

PEAK AND NORTHERN  
FOOTPATHS SOCIETY  
1894 - 1976



Public Footpath

Annual Report  
1975-76

*This is what Wigshaw Property Co. (Broseley Homes) did to a footpath at Heaton Mersey, Stockport. So why didn't Stockport Metropolitan Council prosecute? "We didn't want to appear vindictive" was their reply at a recent Public Inquiry!*

*This example of illegal obstruction by building is only one of a score of similar cases at present on the Society's books and in which inquiries and hearings are being forced during 1976 as part of a campaign to bring local council indifference to breaking of the law to public notice.*

*(For details of Wigshaw's activities see last year's annual report.)*

*"Guardian" photograph by Dennis Thorpe, reproduced by kind permission.*

# PEAK AND NORTHERN FOOTPATHS SOCIETY

Founded in 1894

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# FOREWORD

The past year has been one of change in the Society and we are saying farewell to several old friends. Mr. Newton, our Hon. General Secretary, who recently reached his 80th birthday, has retired in favour of Mrs. Marjorie Freeman, and we wish her every success as the Society's principal administrative officer. Eric Newton came to the rescue when we were in difficulties in 1963 and lost no time in getting our affairs into proper order again. He has served the Society faithfully and conscientiously ever since and deserves our warmest thanks. So does Mr. G. S. Cooper who retired as Hon. Treasurer at the last annual meeting after more than twenty years' service. He is continuing as Convenor of the General Purposes Committee and has given considerable help to his successor, Mr. Rex Walsh.

Mr. Tom Ewart who has put a great deal of work into looking after our signposts since 1961 and was an inspector before that, has also finally retired and has been succeeded by Mr. F. R. Mason with Mr. J. Houfe as assistant and further help from Mr. W. Brookfield. Mrs. E. Evison, an outstanding footpaths defender from Sheffield, whose latest achievement was a successful prosecution of the City Council over a path at Mosboro, has also ceased to be an inspector. We miss her outspoken contribution to Council discussion, but we still hear from her.

All of these people have contributed to the continuation of a movement to preserve local footpaths which started 150 years ago with the Manchester Association for the Preservation of Ancient Footpaths and has been maintained, with varying degrees of success, ever since. Without it the local network would be smaller and more vulnerable and the continuing threat of rationalisation makes it even more necessary today. We plan to celebrate the sesquicentenary of the Manchester Association later this year.

This time last year we said that the Government was expected to produce a White Paper on the reports of the House of Lords Select Committee on Sport and Leisure and the Sandford National Park Policy Review Committee "in the spring". In fact, the paper on "Sport and Recreation" appeared in August and that on "Sandford" in January 1976. Both have the same things to say on the vexed question of rationalisation and it approximates to the Select Committee's compromise proposals for re-designing the network without reduction in mileage.

"Sport and Recreation" (Cmnd, 6200) paragraph 53 says:—

"In the Government's view there is scope for local initiatives to modify the existing networks of footpaths and bridlepaths in

order to reconcile the increasing demands for access for recreation with the needs of the farming community. The Government believes that this can only be achieved on the basis of co-operation between landowners and farmers, walkers and riders, and the local authority. Provided that it is clear from the start that the object is neither to pare down the existing network nor to enlarge it, but to adapt it in ways which, taken together, are clearly beneficial to farmer, rambler and rider, the Government are confident that such co-operation can be achieved and be effective. They await with interest proposals on footpaths which are currently being prepared by the Countryside Commission. In the meantime they are examining whether any changes are needed in the administrative or legislative framework to facilitate local initiatives of this kind."

While we do not accept that substantial re-designing is called for, it is good to know that the Government will not countenance any reduction in the size of the footpaths network and that whatever is done should be on a basis of co-operation between the parties concerned. Whether there is a sting in the tail of the paragraph remains to be seen.

In addition to this the White Paper on Sandford agreed that National Park Authorities should be enabled to exercise all functions relating to footpaths and bridleways now vested in highway authorities, as some of them already do under the Local Government Act 1972. The Authorities should further be prepared, at their discretion, to meet the whole cost of maintaining stiles and gates on rights of way, and to assume responsibility for signposting and waymarking. Where rights of way have been obstructed they should have discretionary powers to take action. The Government promises to introduce legislation where necessary to achieve these purposes.

On the wider National Park issues dealt with by the Sandford Committee, the Secretaries of State (English and Welsh) have in many instances accepted their recommendations, and seem to be attaching more of the importance and priority we should like to see for National Parks. In particular, it is now accepted that top priority must be given to the conservation of natural beauty, and that public enjoyment of the Parks must be, as John Dower said, in ways "that do not impair their beauty or quietude". The Government also accepts that no new route for long distance traffic should be constructed through a national park unless there is a compelling need. The Sheffield-Manchester Motorway proposals will provide an early test of their sincerity in these matters.

