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THE EVOLUTION OF 'WATLING STREET' IN KENT

TIM TATTON-BROWN

A quick glance at the Ordnance Survey 'one inch' maps of the 1950s¹ might suggest that the A2 always followed very closely the old Roman road, later known as Watling Street,² all the way from London Bridge to Dover. This is very misleading because in fact the main road across north Kent has altered its course at many points from time to time and it is surprising that so little work on the 'archaeology' and early history of this route has been carried out. This brief essay will try to show how this exceptionally important land route, the principal road from London to the Continent, has evolved in the two millennia since AD 43.

To study the way that this route has changed over time, it is necessary to use many different sources and techniques, but fieldwork and maps are still perhaps the most useful tools (**Map 1**). With these, and a variety of historical sources, it is possible to deduce much about the changes in alignment and route of the road, and it is no surprise that archaeologists of the later nineteenth century were already producing theories. On 1 February 1878 W. M. Flinders Petrie (later one of the greatest of all Egyptologists) read a paper at the Royal Archaeological Institute entitled 'Notes on ancient roads'.³ This in part deals with some of the roads in north-west Kent, including Watling Street, but it is also of interest because it attempts, albeit briefly and rather roughly, to look at what Petrie called 'the natural history of roads', and the 'axioms and definitions of the subject'. He had perhaps been influenced by Darwin's *Origin of Species* (first published in 1859). By the beginning of the twentieth century, however, it was only the rediscovery of the old Roman roads that seemed to be of interest,⁴ and this work reached its high point in the 1960s and 1970s with the work of the archaeological section of the Ordnance Survey and, in particular, of Ivan Margary.⁵ Only in the last two decades has the wider archaeological study of roads and tracks been taking place.⁶

Two main points arise from these studies. First, during this very long time-span there is good evidence to suggest that, in the earlier Anglo-Saxon period, much of the Watling Street route in Kent was probably not used at all, and that only in the late Anglo-Saxon period

did it once again become a main land-route from London to Canterbury and beyond. By this time, however, many stretches of the old Roman alignment had been abandoned and the section of the route from Dartford to Strood had moved northwards to pass through Northfleet and Gravesend.⁷ Until 1924, when the new arterial road (the A2) was built, much of the Roman road between Dartford and Strood was marked only by parish boundaries, footpaths (through Swanscombe Park, for example), and minor backlanes.⁸ These are well shown on the earliest editions of the OS 'one inch' maps, that were produced from 1801.⁹

The second aspect of the history of Watling Street which needs to be considered is that the mean sea-level has been rising continuously since the late Roman period, greatly affecting the tidal limit on the Medway and other smaller estuaries on the Kent coast. The evolving history of the crossing points of the rivers over which the road passes must therefore be taken into account.

If we now trace the line of Watling Street across Kent from the coast to London and consider its origins, it seems highly likely that, despite the ingenious suggestion of Hind,¹⁰ the main Roman invading forces in AD 43 came across north Kent and built Watling Street immediately after their arrival.¹¹ The short sea-crossing from Boulogne to the then fine natural harbour near Richborough (behind the Stonar bank and south of the Isle of Thanet, and later called Ebbsfleet) was the obvious one for the main army of Aulus Plautius' forces to take,¹² though smaller contingents may also have crossed to the south coast at Fishbourne and elsewhere. It is also likely that the small natural harbours at Dover (in the Dour estuary, now silted up) and Lympne (*Portus Lemanis*) were also used for the invasion and that the Roman roads from these two places to Canterbury were built at a very early date. For the first stage of the invasion, as Professor Frere has shown,¹³ Plautius' forces would have moved across north-east Kent to the Medway crossing at Rochester. From just beyond here, it is possible that a crossing of the Thames, between Lower Higham and East Tilbury, was made so that the Emperor Claudius could get to *Camulodunum* (Colchester) as quickly as possible.¹⁴ This would almost certainly have been feasible in AD 43, though with the rising level of the Thames it would have become less and less easy, but, as Patrick Thornhill pointed out, it was from at least the thirteenth century the lowest ferrying point across the Thames.¹⁵

