been looking at walks which include chunks of Roman road (see p.43).

Elsewhere, we have a pretty full newsletter this month - thanks to all who take the time and effort to contribute. You'll note that some articles are in response to work in previous newsletters and *Itinera* - it's good to see what you contribute is inspiring, maybe provoking, responses. It's the sign of an engaged research society and we should cherish that.

Don't forget to send your newsletter bits to me via this mail link, although Dave will send things on if you forget and send them to him.

Enjoy the newsletter, and keep sharing with your friends .

Cheers, Han

IN THIS EDITION

Roman Roads in Focus

Other News

A Roman Road from Leicester to Ryknield Street, RR573(x) (The Via Devana?)

David Ratledge

Introduction

Leicester was connected to Watling Street by the known Roman road Margary 57b. However, this road is not directed on Leicester but instead aims well to its west. This strongly implies that RR 57b was likely to be a branch off another Roman road heading more westerly. There had been suggestions of just such a road heading north-west from Leicester (Liddle & Hartley, 1994) and was locally referred as perhaps a continuation of the *Via Devana*. There had been, in a few isolated spots, excavations/watching briefs where traces of just such a possible road had been revealed (Browning, 1999). In addition there were some unpublished reports in the Leicestershire HER, which also gave credence to the road's existence. There is even a new housing estate in Moira with its road named Via Devana, although in reality this modern one runs at right angles to the Roman line. However, Lidar has now confirmed the road's existence and located the majority of its very direct route to Ryknield Street, to the south of Burton upon Trent in Derbyshire (fig 1).

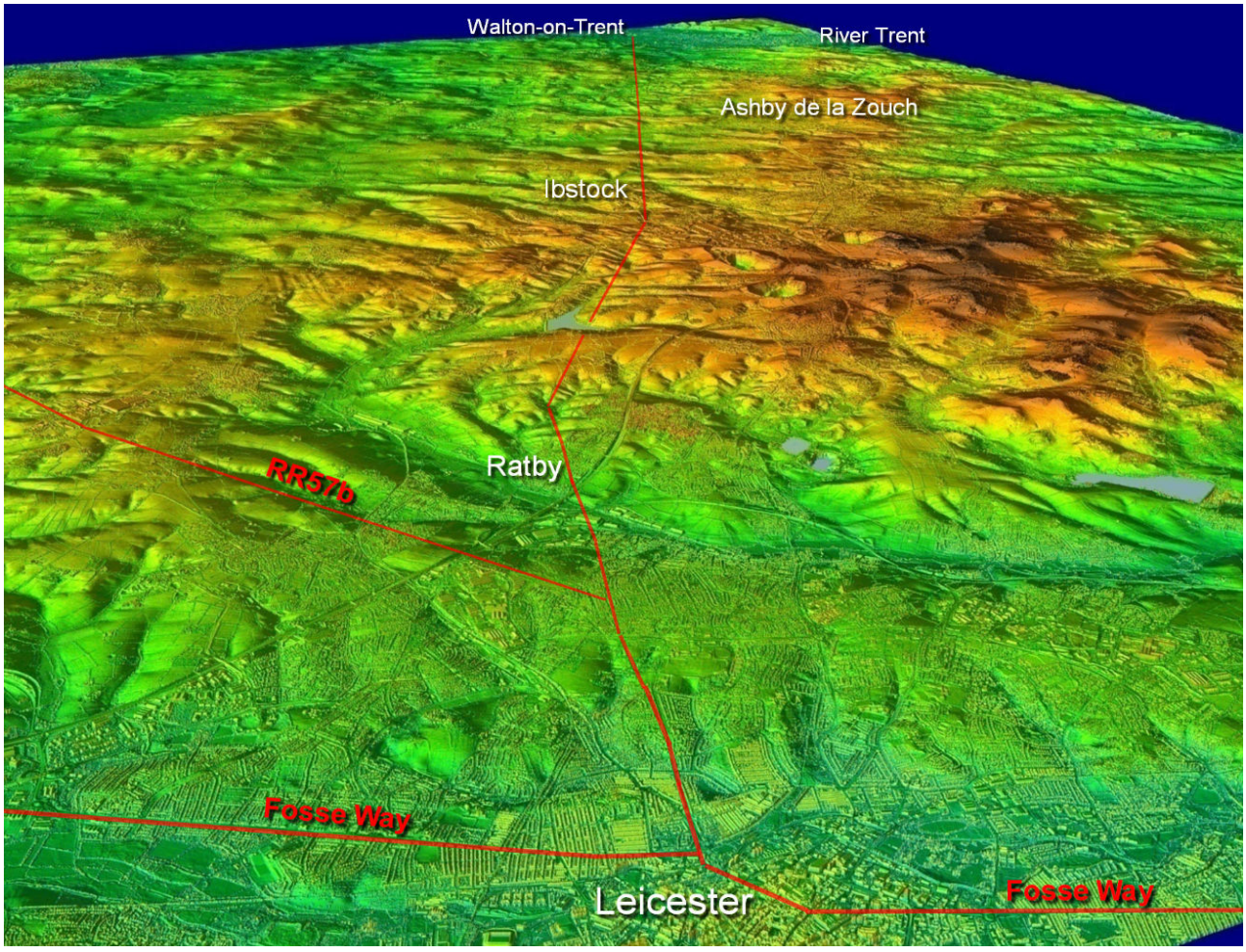


Fig. 1: Oblique Lidar view depicting the route of the Roman road from Leicester to Walton-on-Trent and Ryknield Street. Note how the previously known RR57b is actually a branch of this road. Base Lidar data is © Crown Copyright 2023

The Route

The route leaves Leicester over Bow Bridge and heads at first along King Richard's Road and Glenfield Road. This initial section was believed to be part of RR57b but is now better regarded as part of this road to Ryknield Street. It first becomes extant in Western Park (fig. 2) descending (SK55724 04834) and ascending via a very prominent cutting (SK55548 04854). The junction, where RR57b branched off, can be located by interpolation with reasonable confidence at around SK54440 05090.

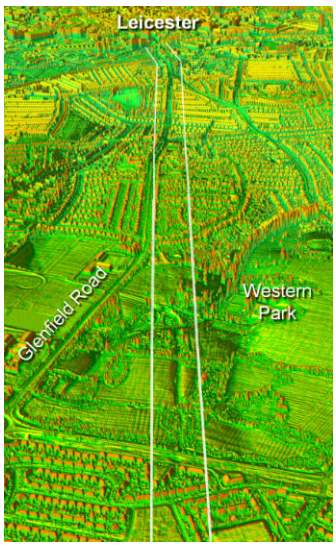
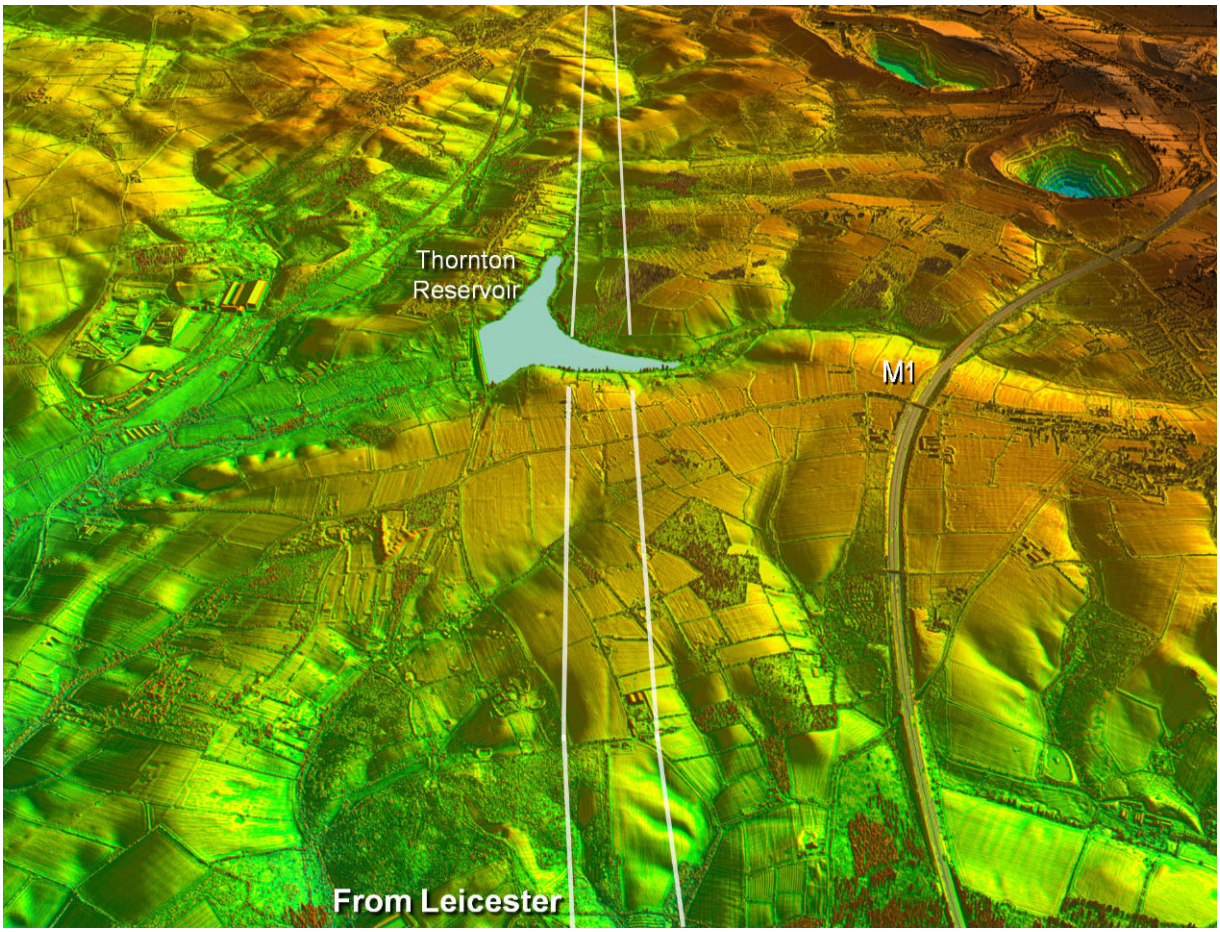


Fig. 2 (left): The first extant section of the road occurs in Western Park as a prominent cutting. The section was previously suspected but believed to be part of Roman Road 57b. Base Lidar data is © Crown Copyright 2023.

Fig. 3 (below): Probably the finest surviving stretch of the road in Leicestershire is visible in this oblique Lidar view looking west from just beyond Ratby. Base Lidar data is © Crown Copyright



The next evidence visible is across Western Park golf course where an *agger* is evident (SK53585 05342). The motorway and Ratby then intervene but Ferndale Drive in Ratby is on or close to the Roman alignment. However, the next certain indication is just beyond Ratby with a faint cutting on line (SK50949 06028). The road then shares a short section with Burroughs Road (SK50607 06117) before diverging off to begin a major alignment towards Ibstock (SK49886 06353).

This new alignment aiming for Ibstock has survived remarkably well and comprises a series of cuttings and *aggers* (fig. 3). This is interrupted by Thornton Reservoir (SK47675 07659) but evidence resumes west of the reservoir although a little less obviously (SK47411 07815). This alignment can be seen continuing initially faintly and then more prominently as a cutting at SK45547 08957 plus as a definite *agger* just before a railway line (SK44097 09858). Hereabouts, between the railway line and Station Road, was a change of direction (fig. 4). On the latter's western side evidence resumes (SK43601 10149) and another faint *agger* is visible (SK42293 10707) before disappearing under a large quarry at Ibstock.

From Ibstock westwards then surviving traces of the route become much more intermittent, where mining, quarrying and industrialisation has taken a very heavy toll. We are fortunate that the route is so direct from Station Road to Ryknield Street that interpolation was able to locate several isolated sections.

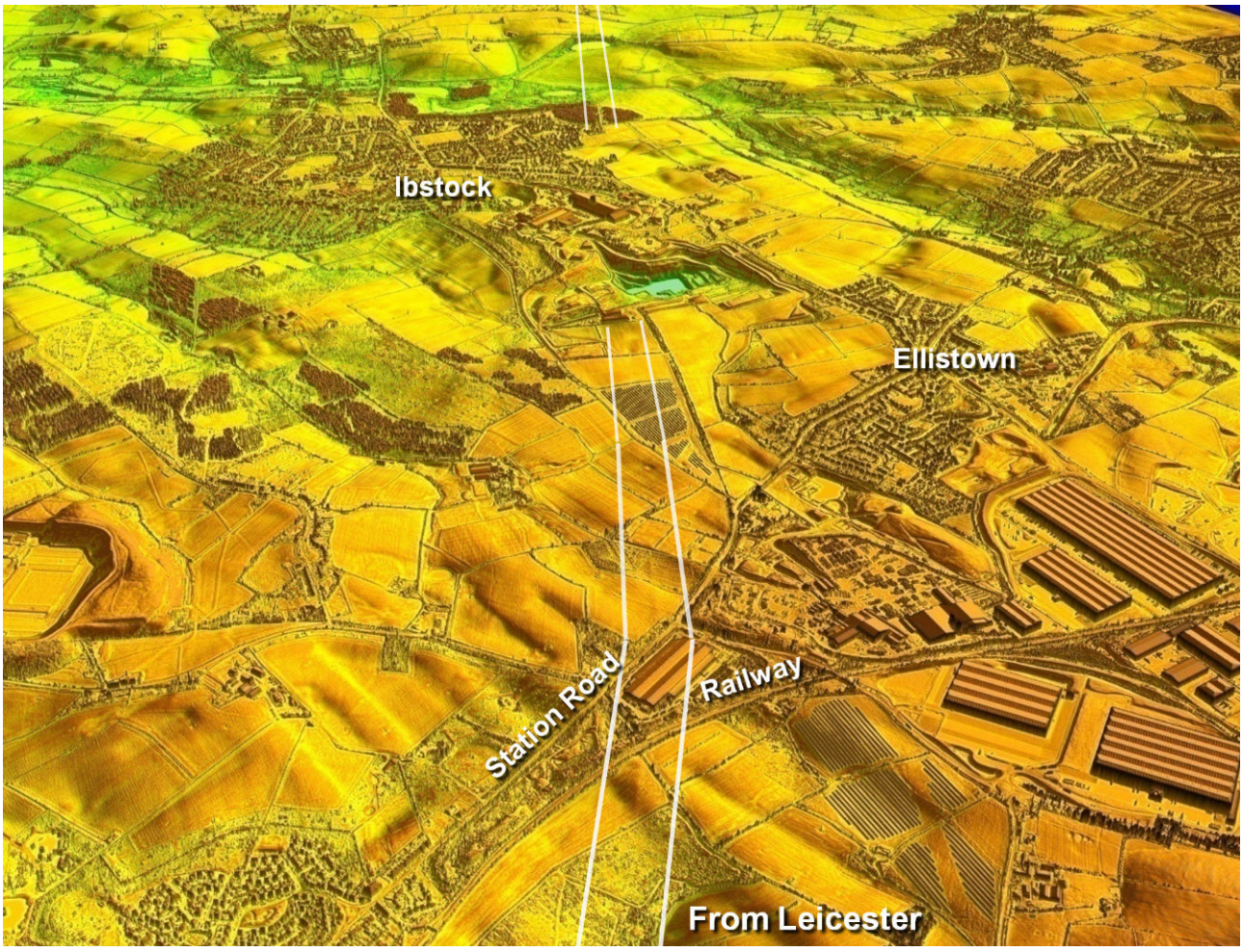


Fig 4: Between the railway and Station Road the Roman road changes direction onto its main alignment which will take the road all the way to Ryknield Street. Base Lidar data is © Crown Copyright 2023

Nevertheless, visible evidence does reappear beyond the A447, Melbourne Road (SK40415 11523) and again beyond Ravenstone Road (SK39235 12073), where a bridle way in Sence Valley Forest Park marks the route. Ahead now is a ridge of high ground at Normanton le Heath and the alignment to this begins just west of a pond on Bower's Brook (SK39290 12026). Today the course is approximated, but not exactly, by a footpath through Queen Elizabeth Diamond Jubilee Wood, which takes us towards Normanton le Heath.

The road drops down and then rises on the approach to Normanton le Heath. This is a very pretty section and is aptly named "The Hollow" (SK37855 12613). The modern road here is generally narrow compared to the overall width of the highway indicating the Roman land-take was much wider (fig. 5).

Beyond Normanton a very obvious *agger* is then visible in the Lidar imagery (SK37088 12917) followed further on by a much fainter one (SK35542 13518). The route then has to negotiate a steep drop just to the west of the A42 and there are two possibilities as to how it did this (fig. 6). The last *agger* on the common route is faintly visible just east of the junction between Ashby Road and Measham Road (SK35180 13670) – see top of figure 6.

The northern option is the more direct and perhaps is the primary route. It is visible straddling the A42 (SK34232 14153) towards the top of the slope. The road would have angled down and there is a possible *agger* visible achieving this (SK33883 14351). The southern option is much less direct but importantly less steep. It heads down the track near Park Farm (SK34378 13839) towards the A42 and west of that road it angles across the slope (SK33971 14061). It would then have joined the more direct route and the latter continues on becoming very obvious as a clear terrace at Bramborough Farm (SK32548 14838). It is not unusual for the Romans to change a route to avoid some difficulty, such as easing a gradient, so both options could be Roman.

Continuing on from Bramborough Farm there are prominent *aggers* either side of Ashby Canal at Moira (SK31859 15144 & SK31452 15334). A short section of the road was revealed alongside Bath

Fig 5: The route of the road through "The Hollow" approaching Normanton le Heath. Note the large width between the border on the left and the wall on the right compared to the width of the modern road. Image: Google Streetview.