FRANK HEAD

# COMMENTARY

## **Roads Used as Public Paths**

Under the provisions of the Countryside Act 1968 it was ordained that all RUPPs recorded on the definitive maps were to be reclassified as footpaths, bridleways or byways open to all traffic, and the process of reclassification has been going on for some time. During the year however the court of appeal ruled that RUPPs could only be reclassified as byways or bridleways and not as footpaths. As the Department of the Environment has accepted the verdict and does not intend to introduce amending legislation the matter rests there for the present. This seemingly paradoxical result is based on the fact that inclusion of a RUPP on a definitive map is conclusive evidence of the existence of a right of way for horseriders and cyclists as well as pedestrians, and the Countryside Act contained nothing to nulify this right. On the other hand, the definitive map provides no evidence of the existence or absence of vehicular rights on RUPPs and reclassification is intended to resolve this issue.

## **The Newman Case**

Last year we reported on Mr. P. J. Newman's attempt to use Section 59 of the Highways Act 1959 to secure the removal of obstructions from four paths in Worcestershire on the ground that they were "out of repair". Favourable verdicts were obtained from Redditch magistrates and the Queen's Bench judges in respect of three of the paths but, as we mentioned in a footnote, the Appeal Court upheld them in respect of two only, which related to hedges growing over the paths. The third path which was obstructed by a wire fence only was said not to be out of repair. It appears therefore that Section 59 is inapplicable to straightforward cases of obstruction. As the County Council has decided not to appeal to the House of Lords, this is the final position.

## **Local Ombudsman**

The success of our friends in the Wigan Footpath Society in securing a verdict of maladministration against St. Helens M.B. for failing to deal with footpath complaints, has encouraged us to report Stockport M.B. to the local ombudsman for similar inactivity in respect of the building of a house over a public footpath near Underbank Farm, Stockport (see cover picture). A diversion order made by Stockport was the subject of a public inquiry on January 13th, at which we were represented by Mr. D. W. Lee.

## **Bulls on Public Footpaths**

The report of the Advisory Council for Agriculture and Horticulture on this question appeared last March. Its

recommendations were so complicated as to have little hope of acceptance by anybody and the Government has not pronounced on them so far. It is satisfactory, however, that the Council did not accept the NFU's pleas for a general extension of the "cow clause" principle, though they brought in a gratuitous recommendation that all counties should carry out comprehensive reviews of their footpath networks, on the lines of the West Sussex review, as quickly as possible. Fortunately, the Association of County Councils has declared against such reviews at the present time, but some counties are thought to favour them and Nottinghamshire commenced a non-statutory review last November. £12,000 has been allocated for this purpose in the first year, and it is planned to spend a total of £120,000 over ten years—all on administration. The county council is said to be aiming at closing up to half of its paths.

### **D.I.Y. Prosecutions**

The Ramblers' Association has published a "Guide to Private Prosecutions in the Magistrates Courts for Obstruction of Rights of Way", which describes how a private individual can prosecute a person responsible for an obstruction. The author is Mr. J. J. Pearlman, the well known Leeds solicitor, and it can be obtained from the R.A. 1-4 Crawford Mews, York Street, London W.1. (Price 25p post free).

### **Memorials**

We hope to erect a suitable memorial to the late Arthur Smith on the summit of Shuttlingsloe as soon as an agreement with the Earl of Derby's agent for a new public footpath has been formalised.

We have met the cost of providing a handrail for the footbridge over Cranberry Clough as a memorial to Fred Heardman of Edale, and a plaque is to be affixed to it.

### **Survey Progress**

The provisional map for the former Chapel-en-le-Frith R.D.C. was published on 31st October last. All but two of a number of objections received were resolved. The Crown Court dismissed an application for a declaration that the path from Rushup Lane to Coldwall Farm (Chapel-en-le-Frith F.P.93) was not public and an application for a similar declaration in respect of Chinley B.R.25 was withdrawn. The Definitive Map has since been published.

The provisional map for the former Bakewell Rural District has also been published and objections were received to the inclusion of sixteen paths.

F.H.

## 1975's BIG BATTLES

DON LEE, Closure and Diversions Secretary, reviews some of the year's most important controversies.

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Our consistent success rate at Public Inquiries—where due to hard work, reasoned argument and local support we have saved many paths for posterity—has encouraged our opponents to use legal loopholes to evade Inquiries in the hope of gaining an unfair advantage over us. These loopholes are chiefly found in undemocratic local act powers to close paths and of the three cases I have chosen this year to describe, two (at Bury and Bolton) illustrate my belief only too well, whilst the other case (at Alton) shows what can be achieved when we are given a fair chance to state our case.

