

THE PEAK DISTRICT AND
NORTHERN COUNTIES
FOOTPATHS PRESERVATION
SOCIETY

1894 — 1954

Annual
REPORT

For 1954

THE CHALLENGE

What

YOU

Can

Do

See page 19

A. SPOONER,
612 ASHTON OLD ROAD,
MANCHESTER 11.

The Peak District & Northern Counties Footpaths
Preservation Society, 1954

Presidents:

P. M. Oliver, C.B.E., B.A.; F. S. H. Head, B.Sc., Ph.D.

Vice-Presidents:

E. Vipont Brown, M.D. P. Daley
Rt. Hon. The Lord Chorley F. Howard

COUNCIL:

Elected Members:

Chairman: T. Boulger

Vice-Chairman: E. E. Ambler

A. J. Bateman	J. Clarke	J. E. Massey
D. T. Berwick	H. Cooper	A. Milner
J. E. Broom	Miss M. Fletcher	R. T. Watson
J. W. Butterworth	A. W. Hewitt	H. E. Wild
J. J. Cash	J. P. Kenyon	

Delegates from Affiliated Societies:

S. Alcock	F. Goff	J. R. Owen
F. Arrundale	R. Harrison	J. Pye
H. Ashton	F. Higgins	J. Shevelan
R. Aubry	A. Hodgkinson	N. Smith
E. Bailey	W. B. Howie	Miss M. Smith
J. G. Baker	R. Jones	J. Stott
J. D. Bettencourt,	H. King	Miss M. Stott
A.R.P.S.	Miss D. Kirton	L. Stubbs
R. Bridge	T. H. Lancashire	H. F. Taylor
T. Burke	A. Lapper	W. Taylor
E. P. Campbell	D. J. Lee	T. Tommins
R. Cartin	W. Marcroft	F. Turner
J. Chadwick	H. Meadowcroft	H. Walton
F. J. Crangle	L. G. Meadowcroft	G. H. B. Ward,
N. Davenport	Miss N. Mellor	F.R.G.S.
P. Edwards	S. N. Miller	Miss J. Ward-Oldham
T. Ewart	Miss M. Mellor	R. T. Watson
G. Fernley	H. Mills	J. Willison
R. S. Frew	S. E. Morton	J. W. Wood
H. Gilliatt	A. E. Nash	

Membership Secretary:

H. Mills

Signpost Supervisor:

H. E. Wild

Hon. Secretary:

Arthur J. Moon, M.A (Cantab.),
29 Brown Street, Manchester 2

Hon. Auditor:

J. E. Broom

Survey Secretary:

N. Redford,
12 Chatsworth Road, Droylsden

Inspectors of Footpaths:

R. T. Watson, T. Ewart,
A. E. Nash, H. King,
G. H. B. Ward, F.R.G.S.

Secretary:

Arthur Smith,
"Perigarth," Tytherington Park,
Macclesfield

Hon. Treasurer:

G. S. Cooper,
13 Duffield Road, Salford 6,
Lancs.

REPORT

FOR THE YEAR ENDING 31st DECEMBER, 1954

THE TASK BEFORE US

ARE we really fond of our footpaths? Or are we willing to allow them to decay and disappear? If the former, what sacrifices are we prepared to make to keep them unobstructed and walkable? That is the challenge confronting us to-day. This Report supplies the proof. When authority will not act, we must. On all sides we see authorities allergic to footpaths, in spite of their statutory duties. What will be your response to the challenge?

Looking ahead we see a prospect of intensified and not of diminished need of our efforts. It is the law to-day, as it has been from time immemorial, that local authorities shall preserve public rights of way. Until 60 years ago, those rights were upheld by manorial courts and county quarter sessions. A complaint made to a parish constable led straight to the court which enforced a remedy and penalised the offender. In 1894 parish councils and rural district councils were charged with the maintenance of footpaths, and in 1949 an added responsibility was put upon county councils. But it is often extremely difficult, and at times impossible, to get an authority to carry out its responsibilities.

It is notable that whilst the first thing a local authority generally does when a burden is laid upon it is to appoint a committee to deal with it (such as a housing or water committee); in no case known to us in our area has this operated where footpaths are concerned. With a few exceptions it is becoming increasingly difficult to have obstructions removed and surfaces respected and restored.

The remedy seems obvious: to organise ourselves so that when attempted negotiations show their futility, we can either cut away the obstructions or take legal action against those who abuse rights of way by cattle, tractors and other means. The former needs a greater influx of young, stalwart, enthusiastic members, willing to act in vigilant parties, and the latter, the stronger financial and personal interest that comes with a steadily increasing membership.

Of course we need not wait before making a start in the direction indicated. When we act more independently and more vigorously, and are seen to do so, the powers that be also become more alert. We have noticed this in a few instances this year. But when we are content to rely on local authorities, their attention often stagnates or wavers with the prods they receive.

Meanwhile we thank those local and county authorities who have assisted in preserving footpaths during the past year, and those of our members who have responded to our suggestions.

THE PRESIDENT

Early in the year Mr. P. M. Oliver passed from us—a loss we share with many other Manchester bodies. Although frail in body, he stood firm in spirit by the objects of the Society and counselled action commensurate with its strength.

Dr. F. S. H. Head was invited by the Council to accept the office of President, which he did with enthusiasm, and a pledge to devote his talents to the promotion of the Society's work.

Mr. J. J. Mills, the Secretary of the C.H.A., is, unfortunately, still too ill to be with us, but he has sent us a cheerful message, which we hope betokens the recovery we looked for a year ago.