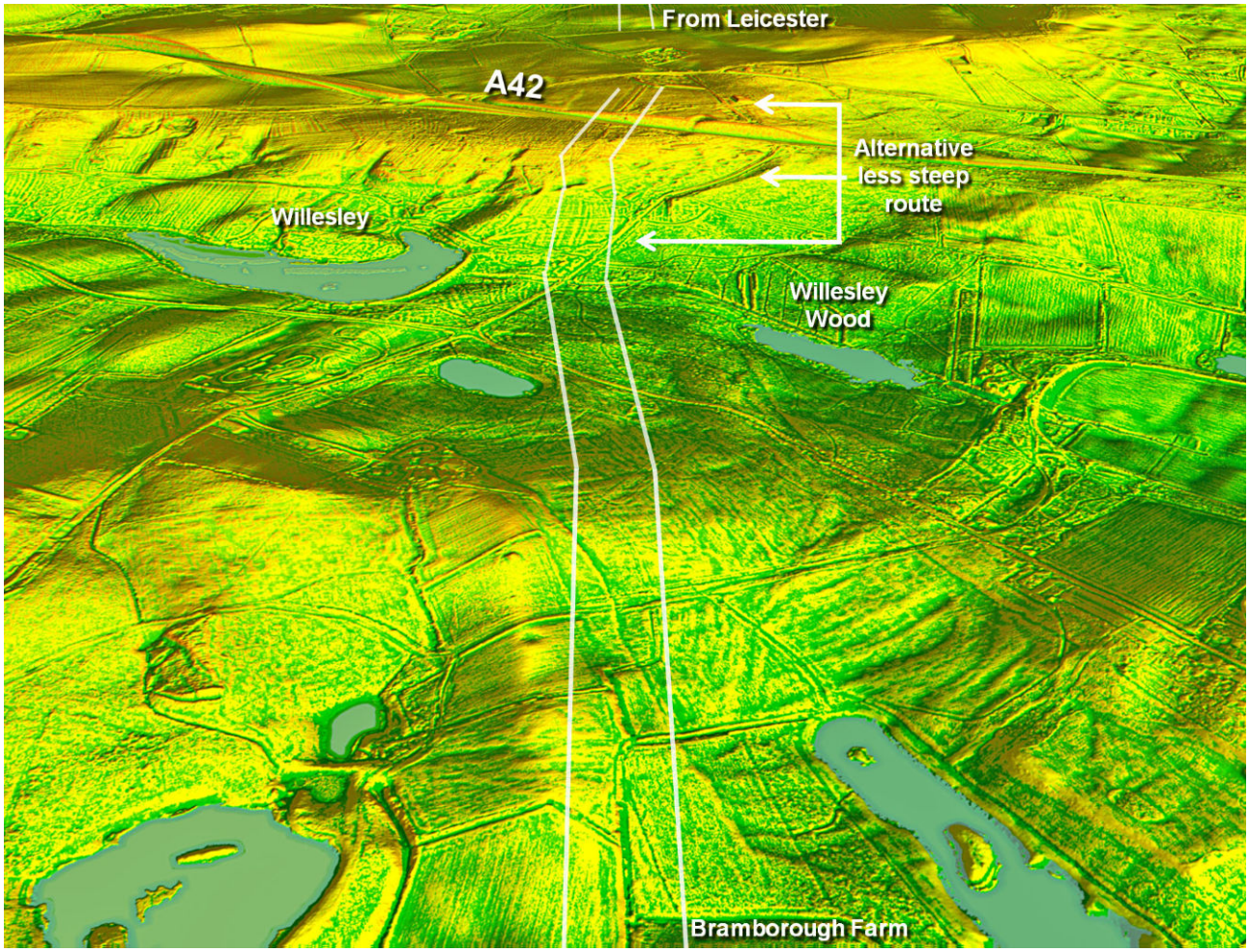


Fig. 6: Oblique 3D DTM Lidar image looking back towards Leicester where the road has to negotiate a steep descent. There appears to be an option of an easier descent to the right (south) but the direct route is perhaps the more likely. Base Lidar data is © Crown Copyright 2023

Lane in 1998 (Browning, 1999), which matches the alignment from the east side of Moira. The last visible *agger* in Leicestershire is a very short length just east of Slackey Lane (SK30576 15671) and is only really recognisable as it is still on the same alignment.

The road now drops down to cross a stream at Gorsey Leys and again we should perhaps expect an angling descent rather than maintaining the alignment. The alignment proper resumes and Lidar imagery first reveals the road in Derbyshire at Mount Pleasant either side of Burton Road (SK29151 16312 & SK28790 16592), with the west side the clearer. There follows a short gap before the road zig-zags slightly to climb a ridge near The Stables (SK27001 17328). Once the height of the ridge is gained (SK26789 17533) then the final alignment begins that will take the road to the River Trent (SK22396 19591). It passes the aptly named Hill Crest and is very obvious in several sections (SK25340 18227 & SK24406 18641). This alignment from Hill Crest is recorded (at the time of writing) in the Derbyshire HER as "conjectural" but we can now be certain that it is indeed part of a Roman road from Leicester to Ryknield Street (fig. 7).

On the east bank of the River Trent, just to the south-west of the road, is a possible Roman fort site. This was first observed in aerial photographs taken by Jim Pickering in 1983 and showed the typical curved corner of a fort with double ditches. In 2022 this was further investigated by Dr. Mark Knight as part of a "Transforming The Trent Valley" project (Knight, 2022). The curved corner ditches were confirmed together with a small number of Roman pottery finds. This fort is

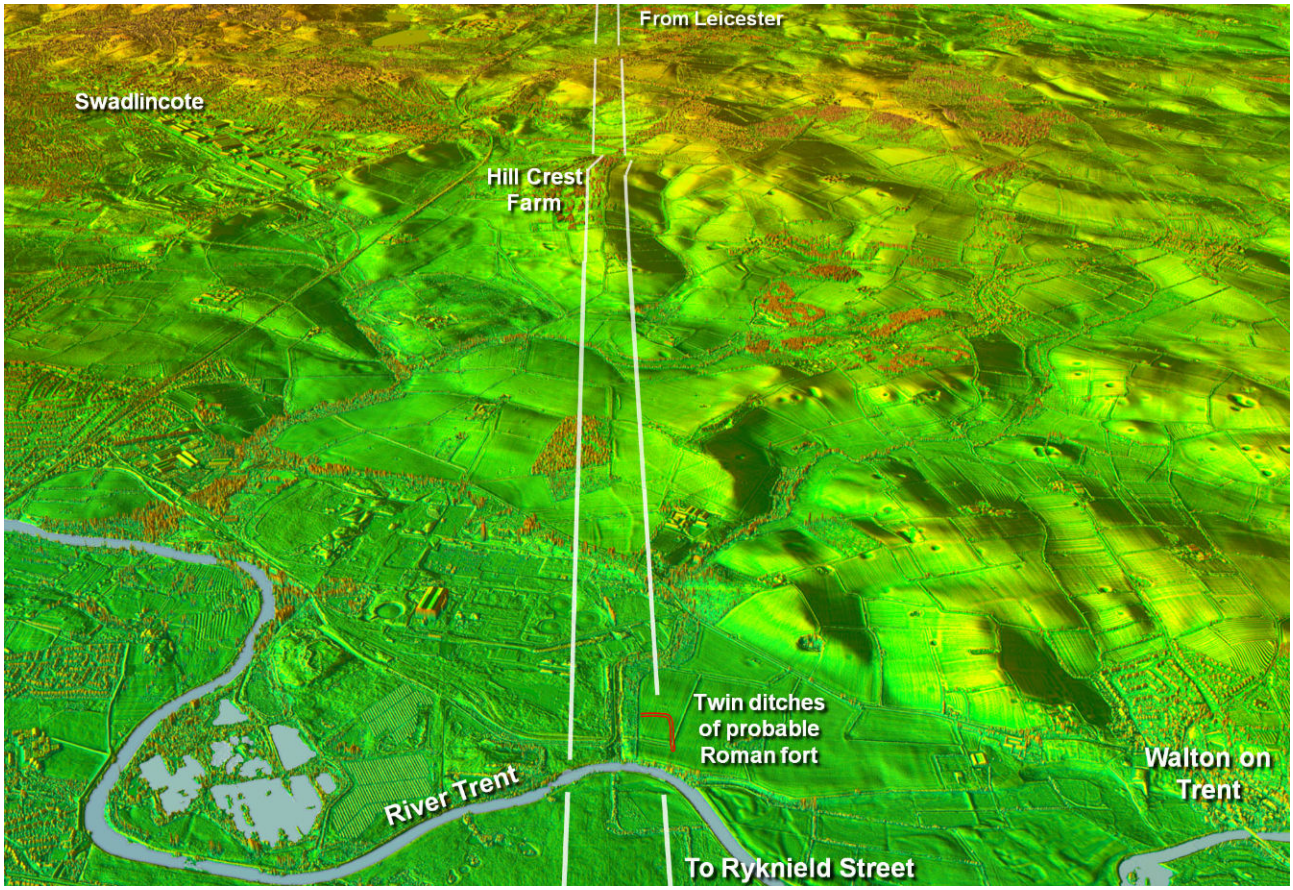


Fig. 7: We are looking back towards Leicester from above the River Trent in this oblique Lidar view. This section is in Derbyshire and the site of the probable Roman fort and its twin ditches is shown in red. Base Lidar data is © Crown Copyright 2023

sometimes referred to as the Drakelow Fort but it would appear to lie in the parish of Walton-on -Trent, a name which, of course, should have given a little clue there could well be something of significance here.

The relevance of a fort on the east bank of the Trent, i.e. the opposite bank to Ryknield Street, would suggest that the road from Leicester (and the fort) would have been earlier than Ryknield Street and therefore could well have had a destination further on. There are indeed clear Lidar indications suggesting that the road continued beyond Ryknield Street climbing Hobhole Dingle and heading on to..... to be continued.

References:

Liddle, P & Hartley, R. F., 1994, 'A Roman road through north-west Leicestershire', *Transactions of the Leicestershire Archaeological and Historical Society*

Browning, J., 1999, 'Ashby Woulds, Bath Lane, Moira (SK 312 154)', *Transactions of the Leicestershire Archaeological and Historical Society.*

Knight, M., 2022, 'Report on the Walton/ Drakelow Roman fort investigation, September 2022', *Transforming The Trent Valley*

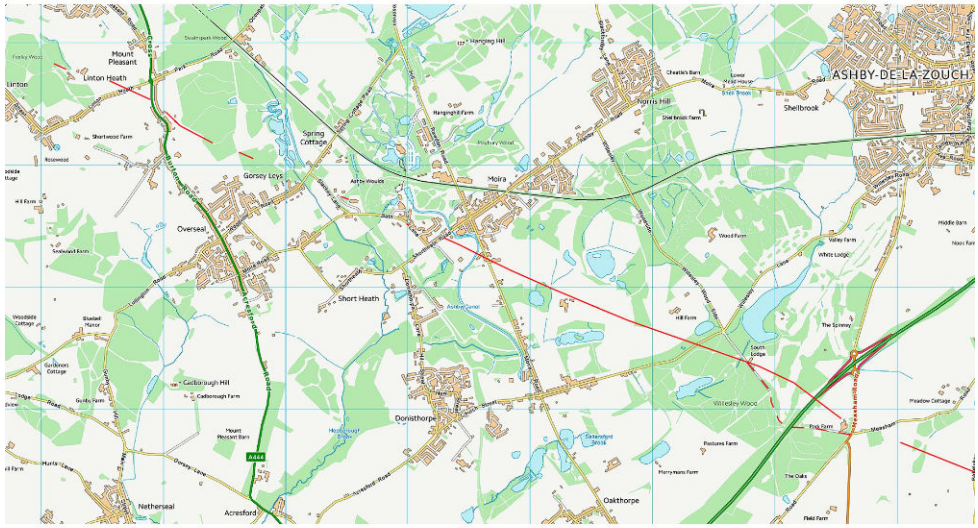
Leicestershire HER: MLE4345

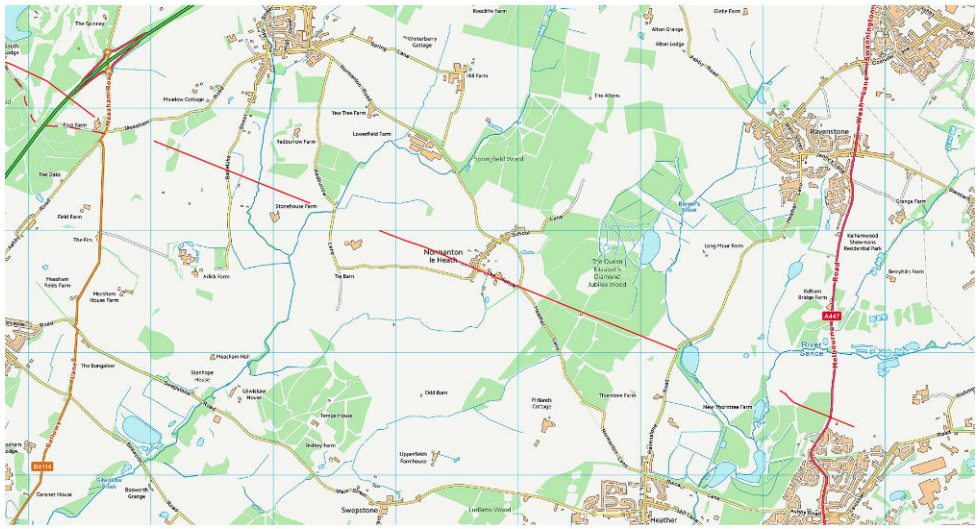
Derbyshire HER: MDR11325

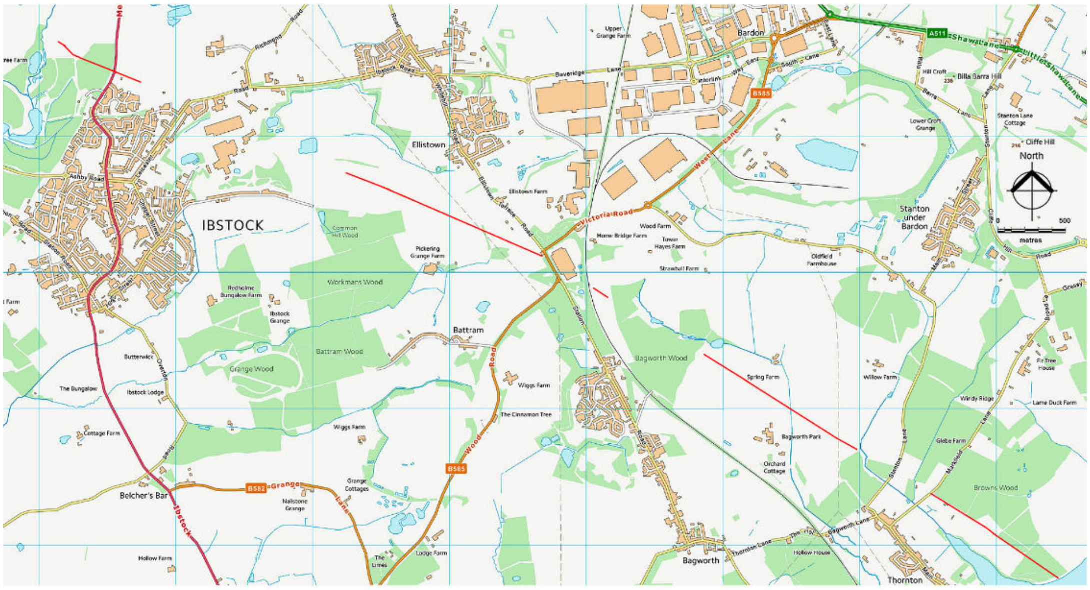
Extras:

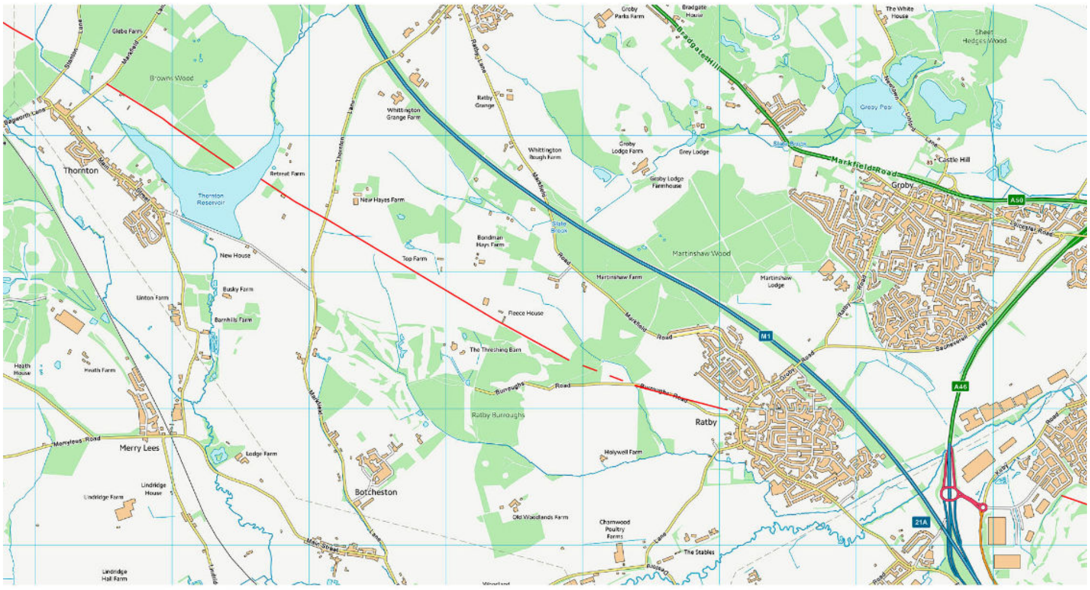
David has added a Lidar flythrough of the road to his YouTube channel, available here.

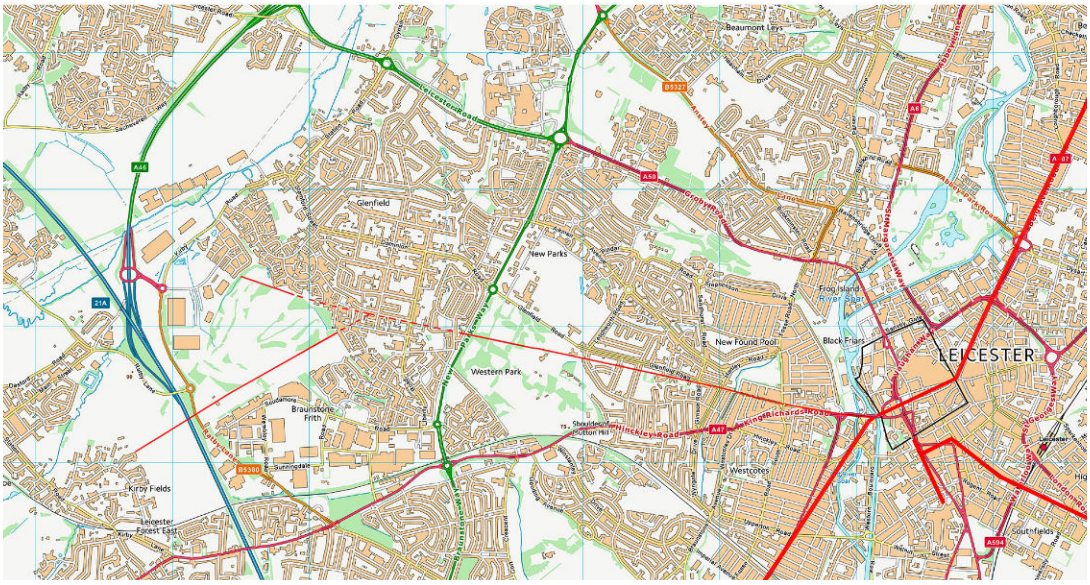
Below are the Route maps of RR573(x) (*Via Devana*) from Ryknield Street to Leicester. Base mapping is Opendata copyright Ordnance Survey.






IBSTOCK
Ellistown
Bardon
Battram
Bagworth
Belcher's Bar
Stanton under Bardon
Thornton
Workmans Wood
Battram Wood
Grange Wood
Bagworth Wood
North


Thornton
Thornton Reservoir
Merry Lees
Botcheston
Ratby
Groby
Martinshaw Wood
Browns Wood
Ratby Burroughs


Glenfield
New Parks
Western Park
Braunstone Frith
Kirby Fields
Beaumont Leys
New Found Pool
LEICESTER
Westcotes

RR4f: from Dorchester to Exeter crossing the Marshwood Vale, Dorset.

Michael Holmes

RR4f is the unglamorous name for one of *Brittania*'s main trunk roads. It connected the towns and forts of the south coast with the South-west and, via a junction with the Fosse Way (RR5a), provided a link to the Midlands, Wales and the North. It is believed to be a 1st century road built by Vespasian's legion to serve its legionary base at Exeter. The road is recorded in the Itineries as No. XV. Nevertheless, it is a surprising that the middle section of RR4f, between Two Gates in Dorset and Woodbury Roman Fort in Devon, is not definitely agreed. Between these two places the road crosses a difficult 25km stretch of hills cut by steep sided river valleys called the Marshwood Vale. There are three or more published routes which claim to be the Roman Road from Dorchester to Exeter. However, recent work by Hugh Toller (Toller 2014) has thrown much needed light on the situation.

