

The Course of Wansdyke through Somerset :

WITH AN ITINERARY.

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I HAVE twice been allowed to bring before this Society the results, then very incomplete, of my investigation of the course of Wansdyke.¹ The work is not yet finished and in the pursuit of it fresh questions are constantly arising. But a point has been reached when I can say fairly confidently that the main course of the dyke across Somerset is clear, and, as that is one of the most important points that has hitherto been doubtful in the story of the dyke, it seems desirable to sketch the Itinerary of its course across the county, without waiting for questions of a possible secondary line of dyke, or of a branch dyke, in the neighbourhood of Bath to be cleared up.

In spite of much that has been written about Wansdyke in our *Proceedings* and elsewhere, knowledge of its actual course has remained up to the present where it was left by Sir Richard Colt Hoare, who examined the dyke along its whole course through Somerset and Wiltshire and published the result over a hundred years ago.² In the long and the large the only difference between the dyke as shown in his map and in the O.S. maps is that portions of the dyke have vanished in the latter, *e.g.* almost all that ran through what was once Prior Park. But in Hoare's map there were many gaps and the course of the dyke beyond Maes Knoll was virtually a blank.

1. *Proc. Som. Arch. Soc.*, LX, i, 63-7; LXVIII, xxx-xxxii, xxxviii-ix.

2. *The Ancient History of North Wiltshire*, 16-33 (London, 1819).

These gaps, which have remained on the map, can now be almost completely filled and many minor works upon the dyke, which were described by the late Rev. J. Skinner, rector of Camerton, early in last century, but do not appear to have been noticed by any other observer, or writer, can also find their place there. In the Itinerary that follows these minor works and such portions of Wansdyke as are already shown upon the map will not be described in detail, the main object being to show a practically continuous line through the county. The Itinerary is based upon the 6in. Ordnance Survey of Somerset. References to the relevant maps are given in the margin.

ITINERARY.

XIV. Wansdyke and the Roman road to Bath run together westward through Wilts to the Somerset border, where the county boundary turns at a very sharp angle on the edge of Ashley Wood. There they separate and Wansdyke follows the boundary w. along the edge of the wood, or just within it, across the Bathford road and along a footpath round the shoulder of Farleigh Down, where it is lost in the old stone quarries on Bathford Hill. A branch of it may possibly have continued along the county boundary towards Inwood. The main dyke reappears, as shown in the map, in Rowbarrow Wood, the earthworks on the edge of the wood being much more extensive than is shown in the map. Its course through the fields below to where it reappears beyond the road to Warleigh and runs down to the River Avon is nearly obliterated.¹ Beyond the Avon there is a trace of it between the railway and the canal, but no certain sign of it on the steep slope above the canal. But it probably

1. The late Mr. H. D. Skrine in a map of the Manor of Bathford does not show the dyke in Rowbarrow Wood, but shows it between the Bradford-on-Avon and the Warleigh roads running along a fence to "Bath 4" in the map, turning s. along the fences shown, then along the Warleigh road and up through Gully Wood to the county boundary. But he shows a fence going N.E. from "Bath 4," as if to meet the Rowbarrow Wood branch. *Proc. Bath N.H. & Ant. F.C.*, Vol. V (1883), p. 53.

went straight up to the point where a tramway from the disused quarries on Bathampton Down to the canal by Holcombe Farm crosses the highroad by a bridge, and my own opinion after many visits is that Wansdyke was
 XIV. utilised to carry the tramway up to the quarries.
 N.W. There is no sign of it ascending the hill anywhere else and the embankment on which the tramway ran has a very ancient look.¹

