

THE PEAK DISTRICT AND NORTHERN COUNTIES
FOOTPATHS PRESERVATION SOCIETY,

1904.

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Council :

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ABEL HEYWOOD, Oldham Street, Manchester, Chairman.

EDWARD G. HILLER, 22 St. Ann's Square, Manchester.

CHARLES DE JONGH, High Lane, Chorlton-cum-Hardy.

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THOMAS MOWER, Market Street, New Mills.

T. J. THOMPSON, 79 Piccadilly, Manchester.

J. H. WRIGLEY, 23 St. Clement's Rd., Chorlton-cum-Hardy.

Together with the Honorary Officers of the Society.

Hon. Solicitor :

L. CARADOC EVANS, Town Hall, Salford.

Hon. Treasurer :

J. B. ELVERSTON, St. Albans Villa, Heaton Chapel.

Assistant Hon. Treasurer :

F. W. WIGELSWORTH, Langford Road, 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, Solicitor, Northern Assurance Buildings
Albert Square, Manchester.

REPORT

FOR THE YEAR ENDING DECEMBER 31ST, 1904.

The Council of the Society beg to submit the following Report to the Members for the year ending 31st December, 1904. Every effort has been made within the powers of the Council to protect all public rights of way and to prevent any interference therewith, and during the year the Members of the Society have had the advantage of the Council's advice on matters which have from time to time come under their notice.

Derwent Valley Water Bill.

With regard to this matter it was found by the Council after making certain inquiries that the Derwent Valley Water Board purposed substituting for a right of way on the right of the Derwent Valley, which would be submerged by the construction of the Howden Dam, a private road for the Duke of Norfolk, K.G., and in consequence they appointed Lieut.-Col. H. T. Crook and the Secretary to attend upon the Solicitor for the Board for the purpose of inspecting the valley and the footpath proposed to be submerged, together with the private road to be substituted therefor, and to report to the Council.

The deputation appointed saw the Engineer of the Board and subsequently inspected the valley, and ultimately it was arranged that the substituted road which the Board originally intended should be a private one should be a public footpath. It was also agreed that the Society would raise no objection to the substituted footpath at the end of

the Derwent Dam when constructed, in lieu of the proposed footpath at the foot of Howden Dam. This your Council feel is a very satisfactory arrangement, as it provides for a public path on each side of the dams, one being for vehicular traffic, to be constructed in the valley by the Board, with a link at the end of the Derwent Dam.

Your Council feel that they ought to express their appreciation of the courteous way in which the representatives of the Board assisted the representatives of your Society to come to an amicable settlement.

Kinder Scout.

It was reported during the year to your Council that the Stockport Corporation were interfering with footpaths in the area of Kinder Scout, but the Council after making certain inquiries with reference thereto ascertained that the Corporation did not intend interfering with any of the footpaths.

The Society have during the past year put into repair the footpath over Kinder Scout from Hayfield to the Snake Inn, have also had the posts showing the footpath renewed, and have erected a number of lettered distance posts by the sides of the path.

In connection with this, the thanks of your Society are due to Mr. Thomas Mower, a member of the Council, for his services in supervising the carrying out of the work without charge; also to Mr. Joseph Gamble and Messrs. C. T. Skelton and Co., of Sheffield, for their kind gifts of tools to enable the Society to carry out the work, and to enable your Society to keep the footpath in good repair.

Druid Circle, Arbor Low.

The Council has not given up the effort to restore the public right of access to the Druid Circle on Arbor Low, Youlgreave.

This undoubted ancient footpath was ploughed up some years ago, and is now grown over, but "once a road always a road."

Footpath over the Derwent Stepping Stones.

In this matter your Council, at the request of the Bakewell Rural District Council, decided on September 9th to grant a sum of £5 towards the placing of a bridge over the Derwent at a place called the Stepping Stones near Offerton. This offer, however, was not accepted, as the District Council decided to simply renew the stones and make them safer for foot passengers.

Eyam Footpath.

It was reported to the Society that a footpath over land belonging to the Duke of Devonshire at Eyam, and leading past the Druids' Circle, on the Highlow Road, had been closed.

Your Society adopted the usual course in this matter, and requested that evidence should be supplied in support of the contention that the footpath was a public one. This, however, has not up to the present been done, but your Society have arranged for the Secretary to see Mr. Martin, the agent for the Duke, and report thereon.

Blacker Hill.

Your Council's attention has also been called by Mr. Ormerod to the closing of a footpath at Blacker Hill, and every assistance has been given to the applicant in connection therewith. The Solicitors for the District Councils within which the alleged footpath was situated were requested to take the necessary steps to protect the same if it should be proved that it was a public footpath, and your Council are informed that steps are being taken accordingly.

Langfield Common.

Complaints were received by your Council that Mr. J. F. Dearden, the lord of the Manor of Rochdale, had closed an alleged right of way over Blackstone Edge and leading along Toad Lane over Langfield Common.

Your Council enquired fully into the matter and decided that before they could take any steps the Littleborough District Council, in whose area the footpath was situated, should be requested to express an opinion as to whether or not there was a right of way over the road in question.

Mr. Dearden has issued a writ against Mr. W. Richards, who had claimed a right to pass over the footpath, and your Society are now awaiting the decision of the Littleborough District Council to enable them to render every assistance they can, in case it is found that there is a right of way.

In addition to the above matters a large number of letters have been received from time to time by your Council seeking advice and information relating to public rights of way. These have been replied to by the Hon. Secretary.

Your Council desire to state that they are always anxious and willing to render whatever assistance they can in order to protect public rights of way, and they are at all times anxious and willing to render any advice without fee or reward.

All communications should be addressed to J. Ogden Hardicker, Solicitor, Northern Assurance Buildings, Albert Square, Manchester.

Your Council desire to impress upon the members and the public generally the importance of exercising their rights over public footpaths strictly, as repeated complaints are received from landowners that the public do not limit themselves to the public rights of way, but trespass over adjoining lands.

Your Council think that every endeavour should be made by members and the public to desist from and if possible prevent trespassing, as this creates a bad impression upon the owners of land, and is liable to change the spirit in which they, with few exceptions, assist the Society in carrying out the objects for which it was formed.

The Society desire to acknowledge the kindly spirit in which owners of land have generally treated the Society, and to state that the owners have always been open to conviction where the Society had shown sufficiently strong evidence that the public they represented were in the right.

Your Council have been requested to consider the advisability of affiliating with your Society a new Society formed in Derby and known as the Derby Footpaths Preservation Society.

Your Council desire to say that they are in full sympathy with the objects of the Derby Society, and will render such Society every assistance that is within its power. They hope that the two Societies will, as far as possible, work together for the purposes of obtaining a common end.