

THE PEAK DISTRICT AND
NORTHERN COUNTIES
FOOTPATHS PRESERVATION
SOCIETY

REPORT
OF THE COUNCIL

**For the Year
ended 31st December,
1949**

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29 Brown Street, Manchester, 2.

Secretary :

HAROLD E. WILD,
21 North Avenue, Burnage,
Manchester, 19.

REPORT

FOR THE YEAR ENDING 31st DECEMBER, 1949

WITH the passage into law on December 16, 1949, of the National Parks and Access to the Countryside Act, 1949, Parliament has conceded reforms for which the Society and other associations of footpath users have contended for many years. Members of the Society are recommended to secure a copy of the Act (price 2s.) from H.M. Stationery Office.

The new legislation empowers the creation of National Parks, the setting up of Nature Reserves, the provision of "Public Access to open Country," but members of the Society will be most directly interested in Part IV of the Act "Public Rights of Way."

County Councils are given the duty of preparing a right of way map upon which every public footpath and bridle path shall be shown, the first stage being the production of a "draft map" by the end of 1952. Four months are then allowed for "representations" and "objections" to be made and after these have been considered and "determined," "provisional maps and statements" are to be deposited. An owner is then allowed 28 days in which to appeal to Quarter Sessions if he disputes a claim to public rights. After any disputes are settled the surveying authority must then prepare the final map—described as a "definitive map and statement."

Members of all political parties in the House of Commons co-operated in the drafting of the new Act, and this Society must acknowledge the tireless efforts of the Commons, Open Spaces and Footpaths Preservation Society who for so many years have advocated the reforms now conceded.

Provisions are included to secure the opening out of new long distance routes such as the Pennine Way, and for new footpaths elsewhere, though new powers to facilitate the granting of "diversion" or "extinguishment" orders will require some close watching by footpath enthusiasts. Local authorities have often allowed footpaths to fall out of use in declining to accept any liability to repair. Any uncertainty is now at an end, the new Act having made the highway authority liable for the repair and maintenance of footpaths.

Under the Rights of Way Act, 1932, it was necessary to prove 40 years' uninterrupted use of paths across entailed land. The new Act reduces the period in all cases to 20 years.

The new Act does not provide for consultation with associations of footpath users. The Rights of Way Maps are to be the work of the local authorities. There can be little doubt, however, that the highway authority will welcome such assistance as Footpaths Societies will be able to offer. It will be incumbent upon footpath users to avail themselves of every opportunity to inspect the official maps when deposited in any area, to make sure that no public footpath has been omitted from the Statutory Plan. Every member of the Society who can assist in the voluntary survey of footpaths is urged to communicate with the Footpath Survey Secretary, Mr. N. Redford, 12 Chatsworth Road, Droylsden.

SECRETARSHIP.—Towards the end of the year, Mr. P. Daley indicated his desire to be relieved of the secretaryship in order to devote more time to other activities. The Council of the Society accepted Mr. Daley's resignation with regret, following his three years of service to the Society, and nominated him as a vice-president. The Council then appointed Mr. Harold E. Wild as secretary.

It would not be possible in a short report to refer to all the cases which have been dealt with by the Society during the past year. The needs are such as to call for a full time appointment but there is no prospect of sufficient financial support to make such a solution possible. Reports of footpath obstructions call for careful investigation to ascertain first whether the path is in fact public and secondly, to decide upon the best action to recommend. A letter to the owner, to the occupying farmer or to the Highway Authority may be called for, or the challenge may call for the erection of a new direction post. During the past year the council has devoted much attention to footbridges. But for the Society's activities in the past in securing the provision and maintenance of footbridges there can be no doubt that certain footpaths would have been lost to public use.

