

FIELD-NOTES IN THE CANTERBURY  
DISTRICT

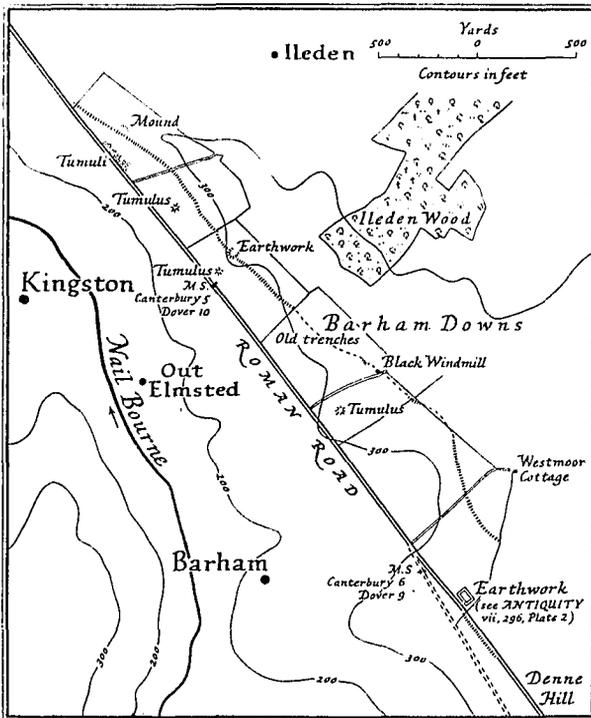
BY O. G. S. CRAWFORD, F.S.A.

*Barham Down.* Near the fifth milestone from Canterbury the Ordnance Map (6 in. sheet 57 N.W.) marks an "ancient earthwork" running parallel to Watling Street (so called) at a distance of 200 yards to the N.E. of it. This is a lynchet. It can be traced quite clearly on the ground for some distance beyond the two terminal points now marked on the map. North-westwards it can be followed up to a cottage called Poorstart; it passes close to the N.E. of the barrows of the famous Kingston cemetery opened by Bryan Faussett between 1767 and 1773 (*Inv. Sep.*, 1856, 35-94); here it consists of a positive and negative lynchet, separated by a terrace-way six paces wide. The barrows are much more numerous than the map indicates, and they extend right up to the negative lynchet. Ploughing would have obliterated them, so we may conclude that the lynchet is older than they are. North-west of Poorstart the lynchet fades out on cultivated land. Near the fifth milestone from Canterbury is a tumulus, and at this point the lynchet is crossed by two later ditches of doubtful age. The ground between them, and beyond to the north, is covered with pre-Roman potsherds (specimens in the Maidstone Museum). That the ditches are, however, of some antiquity, seems indicated by the following description of Leland's, if indeed it is to them that he refers, which seems pretty certain: "In the paroche of Barehamdoune a litle from the wood syde, and about a 6. from Dovar, appereth a dikid campe of men of warre. Sum say that it was Caesar's camp: sum thinke that it was a campe of the Danes. It hath 3. diches." (*Itinerary*, ed. L. Toulmin Smith (George Bell), IV, 1909, 41). Leland's miles were long ones; the actual distance from

Dover is about ten miles. The enclosed down west of Black Mill has been cut to pieces by war-trenches (left open); but it is possible to trace the lynchet through them; and when it reaches the mill enclosure it appears for a few yards quite plainly and well preserved, about 4 feet high. South-east of Black Mill it follows a sinuous course, being best preserved at the intersection of four fences one furlong S.E. of the mill itself. It has been partially levelled after this, but reappears on the down west of Westmoor Cottage, and can be traced on an air photograph (and less easily on the ground) as far as the road running S.S.W. from Westmoor Cottage. Beyond this I was not able to trace it. Throughout its course of  $1\frac{3}{4}$  miles this lynchet keeps slightly to the S.W. of the highest part of the ridge. It is the south-western limit of cultivation of people living to the north-east of it, that is, of uplanders. Excavation at the place referred to above where potsherds occur would quickly determine its age.

*The Roman road, Canterbury to Dover.* Generally speaking, this road has always been assumed, on the whole correctly, to coincide with the modern one. There are, however, some divergencies. The Roman road left Canterbury by the Riding Gate; it is now called the Old Dover road, and passes to the N.E. of the County Cricket ground, falling into line with the modern Dover road at Gutteridge Gate, S.E. of the first milestone from Canterbury (Kent 46 N.E.). It appears to coincide with the modern road through Bridge and up Bridge Hill, where it is accompanied on the S.W. by a row of Saxon barrows just inside Bourne Park (*Inventorium Sepulchrale*, p. 95). There is a fairly large barrow on the N.E. side, by the "B" of Barham Downs (6 in. sheet, Kent 48 S.W., third edition, 1908). It leaves the modern road just before reaching the sixth milestone from Canterbury, and can be seen on an air photograph in the field between the two roads from Westmoor Cottage. Here it passes the double-square also revealed by the air photograph (see *Antiquity*, 1933, VII, 296, Plate 2). In the grounds of Denne Hill it is fairly well preserved as a terrace

or causeway of chalk; here it forms the boundary between the parishes of Womenswold and Barham. It leaves the parish boundary in Wick Wood (57 S.W.), and passes behind (N.E. of) Halfway House, through Woolwich Wood. Here it falls into line with a very high bank and ditch, evidently of mediæval date and probably the enclosure bank of the



LYNCHET ABOVE ROMAN ROAD FROM CANTERBURY TO DOVER.

wood. It can be traced continuously through the wood by anyone who cares to undertake the task, until it falls into line again with the parish boundary on the eastern margin of the sheet (57 S.W.). Beyond this point I saw no certain traces of it, but I expect that it joined the modern road (or crossed it at an obtuse angle) near the meeting-place of the parishes of Wootton, Sibertswold and Barham (57 S.E.).

