

THE PEAK DISTRICT AND
NORTHERN COUNTIES
FOOTPATHS PRESERVATION
SOCIETY

REPORT
OF THE COUNCIL

For the Year
ended 31st December
1942

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The Peak District & Northern Counties Footpaths Preservation Society

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Hon. Treasurer :

ALFRED E. BOWEN, 39-40 Atlantic Chambers, 7 Brazennose Street,
Manchester, 2.

Hon. Secretary :

MAJOR ARTHUR J. MOON
55 Brown Street, Manchester, 2 ; DEAnsgate 4276.

Secretary :

THOMAS BOULGER

REPORT

FOR THE YEAR ENDING DECEMBER 31, 1942.

AS will be seen from the Report, many matters have been dealt with by the Society during the year. More than the average number of complaints of obstructions and disrepair of footpaths and footbridges have been reported and investigations made.

It is with deep regret that your Council has to record the death during the year of Mr. B. S. Harlow, who had been connected with the Society since its inception and a member of the Council for very many years.

SCOTT COMMITTEE REPORT

In August last the Minister of Works and Planning published the Report of the Committee on Land Utilisation in Rural Areas. The Rt. Hon. Lord Justice Scott, P.C. was the Chairman of that Committee and the Report has become known as the Scott Committee Report. Of particular interest to members is Chapter VIII (Clauses 174 to 180) which covers Access to Countryside, Footpaths, Control of Use of Rights of Way, Highways, National and Regional Parks, Nature Reservations and Camps. In this part of the Report the Committee recommends :—

- (1) The setting up of a small Footpaths Commission with power to investigate all disputed cases and to give decisions (subject to some right of appeal to the County Court) thus obviating the costs of legal proceedings in each case.
- (2) That this Footpaths Commission should have the duty of recommending the opening of new public footpaths and the closing of old, an Order from the Central Planning Authority sufficing to make the changes legally effective.
- (3) That the supervision and upkeep of footpaths including stiles and bridges, e.g., over dykes, should be a statutory obligation on the local authorities.
- (4) The recording and marking of footpaths in hilly or remote areas in the continental fashion by bands of colour on trees, posts, stones, etc.
- (5) The recognition of such schemes for "main hiker's highways" as the proposed Pennine Way but the opening of such paths should not give right of passage over adjoining private property.

- (6) The re-opening of the old "coastguards path" as a right of way for walkers round the whole coastline of England and Wales except where existing building or other constructional development including newly raised seawalls of earth construction renders this impossible in which case inland detours should be clearly indicated.

- (7) The Footpaths Commission should also deal with bridle paths by a similar procedure.

Where narrow roads are carrying increased traffic, consideration should be given to the provision of footpaths on the field side of existing hedges, fenced off from the remainder of the fields where necessary as advised by the agricultural authority, and the same system to be considered in road-widening schemes. Where trunk roads are under construction more attention might be given to separate footpaths, not necessarily following the line of the road.

The Commons, Open Spaces and Footpaths Preservation Society has been asked to submit to the Ministry of Works and Planning a memorandum dealing with the suggested Footpaths Commission—its constitution and functions—with suggestions as to how it should work, and the Memorandum, which is being prepared in conjunction with the Ramblers' Association, is now in its final stages of preparation. Your Council has appointed a special sub-committee to consider such Memorandum, and also the Report and their recommendations have been forwarded to the Commons Society to be considered by the Joint Committee prior to the Memorandum going forward to the Ministry of Works and Planning.

Your Council would prefer to see vested in the suggested Footpaths Commission powers additional to those recommended by the Scott Committee. In particular the Commission should have the power enabling it:—

- (a) To create new footpaths (instead of the right of recommendation to the Central Planning Authority).
- (b) To include in a Schedule every footpath, old and new, in the country which it considers desirable, divided into county sections—copies of the county sections of the Schedule to be published by H.M. Stationery Office—and all paths marked on the Ordnance Survey Maps of 1" scale and upwards in a distinctive manner.
- (c) To be responsible for the repair of footpaths, when necessary contracting for stiles, footbridges, etc., to be placed in suitable positions, whether there were such structures existing before or not.