The landscape of the Marshwood Vale where Dorset meets Devon, is farmland wedged between hills and steep sided valleys. Even modern roads find it challenging. In the Iron Age, the western side of the Marshwood Vale, was the frontier between the Durotriges who lived in what is now Dorset and the Damnonii who lived in Devon. It seems that relations between them were not so peaceful as the neighbouring Axe Valley and the Marshwood Vale have many hillforts. The 19th century antiquarians who studied this fascinating area were of the opinion that these were connected by "British Roads", which pre-dated the Roman period. They believed that these were sometimes "Romanised", that is to say converted into Roman Roads in the 1st century. In fact, there is little evidence that this actually happened. There are good reasons for this. The trackways and ridgeways which were in use for many centuries in the Iron Age and earlier were not designed for wheeled vehicles. They were used by pedestrians and pack animals. There is little evidence that the Iron Age people used wheeled vehicles for transport of goods. The Romans required a different approach as their roads, in general, had to be suitable for wheeled traffic. Therefore, it is infrequent that Iron Age tracks were re-used in this way.

The Marshwood Vale has attracted a lot of speculation because it is seen as the battleground between the advancing 2nd Legion (Legio II Augusta) and the Durotriges people who resisted the Roman advance. Interest in the Roman roads of the area has centered on the middle of the first century when the land was contested. The war came to a head at Maiden Castle hillfort south of Dorchester where the Durotriges were defeated and settled for peace. This was indicated by the fact that the Romans allowed them to bury their fallen in a military cemetery within the hillfort. The 2nd Legion then established a number of forts including Lake near Wimborne, Hod Hill, Dorchester, Waddon Hill and Woodbury near Axminster. For details of the campaign and the archaeological evidence, see Field (1992). That the relations between the Durotriges and the Romans were subsequently peaceful is shown by the large quantities of local pottery sherds found in the excavations of these legionary forts. However, there is some evidence that there was a local uprising at the time of the Boudiccan revolt, but the evidence for it is scanty.

The discussion of the Roman roads of the Marshwood Vale has centered on two ideas: first that roads were constructed to serve the Roman forts and secondly that they made use of previously existing trackways. The eastern part of RR4f from Dorchester to Two Gates was observed by 19th century writers before it was overlaid by modern roads. This road may have given rise to idea of a "British Road" being re-used because this section runs along hill crests and resembles a pre-Roman ridgeway. However, it was built to Roman standards. The modern minor road, which is laid on top of the Roman one, takes up less than a third of the width of the *agger*. Although it follows the

Fig. 1: RR4f between Dorchester and Two Gates. The modern by-way is about 3m wide while the road zone is around 9m wide.

contours of the hills, it was built in linked long straight sections and avoids steep gradients in this hilly country (See fig. 1). Davidson (1833) saw the road in the early 19th century before it was "improved". He described it as "composed of flints, with flat stones on the borders and a ditch on both sides...". Toller (2014) gives a full account of the recorded observations by 19th century and earlier antiquarians.

At the western end of the Vale at the border with Devon, excavation and geophysics have revealed a Roman fort and roadside settlement at Woodbury Farm, south of Axminster and established the crossings of the Axe and Yarty rivers. (Weddell et al. 1993). From there on westwards to Exeter, the road is mainly known. The problem arises for the 25 km between Two Gates and Woodbury Fort. Four different routes have been published (see fig. 2).

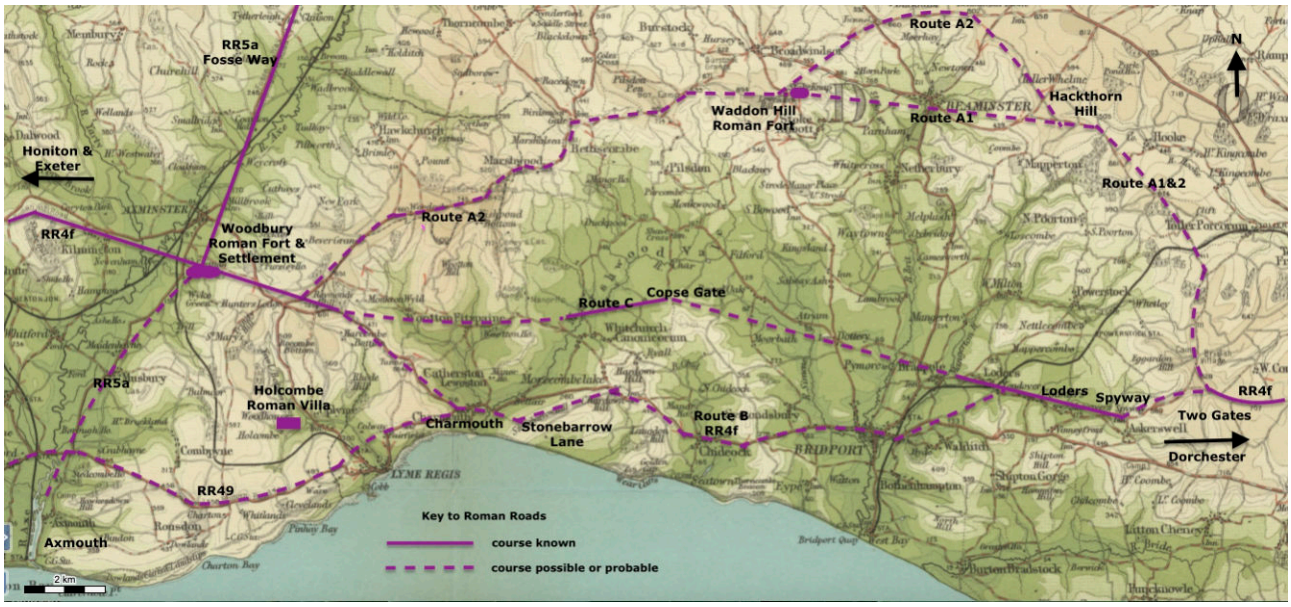


Fig. 2: The Marshwood Vale showing the four published roads described in the text. Base Map: Bartholomew Half inch 1897-1907 reproduced from National Library of Scotland under Creative Commons Attribution 3.0 Unported Licence.

These are as follows:

Route A1: The road to Waddon Hill Fort described and illustrated with maps by Field (1992, 113-119).

Route A2: Whalley (2019) describes a road which he calls the Roman Road from Dorchester to Exeter.

Route B: Margary's road RR4f.

Route C: The road published by Toller (2014).

Route A1: From Two Gates to the Roman Fort at Waddon Hill

This route runs northwards along the edge of the Marchwood Vale to the Roman fort at Waddon Hill. It leaves the road RR4f at Two Gates and makes a right turn, passing Eggardon hillfort to the east and heading northwards. To the west of the village of Hooke, the road follows a byroad in a north-west direction until it meets the modern road B3163 at Hackthorn Hill. Beyond the road junction, there is no further visible indication of the road, but the byroad at Hackthorn Hill is aligned towards the south-east entrance of the Roman fort at Waddon Hill. Field (1992) continued the alignment of the byroad and traced a probable course to a crossing of the river Brit south of Beaminster Church and on to the fort itself. Field does not report any continuation of the road beyond the fort. Possible confirmation of this route is provided by the Lidar which shows what may be the continuation of the alignment across open ground to the west of Hackthorne Hill.

The road is suggested to be very early and built at the time of the first push of the 2nd Legion into the Marshwood Vale. It is overlaid by modern roads and byways for almost the whole length as far as Hackthorn Hill. There is little direct evidence of Roman construction apart from some reported visible sections of *agger* and a causeway where the road crosses a small tributary of the River Hooke called Toller Brook. However, the case for the route A1 is strengthened by the excavation of the Waddon hill fort which had its main entrance at the south-east corner. This is in line with the alignment from Hackthorn Hill.

Further, the author observed a terrace-way descending the hill slope at the eastern end of Waddon Hill which would be consistent with Field's proposed alignment. The fort went out of use in the 1st century but, in the vicinity, there have been finds of *tesserae* suggesting that habitation and a possible villa existed near Waddon Hill. After the fort had been abandoned, it is likely that civilian occupation continued in the vicinity.

The Route A1 starts at a junction with a known Roman road and finishes at a Roman legionary fort. Its status should be seen as a possible Roman road built to link Dorchester with the fort at Waddon Hill.

Route A2: Dorchester to Exeter Road via Waddon and Pilsdon Pen Hillfort

This route was regarded for a long time as the Roman road from Dorchester to Exeter. Indeed, despite Margary's work and later publications of Toller, a very detailed multi-period study of the Marshwood Vale published in 2017 includes a map which shows an approximate version of route A2 and calls it the Roman Road from Dorchester to Exeter (Fleming and Royall 2017).

Whalley (2019) added a considerable amount of detail to the route between Two Gates and Hackthorn Hill. However, at the approach to the aligned road, the route bends north-west and follows a parish boundary. It then makes a wide semi-circularly course north of Beaminster to reach Waddon Hill, approaching the fort from the north.

He states that it continued westwards from Waddon Hill, passing south of the large hillfort at Pilsdon Pen, which at 277m, is the highest point in Dorset. The road then makes a very sharp left turn and follows the ridgeway, now the B3165, past Lamberts Castle hillfort, before another sharp turn to join the A35 towards Axminster. Whalley provides evidence in the form of an excavation to the west of Waddon Hill that the road continued westwards beyond Waddon hillfort.

The main characteristic of the route A2 is that it links a series of hillforts from Eggardon to Waddon Hill, Pilsdon Pen and Lamberts Castle. This is assumed to be associated with the campaign of the 2nd Legion. There may be something in this historically, but the route is not the Roman road from Dorchester to Exeter.

Route B: Margary's published route via Bridport and Charmouth, RR4f (Margary 1973, 113).

Passing Eggardon Hill to the south, RR4f was seen at Spyway Green by Davidson (1833) when it was being broken up for material to mend parish byways. He tells us that it was "composed of large flints laid on a substratum of chalk with a thick layer of smaller stones on top and the whole had formed a mass almost as compact as a wall." This is a fascinating description of the construction of the now destroyed section of the road. Further west, Margary says it passes Loders and turns to south-west in the direction of Bridport, (see fig. 3) where he says that there are early accounts of stones being found under the High Street. Then the road follows the turnpike route to Morcombelake (now the A35). At this point it turns south-west towards Charmouth.

The route now follows Stonebarrow Lane to Charmouth. This lane, which is wider than its modern tarmac surface, has a heavy earth bank on its northern edge. The bank is about 1m high and 2m wide and is not large enough to be an *agger*. Such banks have been seen at other places in the west country. In Charmouth it follows the "Street", then takes a north-west line via the turnpike and along Woodbury Lane to the Roman fort.

In Charmouth, Margary, following antiquarian opinion, recorded a branch taking off towards Lyme and Seaton and proceeding eventually to Exeter. This southern route was also at one time believed to be the Roman road from Dorchester to Exeter. This coastal road was given the number RR49. It is overlaid by modern roads for most of the way. However, there are known Roman villas at several points along the road including at Uplyme and Seaton (Fleming and Royall 2017). When

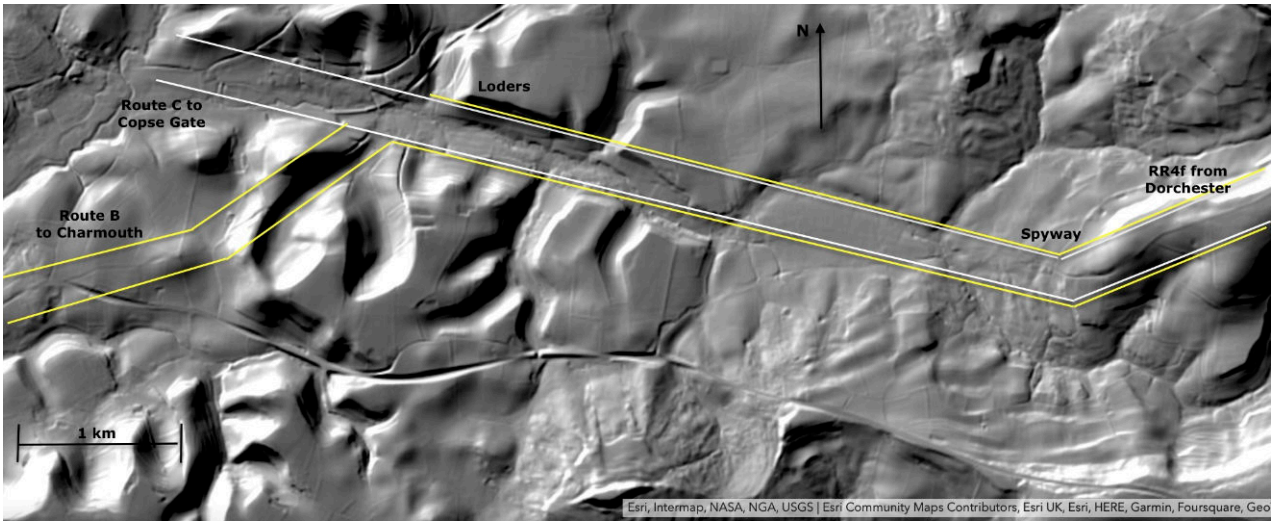


Fig. 3: Lidar shows Route C continuing across open ground from Spyway to the west. The yellow bars show Route B (RR4f) turning south-west towards Bridport, while Route C continues towards Copse Gate. Base Lidar data is © Crown Copyright 2021

RR4f leaves Dorchester, for the first 7km the road is aligned on the city of Exeter - 57 Roman miles (84km) away. This is a remarkable feat of surveying as the alignment, if continued, crosses the open sea of Lyme Bay. While RR4f made a northerly diversion via Honiton, it is the case that the branch road RR49 follows the alignment most closely. Furthermore, the alignment passes through the mouth of the River Axe which may suggest that there was a Roman port at Axmouth. This would have been the southern terminus of RR5a – Fosse Way. Further evidence of this is provided by the alignment of RR5c between Cirencester and Bath, which is directed towards Axmouth. Even though the intervening road, south of Bath, goes away from the alignment, it is resumed in the final stretch approaching Woodbury fort.

Route C: The Direct Roman road between Spyway and Woodbury Roman fort

Details of this route were published by Toller (2014). He based his ideas on work that he had previously done on Welsh Roads and applied the same principles to this similar landscape. He believed that the Roman engineers would find a way that was as close to an alignment as possible, while avoiding steep hills. He found Lidar and *agger* evidence of such a route. In addition, he identified quarry pits along the alignment.

From Loders, where Margary had the road divert to the south-west so as to reach Bridport, Toller looked for and found evidence that it went straight ahead. From Loders westward, he recorded Lidar and *agger* for a road heading directly into the Vale and bypassing Bridport to the north (see Fig. 3). Very significantly, he identified clearly visible Lidar evidence at Copse Gate where the road makes a turn from north-west to west-south-west. This change of alignment enables the road to avoid the high ground to the south. The Lidar continues across a number of fields and can still be seen in a forest towards a crossing of the River Char (Fig 4). Both *agger* and Lidar are visible west of the River Char confirming the new alignment of the road. On the way to Wootton Fitzpaine, the road crosses a small stream. Toller notes that "in a boundary charter of 1044 this location is described as 'straetforda'".

Toller's road then merges with the A35 and Woodbury Lane to reach the fort. It is clearly a direct well-engineered road taking advantage of the landscape to find the shortest way. It should be regarded as the most probable Roman road between Dorchester and Exeter and an alternative route to RR4f.

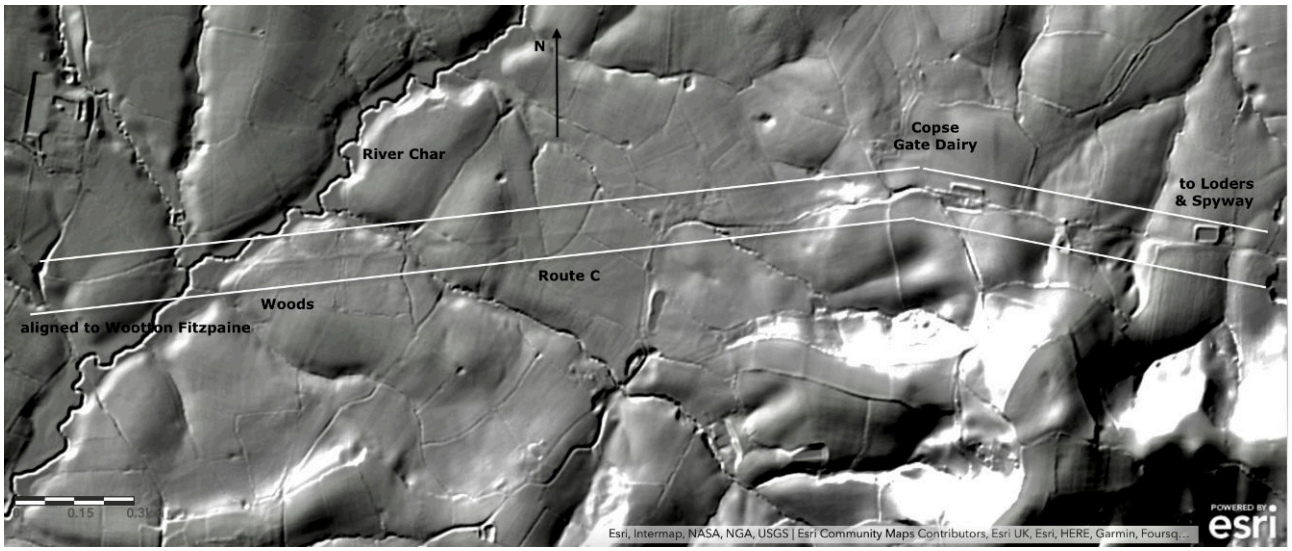


Fig. 4: Lidar showing the Route C crossing fields, woods and the River Char west of Copse Gate Dairy. The right hand section is approximately aligned to Loders and Spyway. Base Lidar data is © Crown Copyright 2021

Discussion

First, both versions of Route A can be discounted as the Roman road from Dorchester to Exeter as they leave the known RR4f at Two Gates. Further to the west at Spyway Green, the road was seen by Davidson (1833) while it was being broken up for road repair material. Nevertheless, all or parts of the Routes A1 and A2 may be Roman and associated with the fort at Waddon Hill. The route A1 seems more likely than the A2 as it is more direct and leads to the south-east gate of the Waddon Hill fort. The alignment of the by-road at Hackthorn Hill with the south-east entrance of Waddon Hill fort also suggests that the Route A1 rather than A2 was the approach to the fort.

Margary's route B (RR4f) has some of the same features as A1. After leaving Loders, the route is mainly overlaid by modern roads, so there is little direct evidence of Roman construction. The exception is Stonebarrow Lane, which is believed to be a Roman road, but which has not been excavated. It is possible that the road through Bridport did not go to Woodbury fort at all, but was part of RR49 and ran along the coast to serve whatever harbours existed at that time. For instance, there was almost certainly a Roman port at Axmouth as this was the most likely southern terminus of the Fosse Way. RR49 may well have been an early road along the south coast connecting a number of useful harbours. It would have enabled re-supply of the Legion by sea at a time when land transport may have been difficult.

On the present evidence Toller's Route C is the most probable route between Two Gates and Woodbury Fort, but may have been a later improvement, built after the military campaigns had finished. It is direct and cleverly laid out and the Lidar evidence is compelling. It is certainly an alternative to Route B (RR4f) and should be regarded as the course of the Dorchester to Exeter Road as recorded in Iter XV. This does not mean that the other roads are not Roman. They may be earlier roads, which were superseded, but remained useful for local traffic until the present day.