The dyke is lost in the quarries, but beyond them runs as shown in the map along the N. of Bathampton Camp and down its W. side. The line continuing it from the S.W. angle of the camp, marked "site of Wansdyke" in the map, appears to have been proved by excavation carried out in 1904 by the Bath Branch of the Society, but the account is not very clear as to the precise spot where the cutting was made.² Following this line and crossing the road, traces of the dyke are faintly discernible in the field between the two roads and still more faintly beyond the next road on Claverton Down. At the bottom of the first field on the Down the main line may have turned
 XIV. W. along the field boundary to Rainbow Wood (but see
 S.W. footnote), while a branch appears to go off S.E. and has been traced to the neighbourhood of the Bath Statutory Hospital. At the edge of the escarpment N. of Rainbow Wood, above the house of that name, there are the remains of a considerable earthwork and here the line we have followed would be rejoined by a branch which appears to have run off to the W. and S. from the N.W. corner of Bathampton Camp, near the old quarry, and making its way across the Golf Course, where there are many traces of ancient earthworks, to have followed the edge of the escarpment, now occupied by houses and gardens, round to Rainbow Wood. From the earthwork N. of the wood the line follows the escarpment on the edge of the wood to a point almost due N. of the "Tower,"

1. Local investigation might find evidence as to the making of this tramway.

2. *Proc. Bath Branch, Som. A. & N.H.S., 1904-5.*

whence it runs nearly s. across the bend of the wood w. of the "Tower"¹ to an old quarry and so into Prior Park, where a fragment of it still remains abutting on the boundary wall of the Park along the road. Thence it probably followed the Park boundary w. From the corner at the top of Prior Park Hill there are traces of two lines of earthwork along the escarpment overlooking Bath, one turning down the hill and then taking the edge of the slope behind Prior Park Farm to cross Blind Lane at the Dry Arch, the other following Blind Lane to the Dry Arch with a well marked quadrangular earthwork upon it just above the farm between the two lines. From the Dry Arch the line follows the steep escarpment above Fersfield to Fox Hill, then curves round, still on the top of the slope below the 500 feet contour, to "B.M. 470.9" on the map, thence to the back of the gardens, etc., on Entry Hill, where its exact course is lost in enclosures and quarries. The direct line from Prior Park Hill to the Cross Keys, a distance of about a mile, is also obscured by roads, buildings, etc., as it was in Colt Hoare's time. For part of the way, at any rate, it probably followed the present highroad, which keeps to the summit of the ground. At the Cross Keys there are traces of a branch running along the s. side of Horsecombe towards Midford. The Rev. J. Skinner describes Wansdyke as going on this line towards Frome and ignores altogether its continuation into and across Wilts. But this line is still under investigation and is outside our present scope.

The line from the Cross Keys to Burnt House runs straight across the neck of land between Horsecombe and the head of Padley Bottom. It is well marked, but has suffered much from quarrying and the plough. The work of destruction has, however, exposed a good section of the ditch in Wansdyke Quarry near Burnt House.² Be-

1. Mr. G. E. Cruickshank has been informed that the dyke could be traced formerly running across E. of the "Tower" towards Claverton Down.

2. See *Proc. Som. Arch. Soc.*, LX, i, 63-7. A new heading was opened in this quarry, cutting the ditch, last spring and the work was carefully watched by Mr. Cruickshank. A report will be made.

yond this quarry the line is nearly obliterated, but it can just be discerned across the angle between a cross-road and the Foss Way. Beyond the Foss Way its course is lost in cottage gardens, but it seems to follow a footpath

XIII. down through Vernham Wood into Padley Bottom.¹
 S.E. In this bottom it shows as a big bank, which forms the rear bank of enclosures in the valley, open in front to the marshy bed of a tiny rivulet. Ascending into Breach Wood it follows the bluff overhanging the stream and gains the road to English Combe along hedgerows and round springs near the Grove Tavern. Its course through the village is not clear, but it shows in a field s. of the churchyard and rises in the orchard of Manor Farm into an immense bank running down to Newton Brook, with traces of enclosures near the farmhouse and by the brook. Beyond the brook there are the remains of more enclosures s.e. of Pensylvania Farm, from which the line runs through outbuildings s. of the farm to the farm lane. It can be traced thence running w. along the opposite side of the lane as far as the next field boundary, at which point it seems to disappear. Actually it went across this field diagonally to the head of a deep combe in which is a series of complicated earthworks, apparently defending the approach up the combe by a new disused road. From the back of these works the dyke runs for a few yards n. along Twelve O'Clock Lane, and then appears to have gone straight over the hill to Park Farm, s. and w. of which there are again considerable signs of old enclosures. It may be observed that Colt Hoare could find no trace of the dyke between Park and Pensylvania Farms; and the earthworks between the latter and Twelve O'Clock Lane are so hidden in the hollow that it would be easy to miss them.