OFFICERS.—For some time it has been apparent that the dual offices of Hon. Secretary and Secretary were an anachronism, and it has been agreed that Mr. A. J. Moon, whose engagements do not now permit his attendance at meetings, should become Vice-President. He does not wish to sever the happy connection of his family with the Society and assures us that his knowledge and assistance are at its disposal when required. We thank him for past assistance and are glad of his continuing interest. The position of Secretary, subject to confirmation of the Annual Meeting, will be designated as honorary in future, until the honorarium paid makes a change in this respect desirable.

The appointment of a membership secretary not having been successful, it has been terminated. This office is therefore still vacant, and in the hands of a vigorous organiser it could be the best single means of banishing our financial and personnel worries.

Mr. F. Higgins having volunteered to act as Signpost Supervisor, we are anticipating a continuance of the good work done by Mr. H. E. Wild.

FOOTPATH INSPECTORS.—To do justice by our area would require footpaths being far more regularly inspected, with a separate inspector for every division (a rural area with adjacent urban areas). This, coupled with the action mentioned previously, would produce results astonishing to members and the public alike.

THE COUNCIL.—Changes in the composition of the Council that have taken place during the year will be found in the appropriate place. We are glad to welcome the new members and hope they will be happy amongst us.

We would again like to record the assistance given by Miss Ruth Clough in duplicating the Minutes, and the Secretary would like to thank all who have helped to make his work and that of the Society more effective.

FOOTPATH SURVEY.—This has been a year of vital importance for the future of the footpaths in our area. Hearings of claims for footpaths omitted and of objections to footpaths included in the Draft Maps of Lancashire have taken place, at which Mr. H. Jones, of Bolton, very kindly represented the Society. We are happy to say that most of our suggestions have been agreed to, a very encouraging result of the efforts of Mr. Redford and his helpers.

In Cheshire, the Draft Maps of the Bucklow, Runcorn, Congleton, Northwich and Macclesfield Divisions, containing 3,183 footpaths, were placed on view and were inspected by the Survey Secretary, Mr. N. Redford, and his assistants. Mr. J. G. Baker, of Frodsham, who is acting as a link between the County Council surveying staff and the footpath societies, together with your Secretary, has filed claims for 219 paths omitted from the Draft Maps, excepting for the Macclesfield Division in which our claims are not yet complete. Members who know this area, extending from Derbyshire and Staffordshire to Alderley and Chelford, should make an early inspection and send in their observations. The maps are on view at the County Surveyor's Office, Backford Hall, near Chester, and at the Macclesfield Rural Council's office, King Edward Street, Macclesfield.

The only Cheshire area now outstanding for the exhibition of Draft Maps within our area is North Cheshire, from Longendale to Gatley, which may be announced any time.

In Staffordshire the Secretary has inspected the Draft Maps of the Cheadle and Leek divisions as far as they extend into our area, including 39 parishes and 2,300 footpaths. The maps are still on view, and our survey team are about to compare notes and decide on the paths omitted which are to be claimed. As the areas include Rushton, Rudyard, the Churnett, Manifold and Dove valleys—all of them favourite rambling areas—all who know the paths should go to the rural council offices at Leek and Cheadle, where the maps can be seen, and make their representations as quickly as possible.

In Derbyshire all the maps of our area have been inspected. These cover Ashbourne, Bakewell and Chapel divisions and contain 2,775 footpaths. Representation as to omissions in the Bakewell division have already been made and a list of objections by owners to paths included has been received. Copies of the lists of omissions and objections can be obtained by members and friends wishing to help in preserving the paths, and we urgently require statements of user to enable our claims to be established and objections rebutted.

The maps of the Chapel division can still be seen at the Chapel Rural Council offices, near Chinley, and at the council offices of Buxton, Glossop, New Mills and Whaley Bridge. Our claims as to paths in this division have yet to be formulated. The greatest number of paths in any single area is 175 in New Mills.

The Secretary has inspected all the Draft Maps of the area in Cheshire, Derbyshire and Staffordshire, and has found of inestimable value a collection of maps given by the late Arnold Robinson, one of the most whole-hearted supporters the Society ever had. As a result, it has been possible to make an index of all the footpaths on the Draft Map of our area in the three counties mentioned. The value of this work will be seen when the hearings are held, and when cases have to be notified to the authorities. Mr. Robinson with his gift rendered a service which he could not have foreseen in his lifetime.

In November an appeal was made in the Press for prewar walking tour books. As a result 122 people sent in over 200 books, and many more would have been sent, but their owners wanted to be sure of having them returned—which cannot be guaranteed, as the authorities may keep them as evidence of the paths which we claim. If possible we shall return them all. We appealed at the time for donors to give us some particulars of tours they had done, but to a large extent this request was overlooked. Obviously, the personal testimony of a walking tour book-holder to the paths he has traversed enhances the value of his book. We are not now wanting any more books, but members and friends who have any would do a good service by going through them carefully and sending to the Secretary details of their book, the tours they have done and the approximate years.

Thus, although the Footpaths' Survey is still in an intermediate stage, an enormous amount of work has been done, which should be of great value later.

Diamond Jubilee Celebrations: To celebrate the foundation of the Society on 16th August, 1894, members and friends gathered at Lyme Hall on 4th September, 1954. Parties walked from Middlewood and other places, and a representative gathering had tea, after which speeches were made by the Mayor of Stockport, Councillor John W. Bennett, our President, Dr. Head, the Chairman, Mr. T. Boulger, and others.

The celebrations are not yet ended. For there is to be an exhibition at Manchester Central Library from Monday, 7th March to 26th March, 1955, which will be opened on the first day at 10-30 a.m. by Alderman Richard S. Harper, Lord Mayor of Manchester, accompanied by the Lady Mayoress. We hope there will be a representative gathering. If you have any material likely to be useful for the exhibition, kindly get into touch at once with Mr. Hubert King, 1 Sycamore Crescent, Ashton-under-Lyne, Lancashire, who will be glad to hear from you. Maps, photographs, press cuttings, etc., relating to footpaths will be welcomed, especially photographs of or taken from footbridges which we have had erected, or footpaths which have been signposted or preserved by any other action of the Society.