At **Bury** we have to contend with the slipshod Section 116 of the Bury Corporation Act, 1932 that allows “any person” to apply to the local Magistrates to close/divert “unnecessary” paths. Usually, of course, this is the local authority's job after considering all the facts, but at Bury there is this dangerous loophole which can be open to all sorts of abuse. In December, 1974, the firm of John B. Kevill, Solicitors of Chorley, acting for C. Brown Sons (Steel) Ltd., brought an application before Bury Magistrates under Section 116. It was in respect of the closure of a well-used bridleway, No. 67, and the up-grading of a nearby footpath, No. 78, to a bridleway, at Pilsworth high above the Irwell Valley (O.S. reference 815.091). In effect walkers stood to lose the use of both tracks as the existing path would become a quagmire once horses were allowed on it and the old bridleway which provided good, wide views was to close completely and quite unnecessarily since all that was needed was a slight realignment so that a building could be erected.

We were never consulted prior to the Order being issued and since Section 116 Orders are not advertised in The London Gazette, as is the case with virtually every other closure and diversion in England and Wales, it was only by sheer chance that I received particulars of the application at all. This was passed on to me by local member, Alan Brackenbury (incidentally, the more local correspondents write to me as Alan does whenever he sees an Order in his area, the better, for even though there may be some duplication at times, this can all be to the good and it gives me someone immediately on the spot with whom to liaise). It was only decided 6 days before the hearing—with Christmas intervening—that we were to object and in that space of time I had the whole case to prepare and to try and drum up some support so it was



not surprising that when I appeared at the Magistrates Court our evidence was incomplete. Before Public Inquiries we get 2/3 months' warning!

It is worth describing what took place at Bury because it is something which may well face any individual objector in the future at Magistrates' Court hearings. I was not allowed to read the Society's proof of evidence, incomplete as it was, and after swearing in, was instructed to speak from memory as best I could. Whilst attempting to do this I was constantly interrupted by the applicant's Solicitor. We heard that the application was being processed under Section 116 for expediency and the Court were also told that no census of users of the tracks had been carried out, so quite how it was decided the paths were "unnecessary" is beyond me. I asked for at least an adjournment until I had chance to negotiate and consult with others, but the Magistrates refused to grant this and confirmed the application as requested. I got the distinct impression from this example of justice that our objection had been a complete waste of time and that we were merely tolerated as objectors.

Fortunately, every cloud has a silver lining and the publicity resulting from the treatment we had received proved to be the catalyst for a public meeting in February concerning the grave threats facing Bury's footpaths, at which was formed the Ramblers' Association (Bury Group) who have already proved their usefulness and will undoubtedly be a force to be reckoned with in the future. Maybe, on reflection, the price of a pleasant bridleway was worth it after all.

Bad as the Bury affair was, the pantomime over Shipgates at **Bolton** surely deserves the "bad egg" award for footpaths in 1975. Shipgates is a town centre ginnel (O.S. reference 718.092) which in 1973 we successfully campaigned to retain (see Annual Report 1973 page 9/10). Unfortunately, this reprieve was to be short-lived, but at least at the end of the day we went down fighting and with dignity and such were repercussions that it will be a long time, if ever before Bolton Metro again tries to use the Bolton Corporation Act of 1872 and the Bolton Improvement Act of 1882, to shut footpaths.

To detail all the twists and turns over Shipgates would take a book and so I will merely say that in 1974 the St. Regis Press—owners of Bolton Evening News—issued a writ against the Council, alleging breach of contract since Bolton had gone back on their private agreement with St. Regis, made in the mid-60's to close Shipgates (which, of course, had not been done due to our 1973 campaign). Faced with the writ, the Council, for financial reasons, decided to re-process the closure. We told Bolton that in such a

controversial case—since the path was used by up to 3000 people daily—if they must go ahead with closure they should at least use modern legislation to allow the Secretary of State to call an independent Public Inquiry so that evidence could be put fairly by both sides. They refused to do this and specially resurrected the two objectionable local acts which contain clauses for the closure of “unnecessary streets” and also closure in the name of “improvement in the Borough”. (Whether this is improvement of public or private property is conveniently left unclear). The lodging of the objections was in itself most peculiar and had to be in an approved form to the Crown Court at Manchester. In fact at one stage we were told as ordinary objectors that we should see a solicitor before objecting, so the danger existed of interested would-be objectors not being registered.