CHEEDALE FOOTPATH

In connection with the bridge erected in Cheedale as a memorial to the late President of the Society, Col. H. T. Crook, in order to enhance the value of the memorial it was decided to

repair the adjoining bridge, and also to repair the path between the two bridges. The work has now been completed, which increased the cost of the memorial to £45. Your Vice-Chairman, Mr. J. W. Price, F.R.G.S., undertook to raise the balance of £4 17s. 0d. to complete the payment for the memorial—actually the sum of £5 3s. 0d. was received from him.

FOOTPATH AT STONY MIDDLETON

Investigation of a complaint as to the obstruction of the path up Coombs Dale was made when it was found that the obstruction consisted of a large quantity of barbed wire staked in the ground and criss-crossing over the grass flat at the junction of Rough Side and Coombs Dale, at a point a little more than $\frac{3}{4}$ mile S.W. of Stony Middleton village—the ground in question being used as a practice ground for the Home Guard. Although there is no difficulty in stepping over the strands of barbed wire, it was clearly dangerous to any person passing this point in semi-darkness, and the Surveyor to the Bakewell Rural District Council has been asked to look into the matter with a view to the wire being removed.

FOOTPATH FROM LEVEL CROSSING N.W. OF HASSOP STATION TO HOLME BRIDGE, BAKEWELL

On being informed of the presence of a bull in a field crossed by this path, and that one of the gates was chained and padlocked, an inspection was made. The bull had by that time been removed and the gate unlocked. The rusting chain and padlock were still on the gate, and as it was thought possible that their presence was tantamount to a claim that the way was private, it was suggested to the Surveyor to the Bakewell Rural District Council that he should communicate with the farmer, informing him that the way was public and requesting the removal of the chain and padlock.

FOOTPATH FROM PEAK FOREST BY CONIES FARM TOWARDS ROWTER FARM

From Peak Forest a walled-in lane runs to a point a few yards beyond Conies Farm where there is a five-barred gate with a wood and a stone gatepost. In between each gatepost and the wall there is a small gap made up in one case by a large slab leaning against the gap, and in the other case by a stone or

stones placed in the gap. The Derbyshire County District Surveyor was asked to call for the refixing of the large slab in the ground so that it would act as a satisfactory gap stile, and the landowners have informed him that they will do so.

FOOTPATH NEAR HAWKHURST FARM, WHALEY BRIDGE

Complaints having been received as to the difficulties experienced in using the path from Stoneheads (on the Disley-Whaley Bridge old road) to Hawkhurst Head, an inspection was made, and it was found that the path made a diagonal crossing of one field, which field was then under crops with no sign of a path across it. As no provision had been made for the footpath the attention of the Derbyshire War Agricultural Committee was called to the matter, and it is understood that the farmer has been requested to roll out the footpath across the field.

RIVERSIDE PATH SOUTH EAST OF BROADHAY FARM, HATHERSAGE

Some six years ago upon the Society's representations the Hathersage Parish Council arranged for the provision of two new footbridges on this path, the Society bearing half the cost. Simple bridges were provided, satisfactory under the circumstances, but recently it was found that both were in need of repair. The Parish Council has informed the Society that it is taking steps to secure the repair of the footbridges.

FOOTPATH FROM KILLHILL BRIDGE, HOPE, TOWARDS FULLWOOD STILE

From Killhill Bridge, or a few yards beyond it, a footpath runs parallel with the road for a short distance, merely separated from it by the boundary fence until at a cross fence the path turns slightly and taking a due northerly direction cuts off a curve in the road, which it rejoins at a substantial wooden stile shortly before the "tunnel" under the railway line is reached. On a recent inspection the Society's Inspector found that the cross pieces of the wooden stile were now missing—probably due to natural decay; also that half way along the track, at the cross fence, two stone slabs forming a good gap stile were obstructed by barbed wire. The attention of the Chapel-en-le-Frith Rural District Council has been called to the matter with a

view to the removal of the obstructing wire being requested and the stile repaired.

TWITCHILL FOOTPATH CROSSING, HOPE.

Following correspondence with the Chapel-en-le-Frith Rural District Council as to the disappearance of the footpath steps leading from the level crossing over the railway to Winhill and Twitchill, that Council has asked the Railway Company to replace the steps.

DOCTOR'S GATE.