A main road for supplying the Roman army in its conquest of the rest of Lowland Britain would also have been needed at a very early date, and this is surely the road that was constructed from Richborough through Canterbury and Rochester to the crossing point of

the Thames (perhaps even a very early bridge) at Westminster. The line of this route has been carefully described by Margary, but his work takes no account of possible changes to the line of the road during the three and a half centuries of Roman rule. When describing the route from Canterbury to Richborough, for example, he notes how the Roman *agger* seems to bifurcate in the middle of Pine Wood near Littlebourne (c. 3 miles east of Canterbury), and suggests that the northern branch was 'making for a small port on the Little Stour near Wenderton'.¹⁶ This seems very unlikely, and the real explanation is surely that the southern branch of the route is a late Roman road (or only a later medieval road) that had moved to higher ground near Ickham and Wingham after the original road had been submerged. Excavations near the early crossing point of the Little Stour in 1975 found a late Roman watermill,¹⁷ but its relationship to the nearby early Roman road was apparently not established.

At Richborough castle itself the alignment westward of the road from the great Flavian monumental arch (and the west gate of the later Saxon shore fort) is, of course, well known,¹⁸ but after a short distance its course is completely lost, and the routes (early and late Roman) from here to Pine Wood have not yet been successfully located, despite local fieldwork and speculation.¹⁹ Margary's assertion that most of the modern A257 between Littlebourne and Ash follows the Roman road, because of 'the normal Roman custom of making the best use of the ground' is not very believable, and much more detailed fieldwork and excavation is needed in this area of east Kent to rediscover the sequence of Roman roads between Richborough and Canterbury. What is striking, however, is that where the Roman roads in east Kent are known with certainty, they do follow very straight alignments. So the Roman road from Canterbury to Dover is well-known as far as Barham Downs because of its straight alignments; after this most of its course is lost. The same can be said for Stone Street, south of Canterbury, where the alignment northwards from Lympne can easily be traced (and the route is still followed most of the way by the B2068) as far northwards as the appropriately-named Street End near Lower Hardres (3 miles south of Canterbury). North of this a narrow lane continues the approximate line to Iffin Farm and traces of the Roman *agger* can still be seen in wooded ground along the east and west sides of this lane.²⁰ Beyond Iffin Farm, however, the Roman road for the last one and half miles to the Canterbury Worthgate is completely lost,²¹ and as will become apparent the main medieval and later route to the city on the south was Wincheap (at the end of the road from Wye) which is not on a Roman alignment. The medieval lane that ran north of Iffin Farm is in a deep irregular

cutting, and for obvious reasons was called Hollow Lane.²² It meets Wincheap at an angle and is clearly secondary to it.