We did our best at the Bolton Crown Court where the case eventually came in April, 1975, but we lost on a strict interpretation of the law, whereby closure for “improvement” can mean virtually anything, and where on this occasion it meant closure of Shipgates so that a private car park could continue in use unhindered by pedestrians. Interestingly and disturbingly, from more aspects than purely footpaths, was one remark from a Bolton Metro officer, who said in cross-examination that they wanted Shipgates shut so that the pedestrians who formerly used it would thereby be channelled through the nearby private Arndale Shopping Arcade.

Even though we were very disappointed over Shipgates the decision may yet prove to serve a purpose in bringing down the abuse of local act powers to close paths. We got national publicity in the press and T.V. over what the media called “the million pound ginnel” and more to the point it was around this very time that the Department of the Environment were considering requests from local authority associations who were anxious to retain certain local act powers when these ancient bits of life-expired legal antiques have to cease being used in 1979/1984. We lost no time in submitting both the Bury and Bolton cases to the Department of the Environment as examples of “democracy at work”. If, as we believe, there are right and fair-thinking people in Whitehall, we hope that the action of Bolton Metro in going against the public’s interest as they did over Shipgates will reinforce our arguments for the total abolition of all special local act powers as they affect footpaths.

Although we appeared at several interesting Public Inquiries in 1975, in most we are still awaiting the result at the end of the year. However, there is one outstanding important case which was finalised during the year concerning a path at **Alton**, Staffordshire. This is well worth describing in some detail since

not only did we succeed in saving a potentially useful little path, but more importantly we were backed up at the highest level in many of our most basic arguments against councils which fail to maintain footpaths, councils who allow illegal construction over footpaths without doing anything, and councils who misuse Section 110 of the Highways Act, 1959. This part of the Act allows paths to be closed when they are "not needed for public use", but so often it happens, due to lack of maintenance or illegal obstruction, that the public are precluded from using them at all.

Footpath 18 is a short, old village path running behind the Talbot Inn and below Talbot Bank (O.S. reference 072 424) in the Alton Conservation Area, a place visited annually by thousands of tourists, who like to seek out its quaint and quiet network of village paths, of which footpath 18 is an integral part. Unfortunately, for many years it had been out of use because the local authorities had never repaired a collapsed retaining wall that had resulted in a partial, but certainly not complete, blockage of the path. Then a builder, Mr. Ansell, knocked down the cottages at Talbot Bank and used them as the foundations of a large new house on the same site. However, this large house needed extra buttresses into the steep hillside and taking advantage of the partial blockage of footpath 18 he placed the buttresses right across the path, thus blocking it completely. Soon afterwards he sold the house and apparently disappeared without trace. In 1972 Staffordshire County Council, as highway authority, issued a Closure Order under the Highways Act, 1959, Section 110. We argued that the public had not been given a chance to use what potentially looked like a very useful village path and since a minor diversion would have been possible—enabling both path and buttress to co-exist—we objected. Our objection eventually reached the Department of the Environment who called a Public Inquiry and this was held in January, 1975, the Inspector being Mr. G. F. Heath. With commendable promptness, the Secretary of State issued the decision in April, the Inspector having made a 20-page report on the whole affair which was a model of its kind. It is worth quoting extensively from the decision letter:—

“Bearing in mind the foregoing and my inspections both before and after the Inquiry, I have to say:—

- a. I am of the opinion that the Order Path is a significant feature of the Talbot Inn sector of the Conservation Area.
- b. That the primary reason for the making of the Public Path Extinguishment Order relating to Section A—B of footpath No. 18 would appear to be the dilapidated condition of the retaining walls, originally constructed to support and protect the footpath, and the high cost of rebuilding them.

c. The Order Path is effectively closed due to the lack of maintenance of the path and its essential retaining walls, and that the present condition of the path has been brought about by neglect, negligence or even irresponsibility on the part of authorities and/or private persons.

d. Section 110 (1) of the Highways Act 1959 makes it clear to me that the onus for securing the extinguishment of the Order Path is upon the Staffordshire County Council to demonstrate that the Path "is not needed for public use"; this they have failed to do to my satisfaction.

e. Section 110 (2) of the Act also states that the Minister "should not confirm a public path extinguishment order unless he is satisfied that it is **expedient** so to do, having regard to the extent (if any) to which it appears to him that the path or way would, apart from the order, be likely to be used by the public". The existing physical closure of the path precludes its use, but I am not satisfied that the path would not be used if it could be reinstated to a reasonable and safe condition.

f. I do not believe that support should be given to any proposition that the word "expedient" should be brought to the rescue of a situation created by illegal and neglected acts.

g. I have come to the conclusion that the situation in relation to the Order Path is a matter of dispute, involving the highway and other authorities and the owners of land adjoining the path and the path itself, and whilst the legal closure of the path might simplify the situation, and minimise public and private expenditure in resolving the problem, I do not feel that the Secretary of State should be asked to provide the instrument to achieve this end, under the provisions of Section 110 of the Highways Act 1959.....