With the assistance of ramblers the footbridge on this track was replaced, but shortly afterwards flood waters had again moved it and it was found high and dry parallel with the stream. Instructions were given by the Society for the necessary repairs to be carried out and the bridge having now been buttressed should withstand flood waters, which in recent years have played havoc with footbridges in this area.

At the Snake Inn end of the track following the representations that were made to the Derbyshire County District Surveyor the latter has had steps constructed at the stream crossing, which is now in better condition than it has been for upwards of twenty years.

OYSTER CLOUGH PATH

One of the stiles on this path being very difficult of passage, suggestions were made to the Estate Officer of the Forestry Commission who readily agreed to have another stepping board added.

FOOTPATH AT KNIGHTWAKE FARM, NEW MILLS

Following representations made by the Society, the Surveyor to the New Mills Rural District Council requested the removal of barbed wire on this path.

FOOTPATHS ABOVE ROWARTH

As a result of the Society's representations (referred to in last year's Report) a simple slab footbridge has been placed across the stream a little to the N.E. of Rowarth village and the condition of the track above the Mill Pond improved.

LADDOW ROCKS

On learning that the public were no longer permitted to use Laddow Rocks, enquiries were made from which it appeared that there must have been some misapprehension as there has been no change on the part of the Manchester Corporation Waterworks Committee regarding access to these rocks.

FOOTPATH AT CHARLES HEAD, KETTLESHULME

Complaints having been received of the obstruction by barbed wire of this path, which extends about $\frac{3}{4}$ mile in a S.W. direction from the road junction at Charles Head, the attention of the Macclesfield Rural District Council was called to the obstruction, and as a result of the action taken by that Council the barbed wire has now been removed.

FOOTBRIDGE AT BROOMYCROFTHEAD

This footbridge, which is a very substantial structure, is now in position and enables the track from the Cat and Fiddle road via Torgate and Dryknowl Farms to be again used. Towards the £32 which the bridge cost, donations amounting to £3 16s. 0d. have been received, leaving a balance of £28 4s. 0d. As it is thought members would prefer that the Special Reserve Fund should be relieved of this burden by themselves making donations towards the cost of the footbridge this Account will be left open during the current year.

FOOTPATHS AT TORKINGTON

Two footbridges—one on the footpath opposite Holly Farm, Torkington Road, going S. across Ochreley Brook, and the other on the path from Yewtree Farm, Offerton Road, going S.E. to Torkington Wood—having collapsed, the Hazel Grove and Bramhall Urban District Council was informed of the condition of the bridges. The District Council has requested the landowners to see to the necessary repairs.

FOOTPATH BETWEEN WARSEND BRIDGE AND POYNTON

The only crossing of Poynton Brook is by using a tree trunk across the bed of the brook which was extremely awkward

after rain. The brook being the boundary between the parishes of Adlington and Poynton, correspondence is taking place with both the Parish Councils with a view to the provision of a footplank crossing of the brook.

FOOTPATH NEAR BARLOW COTTAGES, POYNTON- WITH-WORTH

The Poynton Parish Council on being asked to replace the missing footplank over the streamlet promised to do so at the earliest opportunity when a plank could be secured.

FOOTPATH FROM THE L. & N.E. RAILWAY STATION PLATFORM AT MIDDLEWOOD

Following representations made by the Society, the Surveyor to the Marple Urban District Council has requested the land-owner to make this footpath fit for use—the path being water-logged and swampy, and although a diversion is possible a footplank was necessary to cross the ditch.

FOOTPATH FROM PARK ROAD, BRAMHALL, ALONG- SIDE LADY BROOK, GOING S.W. TO RAILWAY VIADUCT

The attention of the Hazel Grove and Bramhall Urban District Council was called to the condition of this path and the necessary repairs have now been carried out. About two yards of the path had fallen into Lady Brook leaving a cavity and this has been made good and a new stile erected a few yards away.

FOOTPATH FROM DIRTY LANE, ROSTHERNE, GOING N.E. TO BOWDON VIEW

A complaint having been received that two planks of timber obstructed the gap through which the path entered Bowdon View farmyard, the Society's Inspector, on investigating the complaint, interviewed the tenant's representative, and as a result the obstruction has now been removed.

FOOTPATH FROM MOBBERLEY TO OLLERTON

The Bucklow Rural District Council, following representations by the Society, re-erected the footbridge over Pedley Brook, and has been instrumental in getting removed barbed wire that obstructed one of the stiles on the path.

