

The Peak District and Northern Counties
FOOTPATHS
PRESERVATION SOCIETY



REPORT
OF THE COUNCIL

For the YEAR ENDED 31st DECEMBER, 1922



Printers :
THE POLICY-HOLDER JOURNAL CO. LTD.
44 Lloyd Street, Albert Square,
Manchester.



DOVEDALE.



LION'S HEAD ROCK, DOVEDALE.

The Peak District & Northern Counties Footpaths Preservation Society.



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REPORT

For the Year Ending December 31st, 1922.

The Council of the Society has pleasure in submitting to the members the Report for the year ending December 31st, 1922.

Like its predecessor, the year 1922 has been a year of great activity. There would appear to have been an epidemic of closing and obstructing of footpaths on the part of landowners, but in every case reported to the Society of such interference with public rights, the Council has taken prompt and energetic steps to get paths re-opened and freed from obstructions. In this connection it may be observed that occasionally letters appear in the newspapers complaining of the inattention of footpath preservation societies to the closing of footpaths. As it is obvious that the Council cannot automatically be informed of all attempted closings or obstructions, it would facilitate the work if information on such matters were at once sent to the Society for investigation and suitable action.

Signposts.

It is with a feeling of pride that your Council records that every iron direction post of the society, with only one exception, has been repainted during the year.

A five-armed finger post has been erected near Blackshaw Farm, Rowarth, and instructions have been given for the construction of two direction posts and two guide stakes to be erected between the Stonyford-Carr Meadow bridle path and Tunstead Farm, Hayfield. All the Society's boards which were in need of repair or re-erection have been attended to.

It is hoped to arrange for the erection of additional posts during the current year, but, naturally, the number of these will depend greatly on the extent of the financial support given to the Society, as, in view of the large scope of the Society's operations, more than a due proportion of its funds has been expended during the past year in carrying out this class of work. The public should fully realise that these signposts are erected entirely for its guidance and as the signposts help the public so should the latter help the Society.

Footpath by Haddon Hall to Fillyfoot Bridge.

Your Council is still striving to get this path, which was closed a few years ago, re-opened. Both the award affecting the land over which the path runs, and the plan on such award have been thoroughly inspected, and, at much expense, a good deal of evidence collected. This is now being considered and a case prepared to present to the Bakewell Urban District Council, which has promised to take the matter up. In addition to the above path, your Council will include in such case evidence of further obstructions of public rights of way by the same landowner with a view to the Bakewell U.D.C. taking steps to have such paths also re-opened.

In this district the Council has also had to deal with the matter of the misleading notice board marked "Private Road" erected on the path running from the main road at Great Rowsley to Birchover by Stanton Leys and via Wensley to Bonsall. The Council suggested that the words "Except for pedestrians" be added to "Private Road," as the council is satisfied that there is a right of way for foot passengers, which right has been acknowledged by the agent to the estate. The Bakewell R.D.C. at your Council's request has agreed to erect a signpost to counteract the misleading effect of the other one. Unfortunately, this will be somewhat delayed as the Council's right to erect the post is contested by the landowner.

Slippery Stones.

Your Council is in communication with the Wortley R.D.C. with a view to such body erecting a footbridge over the river Derwent at Slippery Stones to re-place that washed away during the great flood in 1900.

Bridle Road from Hazlehead to Derwent Valley.

This bridle path was obstructed for quite a while by the wiring of three gates, but a letter to the local authority has had the desired effect and the path is now in order again.

Doctor's Gate.

It having been reported that, on more than one occasion, members have found the gates at the Mossylee Bridge end of this ancient way securely wired up, contrary to the arrangement come to with Lord Howard of Glossop, the

Council have had some correspondence with him on the subject—a correspondence which is not yet concluded.

Meanwhile, it may be well to remind members and the public generally of the terms of the Agreement.