The Secretary of State accepts the Inspector's findings of fact and agrees with his conclusions. He is not satisfied that the path is not needed for public use. He has decided therefore to accept the Inspector's recommendation and not to confirm the order."

We won at Alton because of hard work, reasoned arguments and local support for a path worth saving. We lost at Bury and Bolton even though we put in hard work, advanced reasoned argument and had local support for paths worth saving. Why then should we have lost? The answer must surely be found in the opening paragraphs.

1826 — 1976

## 150 Years of Footpath Preservation Work

This year marks the 150th anniversary of the formation of one of Britain's pioneering footpath societies and since it was locally based, the Peak & Northern Footpaths Society will be duly celebrating the event.

In the early 1820's Ralph Wright, a path-pilfering landowner from Flixton illegally closed two useful long-established footpaths across what he considered to be his park. This naturally aroused local people who needed the path to go about their daily duties, but where this dispute differed significantly from the many similar illegal closures there had been previously was that via the medium of the press and in particular the then recently-founded and socially-conscious Manchester Guardian, a group of concerned people were brought together with a declared intention of asserting the public's rights at Flixton by making an example of Wright and others of his ilk and thereafter of establishing a forum for resolving more footpath problems.

At a meeting held in the old (King Street) Manchester Town Hall on the 15th November, 1826, this group resolved to form "The Manchester Association for the Preservation of Ancient Footpaths" and such was their determination backed by public support that legal proceedings were quickly brought against Wright and he was forced to reopen the paths. This initial success was repeated on many occasions during the mid-19th century in and around Manchester and we owe a great debt to these early path pioneers for saving rights of way we now take too much for granted.

The Peak & Northern has, in fact, a direct link with the Manchester Association, since following the formation of our Society in 1894—initially to fight for the Hayfield/Snake path and then for all other paths in the area—it was decided to formally wind up the Association which by this time was becoming rather inactive and to give the remaining funds to the fledgling Society to enable it to carry on the fight against footpath abolitionists, which we have tried to do right up to the present.

Clearly we could not allow 1976 to pass without marking this milestone and a sub-committee is now finalising plans for appropriate activities during November. On Sunday, 14th November, there will be a public walk over the very same paths that were saved in 1826 and which miraculously, despite the urban sprawl that has almost engulfed Flixton, still exist as pleasant and well-used walks. On Monday, 15th November, the

exact 150th anniversary, there will be a celebration dinner and the following week we hope to arrange a footpath exhibition at some central location. The Society also proposes to publish a case history/guide to the Flixton affair in order to rescue these paths from historical obscurity, to record their importance as footpath archeology and to relate the pioneering part played by the Manchester Association in footpath preservation work.

Purely by chance, it could well be that one of the paths (Urmston footpath 23, known as Penny Bridge Lane, in Trafford Metropolitan Borough, which runs off Balmoral Road/Chassen Road in the vicinity of the now demolished Shawtown Farm—O.S. reference 756.944) might once more be the centre of controversy, since two years ago we heard of a nebulous suggestion to close a sizeable length of the track ostensibly to build houses, which really required only the slightest of re-routing of the path. We warned of the trouble that would follow if this piece of history were to be tampered with needlessly and suggested that the plans be modified. So far the matter has remained dormant.

DONALD W. LEE

### Footnote

A full account of the origins and achievements of the Manchester Association for the Preservation of Ancient Footpaths can be found in an article by Harold Wild published in the "Manchester Review" for 1965-66, p.242, an abridged version of which appeared in our Annual Report for 1972-73. An even older society was the "Association for the Protection of Ancient Footpaths in the Vicinity of York" founded in 1824, and it is only fair to add that the founders of the Manchester Association sought and obtained guidance from its Secretary.

The "Yorkshire Gazette" of 23rd June 1827 quoted as follows from his annual report:—"Your Committee cannot help referring with pride to the extended influence which the formation of this Society has had in other places. In particular they would refer to Manchester, where last year (after a correspondence with our Secretary) a similar association has been formed, modelled from ours, but on a more extended scale, which by the late Manchester papers, seems to have prevented some serious inroads on the refreshing walks near that populous town".

In 1833 Parliament appointed a Select Committee "To consider the best means of securing open spaces in the vicinity of populous towns, as public walks and places for exercise

calculated to promote the health and comfort of the inhabitants". In Manchester the Committee interviewed Richard Potter, M.P., and the following evidence was minuted:—

"Have you been a leading member of a committee for the purpose of taking care of the footpaths in the neighbourhood of Manchester for some time? — Yes"

"Has that been effectual in preventing many footpaths which would otherwise have been stopped up from the public? — Yes".