It is also hoped to have a smaller exhibition at the Manchester Ramblers' Association Rally at Lyme Hall, on 26th June.

Our thanks are due to Mr. King and his helpers for organising all these events.

Canal Towing Paths: On 1st February, your Chairman and Secretary attended a meeting in Lymm, to try to obtain uniform support of the fifteen local authorities in the area traversed by the Bridgewater Canal in Cheshire, hitherto divided in their opinions. We did not succeed in this effort, but we had a good meeting and made contacts which we trust will be helpful. Since then we have obtained a few statements of user of the canal towpath, but we require many more.

We also require statements of user of the Macclesfield Canal and of the Peak Forest Canal, and shall be glad to supply forms to all who require them.

FOOTBRIDGES.—No. 1. Rowarth: Our pressure for a solution of the problem here led to the Ministry of Transport holding a local inquiry at New Mills Town Hall last July. The Clerk, Surveyor, and some members of the local Council,

the responsible authority, accompanied us to the site, together with the Ministry's Inspector, where it was agreed that stepping stones over the stream which is still eroding the banks would be better than any attempt to reinstate the old bridge. This solution was proposed by Mr. H. E. Wild years ago, but owing to the resistance of the local Council, it has required extraordinary pressure to arrive at this stage. Nor are our difficulties over. Whatever work is to be done will only be achieved by our overcoming the local resistance, still a formidable obstacle. We thank Mr. Hugh Molson, M.P., for arranging the inquiry and thus producing a slightly more fluid situation.

No. 2. Bentley Hall, Bury-Radcliffe: We are glad to report that this bridge has been reconstructed, and is now in use.

No. 3. River Dean, Handforth: This bridge has not been erected, nor have the Wilmslow Council yet provided for it in their estimates.

No. 4. Agden-Bollington, near Altrincham: The replacement of this bridge has been delayed by the action of a farmer in challenging the right of way.

No. 5. Binn Green to Hey Top, Saddleworth: This bridge is now in position—a good job having been done here.

No. 6. Summer Close, Rainow: This bridge is now erected, and there are suitable signposts directing the public towards it.

No. 7. Cheesden Valley: The local authority have accepted responsibility for the repair of this footbridge.

No. 8. Marthall Brook: A Cheshire footbridge on the path from the Dun Cow Inn, Ollerton, to Gleve House Farm, Mobberley. We are still awaiting statements from members and friends, who have used this path, in order to overcome the opposition of the owner-occupier who has contested the right of way. We appealed for these statements in last year's Report, but our appeal went unheeded.

No. 9. Castle Mill to Castle Hill Farm (Bollin Valley): The Cheshire County Surveyor replaced the log over a stream by a new sleeper, but the Bucklow Rural Council have still to have obstructions removed after nearly eighteen months of asking.

No. 10. Bridge at Upper Fold, near South Head: This bridge in the Chapel area is an occupation bridge carrying a public footpath, and has partially collapsed. The Derbyshire County Council decline to repair it as this would be spending public money on a private road beyond what is required to

maintain the public path. Will members please keep an eye on this bridge?

No. 11. Footbridge at Swettenham: The County Surveyor has agreed to repair this footbridge.

No. 12. Suspension Bridge in Styal Woods, Wilmslow: This bridge has been repaired and was reopened in time for Whitsun.

No. 13. Grindsbrook Footbridge: A few light repairs have been undertaken on this bridge.

No. 14. Woodford: Two new footbridges have been provided by Messrs. Roe on footpath diversions here—but the diversions themselves are still “in the air.”

DIRECTION POSTS: During his last year of office as Signpost Supervisor, Mr. H. E. Wild has dealt with the following.

New Posts and Plates: Doctor's Gate; Elmerhurst Cottages, near Lyme Park; Middle Moor, Hayfield; Cut Gate (Derwent).

Refixed and Repainted Posts: Chapel Gate, Edale; Derwent to Moscar—3 posts; Hayfield—Snake, 3 posts.

Repainted Posts and Plates: Slippery Stones, Derwent; Alport Bridge, Derwent; Hallot Hey, Little Hayfield; Blackshaw Farm, near Hayfield; Long Lee, Rowarth; Derwent-Moscar; Clough Farm, Edale.

Refixed Plates: Derwent-Moscar (2).

The Pennine Way: The Chairman and Secretary attended public inquiries held at Holmfirth in May and at Glossop in July, to oppose proposals of the Huddersfield and Manchester Corporations for the diversion of the sections from Longdendale via Black Hill to the Isle of Skye. As will have been seen in the press, the Huddersfield Corporation's proposal was defeated, but Manchester's succeeded. However, it is possible that when a new filtration plant has been installed to filter Longdendale water, to cost £2,000,000, the original line of path will be restored.

The Ministry of Housing and Local Government hope to have the southern section of the Pennine Way dedicated and marked in good time to be enjoyed by walkers in the spring of 1955.

Footpath Library: A few additions have been made to this feature during the year, and further donations of books and maps would be welcomed.

Damage and Litter in the Countryside: We deplore the vandalism that takes place on the flanks of Kinder and elsewhere, and heartily support the efforts made to eliminate it.

Reinstatement of Paths in the Derwent Area: The claims which we made for four paths in this area are being considered by the West Riding and Derbyshire County Councils in conjunction with the Footpaths Survey.

FOOTPATHS IN CHESHIRE. Lower Cliff, Lyme Handley to Spodsbottom, Kettleshulme: This diversion case is exasperating. A reasonable compromise having been reached, all that is required is action by the local authority to legalise present arrangements. But even this small formality seems too much trouble.

