

THE NORTHERN COUNTIES AND PEAK DISTRICT
FOOTPATHS
PRESERVATION SOCIETY.

REPORT

OF THE

Managing Committee

FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31st DECEMBER, 1902.

MANCHESTER:

ABEL HEYWOOD & SON, 56 & 58 OLDHAM STREET.

1903.

THE NORTHERN COUNTIES AND PEAK DISTRICT FOOTPATHS PRESERVATION SOCIETY,

1902.

President:

SIR WILLIAM BAILEY, Sale Hall, Cheshire.

Vice-Presidents:

Major CANDLIN, Heaton Chapel.
P. H. ASHBURY, Goldthorpe, Sheffield.
T. CARR, Atherton, Manchester.
T. SKELTON COLE, Sheffield.
Alderman JOSEPH GAMBLE, Sheffield.
LEO H. GRINDON, Manchester.
ABEL HEYWOOD, Manchester.
Rev. Canon HICKS, M.A., Salford.
GEORGE MILNER, J.P., Manchester.
FLETCHER MOSS, Withington.

J. H. NODAL, Heaton Chapel.
HERBERT PHILLIPS, J.P., Sutton Oaks,
Macclesfield.
Hon. F. STRUTT, J.P., Derby.
Ald. WALTON SMITH, J.P., Heaton Moor.
JAMES WATTS, Abney Hall, Cheadle.
Sir E. LEADER WILLIAMS, C.E.,
Manchester.
The Ven. Archd'con WILSON, Manchester
H. J. WILSON, M.P., Sheffield.

Managing Committee:

ROBERT BURN, High Bank, Wilmslow.
ABEL HEYWOOD, Oldham Street, Manchester.
EDWARD G. HILLER, 22 St. Ann's Square, Manchester.
WILLIAM INGHAM, 4 Llandudno Terrace, Seymour Grove, Old Trafford.
CHARLES DE JONGH, High Lane, Chorlton-cum-Hardy.
A. W. MASSEY, 33 Dale Street, Manchester.
THOMAS MOWER, Market Street, New Mills.
J. H. WRIGLEY, 23 St. Clement's Road, Chorlton-cum-Hardy.
J. J. THOMPSON, 79 Piccadilly, Manchester.
LUKE GARSDALE, Hayfield.

Together with the Honorary Officers of the Society.

Hon. Solicitor:

L. CARADOC EVANS, Town Hall, Salford.

Hon. Treasurer:

J. B. ELVERSTON, Thringston, Heaton Chapel.

Hon. Surveyor:

Lieut-Col. H. T. CROOK, C.E., J.P., Albert Square, Manchester.

Hon. Auditor:

WILLIAM GREGSON, 103 Steven Street, Stretford.

Hon. Secretary:

J. OGDEN HARDICKER, Northern Assurance Buildings, Albert Square, Manchester.

REPORT

FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31ST DECEMBER, 1902.

The Managing Committee of the Society submit the following Report, showing the work done by the Society during the year ending 31st December, 1902. The Committee have frequently met and have had under consideration the following amongst other matters:—

(1). **Footpath, Beresford Dale.**

There are through Beresford Dale two footpaths, one leading down Beresford Dale on the South side of the river, and the other passing by the Fishing Hut built by Charles Cotton on the North side of the river. The footpath, which led close by the Fishing Hut on the North side of the river, was closed by Mr. Frank Green, who had purchased the Beresford Estate, and complaints were received from various members and residents in Hartington stating this fact and asking for the assistance of the Society to protect the public rights in respect thereof. The Committee went fully into the matter, and found that although the Leek Urban District Council had decided that the footpath was a public footpath, yet it was quite unknown to a great majority of the inhabitants of Leek and the immediate neighbourhood, and placed on the extreme confines of Staffordshire, and accordingly such Council could not take any part in protecting the public rights. Your Committee, however, were of opinion that the footpath was a public one, and accordingly communicated with Mr. Green, and ultimately the Chairman (Mr. Abel Heywood), the Honorary Engineer (Mr. Crook), and the Honorary Secretary attended at Beresford Dale with Mr. Green and inspected the footpath. The Sub-Committee reported to your Committee, and a letter was sent to Mr. Green stating that they were of opinion that the footpath as closed by him should be opened to enable the public to pass in front of the Fishing Hut, and that a Bridge

should be placed across the stream connecting the footpath with that on the South side of the stream, and the remainder of the footpath on the North side should be closed, as it was of no assistance or use to the public. Mr. Green considered the matter, and up to the present has not seen his way to conform to the wishes of the Committee, accordingly the attention of the Leek Urban District Council has been again called to the matter. Your Committee are in hope that Mr. Green will see his way to conform to the wishes of the Committee without necessitating the taking of more stringent measures.