The negotiations leading to the agreement were conducted by Colonel Crook, on behalf of the Society, and the late Colonel Hawkins, on behalf of Lord Howard. It was pointed out that the Society could not consent to anything which would, in any way, be in abrogation of the public rights. It was for this reason that it was agreed that there should be no physical obstruction, but that, in return for Lord Howard's proposal to make the path more practicable in places where it had deteriorated, the Society would undertake to inform its members that they would be under honourable obligation not to traverse the path during certain seasons, and also that it would use its best endeavours to induce the public generally to conform to the agreement. In furtherance of this arrangement, the Society agreed to fix notice boards at each end of the way, setting forth, in mutually approved terms, particulars of the arrangement and the periods during which the public was urged to forbear user of the path. The Council trusts that the representations it has made to Lord Howard on this matter will be effective and obviate the necessity for any further steps in defence of the public rights over this ancient way.

Old Roman Road via Oyster Clough.

Complaints having been received of pedestrians being warned from using this old Roman road, which is clearly the continuation of Doctor's Gate way, your Council has sought the permission of the Chapel-en-le-Frith R.D.C. to erect one of the Society's signposts at the point where the line of the old way leaves the high road, to assure the public that there is a right of way. The matter has been before that Council but referred back for further information, which has now been forwarded.

Footpath from Hayfield to Snake Inn.

As promised in the previous report, your Council is in communication with the Chapel-en-le-Frith R.D.C. with reference to the repair of this well worn path. Members who have waded through the boggy portion of the path about Ashop Head in wet weather will be glad to learn that there is a reasonable prospect of something being done to render that portion of the path easier to negotiate.

Footpath from Old Dam to Castleton via Conies Dale.

A deliberate closing of this path by the blocking and filling up of three stiles was reported to your Council who immediately informed the Chapel-en-le-Frith R.D.C. thereof, which Council instructed its surveyor to have the obstructions removed. This has now been done, with the exception of a wire across the gap to prevent sheep getting through, and the question of the removal of this is receiving the attention of such surveyor.

Dovedale.

A suggestion has been made that this beautiful mountain gorge should be acquired on behalf of the public. So far the National Trust has not been approached in the matter, but the Council of the Trust would rejoice to see a scheme for ensuring the preservation of this interesting beauty spot, and would entertain any proposal to make them guardians. The two photographs of typical scenery in the dale are reproduced in this report from blocks which have been kindly provided by a Manchester member of the Society.

Cheshire Footpaths.

It is surprising how many cases of obstruction of footpaths in Cheshire have been reported during the past year. Happily your Council, with the aid of the Bucklow R.D.C. and the Baguley R.D.C. have been successful in getting the obstructions removed on the footpath from Ollerton Hall and the footpath from Oldwood Farm, Poundswick. There has also been considerable correspondence with the Bucklow R.D.C. with regard to the obstruction of footpaths around Pickmere, and from the evidence which the Society has collected and forwarded to the latter Council there is every hope that in the near future these paths will be free again.

The thanks of the Society are again due to the Alderley Edge, Wilmslow and District Footpaths Preservation Society for its assistance in endeavouring to obtain the removal of obstructions at Mottram Hall on the footpath from Wilmslow to Prestbury. The agents to the estate have now admitted the Council's contention and have given instructions for the removal of any obstructions on this estate.

In addition to the above, many other cases have been dealt with and information has been sought and given to members and others who have asked assistance of the Society, and a large number of complaints of obstruction or of paths in

disrepair are at present being investigated with a view to appropriate action being taken. Members would help the Society considerably if, when reporting interferences with public rights, they would obtain all possible information, and also, if possible, forward a sketch plan.

Your Council wishes to record its thanks to the Commons and Footpaths Preservation Society, Ramblers Federation, Sheffield Clarion Ramblers, Derbyshire Footpaths Preservation Society and the Leicester Footpaths Preservation Society for much assistance willingly given.

Finances.