Sandbach Vicarage: Last year's Report claimed this as a spectacular success. We were too previous. The tenant again obstructed the path, and after considerable pressure, the Congleton Rural Council has commenced legal action, whose movement, however, can scarcely be observed. An alternative to dilatory local authority action is clearly indicated.

Marton Lane via Tidnock Wood, Gawsorth: Two paths here both on the Draft Map were brought to the landowner's attention for the removal of obstructions. His response was to deny the right of way. We have statements of local people and desire others from members and friends. Any offers?

Congleton Road to Lowe's Lane, via Moss Cottage, Gawsorth: This is the beginning of a long path to Sutton, which has been encouraged to become waterlogged and fouled in different ways. It is the only approach to a cottage. The parish council, rural district council and county council all failed the complainant, and the county council merely acknowledged our letter. The cottager complained to his M.P. who consulted the Ministry of Housing and Local Government, and they have induced the Macclesfield Rural Council to require the owner to remedy matters. Another case showing the need for direct action, such great pressure as that cannot be brought to all cases.

Gawsorth Church to Rode Green Cottages: This path having been reduced to a quagmire and obstructed by a barbed wire "Irish Gate" for about five years, during which time the parish council and the Macclesfield Rural Council failed to uphold the public right, the Secretary asked the rural council for support in legal proceedings which he proposed to take. The rural council replied that if such proceedings were necessary they would take them. The future of this 400-years-old path should be interesting.

Tytherington Lane to Iron Bridge, Bollington: A farmer having obstructed this path with barbed wire and a locked gate, the Secretary wrote to the Bollington Urban District Council asking to be indemnified in legal proceedings against him, the farmer's solicitors having stated that he denied a right of way. The Council concurred, and the farmer freed the path without proceedings being necessary—after ten months of correspondence, meetings and inspection. Since then, another farmer has moved a stile eight yards and commenced to convert another part of the path into a quagmire with his cattle. This contravenes a diversion order of 1903, whose circumstances have been brought to the second farmer's notice. The co-operation of the Bollington Council is very valuable.

Over Peover, Ollerton and Toft: A path here, going north from the Whipping Stocks Inn, Over Peover, has been freed from an obstructing poultry run, but its continuation to Toft is still obstructed and a crossing path is likewise stopped with barbed wire. This after years of persistent effort.

Buckhall Farm to Tanyard Farm, Hale: The Hale Urban District Council has had barbed wire removed from this path and a stile erected in its place. Mr. R. T. Watson has inspected and approved.

Alvanley and Manley, near Frodsham: The Runcorn Rural Council freed the obstructions from one path in this area, but those on another path have still to be removed.

Woodford Aerodrome: A locked gate at the Adlington end of one of the paths here has now been freed, but a further difficulty has arisen. A new runway having been made, two other paths are in difficulties, owing to the policy of the firm (we believe with concurrence of the Ministry of Transport) of closing footpaths first and discussing them afterwards. We ought to be consulted prior to developments and to have a fair share in negotiations.

Footpath near Partington Gas Works: Here we were consulted by the Gas Board, and through Mr. L. G. Meadowcroft a reasonable compromise was effected.

Blue Ball Farm to Moss Lane, Mobberley: The difficulty here is a garden that has been placed across the Moss Lane end of the path, and although we have had promises from the Bucklow Rural Council, they have done nothing to preserve the right of way. Here is another case where an alternative procedure to the inaction of the Council is indicated.

Warburton Lane to Henshall Lane, Dunham Massey: In spite of assurances from the Bucklow Rural Council, this footpath continues to be obstructed. Another case, obviously, for direct action.

Footpath at Alsager, Cheshire: The duty of freeing this footpath is that of the Alsager Urban Council, which referred it to the County Council, which sent it back again. Nothing has, however, been done; the Council will not answer correspondence, neither will the original complainant who lives on the spot. We have no representative in this area.

Church Lane to Woodford Vicarage: Subsequent to an inspection by Mr. R. T. Watson, we had brambles and hawthorns cut back. They have grown again, however, and require clearing. Besides this a stile needs attention. All these matters have been brought before the Hazel Grove Council, which is, however, allergic to footpaths.

Annable Road, Bredbury: By contrast, the Bredbury and Romiley Urban Council acted promptly about an obstructing wall here, and pulled it down. For this the local people and ourselves are very grateful.