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The Stanegate: Fourstones to Howford

Steve Hedworth

Recent attempts to resolve the crossing of the North Tyne have created papers in Newsletter 21, Winter 2022, pp. 14-19, by David Ratledge and more recently by John Poulter, entitled 'Unravelling the North Tyne crossings of the Stanegate', published by Archaeopress within the volume *Roman Frontier Archaeology – in Britain and Beyond*. The suggested routes are based on Poulter's knowledge of LDAs and assisted by David's Lidar expertise. It is an area I am familiar with and I would like to comment on the conclusions drawn and offer some alternatives where opinions differ by way of comparison.

Part 1: Fourstones to Howford.

Collaboration by the two authors has produced an alternative route for a southern Stanegate route past Warden Hill. The route suggested in Newsletter 21, is the result of a Lidar survey carried out by David Ratledge. On modern OS maps, the Stanegate changes direction and heads northeast to pass along the north side of Warden Hill. This diversion occurs a short distance east of the junction of the B6319 with the minor road to Frankham at NY 884 679. But, in Newsletter 21, it is suggested that the Stanegate continues through Fourstones village to the junction, at NY 8935 6792, with the back lane that leads to the B6319 Chollerford road which is now to the north. At this point it would continue to the east and be aligned with a stone field boundary wall. However, Dave Armstrong, also in Newsletter 21, 'The Stanegate North Tyne Crossing', pp. 20-24, stated that the Stanegate was not found within the B6319, thirty yards east of the Frankham junction. There doesn't appear to be any suggestion of ancient road surfaces within the modern road during repair work within the village of Fourstones. This could be a bad start for the new route but there is a possible solution. Between the Frankham junction and the Chollerford junction in Fourstones the stone wall field boundary is very close to the side of the road. There is a substantial headland on the other side of the wall and I believe an extension into Fourstones could be beneath this ground. East of the Chollerford junction there is a well kept, but equally wide, grass verge. It is possible the modern road could be running alongside the earlier Roman road which has remained untouched by modern road works.

David Ratledge's suspected Stanegate Lidar feature, onwards from here, was checked at the west and east ends where it should cross public routes. There are two possibilities at the west end. A short section of dry stone wall runs ESE from the junction of the modern road to Warden, through Fourstones, and the connecting lane that runs north to meet the road to Chollerford at NY 8936 6792. The indication/crop mark on the Lidar map meets the eastern tip of this wall. A projection of this structure from the field is in perfect alignment with the modern road through Fourstones which has been suggested. The crop mark aligns with a field boundary which is prominent to the naked eye and mapped on OS 1:10000. East of the crop mark the boundary is a substantial hedge as it climbs the slope. On the flatter ground as it approaches Laverick Plantation it is represented by a fence and dirt track.

The public footpath (FP) from Warden to Whinney Hill was walked as the feature has been highlighted on the Lidar map to cross this path at the south end of Laverick Plantation. Particular attention was paid to the section which runs alongside Laverick Plantation from the south. The field boundary previously mentioned can be seen from this path and continues as a narrow animal track across part of the next field. A projection should cross the FP halfway between the south end of the wood and the next field boundary which heads NNE to SSW and upon which the Lidar indication at the field boundary terminates. This section of path is about 250ms in length. The Lidar projection should cross in the vicinity of NY 9035 6742 but it failed to materialize. There is nothing

Fig.1: The section of Homer's Lane that is in alignment with the field boundary projection from High Warden. It is flanked by a steep escarpment which exhibits no signs of passage.

visible to indicate even a track. There is no stonework exposed along the small scarp which the path runs along and the steepness of the hill increases from this point. Even the Lidar traces have disappeared.

From Laverick Plantation there doesn't appear to be any Lidar evidence until Low Warden. The route has been projected over high ground to meet with the FP from Warden Hill to High Warden. When it reaches High Warden this track splits with one leg heading NE and the other SSW. The FP was heading SSE and there is a field boundary on this alignment which is headed in the direction of Low Warden. Between this small settlement and the North Tyne there is another Lidar feature, en route to the river on a SE heading. Part of Homer's Lane is aligned with this projection but there is a steep escarpment between the road and the field which shows no signs of having been traversed. Plus, a closer inspection of the Lidar shot shows this feature is aligned with the centre of St Michael's church at Low Warden. This church can be traced back to AD708 and may have been built on an earlier site. Would it have been built slap, bang on top of what would have probably been at the time the major road of the area? I've no proof, and the field is arable and out of bounds, but an old field boundary or flood defence are alternative interpretations. (Fig.1)

Further research has shown that the crop mark may represent a geological feature. The area is covered by two British Geological Survey maps. They are Sheet 19: Hexham, and Sheet 13: Bellingham. As usual the land under consideration is divided between the two sheets but Sheet 13 contains the larger area. Warden Hill is comprised of sandstone which is part of the Grit Sills formation. The upper part is predominately sandstone but the lower sections down to the Little Limestone are comprised of two layers of shale separated by a sandstone layer. I believe that the crop mark could be this sandstone layer under a thin cover of boulder clay. A closer look at the relevant Lidar-gram below showed the mark heading into the farm complex and re-appearing on the west side. It seemed to be adhering to a contour which would be consistent with an outcrop. The vertical section shown in Sheet 13 shows the formations alluded to.

The above suggests this feature is not the Stanegate. Earlier researchers, the Northern Archaeological Group and Ray Selkirk, believed they had identified part of a route on the lower slopes, approximately 200-300m down the hill, but were unable to find any connections to either

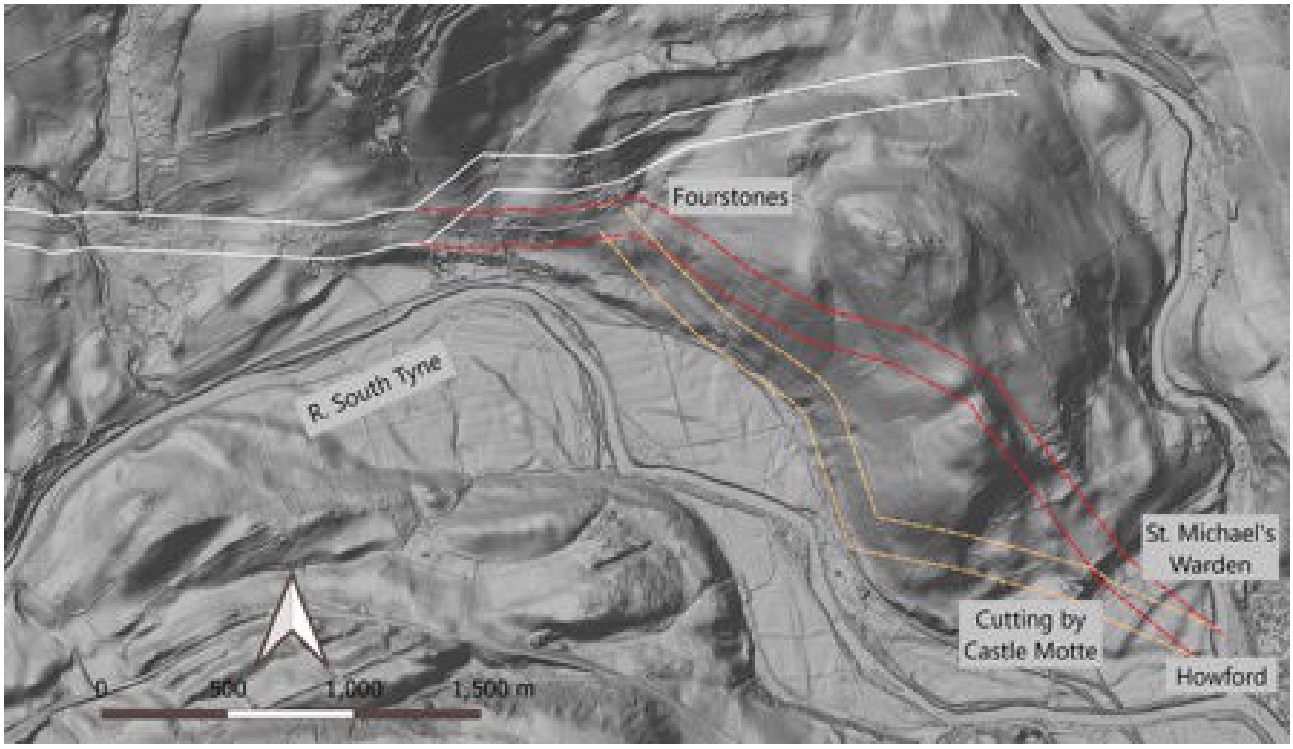

Fig. 2: This shot shows the route on modern OS maps between the white lines. It passes north of Warden Hill. The Ratledge/Poulter route is highlighted between the red lines. The yellow lines show a feature that leads to the start of a grass track which continues across the slope. This feature and the track converge at NY 89982 67209. The Stanegate must run through Fourstones to make the High Warden route possible. However, if this is the case, there is no reason why the feature between the yellow lines could not be extended to meet this projection. Alternatively, the projection could have turned right, cutting the corner created by the modern road, and merge with the feature. Most of these fields are arable at present and ploughing may have destroyed the evidence.

the known Stanegate, near Frankham, or a passage to the North Tyne. However, with the help of Lidar, observation and some educated guesswork I believe most of the gaps can be filled in. Let's start with a lidar shot that shows the Ratledge/Poulter feature and some interesting other possibilities. (Fig. 2)

To date, I have been unable to attain permission to field walk the land between this point, NY 89982 67209, and Private-walk Wood, opposite Fourstones Paper Mill, where the track merges with the PFP from Warden Hill. However, the green track can be plainly seen from the road side and earlier research, made available by the Northern Archaeological Group, was published in *On the Trail of the Legions*.

The green track is headed towards the field boundary to the south. On the latest version, 2022, of this site, https://www.lidarfinder.com/ the feature is not discernible in the next field, but a continuation on the same heading leads to a flat terrace which is in alignment with what appears to be a raised earth field boundary. It passes the west edge of a small plantation, NY 90313 66716 and at the south end a track continues heading south-east to merge with the footpath along the south edge of Private-walk Wood at NY 90592 66667. This is the terraceway mentioned by John Poulter in 'Unravelling the North Tyne crossings of the Stanegate.' On p. 290, the author states it can be seen to have been constructed of cinders and can be rejected as Roman. I'm not sure what is meant by cinders, remnants of burnt wood or coal, according to my dictionary, but perhaps clinkers were the intended term. This is waste from a furnace and was often used to repair tracks. If this is what was meant, then there may be a simple explanation. During the 1980s, the farmer removed large quantities of stone from these fields as evidenced by Selkirk in *On the Trail of the*

Legions. On pp. 114-5, there are photos showing large stones protruding from a raised feature and the resultant pile of stones. The effect of such excavations would not have been a level track so a layer of crushed furnace slag, clinker, would have been a reasonable solution. The footnote accompanying the photo on p. 114 above, suggests the feature is crossing land between the small plantation and Private-walk Wood. As for the lack of additional Lidar evidence we have known destruction by the owners and Poulter's suggestion that the early Stanegate may have been just a track, or lightly metalled, and might not show up on Lidar scans, particularly if the foundation layer was undermined.

To sum up, the suspected alternative southern branch of the Stanegate changes course from SSE to ESE in the vicinity of the small plantation and traverses the slope towards Private-walk Wood. It is, in effect, cutting across the corner and heads ESE along the southern end of the woods. It appears to be a raised feature and a continuation along this course would see it merge with the track which passes the south edge of the Norman motte of Warden Castle. This track descends the steep bank side. It zig-zags downslope and is the only route that has been found to descend this escarpment. The original line may have emerged from the Old Vicarage as the modern driveway. This track is inaccessible as the property is now a private residence and buildings appear to have been built over part of the suspected original track. At NY 91259 66437, a continuation from the driveway crossed the Warden-Chollerford road known as Homer's Lane. It looks to be heading towards a gate on the east side of the field opposite the Old Vicarage, and beyond that is Ratledge's Lidar line which is heading south east towards the river. However, there is another possible target. What may be an old road surface, or possibly a foundation, at NY 917 644, on the bank of the North Tyne, is only a few hundred metres further. Within the river Poulter describes a "jumble of large square cut stones" which can be easily seen from the accessible east bank.

This route has some logic. The route is above the most extreme of flood levels, and parts have been photographed and published in Selkirk, 1995. The Norman castle may have been built to command the river crossing. It can't be a coincidence that it stands alongside the only obvious route that provides passage down the steep escarpment on the west bank. This same road passes, barely over 100m, south of St Michaels Anglo-Saxon church, at Low Warden. This can be traced back to AD 708, and is believed to have been built on an earlier site. This suggests a major route and, in this time period, it seems likely the origins would be Roman and the obvious choice is the Stanegate.

Permission to field walk the areas, as the next stage of the investigation, has been sought from the landowners.

To be continued with section east of the Tyne.

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Poulter J., 'Unravelling the North Tyne Crossings of the Stanegate', *Roman Frontier Archaeology – in Britain and Beyond: Papers in Honour of Paul Bidwell Presented on the Occasion of the 30th Annual Conference of the Arbeia Society*, Hodgson N., and Griffiths B (eds) (Archaeopress Roman Archaeology 92)

Selkirk R., 1995 *On the Trail of Legions* (Anglia Publishing)

The series of images below show the suspected lower route as it traverses the fields on the east side of the Fourstones-Warden road, north and opposite the Paper Mill.

Image 1 (left): After passing through the gate at NY 89982 67209 the lower route appears to continue as this track towards the small isolated tree in the upper centre on the field boundary.

Image 2 (right): The track continues along the base of the slope.

Image 3 (left): The grass track crosses into the field to the right. Further progress is difficult to see on Lidar but visually, a continuation to the terrace way, in the fields north of the paper mill, looks plausible.

Image 4 (right): The terraceway with the earth embankment behind as seen from the layby, north of the railway crossing, at about NY 602 665.

Image 5 (left): The track as it emerges from the field west of Private-walk Wood. The PFP from Whinny Hill is in the foreground and has approached from the right. Facing WNW.

Image 6 (right): The suspected Stanegate running along the south end of Private-walk Wood. The right side wall is built on what appears to be a raised structure. It extends beyond the wall into the field and can be seen curving downwards from the wall. Facing ESE.

Image 7 (left): The FP deviates from the "Stanegate" and heads southwards to the Bridge End – Fourstones road which it meets about quarter of a mile south east of the Paper Mill. The track bears left to High Warden but this alignment continues as the wall on the right and is headed to the Norman motte. Facing ESE.

Image 8 (right): A long distance shot showing the suspected Stanegate at the bottom of the slope behind the Old Vicarage. The Norman motte is on top of the slope behind the trees. This is the only place where a route has been discovered to traverse this escarpment.

RAVENNA COSMOGRAPHY RELATING TO DORSET

Sally Woodlock

Anthony Durham has again spurred me into making a contribution to the Newsletter with his comments on the Ravenna Cosmography in the Spring 2023 Newsletter, as he did in 2019 that resulted in my contribution to the Autumn 2019 Newsletter on the subject of the Antonine Itinerary XV.

I agree with him that the Ravenna Cosmography should not be ignored or dismissed, just as Ptolemy's *Geographia* should be examined and tested more often.

In my interpretation of the Antonine Itinerary XV, I said that *Durnovaria* was Tarrant Hinton, not Dorchester, and that Dorchester was called *Dolocindo* from the Ravenna Cosmography. (I also stated that "Brige" was Bulford, and have since found that the adjoining Saxon Parish is Brigmerston, which gives more certainty to that part of my route from Oxford to Old Sarum. Littlecote Manor and Roman Villa is also along this route on the south bank of the river Kennet.)

Anthony wrote: "We can imagine the Cosmographic finger tracing across historic maps on a track that only sometimes follows the course of an engineered Roman road, and generally does not cross back over itself."

I know little of S.W. Scotland, but do have local knowledge of Dorset. My conclusions are based not on the origins of the names, but on Roman information and how the names have evolved. I see the Cosmography as starting in the S.W. tip of England and zig-zagging eastward initially, keeping south of the current A4 at first. My interest starts at Ilchester, thus:

No. 26. *Lindinis*	if not London, then Ilchester is said to be *Lendiniae/Lindinis* and a stone on Hadrian's Wall states C DVRTRO INDINESIS which is said to relate to Ilchester and its fort
No. 27. *Canca/Canza*	on the Roman road from Ilchester to Dorchester, RR47, west of Yeovil, is East Coker, where Roman mosaics have been found. (Gathercole, Clare. "An archaeological assessment of Yeovil." (PDF). English Heritage Extensive Urban Survey. Somerset C. C. p.10. Archived from the original (PDF) on 25th October 2012.)
No. 28. *Dolocindo*	Dorchester, from Durotriges + 5 Roman roads (to Ilchester, Exeter, Weymouth, Lake Farm Wimborne with possible diversion to Poole, and Blandford/Old Sarum via Druce Farm, Dewlish and Winterborne Kingston Roman sites though yet to be acknowledged). It became the Saxon "Doroceaster". Many have suggested *Dolocindo* as Dorchester.
No. 29. *Clavinio*	www.romaneranames.uk website suggests it is a coastal site, and so Weymouth, linked to Dorchester by the Roman road RR48 seems likely.
No. 30. *Morionio*	some suggest Hamworthy/Poole, because "mori" can denote "sea" and it connects with Lake Farm fort, Wimborne via Roman road RR4d
No. 31. *Boluelaunio*	unknown but could be Lytchett/Upton Heath on RR4d, or Bovington nearby, where there is a current Army camp and Tank Museum.
No. 32. *Alauna*	Ptolemy places "Mouth of the Alauna" at the mouth of the river Allen into the river Stour at Lake Farm Roman Fort, Wimborne, on RR4d

Proceeding then up the river Stour and possible associated roadway:

No. 33. *Coloneas* means "settlement", and there was such a settlement at Shapwick near Badbury Rings. See Dorset Councils HER Number MDO6049. It is crossed by the Badbury Rings to Dorchester Roman road, RR4e.

No. 34. *Aranus* The O.S. Roman Britain map shows Iron extracted near the mouth of the river Tarrant, into the river Stour, so did the name evolve to T'arrant. Tarrant villages upstream had Roman history, and are on the Roman road to Bath, RR46.

No. 35. *Anicetis* Dorset historian, Hutchins, said that Baxter thought Blandford Forum was *Belaniensis Trajectus*, and Samuel Lewis thought it *Trajectus Belaniensis*. If one removes the "crossing good" part, one has "aniensis" which is not very different to Anicetis. Furthermore, a second stone at Hadrian's Wall said CI DVRO TRABLEND/ NIESI, which could indicate a fort at Blandford at the only low pass through the chalk hills of Dorset between Poole/English Channel and Blackmore Vale/Somerset Levels/Bristol Channel, and on the river Stour and the Ridgeway. (I have a position for a fort, but that is for another day, albeit Ptolemy placed ISCA Legio II in the Blandford area.)

No. 36. *Melezo* a guess would be Hod Hill.

No. 37 *Ibernio* some, including Ben Cox, local historian of Blandford, suggest Iwerne Minster, a Roman Villa site, just north of Hod Hill.

Reverting eastwards again:

No. 38. *Bindogladia* or *Vindogladia*. General Pitt-Rivers considered this to be Bokerley Dyke, as I do, being the necessary 12 Roman miles, on RR4e, from Old Sarum in the Antonine Itinerary XV

No. 39 *Noviomagno* or *Noviomagus*, often used as "new big town/market". Ptolemy puts it at Silchester, but Romans used names more than once and so it could be Old Sarum

The next are guesses:

No 40. *Onna* ? Andover/Anna Vale, on a Roman road RR4b

No 41. *Venta Velgarum* Wilton Water/Crofton per my Antonine XV interpretation

No. 42. *Armis* ? Amesbury, also on my Antonine road

No 43 *Ardaoneon* ? Ardington, east of Wantage, also on my Antonine Roman road

No 44. *Navimago Regentium* ? Southampton or Portsmouth

I hope this will give encouragement to others to identify Ravenna places in their areas.