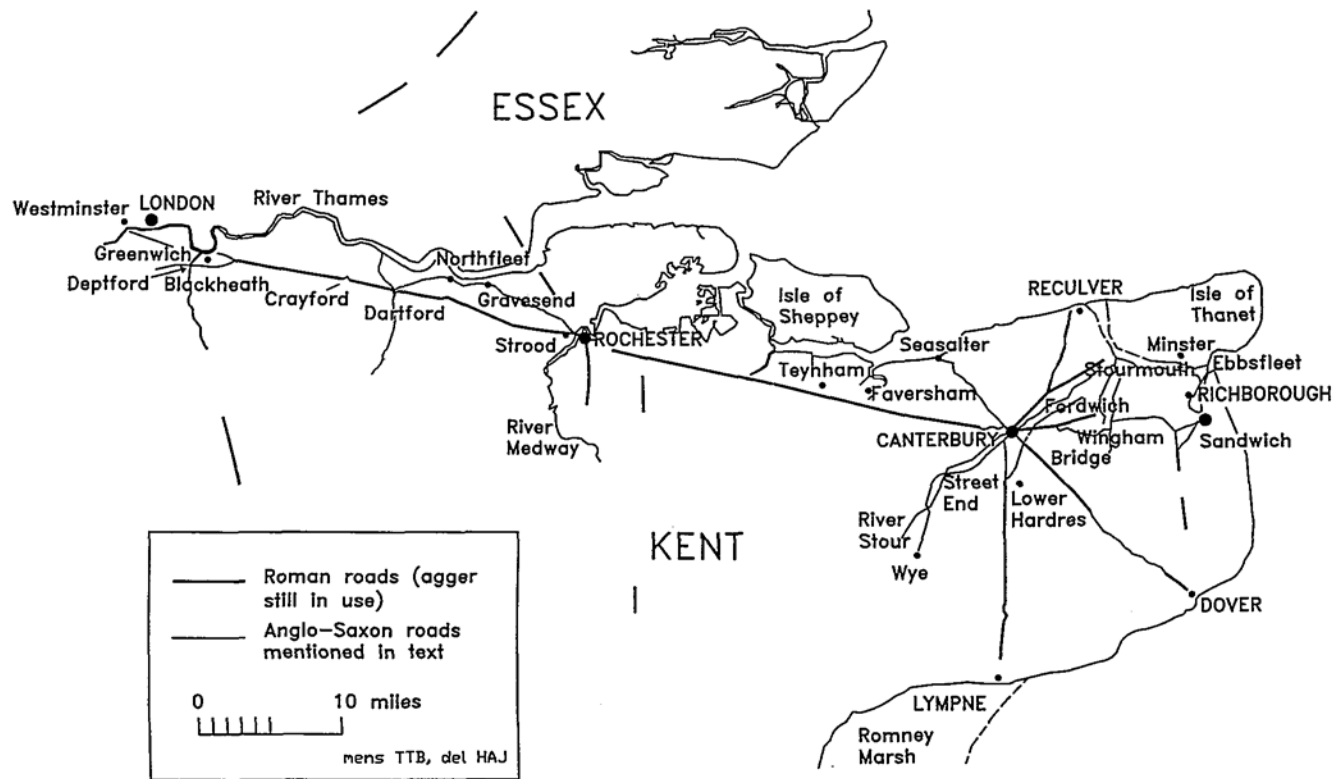
On the west side of Canterbury as well, the line of the Roman road (Watling Street) is completely lost between Upper Harbledown and the West gate,²³ and this too suggests that at some time (probably in the fifth century) this route into Canterbury ceased to exist. It is significant that the medieval and modern route to Canterbury's West gate was from the north-west. This road, now the A290, leads to the coast at Whitstable, but the map,²⁴ and historical evidence, suggest that the original destination of this road was Seasalter, which by the late Anglo-Saxon period was a major settlement on the Thames-side littoral at the mouth of the Swale.²⁵ The medieval and modern road from London to Canterbury meets this road beside St Dunstan's church, some quarter of a mile north-west of the West gate. Once again, as with the road from Canterbury to Wye (see above), this strongly suggests that in the late Anglo-Saxon period the road to Seasalter was the earlier, and more important road. This in turn suggests that the sea-route up the Thames estuary was probably the more heavily used from Canterbury to London in the later Anglo-Saxon period.

What about the situation in the early to middle Anglo-Saxon period? There can now be little doubt that by the middle of the fifth century the principal Roman towns in South-East England (including Canterbury) had been abandoned,²⁶ thus making the old Roman roads between them redundant. In the early centuries following the Anglo-Saxon (and Jutish) invasions and settlement, the principal land-routes across Kent were not the main east-west roads to London, but the north-east to south-west droveways connecting the primary settlements in north and east Kent with new pasture lands south of the Downs and in the Weald.²⁷ With the advent of major new coastal trading settlements in Kent and South-East England in the seventh century (places that often have *-wic* names), the major routes between these places were, of course, by sea. On the landward side, however, there were important roads leading to these places, and it is interesting to note that the original roads into Sandwich, probably the most important of these trading settlements in Kent, were from the south.²⁸ The principal roads to Fordwich, at the tidal limit of the Great Stour, two miles north-east of Canterbury, were also from the south and south-west, and one of these routes was probably the road that diverged from the Roman road at Street End (see above) and continued to Fordwich, bypassing Canterbury on its east side.²⁹ With the advent of the Vikings, and the creation of the *burhs* in the late Anglo-Saxon period (particularly the re-use of the Roman walled towns of Canterbury and Rochester), Kent once again acquired truly

urban settlements,³⁰ and it is the roads between these places and London and Dover that once again started to make Watling Street an important land route. Only with the disappearance of the Viking threat in the reign of Cnut, however, and with the rebuilding of Rochester bridge, can one say that this route across Kent from Dover to London was once again of major importance. It is interesting to note that this importance is reflected in the use of this route by William the Conqueror just after his victory at the Battle of Hastings in October 1066.³¹ He marked this new-found importance by building new castles along this road at Dover, Canterbury and Rochester, that were to remain the most important royal castles in Kent over the next three or so centuries.