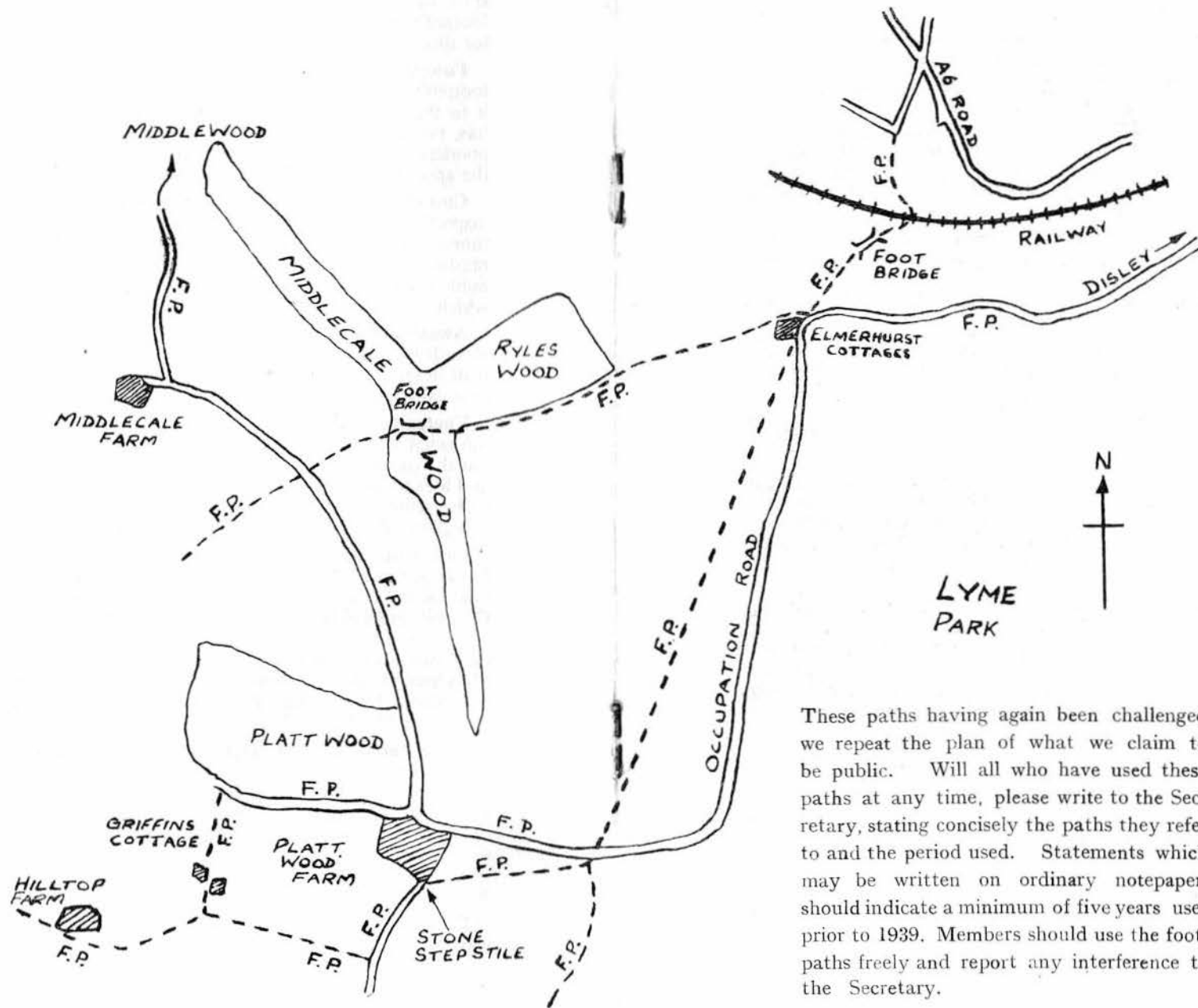
Footpaths at Cranage, Swettenham and Twemlow: We are informed that a stile on a path at Swettenham has been fixed, but the footbridge has yet to be repaired, and the barbed wire and locked gates on paths in Cranage and Twemlow have still to be removed. Here again we are dealing with a body, the Congleton Rural Council, allergic to footpaths.

Path near Redes Mere: This path from Thornycroft to Fanshawe involves both the County Council and the Macclesfield Rural Council. A notice belonging to the County Council, prohibiting cycling on the footpath, disappeared, and stiles were obstructed and a wicket gate nailed up. We asked the County Council to take action as to their notice, and the Macclesfield Rural Council to have the other matters remedied. The notice has "reappeared," but the other mixture is "as before."

Little Leigh to Stone Heys Lane, Northwich: This case of obstructions was sent to the Northwich Rural Council, which body sent it to the County Council. On being informed by us that they were the correct body to deal with the matter as the rights of way were not in dispute, the Northwich Council replied evasively. A request to the County Council as to whether the rights are disputed has brought no answer. Another allergic council?

Knutsford to Mobberley, via the Old Church: This case was brought before the Knutsford Urban Council last June.

PLATTWOOD FARM, LYME HANDLEY,



These paths having again been challenged we repeat the plan of what we claim to be public. Will all who have used these paths at any time, please write to the Secretary, stating concisely the paths they refer to and the period used. Statements which may be written on ordinary notepaper, should indicate a minimum of five years user prior to 1939. Members should use the foot-paths freely and report any interference to the Secretary.

but not until November was it put before the farmer concerned, and by this January nothing had been done. The debate continues.

Lyme Park: Stockport Corporation have agreed to repair broken ladder stiles, for which we are grateful.

Threat to Petty Pool Woods, near Northwich: As no effective society operates in this part of Cheshire, we took up a flagrant case of felling timber in a protected area, with the County Council, the Forestry Commission, and the Ministry of Local Government and Housing. The result is encouraging, but it is a reflection on Cheshire that we should have had to do it.

Eaton, near Congleton: Macclesfield Rural Council have ordered a farmer to remove obstructions on a path here, for which we are grateful.

Alderley: We have passed to the Wilmslow Society a complaint of obstructions on a path here.

Tatton Estate Paths: A list of paths here which we are either claiming or are not marked on the Draft Map was circulated to members last July. So far we have received too few statements of user necessary to establish our case, although many members and some clubs are known to have used them frequently.

FOOTPATHS IN DERBYSHIRE: In July, 1953, we put a case of obstruction to the footpath from Kinder Reservoir to Tunstead Clough before the County District Surveyor, who sent it to the Assistant County Surveyor. There have been illness and other difficulties amongst the surveying staff, but as letter after letter produced no action, we became very concerned. Having proposed that, where necessary, the County Council should invoke the aid of rural council surveyors or even of outsiders to deal with footpath work, we still met with no response. Until in December, 1954, the Assistant County Surveyor informed the Secretary that the County Council could not attend to footpaths because more important work would have to be left and this would make such attention difficult to justify.

We have no complaint to make against the officers of the County Council whom we have always found courteous and friendly. This declaration of policy could not be allowed to pass, however, and a strong protest was made to the Surveyor and to the Clerk of the County Council. They agree that owing to limitations of staff and of finance, not as much resources or money is being devoted to footpaths as we desire, but they reject the suggestion that the County Council are allowing footpaths to decay.