From the enclosures by Park Farm the dyke is just traceable through rich meadow land to the stream that

1. We should expect to find another line to English Combe, keeping to the high ground s. of this bottom, but so far have not observed any traces of it.

runs past Dog Kennel Wood, s. of which there is an oblong enclosure, overlooking the deep valley carved out by the stream. From the opposite bank the map shows the "site" of the dyke as running almost in a straight line over level fields to the lane leading up to Stantonbury Camp. But its course is probably more nearly represented by a line of field walls, whose irregularity may indicate the original position of the scarp and counterscarp of the dyke. Beyond the road to Stanton Prior the dyke climbs up the lane and through a wood to the camp in an imposing form. It runs along the n. face of the camp, and from its n.w. corner descends a shoulder of the hill through such dense woodland that it is impossible to keep on the exact line. But on the open downland below the wood and in an arable field below, abutting on the Bath-Wells road, it has completely disappeared, though the map shows it in a well marked form. Beyond the road it can again be traced in the grounds of Wansdyke House, though nearly obliterated, while it again becomes very distinct in the fields beyond as far as the road to Compton Dando, with a big unrecorded earthwork in the second field below Long Hill. Its course along the road can be traced, as in the map, but just across the Bathford Brook there are several large mounds and irregular works, not shown in the map, in the field s. of the road. From the Burnett road a magnificent stretch of the dyke runs down to the River Chew through two big grass fields in which there are extensive signs of occupation. In the first of these what looks like a hollow-way runs down to the alluvial flat bordering on the Bathford Brook, where it ends in two very peculiar banks, one crescent-shaped, the other straight, stretching w. along the base of the well marked terrace formed by the flood-plain of the Chew. Altogether the indications are that this was an important station on the dyke at the river-crossing.

Beyond the river the O.S. line can be traced to a copse called Pepper Shells. It must cross the n.e. angle of the copse and climbs Fairy Hill along hedgerows in a n.w. direction to Knowle Farm. Here, as usual near an in-

habited site, the line becomes obscure, but there are traces of more than one enclosure in wet ground abounding in springs between the farm and the stream in Wooscombe Bottom. The main line seems to have run about halfway down the s. slope of Wooscombe Bottom and is very distinct on the open slope w. of a little copse as far XII. as a field bank that crosses the slope. Here it seems to N.E. have run into another system of enclosures, difficult to disentangle from the later fields, until the open ground is reached on Publow Hill, where they become very evident, extending right down to the low ground w. of the hill. Down its s.w. slope there run six or seven banks, nearly parallel, but for the slight divergence due to the spread of the ground, dividing the hillside into long, narrow fields. These appear to end in a lane that runs between well marked banks round the foot of the hill, for no main dyke can be traced across this lane and it seems to mark a break in the line of the dyke. Beyond it are probably more enclosures, from which a straight line of dyke can be traced down to a little tributary of the Chew, which it crosses just n. of Cottle's Farm. Beyond the brook in the field by the farm the bank again shows very big and continues with an imposing profile¹ as far as the Bristol and North Somerset Railway. It disappears again just before the railway bridge over the Bristol road, but the line of the dyke crosses to the s. of the railway and follows the field boundaries on the edge of the slope just above it. In the fourth field from the road it reappears and continues, as shown in the map, to Maes Knoll. The field immediately e. of the road to Norton Malreward is surrounded by an earthwork s. of the dyke, while across the road there are remains of extensive earthworks to the n. of the dyke at the foot of Maes Knoll and on the slopes below Maes Knoll Camp. Wansdyke climbs up to the e. side of the camp by a deep lane, rounds the n.e. corner and keeps along the n. face of the camp to its n.w. angle.