FOOTPATH FROM LACH DENNIS, NEAR OLDHALL FARM, GOING NORTHWARDS TO HULSE LANE

The negotiations with the landowners as to the obstruction at the Lach Dennis end of the path by the grounds of a newly-erected house (referred to in last year's Report) were brought to a successful conclusion. An agreement was reached with the owner of the house in conjunction with the adjoining landowner whereby the path has been opened out into Smithy Lane, which is on the other side of the hedge of the house grounds. The owner has erected a suitable stile where the path joins Smithy Lane, and also a direction post worded "Footpath" at the entrance to Smithy Lane from the road at Lach Dennis. In return for this the Society agreed with the owner to request the public to use the outlet into Smithy Lane, and not to attempt to go over his land. Members will recollect that the Northwich Rural District Council was not prepared to take any action in regard to the matter for the time being under present conditions.

FOOTBRIDGES WITHIN THE RUNCORN RURAL DISTRICT COUNCIL AREA

Following representations to the District Council a strong timber bridge has been erected on the path across Whiteley Reed near "New Bank" and the Antrobus Parish Council has decided to re-erect the bridge over Gale Brook on the path from Arley Post Office to Hollins Farm. The District Council has also been asked to replace the damaged footbridge on the path from Marsh Farm to Brookhouse Farm, Lower Whitley.

FOOTPATH ALONG BANK OF RIVER MERSEY FROM NORTHENDEN BRIDGE TOWARDS WEST DIDSBURY

Complaints having been received as to the condition of this path, particularly in wet weather, an inspection was made. The path, which is about a mile in length from Northenden Bridge to Christ Church, West Didsbury, was found to be pitted in many places with small pools of water, some only a yard apart,

especially at the Northenden end. The Manchester Corporation City Engineer, to whom the matter was reported, has taken steps to ensure that the necessary repairs are carried out.

FOOTPATH FROM BENNETT STREET TO LODGE LANE, HYDE

This path having been obstructed by the erection of a Day Nursery, the Society's Inspector discussed the matter with the Hyde Corporation Surveyor who undertook to provide a reasonable diversion.

FOOTPATH FROM N. END OF HAWKSHAW LANE GOING NORTH TO MOORBOTTOM ROAD, HOLCOMBE MOOR, AND EDGEWORTH

Complaints having been received that at the southern end of the path there was an obstruction consisting of a rough fence with two strands of plain wire across, the Society's Inspector interviewed the tenant of the land and suggested to him that he make a gap in the fence or fix a step to enable pedestrians to stride over the fence. The tenant (who stated that the fence had been erected by a former occupier of the farm) arranged to make a gap in the fence.

FOOTPATH LIBRARY

The following additions have been made during the year to the Society's "Footpath Library" of books and maps. The Library is housed in the Special Collections Department on the second floor of the Manchester Central Library and members of the Society are entitled to borrow any book or map for home study on presentation of the Library Ticket, which is forwarded to members on payment of the annual subscription:—

- Sheffield Clarion Ramblers' Handbook 1942-43.
- "The Northern Rambler," December, 1940 to December, 1941.
- "Irish Hill Days," by Alan F. Airey.
- C.P.R.E. (Sheffield and Peak District) Report, 1942.
- "Healey Hall, its dated and inscribed stones."
- "Old Sun Dials in or near Rochdale."
- "All about Derbyshire," by Edward Bradbury.

FINANCE

The Council is pleased to record membership income as showing an increase on 1941 of £9 4s. 5d. This is accounted

for by the fact that only 21 members have failed to renew their subscriptions whilst 70 new members have joined the Society. The membership is now 315 together with 51 affiliated clubs which very favourably compares with the last pre-war year (1938) when there were 271 members and 57 clubs. Although it has long been felt that the burden of supporting the Society falls upon far too few of those who derive undoubted benefit from the Society's work, nevertheless it is gratifying to know that despite present conditions such work is attracting so many new subscribers.