Grateful as we are to the officers mentioned for their frankness, we must judge by results. Seeing that we have made extremely few demands upon the County Council, the case already mentioned ought to have been disposed of a year ago, as well as a case of repairing the footpath at Blackwell Mill in the Wye Valley. It might have been too much, perhaps, to have expected the case of about thirty footpaths in Charlesworth to have been disposed of by now—it was presented in December, 1953—but a start at least ought to have been made. In this interchange of courtesies, we have further proof that we should be ready to take independent action.

Deep Dale to Wheal Lane: This path, leading from near Monsal Dale out of Bakewell Road to Wheal Lane, having been obstructed about half a mile south-east of Over Wheal Farm, was placed before the Bakewell Rural Council for attention. The sequel is that although the path has been put on the Draft Map by both the parishes in which it lies (Sheldon and Taddington) the farmer has disputed that it is public. Therefore, we require statements of user. A keeper of a neighbouring estate says he has known it for over forty years to be a public footpath, but he will not allow us to use his evidence in support. Mr. Ewart spent a whole afternoon on the spot looking for witnesses, without result. Any members or friends like to volunteer?

Barrow Hill to Springwell, near Chesterfield: The Secretary made two journeys to the spot, one to obtain evidence, another to speak at a meeting held to support the case for a right of way. The Chesterfield Rural Council and the Staveley Urban Council are now trying to establish the public right.

Rowarth. From Lower Harthill Farm to Back Rowarth: After contending for fifteen months that there was no real cause for complaint here, the Derbyshire County Council have changed their mind, and passed on to the Chapel Rural Council the task of getting the farmer to remove a rough gate with barbed wire attached, but they still consider a dog, reported to be savage, not to be dangerous.

Monsal Dale to Little Longstone: After two and a half years of correspondence, and visits to the spot by Mr. Ewart, this path was found in March last to be free from obstruction.

Motor Cyclists in Roych Clough and on Chinley Churn: Complaints having been made during the year about the abuse of bridle and other roads in these places, the police and the County Council have been informed. But the police do not seem to keep a close eye on this kind of thing, which is a great annoyance to walkers.

Higger Lodge to Hathersage: Complaints about a party having been turned back with threatening language on footpaths here, were sent to the Bakewell Rural Council for attention in March last. But although we continually pressed the matter until November, we received no satisfaction. This is the kind of case which we ought to build up and present ourselves. Will members and friends traversing Mitchell Field Farm let us know of any experiences they have. The paths whereon the trouble occurred are on the Draft Map.

Lark Hill to Shaw Farm, New Mills: Following representations to the New Mills Council, the obstruction to this path by a golf club was removed.

Brough to Shatton: Mr. Ewart, after great effort, made satisfactory arrangements with the farmer to have obstructions removed. The latter, however, did not keep his word, and Mr. Ewart is renewing his efforts.

Other paths dealt with are at Mam Farm, Castleton; Chapel Milton; Matlock district; Ashbourne district; Parsley Hey.

LANCASHIRE FOOTPATHS: Paths near Bombards Farm, Bury, were threatened with extinction by a housing estate being built over the occupation road leading to a farm. This road carried a public footway, from which branched about six footpaths. Representations to the Bury Corporation have borne fruit. A diversion at Horwich and a missing stile at Leigh were satisfactorily disposed of also.

A case which we trust is unique occurred at Goose Cote Hill, Turton. Here, on two previous occasions, the Urban Council had allowed a quarrying firm to destroy a footpath. The firm did the same about two years ago, but this time were observed by a footpath enthusiast living nearby. But not early enough to prevent the damage. The Ministry of Local Government and Housing were informed of the Council's failure to safeguard public footpaths, and measures taken which we hope will prevent a repetition of the occurrence.

During the year we supported the Lancashire C.P.R.E.'s opposition to a high-power electric power line near Belmont, and the proposal for a new prison on a site near Wrightington. Each of these schemes would interfere greatly with the enjoyment of footpaths, highly regarded and used by ramblers, as well as extinguishing some of them.

In our last two reports we appealed for greater efforts to put the Society on a sounder basis, and set up a target of one thousand members. In 1953—Coronation year—a slight improvement resulted; but in 1954—Diamond Jubilee year of all years—the membership mercury has fallen again and our members are now fewer than a year ago.

We require a constantly increasing membership to renew the Society's life blood. Apathy and complacency are our greatest enemies. There are too few workers for too much work, and some who could do more are doing less. Ours is a fine heritage of footpaths, but it will assuredly melt away like last winter's snow, however many Acts of Parliament may exist, if the walkers of yesterday and to-day do not realise their responsibilities.

When a beautiful scene is faced with desecration or a historic building with demolition, a great outcry arises. But when a footpath equally beautiful or of equal antiquity is threatened, in silence it is often allowed to disappear. The same knight-errantry is required in the defence of a footpath as of an old hall or precious scene.

As personal contact has hitherto proved the most fruitful source of new members and of new income, we appeal to members to take receipt books, which the Treasurer will be pleased to supply, and to enrol new members on every possible occasion. There is a great field for this activity within the affiliated clubs, and also for taking collections on rambles and social occasions.

FINANCIAL REPORT for 1954

AS will have been gathered from the foregoing Report, the work of the Society over the past year has increased in volume out of all recognition, carrying in its wake an inevitable increase in expenditure.

All three aspects of the work of the Society, footpath preservation, signpost provision and maintenance and the footpath "Survey," have shared in the increase as was foreshadowed in the Report for 1952, and for which reason an especial appeal for a membership of a thousand was made and repeated more desperately last year. Unfortunately, the increase in membership from 350 in 1952 to 466 in 1953 has not been maintained, and it is almost tragic to have to face a drop to a figure of 400 for the year 1954. Although 77 new

members were obtained during the year, death, resignations, removals from the district and failure to renew membership, have accounted for a wastage of 143 members, the latter reason being the one chief cause for this loss. Steps are being taken to follow up those who have not rejoined us. The position of the affiliated societies is more steady, two new societies having been obtained with 57 renewals, giving a total of 59 against 56 last year.