1. This is where the Society visited the dyke during the Annual Meeting at Bristol last July. See Excursion Notes, pt. i of this vol.

Thence its course is along a footpath on the edge of the escarpment to a lane descending sharply towards Whitchurch. It crosses this lane and continues along a hedgerow opposite, still keeping to the edge of the escarpment. The hedgerow, a furlong on, turns at right angles down a shoulder of the hill. Across the salient formed by this shoulder run two or three lines of well marked scarp and some distance below these there is a bastion-like outwork just above Hill Farm (VI. S.E.). To the N.W. of the salient there are traces of other ancient works, which look like the completion of a line of defence.

The line of the work now trends S.W., following the direction of the ground and keeping roughly to the 500-ft. contour along the lower edge of fields stretching up to the Whitchurch lane. The exact course is almost impossible to describe in detail, as instead of a single line of bank and ditch, it consists of a series of enclosures, single or multiple. About half-way between Maes Knoll and East Dundry, however, there is a very well marked line XII. of bank and ditch extending for some 300 yards with N.W. the counterscarp on the very brink of the escarpment. A footpath follows this, but before it reaches East Dundry the line trends again N.W. in an elaborate series of enclosures lying on either side of Newdown Lane and extending between the 500-ft. and 600-ft. contours as far as an accommodation road running N. from North-hill Farm. It is impossible to make out the original plan of these works, as the ground is covered by a network of fields and is highly cultivated. Half-a-mile N. of East Dundry the farm-road turns at right angles to the W. and runs to Dundry, crossing the main Bristol-Wells road near Mount-pleasant. Wansdyke, appears to follow this line as far as Dundry, climbing up to and above the 600-ft. contour, but throwing off a branch diagonally down the hill along a lane in front of Mount-pleasant and across the face of the escarpment. The main line goes through Dundry and just beyond "B.M. 647" on the map, and before reaching a very sharp and steep westerly bend of the road plunges straight down a shoulder of the

VI. hill along a footpath approached by a short flight of S.W. steps. The descending bank of the dyke is exceptionally big, but consists partly of a natural ridge of rock.¹ On reaching the main road at the bottom of the hill it rejoins the line coming down diagonally from Mountpleasant.² The hillside below Dundry between the two lines is seamed with earthworks based upon the lower line. Beyond the junction the line doubles back upon itself round the head of the deep vale below Dundry Hill, running along the s. side of the road with the ditch, *i.e.* the valley, on the s.e.³ At "Hill View" it crosses the road and can be traced across the s.e. shoulder of "the Peart" to the end of the lane past Oaktree House, where it enters a network of low marshy fields and its course is not very clear. But it makes its way to the back of the fields on the western side of Highridge Common and runs N. through Highridge Farm. A raised farm-road, continuing N. from the farm on the nearly level summit of a low watershed between Bishopsworth and Yanley, appears to be the remains of the dyke, and carries on the line to the lane coming from Highridge Common and along it as far as Bishopsworth Lane. To the w. of this farm-road there appears to have been another series of enclosures extending to Castle Farm,⁴ but these again are difficult to disentangle from the fields into which the country is now divided.

The dyke is again traceable as a single line in the farm-

1. The course of Wansdyke along the ridge from Maes Knoll to Dundry was discovered some years ago by Lt.-Col. A. B. Prowse, M.D., F.R.C.S., of Clifton, and reported to a local society. But the discovery attracted no attention at the time and no news of it reached the Somersetshire A. & N.H.S. I was fortunate enough to hear of it and Colonel Prowse kindly showed me what he had found.

2. Not to be confused with another house called "Mountpleasant" in Highridge.

3. A noteworthy deviation from the otherwise invariable rule that Wansdyke always has its ditch to the north.

4. The origin of this name is not known. Mr. O. G. S. Crawford has observed that "Castle" in a place-name often points to the neighbourhood of a building such as a Roman villa.