(We are indebted to Tom Stephenson for this information).

F.H.

### OUR ANNUAL DINNER

Asparagus soup, succulent Steak and Kidney Pie, Apple Pie and Cream, Coffee, After Eight Mints, a repast for a Gastronomer, and after the toast to H.M. Queen, we all relaxed in our seats and listened to a very interesting discourse by Gerald Mcguire, O.B.E., the new President of the Ramblers Association, and Deputy National Secretary of the Youth Hostels Association. Mr. Mcguire, had until recently, been the Y.H.A.'s Countryside Officer, so therefore his talk touched on many subjects near and dear to our hearts.

As usual, many guests lingered after the proceedings had terminated to conduct their own social interchange with other members of the society. One more very successful Annual Dinner at the New Albion Restaurant had ended—now who shall we have next year?

L.G.M.

## FOOTPATHS REPORT FOR 1975

### Cheshire

**Adlington F.P. 35.** (G.R.927786). Representations secured stiles to avoid double electrified fencing.

**Bollington F.P. 13.** We are supporting considerable local opposition to a privacy diversion at Dawson's Farm, Kerridge.

**Croft F.Ps. 7 and 22.** In conjunction with the Warrington R.A. Group we opposed an attempt by Warrington New Town Corporation to close these paths under Section 23 of the New Towns Act 1965. We succeeded in getting a public inquiry (not obligatory in these cases) which was held on 12/8/75. (Stop Press: Case won 2/2/76).

**Disley F.P. 40.** We are supporting the New Mills R.A. Group in opposing the diversion of this path on to an indirect estate road.

**Gig Hall Footbridge, Wincle, River Dane.** The promised new foot-bridge is now in place.

**Lea F.P. 3.** (Crewe and Nantwich D.C.) This path was saved following an inquiry at which Mr. D. W. Lee acted for the R.A. (North Staffs Area). The Mid-Cheshire Society were co-objectors.

**Poynton F.P. 71. (Towers Road).** We have objected to an order made by Macclesfield D.C. after a house was built over the path, and to similar irregularities in respect of **F.Ps. 77 and 78.**

**Rainow F.P. 18.** A stile has now been erected at the Charles Head end of the path.

**Sandbach. Foundry Lane, Elworth.** (see last Report). Mr. Lee represented us at the inquiry. Result still awaited.

**Sutton F.P. 13.** (Sheet SJ97; G.R.951702). This path, which is included in the Gritstone Trail, is no longer obstructed.

**Wildboarclough F.P. 22.** (G.R.971678—974678). The County Council has agreed to provide a ladder stile and a finger post to nullify an adjacent "Tresspassers" notice. **F.P. 26.** (G.R. 981713—984710). Following representations, the County Council has secured removal of obstructions and a new stile.

### Derbyshire

**Aston F.P. 7.** We are opposed to a suggestion that this well known path from the main road south of Hope station to Brough Mill should be replaced by a footway along B6049.

**Brough and Shatton F.P. 8.** Brough Mill SE to Townfield Lane. Having been refused a closure order by the local authority, the landowner obtained one direct from the D.O.E. under the little used Section 112 (5) of the Highways Act 1959. Negotiations with him secured a better line of path and withdrawal of the order.

**Buxton F.P. 36.** We have agreed to a diversion near Burbage Church.

**Buxton.** We have reported obstructions on the well known path from Grin Row (034717) to Turncliffe Farm, to High Peak B.C.

**Chapel-en-le-Frith F.P. 93.** Rushup Lane to Castleton Road. Following an appeal by the landowner for the deletion of this path from the



Provisional Map, we helped to find witnesses and the appeal was dismissed by the Crown Court at Derby. The path will therefore appear on the Definitive Map. **F.P. 95.** Rushup Road (G.R.089823) to Sparrowpit. A suggestion for upgrading to bridleway status is being opposed.

**Charlesworth F.P. 95.** Following our complaint the council have erected a stile at the northern end.

**Chesterfield F.P. 84. Grangewood Farm, Boythorpe.** We are supporting the local R.A. in opposing diversions on to estate roads.

**Chinley F.P. 32. Ashen Clough.** We are opposing a diversion.

**Great Longstone F.P. 27.** Agreed to diversion of path across Blakedon Hollow should Laporte Industries secure planning permission for fluorspar tailings dam there, but object to this development on amenity grounds.

**Hasland F.P. 4.** We supported Chesterfield R.A. Group in opposition to a diversion order at a public inquiry on 21/10/75. Result awaited.