More about the Roman Roads of Wales

Paul Smith

The RRRA Newsletters feature a lot of articles describing research about structures in the ground; and quite right too.

This article builds on Dave Armstrong's excellent article: "Roman roads of Wales" published in Newsletter 15. and describes how I worked to piece together disparate threads of evidence about the Roman roads of Wales. It is hoped this will help the membership to a better understanding of the Roman road network in the country.

It's funny how a search to the south can lead you west. Since I joined the RRRA I have done a fair bit of work documenting the Roman roads in Shropshire and my plan was to move south into Herefordshire. Having explored RR6a from Whitchurch in north Shropshire to Wroxeter and then RR6b from Wroxeter to Leintwardine in Herefordshire it seemed logical to start by looking at RR6c (Leintwardine to Monmouth.) This would have been part of the route taken by the legions on their march from Wroxeter to Caerleon.

I turned first to I.D. Margary's book *Roman Roads in Britain* and found RR6c in Chapter Eight; title 'Wales & the Marches'. Margary described the 40 mile route of RR6c as being from Leintwardine in Herefordshire to Monmouth which is situated approx. 2 miles over the border in Wales. However, when I turned to the page of the RRRA web site which lists the OS Roman road files for England I found the file for RR6c is missing. RR6c terminates in Wales but most of the length of the route of the road (approx. 38 miles) runs through the English county of Herefordshire.

The RRRA web site explains what might have happened to these files:

> Until its closure in 1984, the Ordnance Survey Archaeology Division maintained detailed files on all the known and suspected Roman roads in Britain. The files were then passed on to the respective Royal Commissions on the Ancient and Historic Monuments of England, Wales and Scotland.

I was left wondering whether the RR6c file had been sent to Wales in 1984 and so had not been digitised. I began building a spreadsheet in Excel (fig.1) and added a row for each of Margary's roads and then indicated in a column in the spreadsheet whether the RRRA has a scanned copy of the Ordnance Survey Roman Road File for that road. I included all the Margary numbers and then added all the roads with an RRX number awarded by the Ordnance Survey

RRRA				Margary Source: 'Roman Roads in Britain' by I.D. Margary (1973 edition)			
RRRA OS File Name	Link Correct	On RRRA Web Site	Notes and Confidence	Name	Margary Route Description	Margary Page No	County
RR1a		Yes	Itinera 2,319 & 322	WATLING STREET	Dover-Canterbury (14.5 miles, 23km)	35	Kent
RR1b		Yes	plm	WATLING STREET	Canterbury-Rochester (25.5miles, 41km)	42	Kent
RR1c		Yes		WATLING STREET	Rochester-London (28.75miles, 46km)	51, 55	Kent

Fig 1: The top left-hand side of the spreadsheet. © Paul Smith

K	L	M	N	C
	Burnham (B)			
	Source: 'Roman Frontiesr in Wales & the Marches' by B. Burham & J. Davies. 2010			
	Welsh Road Number	**Page No.**	**Burnham Route Description**	

Fig 2: The next section of the spreadsheet. © Paul Smith

As a result, I identified 28 Margary and RRX roads in Wales and the Marches (and a further 7 roads in Scotland) that would need to be digitised for the RRRA to be able to present researchers with a complete set of Ordnance Survey's files for the Roman roads in Britannia. I am pleased to be able to report that our Chairman has begun the task of exploring whether we can establish a project to scan the OS Roman Road Files now being held by *Royal Commission on the Ancient and Historical Monuments of Wales* (RCAHMW).

I was lucky enough to receive a copy of "Roman Frontiers in Wales and the Marches" by Barry Burnham et al. for my birthday last year. This is a splendid book; I strongly advise anyone with an interest in the Roman roads of Wales to obtain a copy. Towards the back of the book is a gazetteer of roads; it was not surprising to note that the late Hugh Toller (the co-founder of the RRRA with Mike Haken) was one of the authors of this gazetteer.

Two new columns were then inserted into the spreadsheet: 'Page No' and 'Burnham Route Description' and a 'Burnham header' was created (fig.2). The observant amongst you will have noticed the first column: 'Welsh Road Number.' This column was added later when I discovered that the four Welsh Archaeological Trusts had allocated Welsh Roman road numbers as we'll discuss below. You will also have noticed that the three rows below the header in Fig 3 are now empty, that's all down to I.D. Margary who began numbering the roads in Wales and the Marches

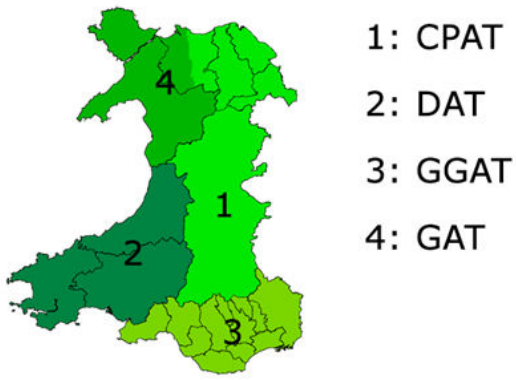

Fig 3: Wales has been divided into four areas with an Archaeological Trust taking responsibility for the HER in each area.: Clwyd-Powys Archaeological Trust (CPAT), Dyfed Archaeological Trust (DAT), Glamorgan-Gwent Archaeological Trust (GGAT) & the Gwynedd Archaeological Trust (GAT).

with the number 6. The first road you will find in Chapter Eight of Margary's book is RR6a but to find details of this road on the spreadsheet you have to scroll down in the spreadsheet to row #247.

Adding the roads listed in the gazetteer of Burnham's book to the spreadsheet and then checking against the column 'On RRRA web site' led to the identification of the 28 un-digitised roads in Wales and the Marches mentioned above.

The next step in the construction of the spreadsheet was to obtain information from the Welsh HERs. If you refer back to "Roman roads of Wales" published in Newsletter 15 you will read that, in Wales, the HERs are maintained on behalf of the Welsh Ministers by four regional Welsh Archaeological Trusts.

The spreadsheet was expanded to the right with a section for each of the Archaeological Trusts: On commencement each section contained two columns: 'Road Number' & 'Route Description'. Later a third column was inserted between the original columns to enable recording of a second or alternative road Number.

The next task was to populate the new sections of the spreadsheet with data. Four documents were considered:

CPAT: CPAT 527. 'Roman Roads in Mid and North-East Wales.' 2003 For a copy of the full report in pdf format email Paul Smith

DAT: 'Roman Military Roads, Forts & Vici in S.W. Wales.' See the DAT website here. Full report available from DAT

GAT: *Roman Roads in Gwyneth* by D. Hopewell. 2013. This excellent book is out-of-print (but check Ebay, Abe Books etc. if you would like a copy)

GGAT: 'Roman Roads in South East Wales.' 2004. Full report available here.

Then each 'new' piece of information had to be checked to see whether it could be cross referenced to information in the 'Margary' & 'RRRA' sections of the spreadsheet. Why was this necessary? Well, imagine someone told you there was strong evidence for a Roman road between Strood and Eltham (which there is) but imagine that you were not aware that Strood is near Rochester and Eltham is near London. You might think of the Strood to Eltham road as a newly discovered Roman road and not realise that this (Strood to Eltham road) would just be another way of describing Margary's RR1c which runs from Rochester to London. Every effort was made to check that the location names (towns & villages) used to describe the start/end points of the roads described by

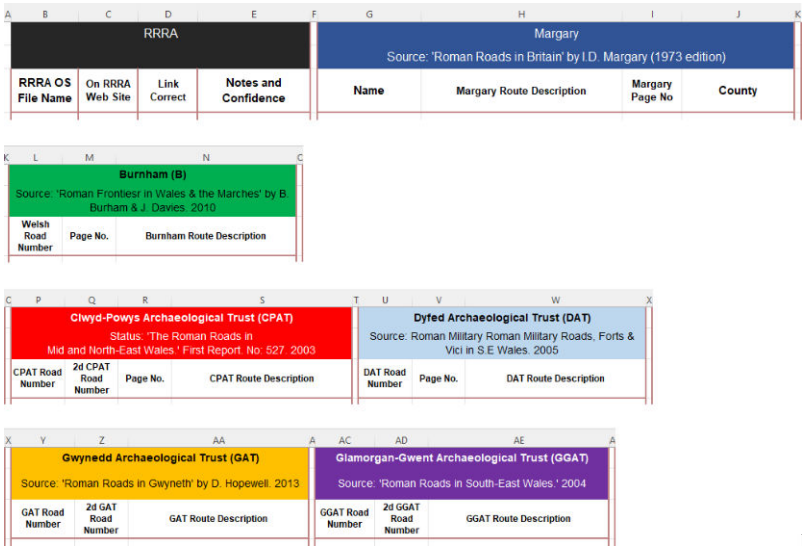

Fig 4: The header for the spreadsheet at 100% and split into four parts so that the detail can be read. © Paul Smith

the Welsh Archaeological Trusts were not on the same line as Margary's Roman roads. However, it would not surprise me if mistakes were made.

New rows were added to the spreadsheet and new information was placed in the 'Road Number' & 'Route Description' under the appropriate Archaeological Trust heading. It was at this point that a third column was inserted to record a second or alternative road number (fig.4).

Before I describe what I discovered a short detour is needed to consider the numbering systems used in Wales. This is my best understanding:

Prefix	Description
RR	Those routes considered to be Roman by Margary: the numbers correspond to those given in Margary's 1955 book
RRX	These have been described as consisting of those routes considered by the Ordnance Survey to be Roman or probably Roman but not listed by Margary. In fact, also listed are a number of roads proposed as Roman on the basis of antiquarian research but rejected by the Ordnance Survey
RRN	Allocated by RCAHMW for those routes considered to be Roman or probably Roman, but which were not allocated RR or RRX prefixes by the Ordnance Survey

To these have been added a further class:

RR GGAT	Allocated by GGAT for roads not catalogued by RCAHMW

What did I discover? The results are displayed below. First a series of RRX roads. These are the roads of possible Roman origin in Wales, which were either not recognised by Margary, or discovered after the final publication of *Roman Roads in Britain* in 1973. This list fills in some of the gaps in the RRRA RRX collection. They are:

Road No.	Source	Details
RRX48	Burnham	Caernarfon (Segontium) to Bryn y Gefeillau
RRN51	GAT	Brithdir Triangle
RRN52	GAT	Brithdir Triangle
RRN53	GAT	Bryn y Gefeiliau (Caer Llugwy) to Betws y Coed
RRX58 a	Burnham	Castell Colelen - Caersws
RRX61	Burnham	Forden Gaer to Llanfor
RRX63	CPAT	Caersws - Pennal via Penycrochbren
RRX63a	Burnham	Carno – Penycrochbren
RR69aPart1	GAT	Caerhun (Canovium) to Bryn y Gefeiliau (Caer Llugwy)
RR69aPart2	GAT	Bryn y Gefeiliau (Caer Llugwy) to Tomen y Mur
RRX75	Burnham	Mortimer's Cross to Clyro
RRX76a	Burnham	Mortimer's Cross to Presteigne and Discoed
RRX77	Burnham	Brecon Gaer to Glancamddwr
RRX79a	Burnham	Castell Collen to Cae Gaer
RRX79b	CPAT	Castell Collen - Trawscoed
RRX80	Burnham	Penhow to Magor Pill
RRX82a	CPAT	Clyro - Castell Collen
RRX82b	CPAT	Clyro – Paincastle
RRX82c	CPAT	Penny Darren - Brecon Gaer
RRX82d	Burnham	Caersws to Trawscoed
RRX82e	CPAT	Trecastle – Carmarthen

RRX82g	CPAT	Bishopsmoat - Forden Gaer
RRX82j	CPAT	Llanrhaeadr - Rhyn Park
RRX82k	CPAT	Llanrhaeadr northwards
RRX82m	CPAT	Llanrhaeadr - Dolwar Hall
RRX84	Burnham	Coelbren to Llandovery
RRX85	CPAT	Beulah westwards
RRX86	CPAT	Coelbren to Penydarren
RRX87	CPAT	Beulah eastwards
RRX88	CPAT	Cwmdu – Llyswen
RRX89	CPAT	Bronllys northward
RRX95	Burnham	Caernarfon (Segontium) to Pen Llystyn to Tomey Mur
RRX95Part2	GAT	Pen Llystyn to Tomey Mur
RRX96	Burnham	Brithdir to Pennal
RRX121	Burnham	St Asaph to Corwen

Next come the RRN roads:

Road No.	**Source**	**Details**
RRN8	Burnham	Rhyn Park to Rug
RRN14	Burnham	Hinwell to Penybont Common or Colwyn Castle
RRN17	Burnham	to Brithdir Triangles
RRN18	Burnham	to Brithdir Triangles
RRN19	Burnham	Bryn y Gefeiliau to Betws-y-Coed link to RR6a
RRN20	Burnham	West of Carmarthen
RRN21	Burnham	Heol Spencer
RRN22	Burnham	W. Aberthaw to Lanharry via Cowbridge
RRN23	Burnham	Ffordd y Gyfraith

And finally, the GGAT roads:

Road No.	**Source**	**Details**
RRGGAT001	GGAT	Wheel Lane
RRGGAT002	GGAT	LG Semicon Road
RRGGAT003	GGAT	Sor Brook Valley Road
RRGGAT004	GGAT	Ffordd y Gyfraith
RRGGAT005	GGAT	Heol Spencer
RRGGAT006	GGAT	West Aberthaw - Llanharry
RRGGAT007	GGAT	Road on East Bank of River Neath
RRGGAT008	GGAT	Road on Strmy Down/Newton Down
RRGGAT009	GGAT	Road at Rumney
RRGGAT010	GGAT	Road at Llandaff
RRGGAT011	GGAT	Possible road at Pantllaca

Those members who have read Dave Armstrong's article: 'Newly Allocated Margary Road Numbers' will know that the allocation of a new Roman road number follows a protocol as described in *Itinera Vol.1* (Armstrong, 2020, p.377), by the RRRA and is only agreed following the criteria laid out by Mike Haken in Itinera 1 (Haken, 2020, pp. 285 - 318).

My spreadsheet was forwarded to Mike Holmes (the RRRA officer with responsibility for curating the Margary number list) and has been absorbed into the spreadsheet he maintains.

Welsh Roman Roads Research Project

There is a big job to be done here.

It is hoped that this article will encourage RRRA members to step forward and start work on the task of finding out everything they can about one or more of the roads mentioned above.

Historic environment records (HERs) are an excellent starting point when finding out about a new section of road and the web site Archwilio (Archwilio [Ar-ch-wil-ee-o] Welsh verb, to explore, examine, audit) provides public access to the HERs for each local authority area in Wales. See: Archwilio

Contacts

RRRA researchers who would like an up-to-date copy of Mike Holmes' Margary number list or for enquiries regarding the number list please contact Mike Holmes: margaryregister@gmail.com

For enquiries regarding the contents of this article, please contact Paul Smith: paul@paulesmith.co.uk

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Evidence for RR344(x) between Holton St Mary and Long Melford, Suffolk

Geoff Lunn

In the summer of 2020, Jim Pullen of Colchester Archaeological Group (CAG) took a series of drone images of cropmarks adjacent to the A12 dual carriageway, near the Four Sisters Interchange at Holton St. Mary in Suffolk. The images show quite vividly cropmarks of the known Roman road which follows the path of the modern A12 from Colchester towards Coddenham (*Combretovium*) and eventually to Caistor St Edmund near Norwich (*Venta Icenorum*). This is Margary's RR3C, part of the "Great Road", and known locally as the "Pye Road" since Medieval times.

What was not expected was a clear image of a spur leading off the main Roman road towards Holton St Mary. As the chairman of the CAG Roman Roads Group (RRG), I was of course intrigued to know where the spur was heading. There started a quest, which took me about two years, to trace this hitherto unknown road across the fields of Suffolk and to determine where its ultimate destination might be.

My fellow members of CAG and I had for some time been using Google Earth (GE) with Lidar overlays provided by Dr. Tim Dennis to search for Roman roads and other historic anomalies. Our reasoning behind using GE was that upwards of a dozen dated images from as far back as 1945 are available for free, already georeferenced, with a very user-friendly interface and various easy to use tools thrown in. With Tim's georeferenced Lidar overlays we were able to compare faint traces on Lidar with possible cropmarks on the GE APs from the various historical layers, except that in the case of the Holton St. Mary spur, there seemed to be nothing to see! I vividly remember poring

Fig. 1: Drone image of RR3C cropmark at Four Sisters Interchange on the A12 in Suffolk, looking south towards Stratford St. Mary, showing a clear spur leading off to the right towards Holton St. Mary. Note the later track cutting the RR cropmark in the foreground. Image courtesy Jim Pullen.

over my cinematic PC screen looking in vain for any trace of the road as it headed westwards, presumably up one of the several river valleys in the area, but it seemed to disappear under Four Sisters Farm, adjacent to the A12, almost immediately. What to do next?

I set about looking further afield on both Lidar and GE to see if any traces could be found which might link up with our short stub of road at Four Sisters. I started to find very faint traces on Lidar of straight alignments of what I took to be the remains of the agger of the road, with rather large gaps between traces, but looking very much like they perhaps once formed a coherent route, and apparently heading for Long Melford, some 15 miles up the Stour Valley from Holton.

Not having the knowledge at that time of how to create my own Lidar images, I was helped enormously by Tim Dennis, John Rainer of Suffolk Archaeological Field Group, and David Ratledge whom I'm sure you will all know from his many articles written for this newsletter, and his excellent "Travels with Romans" website (www.twithr.co.uk). With such help I was able to find traces of the road as shown in figure 2 on John Rainer's Multi-Angle Hill Shade Lidar image of the Stour, Brett and Box River valleys, through which our road appeared to be travelling. Figure 3 shows this route on a map.

We found four distinct sets of Lidar traces, two of them appear between Shelley Hall and Polstead (figure 4), the other two are further west, between Newton Green and Gt. Waldingfield (figure 5).