- yard w. of the farm and across a field beyond towards Colliter's Brook. It then disappears, probably ploughed out, reappears in Deep Coombe, where it crosses the stream just below the bridge on Yanley Street¹ and runs along the w. side of Yanley Street. There are further enclosures in its rear between Yanley Farm and the G.W.R. Beyond Ashton Brook it is very well marked
- VI. on the w. side of the lane running up to Long Ashton. N.W. It is again masked by the houses and gardens at the end of this village, but along the lane leading to the Golf Course it was clearly seen in 1923 and 1924 in what is now the front garden of a new house opposite Long Ashton Lodge. Below Ashton Hill it may have divided. An old road runs round the eastern side of the hill and the front branch almost certainly followed this line as far as a rough piece of waste ground in Clarcken Coombe s. of the Clevedon road and crossing this and the road entered Ashton Park near an angle in the park wall. It
- V. crossed the park in a N.W. direction, left it just to the N.E. E. of the boundary fence of "the Bungalow" grounds and, traversing the "Fifty Acre" plantation to the quarry on its N., joined the road to Failand. Another
- VI. branch may have crossed Ashton Hill in a westerly N.W. direction and continued along the N.W. edge of the Golf Course, turning N.N.W. just before it came to Providence
- V. past the old quarries to the high road. It would follow N.E. this past Raynes Cross, which appears to have been where the road to Failand crossed the Clevedon road,² and go on towards Failand, joining the other branch just before reaching Yew Tree Cottage.
- VI. The branch through Ashton Park seems also to have N.W. thrown off a branch to the N.E., as soon as it entered

1. The O.S. map calls this "Yanley Lane," but it is known locally as "Yanley Street," as it was in Colt Hoare's time.

2. Collinson says that Wansdyke crossed the Ashton Road at Raynes Cross, but the name seems to have been lost. Mr. H. B. Napier, agent for the Ashton Court Estates, kindly had search made for me, and the name was found on an old terrier, apparently in the position given. Whether a cross actually stood there, or whether the name only refers to the road crossing is not clear.

the park. This ran through Pill Grove and up the N. slope of Clarken Coombe. It has been traced in the plantation to the S.W. of the enclosed kitchen gardens of Ashton Court,¹ and again in the open park to their N.E., where it seems to point towards the long and narrow plantation S. of the lodge on Ashton Hill. This suggests that it originally ran to the, now obliterated, camp called Burgh Walls opposite Clifton.² There are also fragments of a very large camp in the park in Summerhouse Plantation above Ashton Court, with traces of other earthworks between this and the gardens, as well as on the E. side of the plantation. There must have been an important station here.

- V. After the two branches of Wansdyke rejoined near N.E. Yew Tree Cottage it continued towards Failand. But the road appears to be practically upon it and traces of it are not very evident till it approaches Markham Brook, just before reaching Mulberry Farm. Here it can be traced on the E. edge of the road and its course through fields and orchards on the same side can be followed fairly continuously to Moor End Cottages and the bend beyond, where the road begins to swing round past Lower Failand Farm in a turn that covers more than a half circle. Here the dyke breaks up into some three lines of
- II. earthwork. The rearmost line crosses to the W. side S.E. of the road, the S. side round the bend, and would appear to follow the road past the grounds of Failand
- V. House and the church and schools to—in all probability N.E. —the parish boundary. Its further course will be dealt with later. The second line seems to have diverged from the rear line near the Post Office and to run along field banks that keep more or less closely to the edge of the escarpment. Its course is much obscured by buildings, but it is fairly evident in a spinney on the W. side of a

1. By Col. A. B. Prowse last spring, after we had together found traces of this branch in the park to the E. of the kitchen gardens.

2. Skinner and others have said that Wansdyke ended at Stokeleigh Camp, which is separated from Burgh Walls by Nightingale Valley, but have made no attempt to indicate the course it took.

lane N.W. of the church, whence it can be traced across a field below the schools to Jubb's Court. Here it seems to have crossed the Portbury road and to have followed the line of field boundaries E. of and below the parish boundary.