(2). **Lyme Park.**

A complaint was received by the Committee with respect to an alleged diversion of a footpath through Lyme Park, and the matter is still under consideration.

(3). **Delamere Forest.**

A complaint was also received to the effect that a certain footpath through Delamere Forest had been closed by the owner of the Park, but before the Managing Committee could take the necessary steps to have the same opened they ascertained that a private individual was bringing the matter before the County Council, and your Committee are awaiting the result before taking up the matter.

(4). **Chapel-en-le-Frith.**

A report came before your Committee that the Midland Railway Company were interfering with a footpath in the district of Chapel-en-le-Frith, and the Committee decided to take the necessary steps to enforce the undoubted rights of the public. The Midland Railway Company have, however, agreed to place a bridge over their line to maintain the continuity of the footpath in question, thus doing away with the interference complained of.

(5). **Doctor's Gate.**

The Committee have under consideration an alleged closing of a footpath at Doctor's Gate, and are giving their attention to the Old Acts of Parliament with reference thereto, in order to ascertain whether or not the footpath is a public highway.

Subscription Boxes.

The Committee are hoping to obtain the consent of the tenants of the Snake Inn and Royal Hotel in the Kinder Scout district to the placing of subscription boxes therein.

Notice Boards.

The Committee are considering the advisability of placing notice boards, marking the public footpaths in the Peak District, and utilising the funds of the Society to pay the expenses of and incidental thereto, being of opinion that such notice boards will be of considerable advantage to people using the footpaths, a means of protecting the public rights over the same, and preventing trespass through want of knowledge.

The last year has not been one in which many serious obstructions to footpaths have taken place, and consequently the labours of the Committee have not been so arduous as might have been the case if any serious obstructions had taken place, and the Committee hope that all members will notify them of any infringement of rights to public footpaths which come to the notice of such members. The officers of the Society are always prepared, and, in fact, do very often advise subscribers in cases of alleged obstruction to public footpaths free of charge, and a considerable advantage has been taken of this privilege by the members of the Society.

The Society, at the present time, has now, your Committee are pleased to say, a credit balance at the Bank, but at the same time this should not be an excuse for present subscribers to cease sending their subscriptions, which are purely nominal, as undoubtedly the objects of the Society are ones which ought to be preserved, and are considerably to the advantage of the public in protecting rights of way, which would otherwise be either forgotten or lost by reason of the inability of the persons concerned to take up the case on their own account, and your Committee are of opinion that to properly carry out the objects of the Society a reserve fund should be formed.

Attached hereto is a list of subscribers for the year 1902.

The Struggle for the Right of Way over Kinder Scout

and for other Paths in the Peak District,

Being a short history of the origin of the Society,

By T. MOWER, Esq.

As I was Secretary of the old Hayfield and Kinder Scout "Ancient Footpaths Association," founded in 1876, and have since its formation in 1894 been a member of the Committee of the Northern Counties and Peak District Footpaths Preservation Society, I have been requested by my colleagues to write a brief report of the proceedings of both societies.

On referring to the now somewhat ancient minute book, I find that the first meeting of the Hayfield Society was held on July 5th, 1876, with the object of forming a Committee to assert, and as far as possible preserve and protect, the right of the public to traverse certain foot and bridle paths in the neighbourhood of Hayfield.

This action was prompted by a very determined attempt to stop the bridle road from Carr Meadow on the Glossop Road, over Park Hall Moor, and the Leggate Swamp, into the Kinder Valley, and thence forward to the Edale Road, near Stoneyford.