ALPORT FOOTBRIDGE.—The total cost of the provision and erection of this footbridge, erected as a Memorial to the late A. J. Heron, amounted to £350 of which sum the amount of £60 has still to be raised. The efforts of the Memorial Committee to raise the required sum were rendered more difficult by criticism of the design and material of the footbridge. The Memorial Committee readily agree that by the expenditure

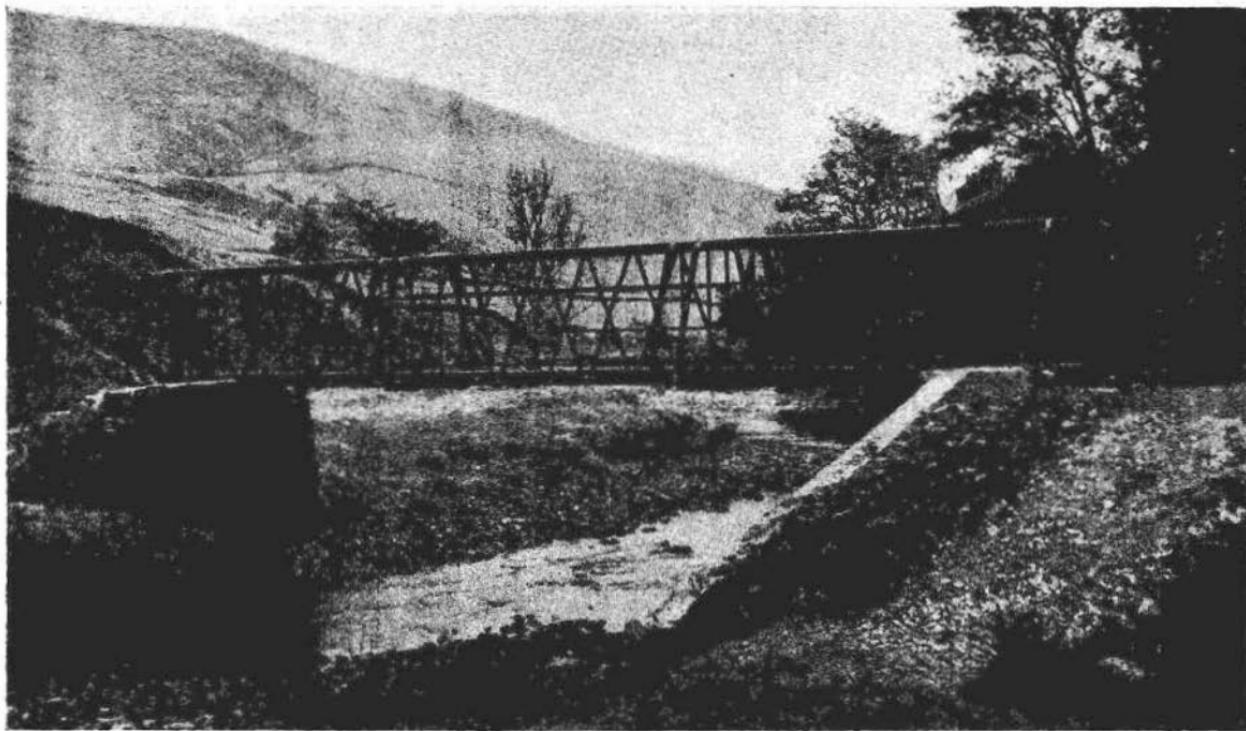


Photo by Courtesy of Messrs. Stewarts and Lloyds, Ltd.
The A. J. Heron Memorial Footbridge at Alport.

of a greater sum of money on the masonry abutments a better appearance could have been achieved, but as the Council considers much of the criticism to be unmerited, a photograph of the footbridge has been included in this report. An amended scheme of tree planting submitted by the Sheffield Branch of the C.P.R.E. has been approved and the Society has promised to contribute £10 towards the cost. Members of the Society who would care to contribute towards the outstanding balance of £60 owing on the footbridge itself are asked to forward their donations to the Hon. Treasurer of the Appeal Fund, Miss M. Dawson, Catterick Hall, Didsbury, Manchester, 20. If the opportunity to purchase this tubular steel footbridge had not been seized, it is unlikely there would have been a public footbridge at Alport for some time to come.

LADY CLOUGH FOOTBRIDGE.—For some few years the Society had experienced anxiety in regard to the gradual decay of the timber beam of the footbridge in Lady Clough near the Snake Inn. Representations were made to the County Surveyor's Department at Derby, and the Society were notified that the County Council have now taken over liability for the maintenance of this important footbridge. The County Surveyor has now repaired the bridge by the provision of a new timber beam. The old iron handrails have been fixed to the new beam, and repainted and the abutments have been repaired.