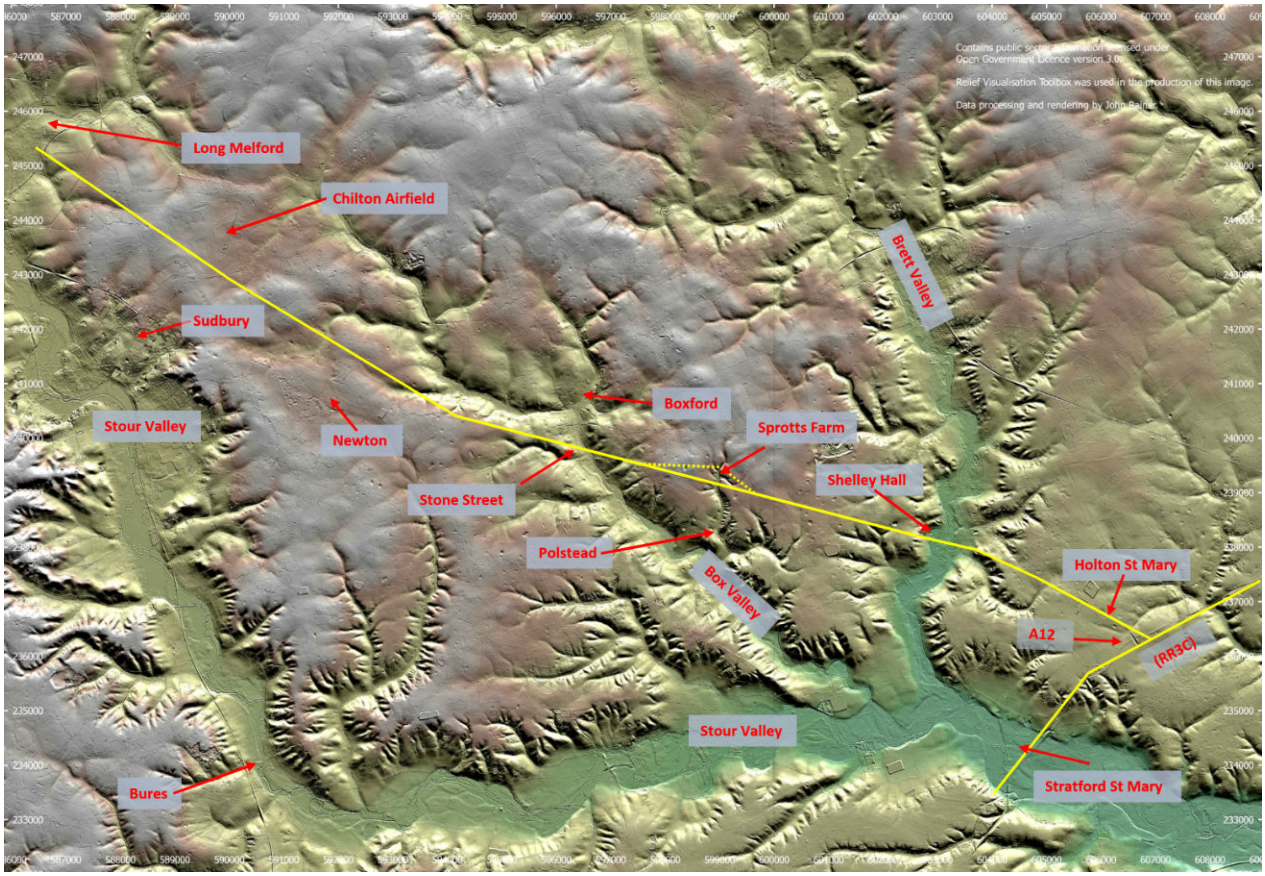

Fig. 2: The complete route of the road shown in yellow. The dotted lines at Sprotts Farm north of Polstead show where there is some uncertainty of the exact route. Lidar Image courtesy John Rainer. Base Lidar data is Crown Copyright 2022

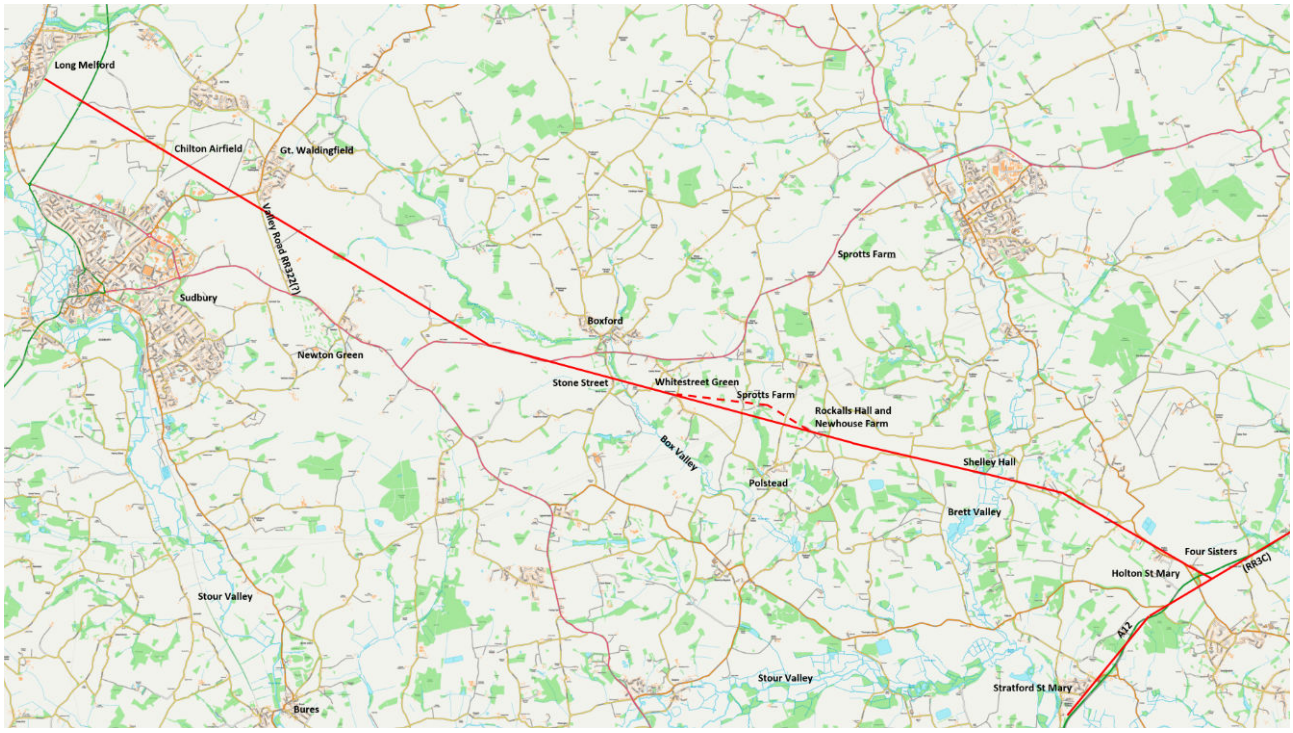

Fig. 3: The complete route of the road shown on a map. The dotted lines at Sprotts Farm north of Polstead show where there is some uncertainty of the exact route. Base map Ordnance Survey Opendata © Ordnance Survey

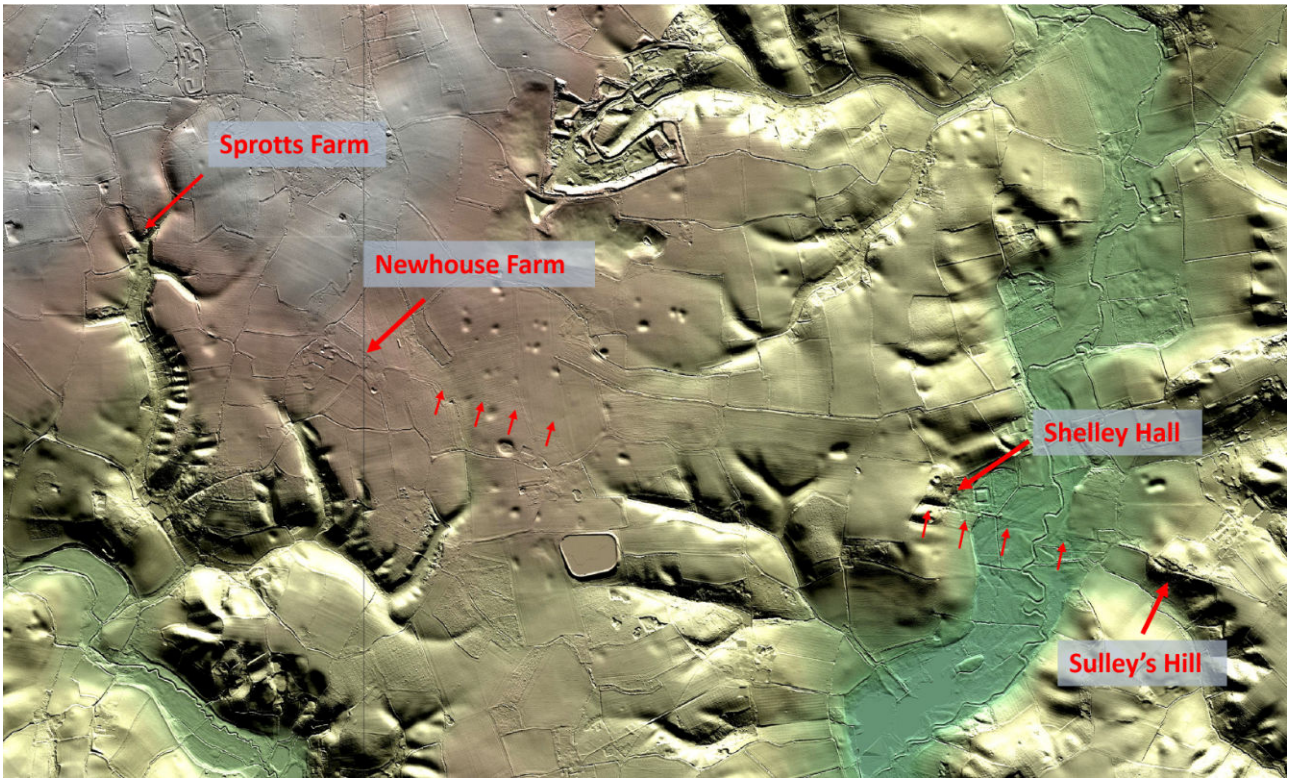

Fig. 4: Faint Lidar traces between the Brett Valley at Shelley Hall and Sprotts Farm north of Polstead. Note Lidar views are DTM so buildings are missing. Lidar Image courtesy John Rainer. Base Lidar data is Crown Copyright 2022

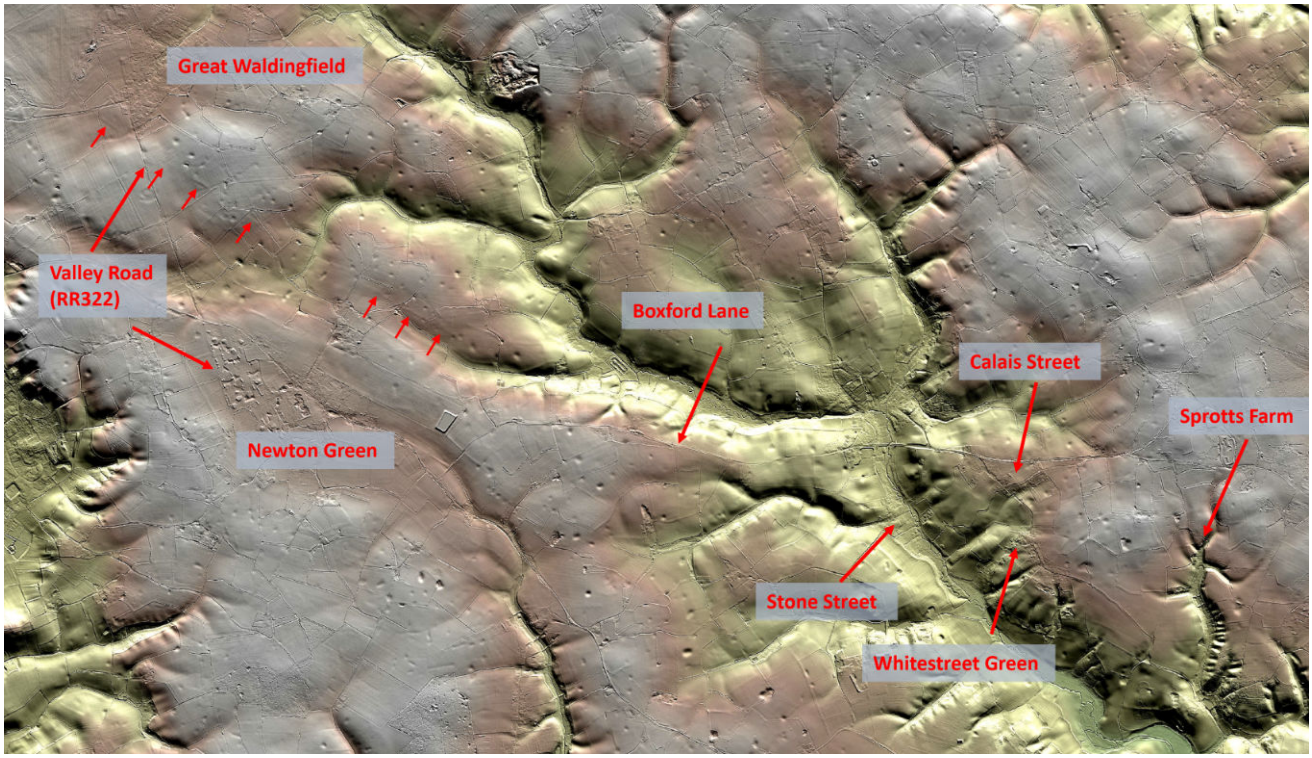

Fig. 5: Faint Lidar traces between Sprotts Farm and Gt. Waldingfield. Lidar Image courtesy John Rainer. Base Lidar data is Crown Copyright 2022

Although it seemed obvious to me that these traces were indeed part of the same Roman road, I needed to find credible evidence to fill the gaps. One of the things that we are blessed with in East Anglia is cropmarks, some of which are really quite unbelievably clear and obvious. But there are also fainter and more ephemeral marks which might only appear once or twice in a decade when the weather and crop conditions are favourable. These are much more difficult to track down. Anyone who has gone in search of cropmarks, especially of Roman roads, will know that it is so easy to miss a mark by studying APs at the wrong resolution, or just not realising that it is there, hidden amongst other perhaps more prominent marks.

The obvious cropmark of a Roman Road is the so called "tramline", two parallel dead straight lines, somewhere between about 12m and 20m apart, usually darker than the surrounding crop due to water retention in the buried roadside ditches slowing the ripening process in the crops immediately above, and often showing the remains of "borrow pits" where gravel for the agger had been extracted. I had the good fortune to work on an excavation last year not far from Colchester where a clear tramline cropmark of an RR had been observed, but with no trace of an agger either on Lidar, or in the soil. Everything had been ploughed away to a depth of about 45cm, but the bottom 15cm of the ditches remained and was enough to affect the vegetation above.

The spur at Holton St. Mary is a good example of an elusive tramline cropmark. It is there as clear as day on GE 6/2018, and as I was to find out later, on Apple maps, but no-one had noticed it until Jim came along with his drone, and the game was up! (Apple maps can be viewed on a PC via the Bing website, or on the rather curiously named duckduckgo.com). The cropmark is at 51.987808N, 1.009551E.

The real breakthrough came when I found the faint tramline cropmarks to the west of Stone Street near Boxford. These line up almost perfectly with a short stretch of Boxford Lane (now part of the busy A1071) and on to the next set of Lidar traces northwest of Newton Green, with only a slight deviation from the alignment. The marks are approx. 14m apart which matches exactly the width

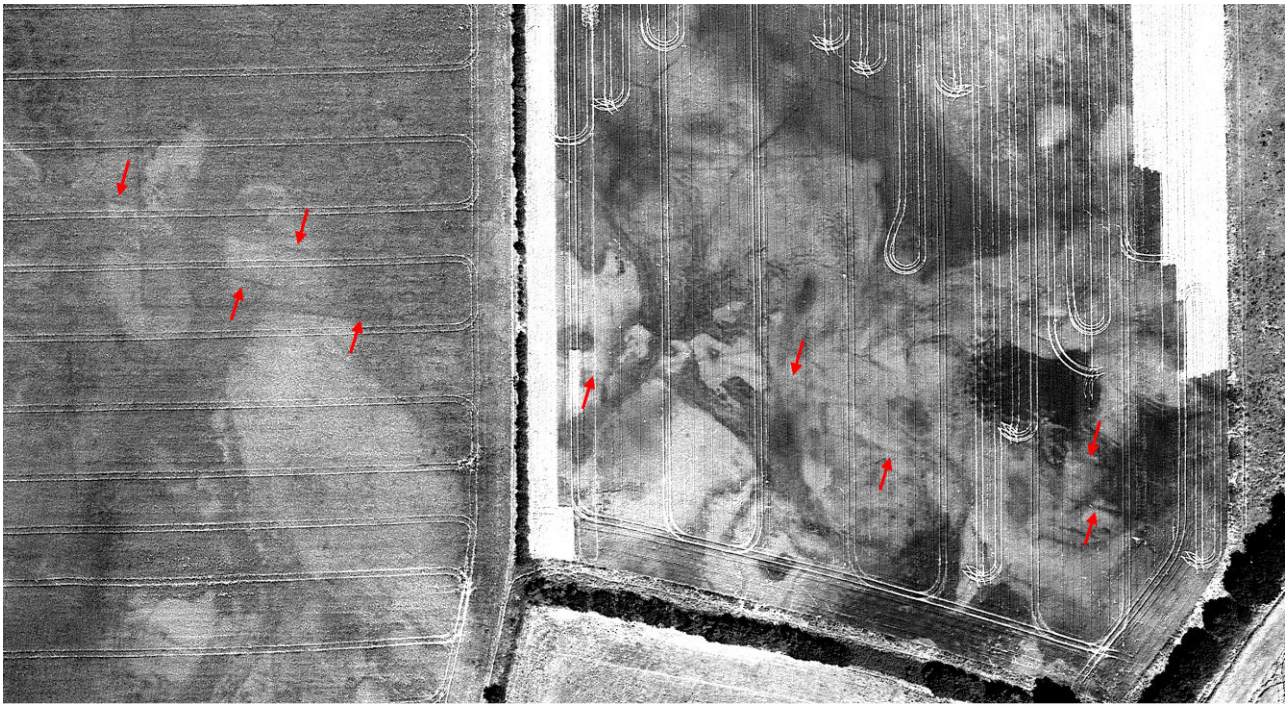

Fig. 6: Faint tramline cropmarks (enhanced) west of Stone Street. Image taken from Google Earth Pro 7/2018. Map data © Google 2023

of the tramlines at Holton St. Mary. To the east of Stone Street on the opposite bank of the River Box, between Whitestreet Green and Calais Street, is another slightly more mysterious mark.

You will have noticed by now that our road appears to be finding its way through several villages with the word "street" as part of the name (Stone Street, Whitestreet Green, Calais Street). "Street" is derived from Old English "stræt", which was borrowed from Latin "via Strata" meaning a paved road, and can be a clue that a Roman road is in the immediate vicinity. There are many villages in East Anglia with "street" in their name, and there are those who claim that it cannot be that they are all named after a Roman Road. Personally, I always take it to be a clue that there "might" be a Roman road in the area, and I search that little bit harder. Indeed, on searching the old maps for

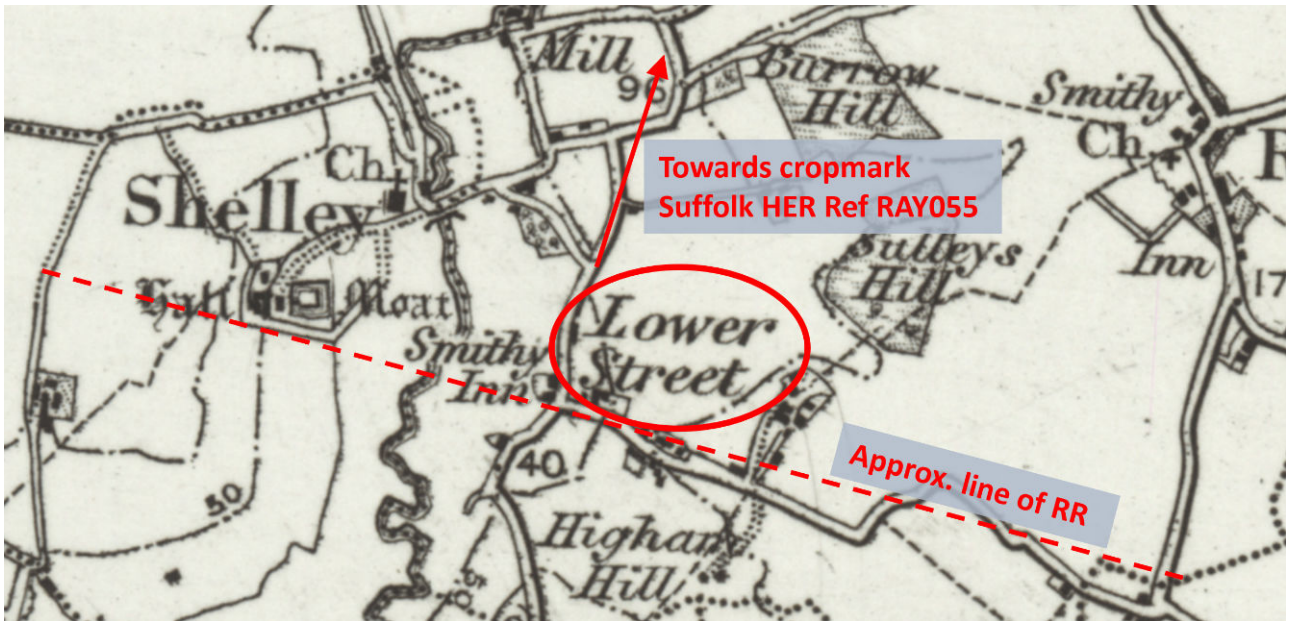

Fig. 7: Ordnance Survey map of 1896 showing Lower Raydon as "Lower Street"

Fig. 8: Cropmarks with Whitestreet Green to the east, Calais Street to the north and Stone Street to the west. Aerial Photograph is Copyright © 2023 Apple Inc. All rights reserved

the area I came across yet another village, "Lower Street", now named "Lower Raydon" sitting on our road (figure 7).