With a record of so much useful work, it is a matter of regret to find the balance at the bank again shows a considerable reduction. It is true that both the membership and subscriptions show an improvement on the previous year, but, on the other hand, the expenditure in the cause of maintaining public rights has been greater.

The previous pages of this Report show that there is plenty of work in hand for the current year. In order that this work may not be hampered in any way, it is very necessary to have a much increased subscription list, not only for the current work but to allow of a fund being accumulated to meet the contingency of litigation. In the operations of a Society of this kind, the possibility of having to fight for the public rights is ever present, and those rights may sometimes be imperilled if the Society has not at its immediate command the funds requisite to back up its case in the Law Courts.

Membership.

It has been brought to the notice of the Council that it is not sufficiently known that the terms of membership are simple. There are no formalities other than the payment of a subscription of not less than 2s. 6d. per annum, which entitles the member to a copy of the Annual Report and to any information which it may be in the Council's power to give.

In fixing so small a minimum subscription, the Society had in view the desirability of obtaining the highest possible amount of public interest, but, of course, the revenue to be expected from subscriptions at this low rate would be quite inadequate to the requirements for the conduct of the Society's operations. The Council, therefore, renews its appeal for subscriptions higher than the minimum, and for donations towards the defence fund mentioned above.

Affiliated Rambling Clubs & Societies.



- Ancoats Brotherhood.
- Art Museum Field Club.
- Alderley Edge, Wilmslow and District Footpaths Preservation Society.
- Co-operative Holiday Association.
- Co-operative Holiday Association, Manchester " A " Section.
- Co-operative Holiday Association, Manchester " B " Section.
- Derbyshire Footpaths Preservation Society.
- Field Naturalists and Archæologists Society.
- Holiday Fellowship (Manchester Group).
- Holiday Fellowship (Stockport Group).
- Hallamshire Ramblers Federation.
- Manchester Rambling Club.
- Manchester Pedestrian Club.
- Manchester Amateur Photographic Society.
- " Nomad " Rambling Club.
- " R " Club.
- Rucksack Club.
- Ramblers Federation.
- Stockport Field Club.
- Salford P.S.A. Rambling Club.
- Sheffield Clarion Ramblers.
- United Field Naturalists Society.
- Zion Rambling Club.

Affiliation.

The minimum fee for Rambling Clubs and other Societies desiring to become affiliated is 10s. 6d. per annum. The payment of the fee carries with it the right to nominate a delegate to attend the Council's meetings.

It is particularly encouraging to note the very welcome addition to the number of Rambling Clubs and other societies affiliated to our Society. There are, however, many similar associations in the district which are not yet affiliated, and a special invitation is extended to these to attach themselves to us, for by so doing they would help the society financially, and, through their delegates, would take a part in its management.



Peak District & Northern Counties Footpaths Preservation Society.

Statement of Income and Expenditure for the Year 1922.

INCOME.	£	s.	d.	EXPENDITURE.	£	s.	d.
Balance from 1921.....	87	7	0	Repairs and erection of Sign Posts.....	24	1	7
Subscriptions, 1922.....	44	15	6	Printing and Stationery.....	9	7	6
Bank Interest.....	0	17	0	Advertising.....	1	2	0
				Hire of Rooms.....	3	12	6
				Maps.....	4	17	0
				Travelling Expenses—Sec. & Inspector	4	6	5
				Travelling Expenses—Lecturer	4	7	6
				Correspondence Secretary's Honorarium	20	0	0
				Footpaths Inspector's Honorarium.....	5	0	0
				Postages.....Secretary	£3	17	10
				Inspector	0	9	3
				Hon. Treas.	0	13	4
				5	0	5	
				Sundry small payments	1	18	9
					83	13	8
				Balance.....	49	5	10
					£132	19	6
					£132	19	6

F. W. WIGELSWORTH,
Hon. Treasurer.

Audited and found correct,
W. GREGSON, *Hon. Auditor.*