The result of this position is that our income from the membership in the form of the membership fee and affiliation fee amounts to £188 3s. 10d., against which we have expended a total sum of £432 4s. 2d. This picture will give some idea of the almost impossible task facing your Council when it opens its deliberations on ways and means for the future.

In addition, of course, to the income derived from the receipt of normal subscriptions, amounting to £188 3s. 10d., we have received the following contributions:—

	£	s.	d.
Contributions to the General Fund	5	18	0
Contributions to the Signpost Account	53	8	5
Contributions to the Survey	0	10	6
Contributions to the Defence Fund	25	15	0

Contributions to the Defence Fund are not available for use against day to day expenditure but the remaining sums have been applied to the reduction of the amount of money spent on the relative items. Even so, the fact still remains that we are spending far more than we receive and the reserves of the Society are, year by year, being seriously depleted at a time when we should be building up those reserves against possible actions which may have to be undertaken as a result of the culmination of the Footpath Survey.

In passing it must not be overlooked that a most generous response has been made to the appeal for donations towards the cost and maintenance of signposts, amounting to a sum of £53 8s. 5d. which has gone a long way towards meeting this increasing commitment.

The cost of the provision and maintenance of signposts and the Footpath Survey has doubled during 1954. The Survey has now completed its sixth year of activity at a total cost to the Society of £307 14s. 1d., which has been met by the Special Reserve Fund.

The Special Reserve Fund has been increased by £100. being a legacy from the estate of the late Mr. J. Macauley.

The net deficit on the General Fund after making the usual transfers from the Special Fund amounts to £24 18s., as against £27 7s. 7d. for 1953, which figure has been carried forward to next year as was done previously. The carrying forward of deficits since 1952 has amounted to a progressive total of £113 which presents your Council with a serious problem of finance. It is hardly necessary to say that there are two possible solutions to this problem—an increase in membership or an increase in the membership fee. These two alternatives have been with your Council for several years now and it is still of the opinion that the strength of the membership is the answer—will this opinion be vindicated by the necessary response during 1955? Remember: **1,000 members please.**

The Council wishes to place on record its appreciation of the continued generous support of the Society by the membership and the affiliated societies and trusts that this will continue in the future to enable the increasing work of the Society to be effectively continued.

Membership and Affiliation: The terms of membership are simple, involving no more formalities than the payment of a minimum subscription of 3s. 6d. per annum for individuals, 2s. if under 21 years of age, and a minimum of 10s. 6d. per annum for clubs and societies.

Subscriptions and donations to the Defence Fund may be sent now for 1955, to the Honorary Treasurer, Mr. G. S. Cooper, of 13 Duffield Road, Salford 6, Lancashire.

G. S. COOPER,

Honorary Treasurer.

Affiliated Rambling Clubs and Societies, 1954

- Accrington Naturalist and Antiquarian Society.
- Ashton-under-Lyne and District C.H.A. and H.F. Rambling Club.
- Barnsley C.H.A. Rambling Club.
- Barnsley Mountaineering Club.
- Bolton C.H.A. Rambling Club.
- Bramhall Ratepayers' Association.
- Bury and District C.H.A. Rambling Club.
- Camping Club of Great Britain and Ireland, North-West Region.
- C.E. Holiday Homes.
- Central Rambling Club.
- Comradeship of the Christian Endeavour Holiday Homes, Manchester Section.
- Comradeship of the Christian Endeavour Holiday Homes, Stockport Section.
- Co-operative Holidays Association.

C.P.R.E. Congleton District Committee.
 Crescent Rambling Club.
 Derby C.H.A. and H.F. Rambling Club.
 Derbyshire Footpaths Preservation Society
 Eastwood Ramblers.
 Eccles C.H.A. Social and Rambling Club.
 Friendship Holidays Association (Manchester) Rambling Club.
 Hallamshire Footpaths Preservation Society.
 High Lane Residents' Association.
 Holiday Fellowship Ltd.
 Holiday Fellowship, Manchester Group.
 Holiday Fellowship, Oldham and District Group.
 Macclesfield and District Field Club.
 Manchester A.E.I. Rambling Club.
 Manchester Amateur Photographic Society.
 Manchester Association Rambling Club.
 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. Social Club.
 Manchester and District Rambling Club for the Blind.
 Manchester Fellowship (Ramblers' Section).
 Manchester H.S.C. Languages Rambling Club.
 Manchester Pedestrian Club.
 Manchester Field Naturalists' and Archæologists' Society.
 Manchester Rambling Club.
 The Moorland Ramblers' Club.
 North-West Naturalists' Union.
 Oldham and District C.H.A. Rambling Club.
 Oldham Photographic Society.
 Ramblers' Association (Liverpool and District Federation).
 Ramblers' Association (Manchester and District Federation).
 Ramblers' Association (Sheffield and District Federation).
 Rucksack Club.
 Sheffield C.H.A. Rambling Club (Section "A").
 Sheffield C.H.A. Rambling and Social Club.
 Sheffield Clarion Rambling Club.
 South-East Lancashire County Scout Council.
 Stockport C.H.A. Rambling and Social Club.
 Stockport Field Club.
 Stockport Seconians' Association Rambling Club.
 Stockport W.E.A. Rambling Club.
 Sutton-in-Ashfield and District Rambling Club.
 United Field Naturalists' Society.
 Wesley Guild Holidays.
 Woodford Residents' Association.
 Workers' Travel Association.
 Youth Hostels Association (Burnage and Levenshulme Group).
 Youth Hostels Association (Manchester and Salford Sub-Regional
 Group).
 Youth Hostels Association (Prestwich Area Group).
 Youth Hostels Association (Sheffield Sub-Regional Group).