It descended Lydden Hill, not on the line of the existing road, but through Old Road Plantation (67 N.E.) which consists of two very deep road-cuttings, emerging in a ploughed field. Thence there can be traced a stony shelf which falls into line with the modern road at the cross-roads beside the tenth mile stone from Canterbury. From Lydden to Dover it seems never to diverge far from the existing road ; but I have not been over this portion on foot.

It should be added that there is no early (pre-Conquest) authority for the name Watling Street in Kent. The London-Canterbury road is called Casing Stræt on Bexley Heath in an original charter of 814 (Birch, *Cart. Sax.*, I, No. 346) ; and the Canterbury-Lympne road (probably) is called Kaseru stræte (*Liber de Hyda*, pp. 242-53). A stream called Casincburna also existed (Wallenberg, *Kentish Place Names*, 1931, 120, citing other instances).

*Chartham Downs.* A few disjointed notes are collected and set down here ; they may assist someone else to clear up the problems of an interesting bit of country.

It has been stated that the County Mental Hospital occupies the site of a Saxon cemetery (Sir Flinders Petrie in *Arch. Cant.*, XIII, 13). On the other hand the plan in Douglas, *Nenia Britannica*, 1793, Plate XXIV (reproduced in Hasted, VII, 1798, frontispiece, and also in Baldwin Brown, *Arts in Early England*, IV, 1915, p. 729) would place it near the cross-roads S.W. of the Fagge Arms. Is this the same as the cemetery on Kenville Down (*Inven. Sep.*, p. 160) ? Kenfield Farm lies well to the S.E. and the down belonging to it would be somewhere near Pond Wood presumably. (6" sheet, 46 S.W.).

A cross-dyke runs across the modern road immediately south of Little Iffin Wood, between it and Swarling Farm. It faces west, the ditch being on the west side. It is destroyed immediately north of the road by a modern chalk pit (where a section of both bank and ditch is exposed), but can be seen above it for a few yards ; after which it seems to end abruptly in a lynchet. This lynchet can be followed westward through

Little Iffin Wood, gradually climbing the hill parallel with the southern margin of the wood. Finally it emerges and continues westward as a modern field boundary. The field between Little Iffin Wood and Pond Wood is covered with pot-boilers, and there are also a few oyster shells.

South of the road the bank is well preserved and the ditch visible; but both soon disappear in land formerly under plough. The total length is about 150 yards. Dr. Ince tells me it is called Deadman's Bank. Hasted says, ". . . On the contiguous plain, called Swadling [Swarling] downs, still more southward, there are three or four lines of intrenchments which cross the whole downs from east to west [? north to south], at different places, and there is a little intrenchment in the road, under Denge wood, a little eastward above Julliberies grave" (*Hist. of Kent*, VII, 1798, 301). These cross-dykes *should* still be in existence, but I have not been able to locate them.

Swarling Farm is famous for its Belgic cemetery (Society of Antiquaries, Research Report No. 5, 1925, by J. P. Bushe Fox). The name means Sword-lynch, and I noticed several big lynchets in its vicinity.

Iffin's Wood contains an "ancient encampment" which is difficult to find, as the existing rides or clearings are not marked on the Ordnance Map. Go along the road northwards along the west side of the wood till you come to a large dene-hole (marked on the map, 46 S.W., but not named); it is just inside the wood on the east side of the road. Immediately beyond (N. of) this dene-hole is a path into the wood, running S.E. Follow the path until you come to the tumulus on the right-hand side, presumably that in which five inverted finger-tip urns were found (see *Archæologia*, 1844, XXX, 58). Continue on straight for about a furlong when you will cross a shallow valley, and then immediately on your left you will see banks. These are the earthworks. They consist of a rectangular enclosure with subsidiary banks and ditches; but they defy description, and short of a plan must be left alone. The undergrowth of the wood is being cut down, and if this portion is cleared

later on it should be easy to plan. It may be said that the earthworks are definitely not those of a contour fort, and may well be mediæval. See Hasted, IX, 1800, 291-2, V.C.H., I, 399.

*Tonford Farm* (46 N.W.). The bastioned wall and gateway illustrated in the *Antiquarian Itinerary* (London, 1818, Vol. 7; unpagged) are still to be seen. The wall contains Tudor bricks, the gateway has recently been patched up to prevent it from falling.

“*The Devil’s Court Hall*” (46 N.E.?). J. Barnard Davis records the finding of a Roman (?) skull in a chalk-pit of this name at Redlands near Canterbury. Presumably this is Ridlands Farm south of the Workhouse, but where is the chalk-pit? and what is the exact significance of the name? I am indebted to Mr. C. W. Phillips, F.S.A., for this information and the reference to Davis’s *Thesaurus Craniorum*, 1867, p. 22.

Kent is not rich in earthworks, and it behoves us therefore to make the most of the few there are. That is why I have thought it worth while to publish these notes. Kent, however, is rich in historical documents of the Early Saxon period, many of them originals; and the land-boundaries attached to them contain valuable topographical hints. There could be no more interesting task than to take a portion of East Kent and try and identify the bound-marks mentioned in these charters.<sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup> Dr. Gordon Ward’s paper on “The Topography of Some Saxon Charters relating to the Faversham District,” printed in this volume deals with this.—EDITOR.