From Upper Harbledown (just to the west of Canterbury) all the way to the outskirts of Chatham, the long straight alignments of the Roman road can still be followed on the modern map, as the A2, for about 25 miles.³² This whole stretch of Watling Street was not troubled by the rising sea-level in the north Kent estuaries, and it clearly formed the 'baseline' on which a whole network of minor roads and lanes was constructed.³³ This is a very rich arable area (later the Kent fruit belt) which contained many Roman buildings. It is very likely that the network of lanes here was established in the later Roman period, and continued in use in the early Anglo-Saxon period after new settlements were established. By the later Anglo-Saxon period the great *agger* of Watling Street was often being used as a boundary (many parish boundaries still follow its line), but it is unlikely to have been a major through-route for the reasons already given. It is also worth noting that none of the more important later Anglo-Saxon settlements in the area: Faversham, Teynham and Milton Regis, are actually on Watling Street itself.³⁴ Instead they lie close to the inland creeks off the Swale and Thames, to the north of the road.

From Chatham Hill the last mile or so of the Roman alignment to the South-East gate of Rochester is completely unknown. The site of the route was speculated upon by George Payne over a century ago,³⁵ but once again the rising sea-level of Chatham Reach on the river Medway has probably flooded and buried the early Roman road. Payne³⁶ suggested that the Roman road here was higher up the hillside, and this may have been the case in the later Roman period, but this has yet to be proved. Similarly the course of the first part of the Roman road west of Rochester bridge has not yet been clearly located, though from the top of Strood Hill its course to Dartford is reasonably well known,³⁷ and as has been shown the modern A2 (built in the early 1920s, and now widened to a huge dual carriageway) has now covered and obliterated most of the Roman *agger*.



Map 1 Watling Street in Kent.

The course of the Roman road from Swanscombe Park (just to the west of the Roman settlement at Springhead) to Greenwich Hill, a distance of over ten miles, is absolutely straight, except for kinks where the modern road crosses the rivers Darent and Cray, and the medieval place names, Dartford and Crayford, clearly suggest that these are places where Roman bridges were destroyed and replaced by fords. It is also worth noting that the early Norman church at Dartford sits right on the Roman road immediately to the west of the site of the Roman bridge. The later medieval bridge was just to the south-east of the chancel. (By contrast the place-name, Bridge, of the village on Watling Street, two and a half miles south-east of Canterbury, suggests that here the Roman bridge survived, though it has not yet been found by archaeologists.)

For consideration of the evolving history of the crossing points of the main rivers which the road encounters, most important is Professor Nicholas Brooks' recent work on the early history of Rochester Bridge³⁸ which has always been, with London Bridge itself,³⁹ the most important bridge (or, briefly at times, a ferry) on Watling Street. The rising of the mean sea-level on the north and east coasts of Kent⁴⁰ has meant, *inter alia*, that two important early Roman river crossings at Deptford and on the Little Stour (east of Canterbury) were drowned in the later Roman, or possibly in the early post-Roman, period. This almost certainly caused the road to be diverted to new crossing points further to the south. The very name Deptford (deep ford) for the A2's crossing point of the River Ravensbourne shows how the ford was characterised in the Anglo-Saxon period. This ford, which probably only acquired a bridge in about the eleventh century, was at the tidal limit of Deptford creek, half a mile to the south of its probable early Roman crossing point close to the Thames at Greenwich Reach. The position of this early Roman crossing point is suggested by the alignment of Watling Street east of Greenwich. On the edge of Blackheath, however, the course of the Roman road is lost and the later road runs south-west to Deptford on a curving route. Similarly the medieval road that carried Watling Street to Greenwich (the centre of the original settlement must be near the parish church of St Alphege) then has to run back south-westwards to the Deptford crossing before continuing its route to London Bridge up the Old Kent Road.⁴¹ Throughout this area of south-east London the actual course of the Roman road is still uncertain,⁴² although recent excavations have found the lines of the Roman streets near Borough High Street and Great Dover Street, in the Southwark area.⁴³

The one completely unresolved problem is whether the original Watling Street from Kent ran westwards across south London to a cross-

ing point on the Thames at Westminster, as was first suggested nearly three centuries ago in 1724 by William Stukeley.⁴⁴ This continues to be a very likely scenario, but the archaeological evidence is still missing. Very recently there has been new work at Lambeth to try to find this road, but it has not been successful.⁴⁵ It seems very likely that this was the earliest line of the Roman road and that in places it should be found covered by late Roman and later silts caused by the rising sea and river level in the low-lying land south of the Thames. The road probably continued on the Westminster side and ran north-westwards to the Edgware Road, as was suggested long ago. This is still the most likely route for the original invading force in AD 43. Only a few years later was work started on the new Roman city of London.