Income exceeded expenditure by £23 10s. 4d., which amount, with the 12s. 1d. in hand from the last yearly balance, totals £24 2s. 5d. In furtherance of the decision of the Council to create a "Contingency" Fund (now called the Post-War Reserve Fund), referred to in last year's Report, the Council has approved that the annual amount to be transferred from the General Account to this newly-created Fund shall be £15, less the amount of any donations specifically made to the Fund during the year. As will be observed, the donations amounted to £2 4s. 6d., leaving £12 15s. 6d. to be transferred from General Account, reducing the previous balance in hand to £11 6s. 11d.

The Defence Fund has been augmented by £9 5s. 5d. during the year, and now stands at £321 0s. 1d.

MEMBERSHIP AND AFFILIATION

The terms of membership are simple, involving no formalities other than the payment of a minimum subscription of 2s. 6d. per annum which entitles a member to receive a copy of the Annual Report together with any information which it may be within the Council's scope to afford. It must be emphasised that in fixing the minimum subscription the Society has in view the desirability of obtaining the fullest possible public interest and that the revenue derived from *minimum* subscriptions is inadequate to meet the needs of the Society's operations. The Secretaries of Rambling and kindred Clubs can perform meritorious service by bringing to the notice of their members the objects and claims of the Society *and urging individual membership.*

The minimum Affiliation Fee for Clubs and Societies is 10s. 6d. per annum which includes the privilege of appointing a Delegate to attend the Council's meetings.

Affiliated Rambling Clubs & Societies

- Accrington Naturalist & Antiquarian Society.
Art Museum Field Club.
Ashton-under-Lyne & District C.H.A. Rambling Club.
Barnsley C.H.A. Rambling Club.
Bolton C.H.A. Rambling Club.
Bramhall Ratepayers' Association.
Camping Club of Gt. Britain & Ireland (L.C. & N.W. District Association).
Central Rambling Club.
City News Fellowship (Ramblers Section).
Co-operative Holiday Association.
Comradeship of the Christian Endeavour Holiday Homes (Manchester Sec.)
Comradeship of the Christian Endeavour Holiday Homes (Stockport Sec.)
Crescent Rambling Club.
C.P.R.E. (Buxton & District Area Committee).
Derbyshire Footpaths Preservation Society.
Field Naturalists & Archæologists Society, Manchester.
Friendship Holidays Association Manchester Rambling Club.
Hallamshire Footpaths Preservation Society.
Heyes Grove Tennis Club, Ltd.
Holiday Fellowship Limited.
Holiday Fellowship (Oldham & District Group).
Holiday Fellowship (Manchester Group).
Manchester Amateur Photographic Society.
Manchester C.H.A. Rambling Club (Section "A").
Manchester C.H.A. Rambling Club (Section "C").
Manchester C.H.A. Rambling Club (Section "D").
Manchester C.H.A. Rambling Club (Section "E").
Manchester C.H.A. Club.
Manchester H.S.C. Languages Rambling Club.
Manchester Pedestrian Club.
Manchester Rambling Club.
Marple Field Club.
North Staffordshire Field Club.
Oldham & District C.H.A. Rambling Club.
"R" Club.
Ramblers Association (Sheffield & District Federation).
Ramblers' Federation (Manchester & District).
Rochdale Field Naturalists Society.
Rucksack Club.
Sheffield C.H.A. Rambling & Social Club.
Sheffield Clarion Rambling Club.
Stockport C.H.A. Rambling & Social Club.
Stockport Field Club.
Stockport Seconians Association Rambling Club.
Sutton-in-Ashfield & District Rambling Club.
United Field Naturalists.
Vegetarian Society Social & Athletic Club.
Willersley Sidholme & Sidstrand Ltd.
Workers' Educational Association (Rambling Section) Stockport.
Workers Travel Association Ltd.
Y.M.C.A. Rambling Club.