II. The third line is formed by a series of enclosures in S.E. the valley, which lie for the most part between Lower Failand Farm on the E., Sandy Lane on the W., the escarpment on the S. and the stream in the valley bottom on the N., with an advanced line still further to the N. along the summit of the N. side of the valley. These enclosures are not on the map and without a plan it would be difficult to give an intelligible description of them, but we may refer particularly to a well marked circular earthwork E. of Lower Failand Farm and immediately to the N.E. of the bend in the road, overlooking the deep combe of Markham Bottom. Even better marked is a long oblong work to the N. of the farm in the angle of the lane to Easton-in-Gordano. The lane, which runs past the farm up the steep slope of the valley and turns sharply to the W. along the summit of the slope, forms the boundary of this work on the E. and N., while the western side is formed by a scarp rising steeply from the valley. A slight bank is all that is left of the S. side of the work. Its N. face commands a clear outlook over ground that slopes away very gradually to the River Avon and its line is prolonged on one side by a line of field banks running roughly E.S.E. for about a furlong, with a connecting bank down to the circular earthwork described above. At the end of this line is a tiny circular work overlooking Markham Bottom. Westwards the line is continued by the lane up to Jubb's Wood, and may have gone along it still further to the N.W. as far as the boundary between Wraxall and Easton-in-Gordano. Whether it can have gone still further W. along the parish boundary is uncertain, and there is nothing to show how or where it ended westwards. A detailed description of the earthworks which have left their traces in the valley W. of the farm is impossible here. They are well marked on either

side of Sandy Lane, especially in the large field immediately E. of the lane and in the one next it, where their steep scarps rise high above the stream in the bottom and there are signs of a way down to and possibly across it. In a smaller field N. of the big field next the lane the earthworks again resolve themselves into a single bank rising well above the stream, which serves as the ditch. West of the lane the ground begins to rise and the valley to close in, forcing the dyke to run into and across the lane, where it gives a foundation for two or three cottages built upon it. It then swings round to the W., crosses a small tributary rivulet and climbs out of the valley up a steep slope, with the lane running along the ditch in a very distinct hollow-way. On the slope is a series of banks of a very peculiar character, which, like the banks W. of Pennsylvania Farm give the impression of a fortified approach from the valley. Over a stile at the top of the slope is a fairly level field, where we again find traces of earthworks, down through which the path reaches the Portbury road. Immediately opposite is a short, broad lane, curving upwards for a hundred yards or so and ending abruptly in a field. The high bank above this lane to the S. is evidently the continuation of Wansdyke. At this point the two rear lines of earthwork, referred to above, appear to rejoin the front line. The line of field boundaries, along which we trace the centre line, leads up to the end of the lane, while the rearmost line quits the parish boundary two fields away and probably follows a curious tongue-shaped line of well marked banks and ditches of uncertain origin. They are not shown as earthworks on the O.S. map, though their position and the outline of the ground they occupy appear there. From the head of the lane the line continues W. along hedge-banks running under Windmill Hill towards Oakham Farm. Below the hedge in the first field and therefore N. of the dyke the series of enclosures is continued in a big field extending along the Portbury road and in the next field we find similar traces above the dyke, between the hedgerow and Windmill Hill. In the field beyond,

adjoining Oakham Farm, the line of the dyke runs parallel with and a little below the hedge to the wall at the back of the farmyard and thence through outbuildings to the gate opening on to the road. It then runs down the road towards Portbury, at first for some little distance on the E. side of the road, then crosses and continues down the W. side. But its course has been obscured by the diversion of a stream to supply water for Portbury Mill. The original features of the scene, however, remain clear and are very striking, though the details have been modified.

