

THE PEAK DISTRICT and  
NORTHERN COUNTIES  
FOOTPATHS PRESERVATION SOCIETY.

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# REPORT

*For the Three Years ended 31st December, 1901.*

PRESENTED JANUARY 31ST, 1902.

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MANCHESTER:

ABEL HEYWOOD & SON, PRINTERS, 56 & 58 OLDHAM STREET.

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Although accounts of the work of the Managing Committee of the Society have from time to time been issued to the members, various matters have occurred to render the holding of the Ordinary Annual Meetings irregular. The brief Report now presented covers therefore a period of three years. During that time a large number of Meetings of the Committee have been held, and work of the greatest importance has been accomplished, although want of funds has materially interfered therewith.

The main work of the Committee arose from its becoming necessary to oppose the bills in Parliament of the Corporations of Derby, Leicester, and Sheffield, for the construction of Waterworks in Ashopdale and the Upper Derwent Valley.

The proceedings before the House of Commons Committee were, owing to the number and importance of the conflicting interests involved, unusually prolonged. The Society petitioned against the Derby and Sheffield Bills in the House of Commons, and succeeded, after much negotiation, in obtaining agreements from both Corporations preserving, or giving the best substitutes for, the old ways. But none of the Bills were accepted by the Commons Committee. A consolidated Bill was substituted; parts of the new scheme being taken from each of the three competing projects. As the new scheme did not contain adequate provision for the protection of the public rights of way, the Society had to lodge a petition against it in the House of Lords, with the result that the clauses asked for were inserted in the Act authorising the works, and a plan of the substituted or protected paths, signed by the Chairman of the Lords Committee, was obtained by the Society.

The duty is imposed on the Society of seeing that the provisions of the clauses are duly carried out. Without watchful care some of the paths may even yet be lost.

The cost of the Society's operations in defence of these rights was nearly £200, mainly paid to Parliamentary Counsel and Agents. The work of the Society's officers was entirely gratuitous. Had either the Derby or Sheffield Water Bills been passed in their original form, several ancient and very important foot and bridle ways would have been lost. Entirely through the efforts of the Society, the following, among other ways, have been preserved:—(a) the old Roman Road from the Snake Inn; (b) the footpath along the Valley of the Upper Derwent from Ashopton to Penistone, and (c) footpaths at various points across Ashopdale and Derwentdale for a stretch of many miles from the Snake Inn and Slippery Stones to Bamford.

The Stockport Corporation promoted a Bill in Parliament in the Session of 1901 to construct Waterworks near Hayfield. The Hon. Surveyor of the Society (Mr. H. T. CROOK, C.E.) examined the plans, and found that the works would interfere with a considerable number of very well-known roads and footpaths. The Corporation expressed their willingness to consider any recommendations for the protection of these roads and footpaths; consequently the Act authorising the works provides that no public footpaths shall be stopped up, diverted, or interfered with, unless and until the Corporation provide substituted footpaths for the convenience of the public.

The last two years have been particularly unfavourable to the collection of money towards the expenses of Societies of this kind, but the Council have pleasure in announcing that within some £30, the amount named above has been subscribed by friends whose names appear in the Hon. Treasurer's Statement. It is hoped that this small balance may soon be received, and that the Society will be freed from debt.

For the immediate future, so long as no matter of urgency should arise, the Committee suggest that the Society be kept together, in order that local societies and others may have the benefit of the experience and advice of the Committee, and that a working body may quickly be got together in case of need. They trust that present members will continue their annual subscriptions of a minimum half-crown, increasing this sum where possible. They suggest, also that the Managing Committee, which will be elected at the Annual Meeting, be appointed (with power to add to their number) until such time as the Chairman, or the honorary officers, shall deem it advisable to call a General Meeting.

Since the issue of the last Report, the Committee regret to have to record the resignation of Mr. TALLENT-BATEMAN as Hon. Solicitor, who has been succeeded by Mr. L. C. EVANS. The duties of the latter as Hon. Secretary have been taken up by Mr. J. OGDEN HARDICKER, Solicitor, 4, Clarence Street, Manchester.