Before discussing Lower Street and its environs, let us examine another rather strange cropmark at Whitestreet Green (figure 8). The lines in the crop have been variously interpreted by local experts as a ladder settlement (Iron Age, medieval or maybe even Roman?); the outlines of medieval "Tofts"; or possibly just plain old land drains. Whatever they are, the central alignment respects the line of the Roman road exactly. Medieval and Roman artefacts are recorded as having been found in the field, but the cropmarks are not, as yet, recorded in the HER.

Perhaps the most prominent Lidar trace along the route of the road appears near Shelley Hall, crossing the Brett River flood plain (figure 9).

In addition to the Lidar trace, there is a clear tramline cropmark running along the top of it, with ditch to ditch spacing of approx. 14m (figure 10).

The area around Shelley Hall is very interesting archaeologically. The Roman road almost certainly descends into the valley along the route of the modern road from Sulley's Hill. At the bottom of the hill is a T junction, and this is the spot marked "Lower Street" on the OS first edition map of 1896. Modern maps show this as Lower Raydon, but there is also this clear evidence for the name Lower Street. There is also a prominent tramline cropmark to the north of Lower Raydon (Suffolk HER Ref RAY055, not shown here), which if extended south would meet our road at the junction at Lower Street, and to the north one assumes it would take us to the known Roman settlement at Hadleigh, and on to Bildeston and RR330 to Ixworth. I have not found any other traces of RR330 in the area so far.

As can be seen from the Lidar image of the Brett valley crossing, the agger looks to be largely intact, presumably because there has been little or no agricultural activity to disturb it over the years, as the area must have flooded on a regular basis before human management of the river upstream

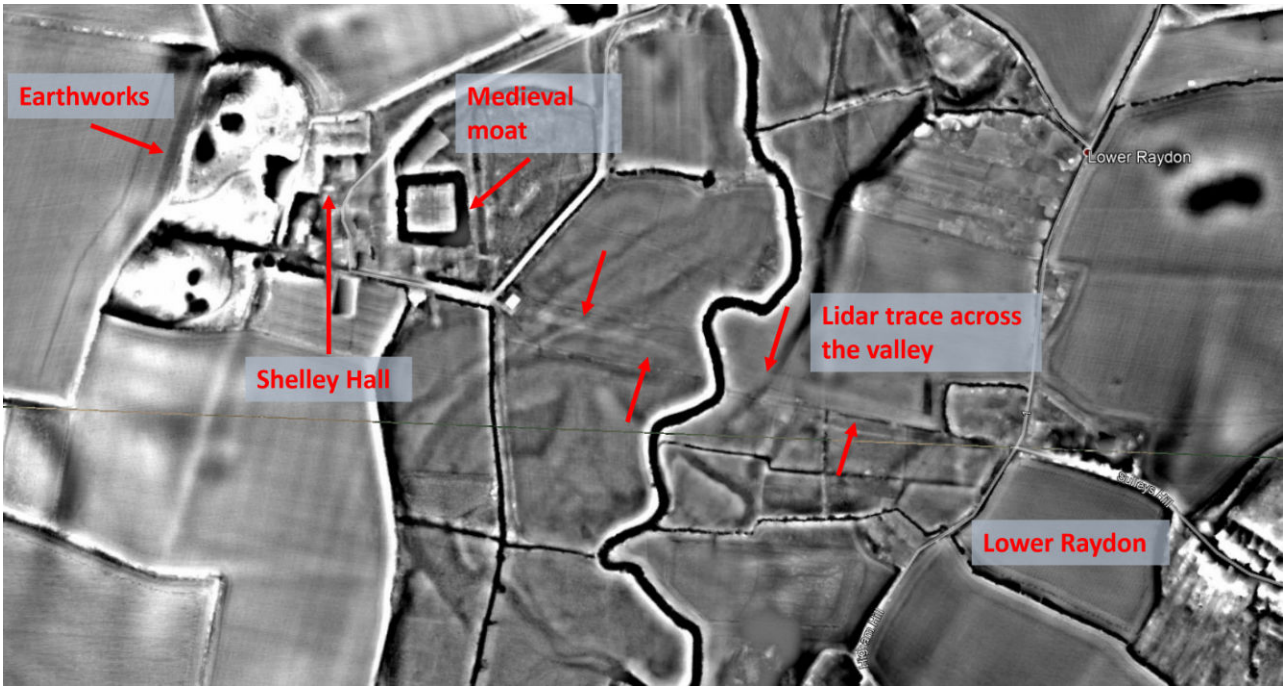

Fig. 9: Simple Lidar Relief Model of Shelley Hall and Brett Valley crossing from Lower Raydon / Lower Street. Lidar image courtesy Dr.Tim Dennis. Base Lidar data is Crown Copyright 2022

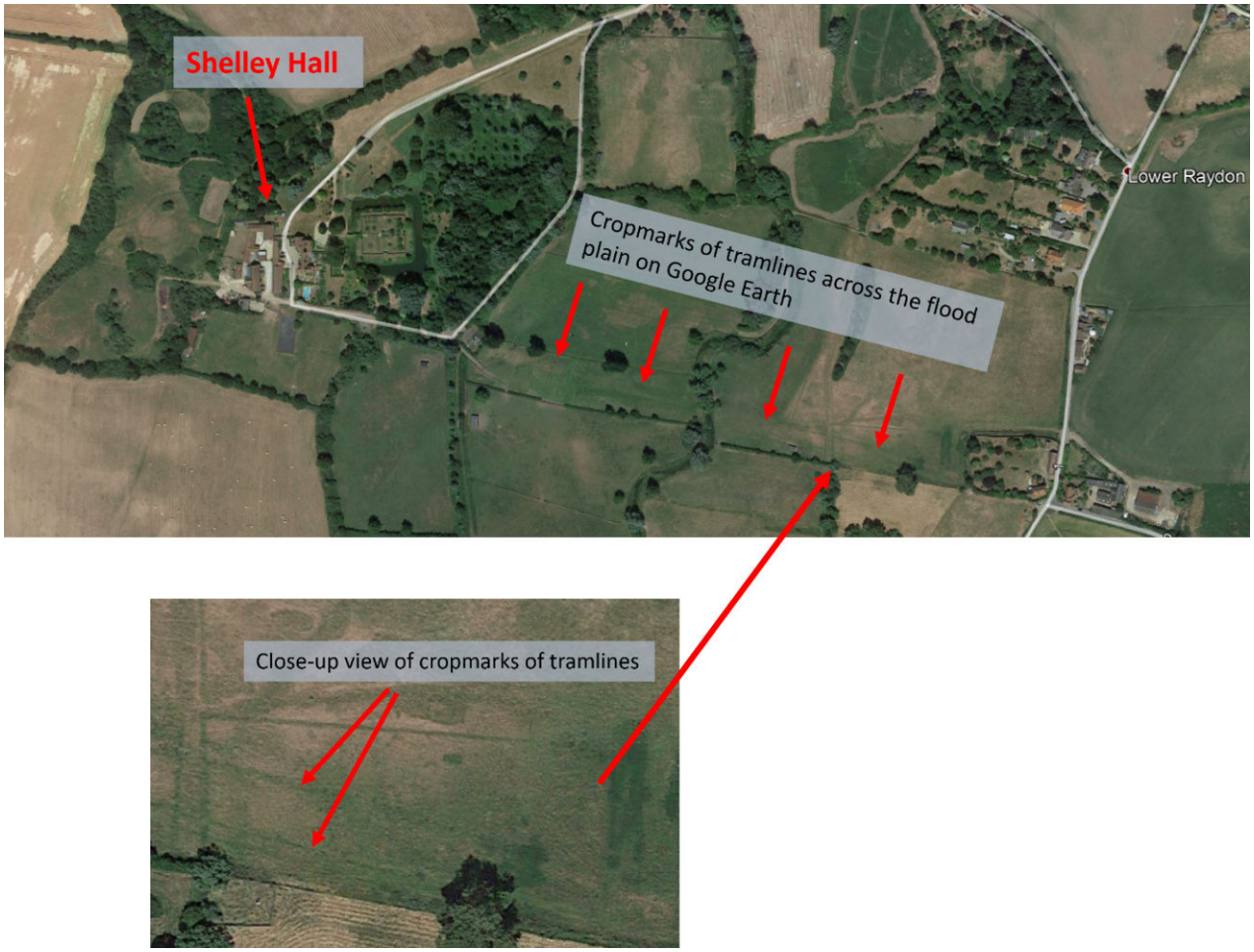

Fig. 10: Google Earth AP showing tramline cropmark following the Lidar trace across the valley, with closeup view of tramlines below. Tramlines are approx. 14m apart. Image taken from Google Earth Pro 7/2018. Map data © Google 2023

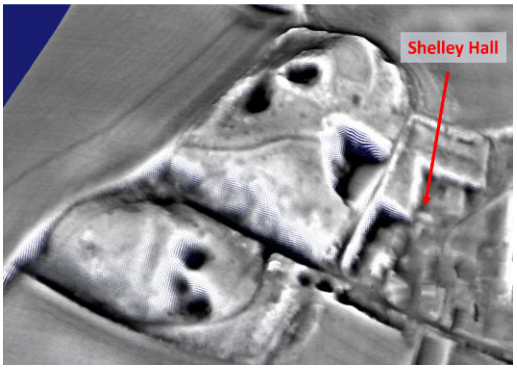

Fig.11: 3D Lidar model of the Shelley Earthwork, with vertical height exaggerated by factor 4. The remains of ditch and ramparts can be seen towards the top and bottom. The RR follows the cut through the mound. 3D Lidar image courtesy Dr.Tim Dennis. Base Lidar data is Crown Copyright 2022

took control. If the *agger* is intact, then there is a good chance that traces of the river crossing might still be evident.

Behind (west of) Shelley Hall there is a substantial earthwork with traces of ditch and banks (figure 11), which is recorded on an old map as "Conyber", i.e. a rabbit warren, but this is not recorded in the HER. It is known from other sites that rabbit warrens were often established in re-purposed earthworks such as mottes and burial mounds (e.g. see Hall Garth near Lockington, Yorks.) Interestingly, the Roman road follows a substantial cut through the earthwork, suggesting that the mound was there before the Roman period. The traces of ditches and banks suggest that maybe we have an Iron Age hill fort here. I can foresee a major archaeological investigation project unfolding in this area in the not-too-distant future.

West of the cut in the earthwork at Shelley Hall, there is no discernible trace of the road on either Lidar or APs for about 1.5km, and then we encounter more faint but discernible Lidar traces on the approach to Newhouse Farm, NNE of Polstead. These traces line up precisely with the alignment across the Brett Valley at Shelley Hall, so it appears that we have found our road again. Interestingly, the Lidar traces line up exactly with the long driveway to Newhouse Farm – a

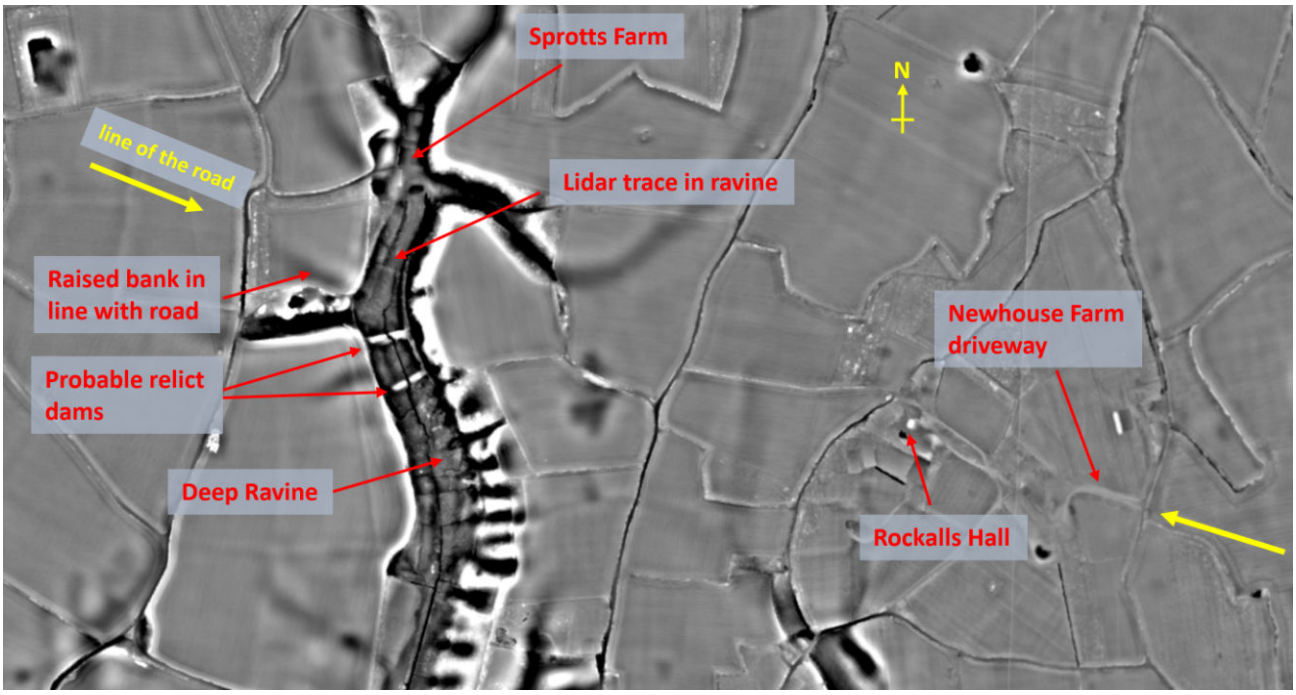

Fig.12: SLRM Lidar view of Sprotts Farm at the head of the ravine. Note how the driveway to Newhouse Farm lines up perfectly with the RR. Lidar image courtesy Dr.Tim Dennis. Base Lidar data is Crown Copyright 2022

repurposed Roman road now welcoming visitors to the new house perhaps? Both Newhouse Farm, and Rockalls Hall next door also appear to have been built on the *agger*.

West of Rockalls Hall, things get a bit more complicated. At the head of a short but rather deep valley with a stream flowing into the village pond at Polstead, we find Sprotts Farm (figure 12). There are faint Lidar traces at the point where the road would have crossed the valley, but I have also found a couple of clear tramline cropmarks which are not on the alignment, but which are the correct width and which look very much like Roman road ditch marks. The cropmark to the west of Rockalls Hall suggest that the road may have diverted north of Sprotts Farm in order to avoid the deep ravine. A similar mark but on a different alignment appears west of Sprotts Farm (figure 13), and north of the valley head, and this cropmark lines up very nicely with the marks at Whitestreet Green, and the marks west of Stone Street. My assumption here is that there are multiple phases of the road, one of which crosses the deep ravine, and another which skirts round the head of the ravine perhaps to avoid the steep sides. The fact that the traces in the ravine line up with the lidar traces to the east, and the Sprotts Farm mark aligns with Whitestreet Green strongly suggests to me that these are all parts of the same road, but not necessarily concurrent with one another. I am hoping that more marks might reveal themselves during another dry summer and help solve the mystery.

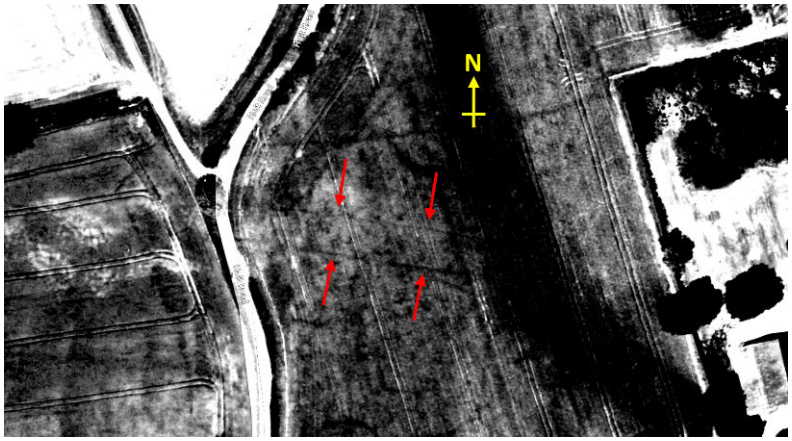

Fig. 13: Enhanced AP immediately west of Sprotts Farm showing cropmark of RR tramlines. Aerial Photograph is Copyright © 2023 Apple Inc. All rights reserved

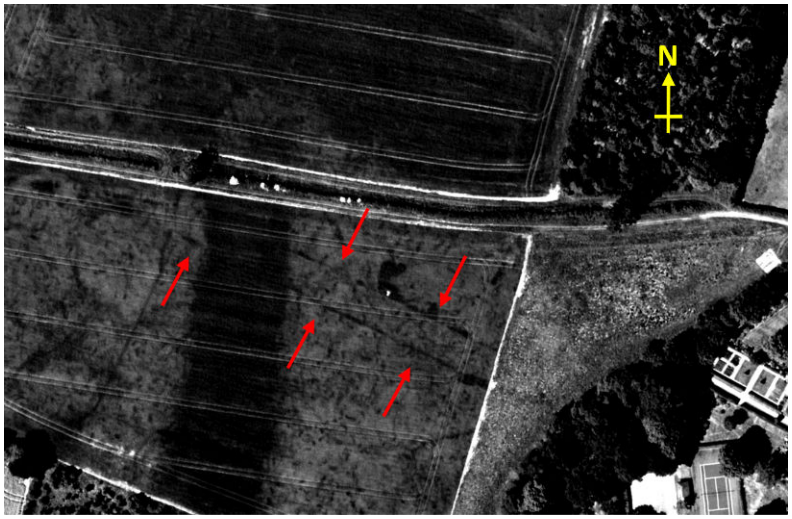

Fig.14: Enhanced AP immediately west of Rockalls Hall showing cropmark of RR tramlines on a slightly different alignment to those at Sprotts Farm. Notice the apparent borrow pits along the line of the ditches.