For many years it was assumed that the famous 'bridgework' list in *Textus Roffensis* dated from the later tenth century, but recent work by Professor Brooks now shows that it is dated incorrectly and can only belong to the first half of the eleventh century (it was actually copied into *Textus Roffensis* in c. 1120).⁴⁶ This fits in well with the history of the period because in the year 999 the Danish army sailed up the Medway from the Thames and completely laid waste the whole area after defeating the Kentish levies.⁴⁷ Though Rochester bridge was possibly in use again from the seventh to the ninth centuries, it was perhaps in ruins at this time, and the Danes may have been able to sail through the bridge and further up the Medway.⁴⁸ In the following years the Danes took Canterbury (1011) and often used Greenwich as a camp (Archbishop Aelfheah was murdered here in 1012). Only after the accession of Cnut to the throne of England (1017) would it have been possible to restore the bridge, and as has been shown it was perhaps from this time that Watling Street once again became the main land route from Sandwich, Dover and Canterbury to London. However, the sea route up and down the Thames was probably still the more important route until after the Norman Conquest.

From the twelfth century onwards Rochester bridge got more and more use, and it is very clear that the great land route across north Kent was once again of very substantial importance.⁴⁹ It was perhaps most famous as the route taken by pilgrims travelling to the shrine of St Thomas in Canterbury, and Chaucer's *Canterbury Tales* clearly indicate that this was the route that was used in the very late fourteenth century.⁵⁰ As it happens, the old Rochester bridge was finally destroyed in February 1381 by floodwater after a great freeze,⁵¹ and a new bridge to the north was not completed until 1392. During the intervening decade a ferry had to be used, but it is likely that the peasant army under Wat Tyler that rode to Blackheath from Canterbury on 11-12 June 1381 were able to use the partially repaired bridge.⁵²



Watling Street. The approach to Rochester from a nineteenth-century print

This is not the place to follow the long and interesting social history of Watling Street in the medieval and post-medieval periods. The road that was re-established, with its diversion via Gravesend, in the eleventh century probably remained little changed until the Turnpike era of the eighteenth century,⁵³ when new routes were made, such as the 'New Dover road' on the east side of Canterbury in 1790.⁵⁴ The whole road is first shown in detail on Philip Symonson's famous map of Kent, published in 1596.⁵⁵ Symonson also shows the other major medieval and Tudor road across Kent to Hythe, via Maidstone and Ashford,⁵⁶ which in the twentieth century was to become the A20. This was also a much used medieval route that went over the Medway at either Aylesford bridge or the great bridge at Maidstone.⁵⁷ These two major routes across Kent were only finally 'bypassed' in the later twentieth century when the two motorways were built. Just west of Rochester bridge, however, a section of Watling Street still remains as one of the busiest roads, virtually a motorway, in Kent.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

The writer is extremely grateful to Professor Nicholas Brooks and Dr Frank Panton for commenting most helpfully on an earlier draft of this essay. They are not, of course, responsible for any of the speculations. The writer's wife, Veronica, has very kindly word-processed his text. Howard Jones redrew the writer's sketch-map on his computer.

NOTES

¹ Sheets 171-3 of the Ordnance Survey 'Seventh Series' maps at 1 inch to the mile.

² The Anglo-Saxon name of Watling Street (in fact *Waeclinga Street*) was originally only the name of the Roman road near St Albans. Only later did the name come to be used for the whole of this road to London and on across Kent to Dover. See K. Cameron, *English Place Names* (3rd edition, 1977), 154.

³ *Archaeological Journal*, 35 (1878), 169-175.

⁴ See, for example, T. Codrington, *Roman Roads in Britain* (2nd edition, 1905).

⁵ I. D. Margary, *Roman Roads in Britain* (3rd edition, 1973).

⁶ See, for example, C. Taylor, *Roads and Tracks of Britain* (1979) and B. P. Hindle, *Medieval Roads* (1982).

⁷ R. H. Hiscock, 'The road between Dartford, Gravesend and Strood', *Archaeologia Cantiana*, 83 (1968), 229-247.

⁸ One of these minor lanes, along the north side of Cobham Park, survived alongside the A2 until much more recently.

