

REPORT

FOR THE YEAR ENDING DECEMBER 31ST, 1903

The Managing Committee submit the following Report for the year ending December 31st, 1903, which, though it has not been one of strenuous opposition to interference with public rights of way involving much time and labour on the part of the Committee, yet much has been done in the way of attention to, and advice on, matters which have from time to time come under the notice of the Committee.

Beresford Dale.

With regard to this matter, to which reference was made in our last report, in respect to the closing of a footpath in Beresford Dale by the owner, certain suggestions for a substituted path in lieu of the original one were made by the owner to the Committee, which, however, did not meet with their approval; and although counter proposals were made by the Committee no agreement could be arrived at between them and the owner. However, as the obstruction complained of was not persevered in by the owner no further action on the part of the Committee was necessary.

Lyme Park.

With regard to this matter, to which reference was also made in the last Report, the Committee, from information received, are satisfied that under existing conditions no serious interference of public rights demanding action has taken place.

Doctor's Gate.

In this matter the Committee are endeavouring to obtain further information with regard to the alleged stopping up of the footpath from the person complaining thereof, and also evidence of user, without which the Committee are unable to move further in the matter.

Bradwell Moor.

The attention of the Committee was called to the fact that certain public rights of way were likely to be interfered with owing to the contemplated acquisition of Bradwell Moor by the Army Authorities as a military training ground. Your Committee accordingly took the matter in hand and communicated with the Bakewell Rural District Council, in whose district the moor is situate, and obtained from them an assurance that any interference of public rights by the Army Authorities in their district would be attended to.

Kinder Scout.

The Committee had under consideration the question of public rights of way in the above district as affected by the Stockport Corporation Water Bill of 1901, in which power was given to such Corporation to divert any public footpath in the area mentioned in the Bill necessary for the carrying out of their undertaking. Provision, however, was made in the Act for the substitution of other paths in lieu of those diverted, and your Committee, in order to satisfy themselves that this power was not being overlooked by the Authorities interested, communicated with the Hayfield District Council on the matter, to know whether any paths had been diverted by the Corporation, and if so whether they had exercised their power under the Act for obtaining substituted paths, and your Committee were assured by them that they would look after the protection of the public footpaths in their district.

Hollinwood Footpath.

A complaint was received by the Committee with regard to an alleged obstruction to footpath leading to and from Walker Road off Hollinwood Road, in Hollinwood. The Committee took the matter up with the tenant of the land who had placed the obstruction on the path, and also with the agents of the owner, who contended that the path in question was a private one over which the public were allowed on sufferance only, and before taking any further action in the matter the Committee are endeavouring to obtain further evidence of user and other information with regard to the alleged right of way.

Dean Row.

Complaint was received of alleged interference of public right of way at Dean Row, near Wilmslow. The Committee are causing enquiries to be made with regard to the alleged obstruction, and for evidence of user, &c., when the matter can be thoroughly gone into.

Burnage Lane Footpath.

It is reported to the Committee that a footpath leading from Burnage Lane to Didsbury Church has been stopped up by a neighbouring farmer, and the Committee are making enquiries into the matter.

Whalley Abbey Estate.

Your Committee received intimation that several public footpaths were likely to be interfered with on the above estate if the contemplated purchase of land for the purposes of a lunatic asylum was carried out, consequently your Committee are making full enquiries into the matter, and will take whatever steps they think necessary to protect all public rights of way in case they are interfered with.

Footpath, Snake Inn to Hayfield.

The attention of the Committee was called to the bad state of repair of this footpath, and they accordingly communicated with the Hayfield Parish Council on the matter, who undertook to repair the portion of the path in their district.

In addition to the above-mentioned matters, numerous letters have been received from time to time by the Committee seeking advice and information on matters relative to public rights of way. Any such enquiries are gladly welcomed by the Committee, and any subscriber or other person interested in the work of the Society desiring information or advice on questions of public rights of way are requested to communicate with the hon. secretary, Mr. J. Ogden Hardicker, solicitor, Northern Assurance Buildings, Albert Square, Manchester.

During the year your Committee were requested by the president of the Society (Sir William H. Bailey) to consider the desirability of amalgamation or affiliation with the Commons and Footpaths Preservation Society, whose headquarters are situate in London, but after obtaining the views of the Commons and Footpaths Preservation Society with reference thereto, and full information with regard to the terms upon which they would be willing to amalgamate or affiliate, and after a careful consideration and full enquiry into the matter your Committee were of opinion that the interests of the public in this district could be better served by an independent Society in their midst, but at the same time expressed the opinion and desire that the two Societies might with mutual benefit assist each other in any way possible, and are pleased to say that the Commons and Footpaths Preservation Society have reciprocated the wish and desire of your Committee.