The Peak District and Northern Counties Footpaths Preservation Society

INCOME AND EXPENDITURE ACCOUNT FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31st DECEMBER, 1954

1953			£ s. d.			£ s. d.			1953			£ s. d.			£ s. d.							
To EXPENDITURE			£ s. d.			£ s. d.			By INCOME			£ s. d.			£ s. d.							
26	11	3	Annual Report: Printing	30	7	0							Balance brought forward from 1953									
4	3	6	Distribution.....	5	0	2							Subscriptions—									
						35	7	2							Paid in advance as per 1953 Statement — 6							
9	0	0	Hire of Rooms				11	15	9	3	6	0				Members	1	6	9			
34	19	10	Printing and Stationery				24	14	9							Received during 1954—						
3	10	0	Insurance Premiums				0	10	0							400 Members	127	4	10			
36	5	4	Signposts erected and maintained	67	11	5				58	6	6				59 Affiliated Societies	60	19	0			
1	10	0	Less Contributions received	53	8	5	14	3	0										188	3	10	
2	2	0	Subscriptions to Commons, Open Spaces and F.P. Society	2	2	0				9	3	6							5	18	0	
2	2	0	Affiliations to four Branches of the C.P.R.E.	2	2	0				24	18	4							25	15	0	
									40	1	6											
			Sundry expenses				4	4	0	1	6	9							40	19	1	
2	16	0	Cost of 1954 Annual General Meeting				0	1	8½										1	8	9	
			Honorariums—				6	3	0													
30	0	0	Secretary	30	0	0				39	11	9½										
52	10	0	Four Footpaths Inspectors	52	10	0													88	16	10	
5	5	0	Treasurer	5	5	0	87	15	0										27	0	9	
			Travelling expenses—							27	7	7½							115	17	7	
12	9	3	Secretary	31	10	3													24	18	0½	
5	9	11	Four Footpaths Inspectors	9	3	4																
6	3	5	Other Officials (D/posts)	3	11	1																
						44	4	8														
25	4	3½	Postages and Telephones				28	17	5													
0	8	4	Cheque Books (3)				0	12	6													
1	12	6	Bank Charges				1	10	0													
1	6	9	Subscriptions paid in advance for 1955—5 Members				1	8	9													
42	6	9½	Footpath Survey	89	7	4																
2	15	0	Less Contributions Received	0	10	6																
						88	16	10														
			Diamond Jubilee				27	0	9													
24	18	4	Donations to Defence Fund				25	15	0													
329	19	6				403	0	3½				329	19	6				403	0	3½		

27th January, 1955.

G. S. COOPER,
Honorary Treasurer.

J. E. BROOM,
Honorary Auditor.

DEFENCE FUND at 31st DECEMBER, 1954

1953			1953			1953		
£	s.	d.	£	s.	d.	£	s.	d.
537	0	3	561	18	7	561	18	7
24	18	4						
Balance brought forward from 1953 ...			Add Donations received during year			Balance carried forward to 1955		
<u>£561 18 7</u>			<u>£587 13 7</u>			<u>£587 13 7</u>		

SPECIAL RESERVE FUND at 31st DECEMBER, 1954

1953			1953			1953		
£	s.	d.	£	s.	d.	£	s.	d.
995	16	9½	951	0	0	39	11	9½
Brought forward from 1953			Bequests received during year—			Transfer to General Fund—		
J. Macauley Legacy			100 0 0			To cover cost of "Survey"		
(Original Bequests:—Arnold Wilson Legacy £713 16s. 8d; G. H. B. Ward, F.R.G.S., Gift towards Erection and Maintenance of Signposts £50; Anonymus £12 10s. 0d.; Edwin Royce Legacy £500; J. A. Rowcroft Bequest £50).						To cover cost of "Jubilee"		
						To cover cost of Memorial Fund		
						Balance carried forward to 1955		
<u>£995 16 9½</u>			<u>£1,051 0 0</u>			<u>£935 2 5</u>		
						<u>£1,051 0 0</u>		

MANCHESTER AND SALFORD SAVINGS BANK DEPOSITS at 31st DECEMBER, 1954

1953			1953			1953		
£	s.	d.	£	s.	d.	£	s.	d.
628	2	6	646	19	3	1,510	14	2
18	16	9	19	7	7			
842	10	2	666	6	10			
21	4	9	863	14	11			
Balance brought forward from 1953—Special Account			Add Interest Received for Year			Balance brought forward from 1953—Ordinary Account		
Add Interest Received for Year			Add Interest Received for Year			Add Interest Received for Year		
<u>£1,510 14 2</u>			<u>£1,551 13 3</u>			<u>£1,510 14 2</u>		
						<u>£1,551 13 3</u>		

CASH POSITION at 31st DECEMBER, 1954

1953			1953			1953		
£	s.	d.	£	s.	d.	£	s.	d.
24	7	2	16	12	3	561	18	7
1,510	14	2	1,551	13	3	951	0	0
2	11	10	1	4	9½	1	6	9
27	7	7½	24	18	0½	10	13	11½
Cash at Bank			Cash on Deposit with M. & S. Savings Bank			Balance at Credit of Defence Fund		
Cash in Hand			Deficit on General Fund			Balance at Credit of Special Reserve Fund		
Subscriptions Paid in Advance for 1955						Accrued		
Interest on Bank Deposits						Interest on Bank Deposits		
<u>£1,565 0 9½</u>			<u>£1,594 8 4</u>			<u>£1,565 0 9½</u>		
						<u>£1,594 8 4</u>		