Less than half-a-mile away the twin hills of Conygar and the Mount seem to form an imposing termination to the great dyke, though its actual end, as will be seen, is on an old foreshore a mile and more beyond them. The road runs down to the depression between these hills, clearly in what was once the channel of the stream. On either side of it and at the foot of the Mount are signs of former extensive enclosures, between which the main bank must have followed pretty much what is now the W. side of the road. This becomes very clear in the large field, the last before the village is reached, where Portbury Mill stands right under the precipitous face of Conygar. Here the big bank turns at right angles from the roadside into the middle of the field, and, making another right-angled turn, runs up to the corner of the mill-garden: but the making of the garden and mill-pond have destroyed its actual junction with the little camp-crowned hill. On the W. side of this field there is an old trackway, now occupied by the diverted stream, and beyond it are more enclosures, but the diversion of the stream and the construction of the pond make it difficult to tell what was their original relation to the dyke, or to the camp on Conygar. The S.E. side of the hill is so steep that it is doubtful if Wansdyke ever ran up it to the camp. On the N.W. side, however, there are traces which suggest that there it may have continued down the slope, but a great part of the hill on that side has been quarried away.

At the foot of the hill across the road to the N. are the remains of an old priory, and the W. wall of its precincts,

which now enclose the curtilage and orchards of the Priory Farm, appears to be built upon the dyke. In the field to the w. of this there is another big oblong enclosure, extending from the road down to what was evidently an old foreshore. The sea at one time came right up to Portbury and between it and Portishead ran nearly to Clevedon. It would in fact do so still at high-water spring-tides, but for the sea-banks, and when the banks have been breached by exceptionally high tides, it has been known to flow as far as St. Mary's Church. Before

- II. the construction of the "old sea bank," that runs just
 S.W. beyond the line to Portishead, the higher ground from the bridge by the Railway Station to Atherton House, and from the bridge over the railway beyond Sheepway Gate Farm to the saltings by Chapel Pill at the end of N.E. the "old sea bank" running to the River Avon, must have been an island, though probably only a tidal island. From the old foreshore by Priory Farm the dyke is continued by a very distinct causeway over the tidal flats S.E. to the former island just by the bridge at Portbury Station, passing through what is now a small holding, which seems to have been artificially embanked. Beyond the railway it enters an orchard, where it had perhaps to cross another channel. It is very well marked in the field beyond this, running up beside the road to Priory Villa, which stands upon it. It passes through the kitchen garden of the villa and seems to have branched just beyond it. One branch probably continued on the line of the road to "the Bungalow" and Portbury House, in the fields beyond which there are extensive traces of enclosures on either side of the road. The other branch appears to have crossed the road and to have followed the E. side of Sheepway Lane to the angle it makes at the back of Sheepway Farm. Thence it probably ran across II. the fields in a N.W. direction, to terminate in a big S.W. enclosure in a field just to the E. of Wharf Lane and N. of Atherton House, looking straight away to Portishead across the tidal flats. The lane here descends to the level of the flats and runs across them to Portbury Wharf,

II. which lies just inside the present sea bank and is said N.W. to have been the port in Roman times, though there is little appearance of this in its present condition. Old writers generally assert that Wansdyke ended at Portishead and later ones have followed them blindly. If this were true, it could only have gone along the "old sea bank" that ends on the "shore" of the "island" close to Atherton House. But there is nothing, either here or at the Portishead end of the bank, which would suggest that this was ever anything more than a sea bank, or that it continued on to the land. If the date of this bank were known, it might throw some light upon the problems connected with the date and object of the dyke. But we have been unable to find any evidence bearing upon this and should be glad if any member of the Society can assist us.

In conclusion I have to thank the following specially, among many who have helped in these investigations :—Mr. G. E. Cruickshank, F.S.A., who has been with me along practically the whole line and whose local knowledge has been most useful ; Mrs. K. E. Symons, whose intimate knowledge of the Bath district and its old charters has been invaluable ; Mr. H. B. Napier, for permission to visit Ashton Park and the Ashton Court estates generally and much other help ; Mr. E. S. Rex, who was studying under Mr. Napier and was allowed to accompany me on several occasions, and was keenly interested in the work ; Mr. J. E. Pritchard, F.S.A. ; and Colonel A. B. Prowse, M.D., F.R.C.S., who went with me over much of the line and placed at my disposal his knowledge of the course of the dyke along Dundry Hill.