**Hope F.P.** Difficult stiles and bull near Oaker Farm (G.R.163855) reported.

**New Mills F.P. 88. Beardhough Farm.** At a public inquiry on 22/10/75 we supported local residents who opposed diversions from the farm yard on to allegedly boggy ground. Result awaited.

**Parwich F.P. 12.** Signs and warning notices to be erected where path passes near toxic waste site at Low Moor Farm.

**Whaley Bridge F.P. 77. Fernilee Farm.** High Peak B.C. informed that path through farmyard is obstructed by derelict vehicles.

**Youlgrave F.P. 9.** This path was threatened by the proposed Conksbury Lane Quarry extension and was indeed cut through without authority, but representations to the County Surveyor secured speedy restoration.

**Footpath from Litton to Monsal Dale,** over Litton and Cressbrook railway tunnels. In 1963 Chatsworth Estates agreed to permissive user of the final portion of this track leading to Upper Dale Farm, but a "Trespassers" notice was erected at that end some time ago. Representations have secured its removal.

**West Derbyshire District.** The Bakewell and Matlock R.A. Group have agreed to take over the territory formerly covered by Mrs. Evison. Their footpaths secretary has dealt with complaints in respect of 46 paths.

## **Greater Manchester**

**Altrincham, Windsor Road.** (See last Report). We were represented at an inquiry on 5/3/75. The Inspector's report criticised the local authority for not appearing and the developers for not seriously considering our alternative suggestion. The D.O.E. gave the developers one month to consider our offer, and reserved their decision. (Stop Press: Our suggestion for a new path now accepted).

**Bolton F.P. 217.** We are supporting the Bolton R.A. Group in opposing extinguishment.

**Cheadle F.P. 33. Stanley Hall Farm.** We opposed a diversion which might deny the public views of the farm which is a listed building. We understand Stockport M.B. are not continuing with the application.

**Denton Relief Road Inquiry.** Mr. Lee attended and asked for a link between F.P. 8 and B.R. 10 near to Denton station.

**Droylsden, Water Lane.** We withdrew our objection to the proposed closure (see last Report) after Tameside Council agreed to leave the lane as a footpath only.

**Hazel Grove and Bramhall F.P. 50. One Oak Farm.** We advised Stockport M.B. against a diversion on to the banks of the Lady Brook because erosion might occur, but they have issued an order and local residents are objecting, and we are making representations.

**Little Lever F.P. 52. Lostock F.P. 359.** We are opposing extinguishment orders issued by Bolton M.B. under Highways Act Section 110; their local act is not being invoked this time.

**Milnrow F.P. 162. Tunshill Golf Course.** We are opposing extinguishment.

**Pigley Stairs Bridge. River Bollin.** (see 1973-74 Report). The promised new bridge has been erected at G.R.796842 near Hale.

**Rochdale. Full Pot Lane.** We have objected to a closure order. An inquiry is awaited.

**Urmston F.P. 13.** (See 1973-74 Report). The original T.C.P.A. diversion order was rejected by the D.O.E. because housing had already been built over the path. It has now been re-advertised under Highways Act Section 111..

**Wardle F.P. 12.** Yet another instance of a T.C.P.A. order issued after building had taken place.

## **South Yorkshire**

**Bradfield B.R. 40.** Blocked stiles and obstruction by vegetation reported.

**Ecclesfield F.P. 73.** We are supporting 200 local objectors to the closure.

## **Staffordshire**

**Kingsley F.P. 4.** We are opposing closure of a path used by school children as well as walkers. A public inquiry was recently held and the result is awaited.

## **West Yorkshire**

**Todmorden B.R. 9.** We are supporting the Calderdale R.A. Group in opposing the closure of this bridleway, near the old Eastwood station. Inquiry pending.

(Compiled by F.H. from the Society's Council Minutes).

## **SIGNPOST SUPERVISOR'S REPORT**

There seems to have been little enough new signpost work during the year gone by, but there has been a fair amount of routine tidying up and repair work, also some new erections in recent months mainly by the efforts of Leslie Meadowcroft, Walter Brookfield and John Houfe.

New signpost work either in hand or completed is listed below:—

- 1/ Two signposts erected on behalf of the Davenport Townswomens' Guild;
  - a/ One at Bowstones, Map Ref. S.J.98-974813 and the other
  - b/ near Moorside, Map Ref. S.J. 98-984819.
- 2/ The delivery of plates for the signpost to Brushes Farm is expected any time now.
- 3/ Owing to some difficulty with the High Peak Highways Dept., we have still not completed the arrangements for Jimmy Bramwell's Memorial Signpost on Footpath, Whaley Bridge 22.
- 4/ Walter and John re-sited the signpost near Windgather that had been incorrectly positioned; they also carried out other inspection work on the same occasion.