⁹ Now conveniently reproduced in F. Hull, *Ordnance Survey Historical Guides: Kent* (1988). See also B. P. Hindle, *Maps for local history* (1988), 119-126.

¹⁰ See J. G. F. Hind, 'The invasion of Britain in AD43 - an alternative strategy for Aulus Plautius', *Britannia*, 20 (1989), 1-21.

¹¹ They may well have started to build the road while waiting for the Emperor Claudius to arrive.

¹² The prevailing winds and tides were, and are, up the English Channel from the south-west.

¹³ See S. S. Frere, *Britannia. A History of Roman Britain* (revised edition 1978), 78-83 for the best general account of the events of AD 43.

¹⁴ As first suggested by P. Thornhill, 'A lower Thames ford and the campaigns of 54BC and AD 43', *Archaeologia Cantiana*, 92 (1976), 119-128.

¹⁵ *Ibid.*, 123.

¹⁶ Margary 1973, *op. cit.* (see note 5), 36-9. See also F. H. Panton, 'The Canterbury-Richborough Roman road: a review', *Archaeologia Cantiana*, 114 (1994), 1-15.

¹⁷ As yet unpublished, but see C. J. Young, 'The late Roman water-mill at Ickham, Kent, and the Saxon shore', in A. Detsicas (ed.), *Collectanea Historica* (1981), 32-40.

¹⁸ See B. W. Cunliffe (ed.), *Fifth report on the excavations of the Roman fort at Richborough, Kent* (1968), especially 37-40 and plan p. 230.

¹⁹ See C. Knox, 'St Margaret's Bay, and the Roman roads from Richborough to Dover and Canterbury', *Archaeologia Cantiana*, 54 (1941), 35-40; I. D. Margary, 'Notes on Roman roads in east Kent', *Archaeologia Cantiana*, 61 (1948), 126-132. It is highly significant that the principal route through Wingham is a north-south one (a drove road), with the roads east and west, to Sandwich and Canterbury, being secondary.

²⁰ The *agger* is clearly marked on the Ordnance Survey 1:25,000 map (now Explorer sheet 150).

²¹ The *agger* was not located in 1977-8 when the A2 Canterbury bypass was cut right across its line, see *Archaeologia Cantiana*, 95 (1979), 272.

²² This cutting in the Chalk must have been caused by many years of erosion by people, animals and carts in the post-Roman period.

²³ The medieval West gate probably lies on top of the principal Roman West gate in the city walls. Within the city walls all the Roman streets were lost, and replaced by new ones in the later Anglo-Saxon period, see T. Tatton-Brown, 'The Anglo-Saxon towns of Kent', in D. Hooke (ed.), *Anglo-Saxon Settlements* (1988), 213-232, especially p. 218, fig. 10.3.

²⁴ The route to Whitstable and Seasalter diverges at the top of Pean Hill.

²⁵ It is called a *parvus burgus* in Domesday Book, see T. Tatton-Brown, 'The towns of Kent', in J. Haslam (ed.), *Anglo-Saxon towns in southern England* (1984), 32-4 and R. Baldwin, 'Seasalter: a problem borough in Domesday Kent re-examined', *Archaeologia Cantiana*, 110 (1992), 237-267.

²⁶ For Canterbury the best archaeological evidence for this can be found in K. Blockley *et al.*, *Excavations in the Marlowe car park and surrounding areas* (1995). See also, T. Tatton-Brown, 'Canterbury's urban topography: some recent work', in P. Riden (ed.), *The Medieval Town in Britain* (1980), 85-98.

²⁷ See A. M. Everitt, 'The making of the agrarian landscape of Kent', *Archaeologia Cantiana*, 92 (1976), 1-31, and *Continuity and Change, the evolution of Kentish settlement* (1986).

²⁸ Tatton-Brown 1988, *op. cit.* (see note 23), 219.

²⁹ Though this route was probably a droveway in origin. The original route to Fordwich was the track on the east side of Canterbury that starts at St Martin's church, and not the Roman road from Northgate; see M. Sparks and T. Tatton-Brown, 'The history of the Ville of St Martin's, Canterbury', *Archaeologia Cantiana*, 104 (1987), 200-212, and fig. 2 (inset), p. 128.

³⁰ Tatton-Brown 1988, *op. cit.* (see note 23), 221-232.

³¹ From Hastings Duke William moved slowly along the coast to Romney and Dover before turning inland for London. See D. C. Douglas, *William the Conqueror* (1964), 205-6.