As the Committee that was formed was quite ignorant either of the legal rights of the public, or of the obligations of the land-owners, so far as the footpaths were concerned, it was some time before any active work could be begun. The discovery, however, that a number of ancient maps were in the keeping of the Mother Church of the ancient parish of Glossop showed in what direction our efforts must be made. In looking over the papers of a deceased relative of my own, I found the rough drafts of two surveys of common land for enclosure purposes, in the parish of Hayfield. The surveys were dated 1829 and 1836, and it was through them that the clue was given as to where the fullest information could be obtained. On applying to the then Vicar, the Rev. J. D. Knowles, the Committee received courteous

assistance and opportunity was given for making copies of the various "award" and other maps in his custody. Forty years having elapsed since the survey was made, the fact of their existence appeared to have been entirely forgotten. From the evidence of the maps, and the manuscript preserved with them, it was quite clear that the landowner who was endeavouring to close the Carr Meadow road, was acting entirely against recorded public right, and when he became convinced of this he gave way and repaired the road where it was dangerous.

But such information as the "award" map gave, it did not give the continuation of the road in the direction of the Woodlands for more than a mile and a half. So far, however, it was unmistakable, and the Committee therefore set to work to collect the evidence of old residents in the neighbourhood that they had always travelled from the Woodlands to the path laid down on the map without hindrance from anyone, and as a matter of right.

None of the guide books in existence entering fully into the matters in which the Committee were interested, they decided to publish a guide and map of their own, the latter to be on the scale of three inches to the mile. The map was enlarged from the one inch ordnance map and all the known foot and bridle paths as laid down in the Inclosure Award maps were added.

Meanwhile, other paths which had been stopped were dealt with by the Committee and the obstructions were removed by the Committee and a large number of the inhabitants of the village and neighbourhood.

Dissensions and troubles arose among the members of the Society, and from this time the usefulness of the Society began to wane, and funds did not come in as it was expected they would. Then Manchester—the appeal to them possibly not having been made in the way it might have been—and the neighbouring towns not having responded to the appeal for assistance, the Committee was faced by an adverse balance for the printing and publishing of the guide and for other necessary expenses. Thus the work of the Association came to a standstill; even the guide book, which

the Committee could not see its way to reprint, being transferred to and brought out by Mr. William Walker, of King Street, Manchester, and Farlands, Kinder.

But some of us never gave up hoping, and, as far as we could, working. It is said that "all things come to those who wait," and we felt that if we could only wait, public right must eventually be asserted and obtained.

The beginning of the end came after sixteen years of waiting through an eloquent article by "Verax," which appeared in the "Manchester Guardian," July 24th, 1894. "It is a matter of policy," he wrote, "out of regard to the public health to keep the country as open as possible to the towns, and this can only be done by carefully guarding every right of way. It may very well be held that the Corporations of the towns have in this respect a duty to discharge which has hitherto been overlooked." This was probably a prophetic opinion. The Corporations of the towns benefited by the Peak District Society have never contributed either money to the funds of the Society or encouragement in its work, and no thanks or acknowledgments of any public kind have been made for the rights that the Society have protected for the inhabitants of a huge and important district.

On August 3rd a meeting called by newspaper advertisement was held in Piccadilly, Manchester, which was attended by about forty persons, among them three or four gentlemen who afterwards became a part of the Executive Committee of the Peak District Society. It was agreed to form a Society, and a further meeting was held at Hayfield the day after the Manchester meeting, and at it arrangements were made for holding a public meeting in Manchester on August 16th. At this meeting the Society was formally constituted. Sir William Bailey was elected president, and Mr. Abel Heywood chairman. The other important offices were taken by Dr. R. M. Pankhurst, Hon. Counsel; Mr. C. T. Tallent-Bateman, Hon. Solicitor; Mr. William Bell, Hon. Treasurer, (and on his resignation Mr. Elverston was appointed); and Mr. L. C. Evans, Hon. Secretary. A large number of influential gentlemen allowed their names to be used as Vice-Presidents, among them Mr. Dunckley ("Verax") the writer of the article from which the Association sprung. Subsequently Mr. H. T. Crook joined the Society as Hon. Engineer. Local Secretaries were also appointed in Sheffield, Derby, and Hayfield.