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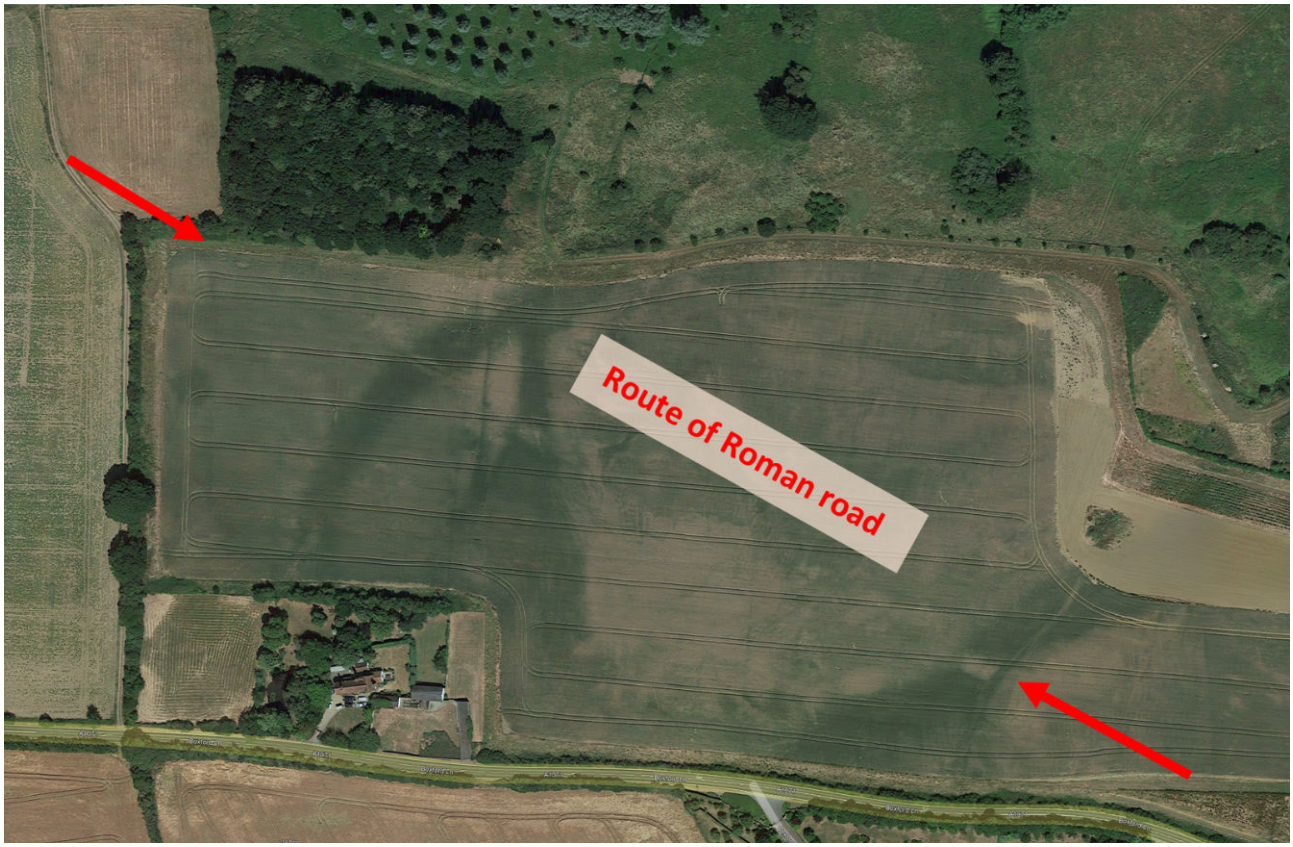

Fig. 15: Google Earth AP from 7/2018 showing ephemeral marks which align exactly with clearer cropmarks and Lidar traces to the west. Image taken from Google Earth Pro 7/2018. Map data © Google 2023

One more cropmark worthy of mention is ephemeral indeed, but sits exactly on the alignments of Lidar and the more prominent tramline marks. Alone, these marks would probably go unnoticed, but when sitting so accurately on the alignment, it seems highly probable that they are remnants of our road. These marks (Fig 15) occur where the road leaves the alignment along Boxford Lane, to the east of Newton Green.

The approach of the road to Long Melford remained a puzzle, and was the last part of the jigsaw to fall into place. I scoured the APs and viewed the Lidar from all angles to try and spot any hint of an *agger* or some tramlines for quite some time. One of the problems with this part of the road is that it crosses Chilton Airfield, which not only obscures all trace of anything ancient, but also introduces lots of new and unwanted traces. Luckily there are clear Lidar and tramline marks south of Gt. Waldingfield (see figure 5) which define the alignment pretty much all the way to Melford. If one looks closely enough, there are faint traces on APs of tramlines between Chilton Airfield and Melford, but there is not space to show them here. If anyone would like to see the evidence, please contact me via the RRRA.

The final image is an enhanced Apple Maps AP of the southern end of Long Melford (figure 16), showing the final approach of our road from the southeast heading towards the known Roman settlement area around Liston Lane. The archaeology in this area is not well defined due to a lack of excavation opportunities, but the Long Melford Heritage Centre members, led by Kenneth Dodd, are gradually putting a picture together of a potentially important crossroads on RR33a (arguably a southern route of the Peddars Way), with our road coming from the southeast, joining the known Roman road from Bildeston and Coddenham (*Combretovium*), RR34a, and continuing west towards Wixoe on what is almost certainly a continuation of RR34a.

Fig. 16: Apple Maps AP of Long Melford Roman Settlement showing surrounding cropmarks including the newly discovered RR344(x) approach from the south east. Aerial Photograph is Copyright © 2023 Apple Inc. All rights reserved

Final Note

You may be wondering why is this road where it is? Apart from the possibility (not yet fully explored) that the junction of RR344(x) with the Great Road RR3c at Holton St. Mary is in fact at "Ad Ansam" (one of the disputed locations on Iter IX of the Antonine Itinerary), it is also quite likely that the road continued further east and may well have eventually arrived at Mistley, which is a little-known Roman port on the banks of the River Stour. There is also a Roman road from Mistley to Colchester (*Colonia Vitricensis*, also known as *Camulodunum*), one of the straightest Roman roads in Essex (RR323(x) on David Ratledge's website), thought to link the important Roman town at Colchester with a deep-water port at Mistley. A road from Mistley joining RR34a at Melford, and linking up with RR24 (*Via Devana*) at Wixoe, as has pretty much been proven by David Ratledge, would have given the Romans a cross country route to large settlements such as Leicester (*Ratae*) from a port which presumably had good trade links with the continent. There is clearly plenty of work to be done here

Other News, Events, Updates & Miscellany

Autumn and Winter talks schedule

From Dave Armstrong

Following on from our last season, work has been going on in the background to build a schedule of interesting and relevant talks for our coming season. This will be notified in more detail in the future but as a taster for what is coming, an outline is below. As usual for our talks these will be open access talks booked through Eventbrite. If you missed one, our previous talks are available on YouTube catch up here.

September	Dr John Reid	Trimontium: a key node in the Roman occupation of Scotland
October	Dr Nick Hodgson	The end of the Ninth Legion in Britain
November	Andrew Nicholson	The Romans in SW Scotland: A review.
December	Prof. Jim Crow	High Rochester and Dere Street in Northumberland: the road to the north
Jan, (early)	Paddy Lambert	Roads and Industry: Navigating the Priors Hall Roman Villa
Jan, (later)	L. Allason-Jones	A Typical Assemblage?
February	Prof. Ray Laurence	To be determined (a noted author of many books related to Roman road traffic, travelling, etc)
March	Keith Abbot	Roman Roads of West Berkshire: Locating the intersection of the Road to Bath (RR53) with Ermin Street (RR41)

Itinera

From Dave Armstrong

We have had a few problems with our ordering process for printed copies of *Itinera*. If your ordered copy hasn't arrived in a reasonable time from ordering, please get in touch with Gary, our delivery expert, at itinerasales@romanroads.org. Any details/copy of your order or payment would help Gary unravel where things are.

Also on *Itinera:* we are now working towards Volume 4 for 2024. We already have offers for a number of interesting submissions but there is always scope for more! If you have something, large or small, to contribute please get in touch with Rob, the editor, on itinera@romanroads.org. We can help you with the way to write a paper. What is important is the quality and relevance of the information in it. There is also information on the website here.

Obituary

Terry Shaw, 1947-2023

Terry epitomised community archaeology. A good number of you reading this will have known Terry through his extensive volunteering on community archaeology programmes on many sites in the North East. Always in shorts, always with humour, those legs have graced many a trench whatever the weather. He was a Romanist at heart and his favourite dig was the seasons spent at Vindolanda, but he fared equally well at Arbeia, Wallsend, Piercebridge and Binchester

Terry digging at Binchester, presumably in 2014, from Pauline Shaw. Humour and shorts evident.

excavations. Perhaps surprising himself, he even turned to working on medieval sites culminating in a good few years at Auckland Castle. A long-time member of the Northern Archaeology Group investigating Roman road routes, he took on and professionalised the Treasurer's role, also helping to organise Group activities. When NAG disbanded he was instrumental in passing on the residual funds to the RRRA and with his wife Pauline was a keen and supportive Association member.

Before all of this he was a dedicated Customs & Excise man of many years service and had a book full of funny stories to tell. An avid reader he was well known for his encyclopaedic knowledge of 60-80s music, loved all things aviation and history in general. So you definitely wanted him on your team at the pub quiz! Always a keen follower of Newcastle United, in later years he became a member at Durham County Cricket and enjoyed sunny spells with friends at the nearby Riverside ground. But there is no denying his real love was archaeology and through that he was lucky enough to meet his wife Pauline who shared his passion for history and became inseparable on site.

Terry battled cancer for four years but succumbed peacefully and without pain at home in May. He is sorely missed by those who were lucky enough to know him and his fellow volunteers.

Obit. by Phil Carter.

David Brewer

Unfortunately I have to advise you of the death of life member David Brewer of Yorkshire. Always supportive of what the Association were striving for David succumbed to cancer a few months ago. He will be missed.

Roam like a Roman

Marcus Liddell has had an article published in Walk Magazine about following Roman roads as part of a walk. Here's some pics of the finished thing.

Bonus points for getting a mention of the RRRA in there as well, Marcus. This will hopefully, probably as a more winter project as we all seem busy during summer, start to link in with the #RomanRoadsFriday and the catalogue of places that Roman roads can be spotted in the landscape without the trained Lidar eye not all of us possess.

TEN PLACES

Roam like a Roman

Roman roads are known for their resilience, with many enduring for centuries to become part of our modern road network. Even those that fell out of use rarely disappeared entirely. Plenty now live on as footpaths, offering walkers the chance to explore history stretching back more than 1,000 years

WORDS MARCUS LIDDELL

1 Military Way, Northumberland
ABOUT The Military Way might be better known if it weren't for its location. This well-preserved road passes through spectacular scenery, but its proximity to Hadrian's Wall means it's easily overlooked. It doesn't fit the stereotype of a Roman road either. The hilly terrain means that long straight sections are abandoned in favour of shorter segments designed to link the frontier's forts and turrets.
WALK IT Park at Housesteads Roman Fort to catch the appropriately numbered AD122 bus to the Roman Army Museum, near Greenhead, Brampton. Walk back past Sycamore Gap, one of the most photographed spots in Northumberland National Park, finishing at Housesteads.
FIND OUT MORE english-heritage.org.uk/visit/places/walltown-crags-hadrians-wall

TEN PLACES

2 Dere Street, Chew Green, Northumberland
ABOUT Dere Street was built to support Julius Agricola's military campaigns in the 1st century CE. The most walkable section starts at Rochester, in Northumberland National Park, and heads north past Bremenium Roman Fort across atmospheric tracts of moorland towards Jedburgh in Scotland. It passes the border near Chew Green, where grassy embankments mark the sites of several Roman camps.
WALK IT Follow Dere Street for about 34km/21 miles from Rochester to Jedburgh, but be aware there are no shops or obvious places to stay. An alternative involves taking a taxi from Jedburgh to Towford, then walking 20km/13 miles back to Jedburgh.
FIND OUT MORE scotborders.gov.uk (search 'Dere Street'; the Towford to Jedburgh walk is Route 9a)

3 Via Devana, Cambridgeshire
ABOUT Like many Roman roads, this route is marked on Ordnance Survey maps. Look to the south-east of Cambridge and you will see an arrow-straight bridleway radiating out of the city. It gained the Latin name Via Devana in the 18th century, and today the chalk grassland preserved by the old road creates a haven for butterflies and wildflowers such as lady's bedstraw, ploughman's spikenard and knapweed.
WALK IT Nearer the city, the path is popular with cyclists, but it grows quieter as you move away from Cambridge. One option for exploring its course involves travelling by bus to the village of Horseheath before walking back to Cambridge rail station (19km/12 miles). Wandlebury Country Park also provides access and includes an Iron Age hillfort. A map is available from the Friends of the Roman Road and Fleam Dyke website.
FIND OUT MORE frrfd.org.uk

4 Akeman Street, Tackley, Oxfordshire
ABOUT Hedgerows or field boundaries sometimes maintain an old Roman road's course. You can see this near Tackley in Oxfordshire, where the line of Akeman Street is preserved. The old road once linked Cirencester to Alchester, close to modern Bicester. At Woodstock, it passes Blenheim Palace and, provided you keep to the path, you can enjoy the Capability Brown-designed parkland for free.
WALK IT The Oxfordshire Way tracks the old road's course for about 10km/6 miles to Stonesfield. There are more paths in the area and, with some creativity, it's possible to create your own circuit. Trains connect Tackley to Oxford (except Sundays), as well as buses.
FIND OUT MORE oxfordshire.gov.uk (search 'Oxfordshire Way')

WALK SUMMER 2023

Slindon Estate, near [illegible]
WALK IT The National Trust has designed a 6km/3¾-mile circuit that includes a section of the Roman road. It starts at Bignor Hill car park, where the road meets the South Downs Way. Nearby, Bignor Roman Villa is open mid-April until the end of October.
FIND OUT MORE nationaltrust.org.uk/slindon-estate/trails/stane-street-trail

Roman diversions

As well as being a great time to explore Roman roads, the summer is popular for Roman history festivals.

CHALKE VALLEY HISTORY FESTIVAL
WILTSHIRE (26 JUNE–2 JULY)
This week-long festival must surely count as the historian's equivalent of Glastonbury. Not only does the event include more than 150 talks, but there's even a campsite for the full festival experience.

EBORACUM ROMAN FESTIVAL
YORK (8–9 JULY) Constantine the Great was proclaimed emperor in York, so there can be few more appropriate places in Britain for a Roman-themed festival than the old city of Eboracum.

COLCHESTER ROMAN FESTIVAL
ESSEX (29–30 JULY)
The city the Romans called Camulodunum celebrates its heritage with gladiatorial displays, re-enactments and archery.

LUNT ROMAN FESTIVAL
COVENTRY (26–27 AUGUST)
Visitors can explore a Roman village and watch re-enactments at this festival set in a partially reconstructed Roman fort.

For more information on the history of Britain's Roman roads, try your local archaeology society or the Roman Roads Research Association (romanroads.org).

TEN PLACES

5 **Peddars Way, Great Massingham, Norfolk**
ABOUT Footpaths, tracks and quiet country lanes follow the course of this old Roman route as it makes its way towards the Norfolk coast. The die-straight section from Great Massingham to Sedgeford embodies many of the characteristics associated with Roman roads. There are no turns or interruptions to worry about, leaving the walker's mind free to drift while the miles melt away.
WALK IT The Peddars Way belongs to the Peddars Way and Norfolk Coast Path National Trail, so is well signposted and easy to walk. If you're tackling the entire trail, it's worth breaking your journey at Castle Acre, where you can see impressive ruins of the town's priory and castle.
FIND OUT MORE nationaltrail.co.uk/en_GB/trails/peddars-way-and-norfolk-coast-path

6 **Ystradfellte, Powys, Wales**
ABOUT The name Sarn Helen is associated with a Roman road believed to have connected Caerhun and Aberconwy but this route near Ystradfellte, in the Bannau Brycheiniog (Brecon Beacons), also takes the name. It traversed the moorland of Fforest Fawr, linking a pair of Roman forts. Two ancient standing stones sit close by – one, Maen Madoc, has a Latin inscription in memory of a man named Dervacus.
WALK IT From Ystradfellte follow a 10km/6-mile circuit that includes the old road. The New Inn pub has a bunkhouse and campsite. A car park near Plas-y-Gors is a starting point for walks on the route.
FIND OUT MORE theswanseaboy.co.uk/2021/12/01/sarn-helen-circular/

7 **Stane Street, Slindon Estate and South Downs, West Sussex**
ABOUT As far as we know, the Romans did not name their British roads. This route linking London and Chichester was probably built soon after the Roman invasion in AD43, but the name 'Stanstret' appears in 1270. A well-preserved section of agger (the type of embankment Roman roads were built on) survives on the Slindon Estate, near Gumber Farm, enhanced by views to the coast.
WALK IT The National Trust has designed a 6km/3¾-mile circuit that includes a section of the Roman road. It starts at Bignor Hill car park, where the road meets the South Downs Way. Nearby Bignor Roman Villa is open mid-April until the end of October.
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WALK SUMMER 2023

8 **Hardknott Pass, Eskdale, Cumbria**
ABOUT Known as a very steep road for cars, Hardknott Pass more or less follows the course of an old Roman road past remote Hardknott Fort. You can walk along the old route on a nearby footpath, taking in dramatic scenery. The route connected Ambleside with Ravenglass and evidence remains near Wrynose Bottom. The fort was built while Hadrian ruled and commands the Eskdale Valley. On a clear day you can see the Isle of Man.
WALK IT You can park in laybys near Wrynose and Three Shire Stone. Pick up a footpath just north of the road as it passes through Wrynose Bottom. It's marked 'Roman Road' on Ordnance Survey maps. At Cockley Beck it crosses Hardknott Pass, following a track and climbing to the fort.
FIND OUT MORE english-heritage.org.uk/visit/places/hardknott-roman-fort

9 **Ackling Dyke, Cranborne Chase, Dorset**
ABOUT Ivan Margary may not be a household name, but his book *Roman Roads in Britain* still dominates the field of Roman road research, more than 50 years after publication. He described Ackling Dyke as one of the 'finest visible relics' of the Romans' roads in Britain. Remains of its agger reach 1.8m/6ft in places. It's more akin to an 'abandoned mainline railway' than a Roman road, suggested Margary.
WALK IT You can walk along Ackling Dyke for 10.5km/6½ miles between the A354 near Sixpenny Handley and Moor Crichel. There are various options for circular walks and the village of Gussage All Saints, with its community-run pub, makes a convenient starting point.
FIND OUT MORE cranbornechase.org.uk/ackling-dyke-conservation

10 **The Well Path, Durisdeer, Dumfries and Galloway**
ABOUT Hadrian's Wall is often seen as the limit of Roman rule in Britain, so you would be forgiven for imagining Scotland didn't have many Roman landmarks. But the push to extend power as far as the Antonine Wall – which stretched across Scotland – in the 2nd century shows the Romans intended to occupy at least part of Scotland and they built roads north of the border. One example, known as the Well Path, lives on as a quiet track near the village of Durisdeer.
WALK IT Park in Durisdeer and follow a 6.5km/4-mile circuit. Enjoy views of hills as the road travels up a glen and explore a Roman fortlet close by. Call in at Durisdeer Church, known for its marble carvings.
FIND OUT MORE walkhighlands.co.uk/galloway/well-path.shtml

Random things from the Internet

Sent in by David Brear, a Master's thesis from Lund University by Tomas Öberg entitled 'The accuracy of road distances in the Antonine itinerary'. Available to all here.

Paul Smith noticed that Wychavon district Council had put up a video about the ford at Evesham with their archaeology advisor Aidan Smyth explaining more about the find.