Peak District and Northern Counties Footpaths Preservation Society

STATEMENT OF INCOME AND EXPENDITURE FOR THE YEAR ENDING 31ST DECEMBER, 1942

EXPENDITURE	£ s. d.	£ s. d.	INCOME	£ s. d.	£ s. d.
Printing Annual Report	13 0 0		Subscriptions for 1942:—		
Circulars, Posters, Envelopes, etc., re same ...	1 8 4		Paid in advance as per 1941 Statement ...	2 4 0	
	14 8 4		Paid during Year to December 31, 1942 ...	110 2 0	
Less Special Contribution by Mr. A. E. Bowen ...	2 0 0	12 8 4	Bank Interest on Deposits with Manchester & Salford Savings		112 6 0
Hire of Rooms		4 10 0	Bank brought forward		26 5 0
Printing and Stationery		7 15 6	Balance carried forward from 1941		138 11 0
Insurance Premiums		3 2 3	Subscriptions paid in advance for 1943		4 1 6
Repairs to Footbridges		1 19 0			
Subscription to Commons, O.S. & F.P. Society ...	2 2 0				
Affiliation Fees (C.P.R.E., 4 Branches)... ..	2 2 0	4 4 0			
Advertising and Sundry Expenses		2 5 10			
Secretary's Honorarium	30 0 0				
Hon. Treasurer—Clerical Assistance	5 5 0				
Footpaths Inspectors' Honorariums:					
Mr. Wild £15; Mr. Gill £7 10s. 0d.	22 10 0	57 15 0			
Footpaths Inspectors' Travelling Expenses					
£5 14s. 0d. and £4 1s. 8d.)	9 15 8				
Other Officials Travelling Expenses	0 4 6	10 0 2			
Inspection Fees re Awards, etc.		0 2 0			
Postages		10 9 0			
Col. Crook Memorial, Balance cost of Plate		0 9 6			
Bank Commission, less Interest (Bank account current)		0 0 1			
Amount transferred to Post War Reserve Fund		12 15 6			
		127 16 2			
Balance brought forward from 1941	0 12 1				
Excess of Income over Expenditure to 31/12/42	10 14 10	11 6 11			
		139 3 1			
Subscriptions for 1943 carried forward		4 1 6			
		£143 4 7			
					£143 4 7

DEFENCE FUND

Balance carried forward to 1943	£321 0 1	Balance brought forward from 1941	£311 14 8
		Donations received during year to December 31, 1942	9 5 5
	£321 0 1		£321 0 1

SPECIAL RESERVE FUND AT DECEMBER 31, 1942

Balance carried forward to 1943 (Arnold Wilson Legacy, £713 16s. 8d.; G. H. B. Ward, Esq., F.R.G.S. Gift towards Erection and Maintenance of Signposts, £50)	763 16 8	Balance brought forward from 1941	£763 16 8
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MANCHESTER & SALFORD SAVINGS BANK DEPOSITS AT DECEMBER 31, 1942

Interest as per contra transferred to General Account	£26 5 0	Deposits at December 31, 1942 at 2½%	£500 0 0
Balance on Deposit carried forward to 1943	1,000 0 0	Deposits at December 31, 1942 at 2½%	500 0 0
		Interest for Year to November 20, 1942	26 5 0
	£1,026 5 0		£1,026 5 0

COLONEL H. T. CROOK MEMORIAL FUND

J. W. & J. Mettam—Cost of erection of Cheedale Footbridge	£35 0 0	Balance brought forward from 1941	£40 3 0
P. Beswick—Balance of work	10 0 0	Donations received during year, December 31, 1942	5 3 0
Shaw & Latham—Memorial Plate	0 15 6	Balance transferred from General Account	0 9 6
	£45 15 6		£45 15 6

BROOMYCROFTHEAD BRIDGE FUND

Cooper Bros. (Builders), Ltd., Erection of Bridge	£32 0 0	Donations received to December 31, 1942	£3 16 0
		Balance paid ex General Fund pending collection	28 4 0
	£32 0 0		£32 0 0

POST WAR RESERVE FUND

Balance carried forward to 1943	£15 0 0	Donations received to December 31, 1942	£2 4 6
		Amount transferred from General Fund	12 15 6
	£15 0 0		£15 0 0

CASH POSITION AT DECEMBER 31, 1942

Balance at Credit of Defence Fund	£321 0 1	Cash at Bank	£87 1 2
Special Reserve Fund	763 16 8	Cash on Deposit with M. & S. Savings Bank	1,000 0 0
Post War Reserve Fund	15 0 0	Broomycrofthead Bridge Fund, Balance owing to General Fund	28 4 0
Subscriptions paid in advance for 1943	4 1 6		
Credit balance of General Fund	11 6 11		
	£1,115 5 2		£1,115 5 2

(Signed) ALFRED E. BOWEN, Hon. Treasurer.

J. E. BROOM, Hon. Auditor.

February 8, 1943.