³² Margary 1973, *op. cit.* (see note 5), 42-4.

³³ All these smaller lanes are consequent on, and hence later than Watling Street. They may well be later Roman in date, as many later Roman buildings (though no major villas) have been found in the area.

³⁴ By the late Anglo-Saxon period the principal churches were situated at these places, see T. Tatton-Brown, 'The churches of Canterbury diocese in the 11th century', in J. Blair (ed.), *Minsters and Parish Churches: the local church in transition, 950-1200* (1988), 105-118.

³⁵ G. Payne, 'Observations on the Roman way from Chatham Hill to Dartford, and other roads', *Archaeologia Cantiana*, 23 (1898), 1-9.

³⁶ *Ibid.*, 4-7 and P. Thornhill, 'Second thoughts on Strood's Causeway', *Archaeologia Cantiana*, 94 (1979), 249-254.

³⁷ Though, as already stated, the medieval road did not follow this route.

³⁸ N. P. Brooks, 'Rochester Bridge, AD 43-1381', in N. Yates and J. M. Gibson (eds), *Traffic and Politics, the construction and management of Rochester Bridge, AD 43-1993* (1994), 1-40.

³⁹ See T. Brigham, T. Dyson and B. Webster, *London Bridge: 2000 years of a river crossing* (forthcoming, 2001).

⁴⁰ The rate in recent centuries has been roughly a foot per century, see G. H. Willcox, 'Problems and possible conclusions related to the history and archaeology of the Thames in the London region', *Trans. London and Middx. Arch. Soc.*, 26 (1975), 285-292, especially p. 290, fig. 4.

⁴¹ This is most clearly shown on John Rocque's 1746 'Survey of London' map.

⁴² See R. Merrifield, *Roman London* (1969), 60-1.

⁴³ For the most recent discovery of this street see A. Mackinder, *A Romano-British cemetery on Watling Street: excavations at 165, Great Dover Street, Southwark* (MoLAS Archaeology Studies, Series 4, 2000).

⁴⁴ W. Stukeley, *Itinerarium Curiosum* (1776), 119. See also Merrifield 1969, *op. cit.* (see note 42), 63-67. It was also a problem the writer tried to look at, over 25 years ago, see T. Tatton-Brown, 'Roman London, some current problems', *The London Archaeologist*, Vol. 2, No. 8 (1974), 194-7.

⁴⁵ B. Sloane, H. Swain and C. Thomas, 'The Roman road and the river regime', *The London Archaeologist*, Vol. 7, No. 14 (1995), 359-370.

⁴⁶ Brooks 1994, *op. cit.* (see note 38), 18-19. John Thorpe first suggested a date of c. 975 for the bridgework list in the late eighteenth century.

⁴⁷ G. N. Garmonsway (trans. and ed.), *The Anglo-Saxon Chronicle* (1993), 131.

⁴⁸ In 1016 the Danes even dug a great channel through Southwark to get their ships round to the west side of London Bridge, *ibid.*, 149.

⁴⁹ Brooks 1994, *op. cit.* (see note 38), 33-40. The route is first depicted by Matthew Paris in the thirteenth century.

⁵⁰ The so-called 'Pilgrims' Way' along the North Downs is, of course, a bogus twentieth-century invention.

⁵¹ This is described in detail in the opening lines of the contemporary *Westminster Chronicle*, see L. C. Hector and B. F. Harvey (eds), *The Westminster Chronicle 1381-1394* (1982), 2-3.

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⁵² See N. P. Brooks, 'The organization and achievement of the peasants of Kent and Essex in 1381', in H. Mayr-Harting and R. I. Moore (eds), *Studies in Medieval History presented to R.H.C. Davis* (1985), 247-70.

⁵³ See, for example, Hiscock 1968, *op. cit.* (see note 7).

⁵⁴ See F. H. Panton, 'Turnpike roads in the Canterbury area', *Archaeologia Cantiana*, 102 (1985), 171-195.

⁵⁵ See the facsimile edition (Ordnance Survey 1976) with notes by Helen Wallis.

⁵⁶ A third route through Tonbridge ends at Rye in East Sussex.

⁵⁷ Part of this road was much used by the archbishop and his household in the later medieval period, see T. Tatton-Brown, *Lambeth Palace, a history of the archbishops of Canterbury and their houses* (2000), 39.