**FRANK MASON**



**GENERAL EXPENSE RESERVE ACCOUNT AS AT 31st DECEMBER, 1975**

1974				1974			
£		£	£	£		£	£
2,960.25	Balance brought forward from 1974 .. .. .	3,657.77			Balance carried forward to 1976 .. .. .	6,220.38	
697.52	Surplus from Income and Expenditure Account .. .. .	362.30					
	Proceeds from Realisation on Investments .. .. .	2,200.31					
<u>£3,657.77</u>		<u>£6,220.38</u>		<u>£3,657.77</u>		<u>£6,220.38</u>	

**INVESTMENT RESERVE ACCOUNT AS AT 31st DECEMBER, 1975**

1974				1974			
£		£	£	£		£	£
4,390.12	Balance brought forward from 1974 .. .. .	4,412.37			Realisation of Investments .. .. .	2,200.31	
22.25	Bonus Issues .. .. .			4,412.37	Depreciation of Value .. .. .	1,018.31	
					Balance carried forward to 1976 .. .. .	1,193.75	
<u>£4,412.37</u>		<u>£4,412.37</u>		<u>£4,412.37</u>		<u>£4,412.37</u>	

**DEFENCE FUND AS AT 31st DECEMBER, 1975**

1974				1974			
£		£	£	£		£	£
2,013.42	Balance brought forward from 1974 .. .. .	1,997.61		93.59	Expenditure During Year .. .. .	21.60	
72.78	Donations Received During Year .. .. .	8.40		1,997.61	Balance carried forward to 1976 .. .. .	1,984.41	
<u>£2,091.20</u>		<u>£2,006.01</u>		<u>£2,091.20</u>		<u>£2,006.01</u>	

**SURVEY ACCOUNT AS AT 31st DECEMBER, 1975**

1974				1974			
£		£	£	£		£	£
212.63	Balance brought forward from 1974 .. .. .	214.03		214.03	Expenditure during year .. .. .		
1.40	Donations received during year .. .. .	5.95			Balance carried forward to 1976 .. .. .		219.98
<hr/>				<hr/>			
£214.03		£219.98		£214.03			£219.98

**SIGNPOST ACCOUNT AS AT 31st DECEMBER, 1975**

1974				1974			
£		£	£	£		£	£
241.08	Balance brought forward from 1974 .. .. .	225.53		53.21	Expenditure during year .. .. .		71.80
122.66	Donations received during year .. .. .	24.55		225.53	Balance carried forward to 1976 .. .. .		178.28
15.00	Stiles Charitable Trust .. .. .						
<hr/>				<hr/>			
£278.74		£250.08		£278.74			£250.08

**EDWIN ROYCE MEMORIAL FUND**

1974				1974			
£		£	£	£		£	£
84.66	Balance brought forward from 1974 .. .. .	79.66		5.00	Expenditure during year .. .. .		
				79.66	Balance carried forward to 1976 .. .. .		79.66
<hr/>				<hr/>			
£84.66		£79.66		£84.66			£79.66

**BALANCE SHEET AS AT 31st DECEMBER, 1975**

1974		1974		1974		1974	
£		£	£	£		£	£
<b>FUNDS—</b>				<b>DEPOSITS AND INVESTMENTS—</b>			
4,412.37	Investment Reserve .. .. .	1,193.75		4,412.37	Investments at cost .. .. .		1,193.75
3,657.77	General Expense Reserve .. .. .	6,220.38		500.00	Manchester Corporation Loan .. .. .		500.00
225.53	Signpost Account .. .. .	178.28		2,319.53	T.S.B. Deposits .. .. .		2,501.33
1,997.61	Defence Fund .. .. .	1,984.41		3,424.29	Bank Deposit Account .. .. .		5,698.52
214.03	Survey Account .. .. .	219.98					
79.66	Edwin Royce Memorial Fund .. .. .	79.66					
			9,876.46				9,893.60
10,586.97				<b>CURRENT ASSETS</b>			
<b>LIABILITIES—</b>				105.41	Tax Recoverable on Investment Interest ..	110.77	
322.09	10-year Subscription Suspense Account ..	312.38		50.00	Other Debtors .. .. .	50.00	
10.90	Subscriptions and Donations in Advance ..	1.50		39.14	Cash at Bank .. .. .	274.82	
6.83	Accrued Expenditure .. .. .	188.85		36.05	Cash in Hand .. .. .		
			502.73	40.00	Petty Cash Float .. .. .	50.00	
339.82							485.59
<u>£10,926.79</u>		<u>£10,379.19</u>		<u>£10,926.79</u>			<u>£10,379.19</u>

R. WALSH, *Honorary Treasurer.*