DOCTORS GATE FOOTBRIDGE.—The Society have undertaken to bear the cost of rebuilding the abutments of this little footbridge but only recently has a firm been contacted prepared to carry out the work. As soon as weather conditions allow the footbridge will be repaired.

FOOTBRIDGE OVER CRANBERRY CLOUGH, NEAR SLIPPERY STONES.—This footbridge had gradually decayed and eventually disappeared altogether, and representations have been made to the West Riding County Council to secure the provision of a new footbridge.

FOOTBRIDGE BETWEEN LONG LEE AND ROWARTH.—In the course of a severe storm three or four years ago, the course of the stream was altered, the stream by-passing the footbridge. The New Mills Urban District Council were requested to repair the footbridge and the footpath, but they eventually replied that "as the land which carried the footpath has been washed away by erosion set up by

the stream, the footpath itself and the right of way have been lost and cannot be replaced." Yet at normal times the active rambler has very little difficulty in traversing the line of this footpath. There is no reason to justify the New Mills U.D.C. in their neglect to repair the path and the footbridge approach, so that at all times pedestrians may use this very old footway. The condition of the footbridge was brought to the attention of the Ministry of Transport whose Divisional Road Engineer at Nottingham arranged for an interview in the New Mills Council Offices between the Clerk and the Surveyor of the U.D.C., the Secretary of the Society and a representative of the Ministry of Transport. As a result of this meeting, estimates of the cost of repairing the path and the footbridge will be prepared by the U.D.C. Surveyor.

YOUNGIT FOOTBRIDGE, EDALE.—Following representations made two or three years ago to the County Surveyor, the old stone packhorse bridge below Jacob's Ladder has now been repaired. There can be little doubt that while natural decay accounted for part of the damage, many of the stones had been deliberately pushed from the parapet walling.

FOOTBRIDGE OVER GREENFIELD BROOK.—Following complaints of the difficulty of crossing Greenfield Brook, the Society has now been advised by the Saddleworth U.D.C. that they have arranged to fix stepping stones across a portion of the brook and that the Ashton, Stalybridge Waterworks Committee will provide a footbridge across the other section of the brook.

Other footbridges which have occasioned correspondence during the year included the Middlecale Wood footbridge near Poynton, the Beresford Dale footbridge, and the two new footbridges at Clough Mill, Little Hayfield.

FOOTPATH AT CHAPEL MILTON.—The Society has continued to press for the removal of the obstructing wall erected by Messrs. Ferodo Ltd. when that firm acquired the land from the Railway Company. There is abundant evidence of user to prove the footway in question is a public right of way and there is important evidence in plans deposited with the Clerk of the Peace at Derby.

PLATTWOOD FARM ESTATE, LYME PARK.—Following the handing over of Lyme Park to the National Trust the new owner of the Plattwood Farm Estate caused a number of "PRIVATE" notices to be erected on his land. These had the

effect of causing many persons unfamiliar with the district to turn back. The Society received many complaints from local residents and from visitors and it was found that employees of the new owner had in fact stopped many people from using public footpaths. The new owner was interviewed and was requested to remove or alter the misleading notices. Careful investigations have been made by the Society and it has been resolved to approach the highway authority for approval to the erection of a four pointed direction post near Elmerhurst Cottages, which was the first point raised in local complaints. Meantime a letter has now been received from the owner, indicating that he has now decided, under protest, to instruct his bailiff to remove the "PRIVATE" notice from the gate near Elmerhurst Cottages.

OLD ROAD FROM BOWSTONEGATE RIDGE ROAD TO HANDLEY FOOT.—This old road had been obstructed at its commencement by a barbed wire fence. Following persistent pressure by the Society through the local authority, the obstruction has now been removed and a satisfactory stile has been provided.

FOOTPATH FROM HOPE VILLAGE TO LOSE HILL.—After some considerable delay, steps were taken by the Chapel-en-le-Frith R.D.C. which resulted in the provision of a stile on this footpath at a point where previously a barbed wire obstruction had been placed.

BULLS IN FIELDS CROSSED BY PUBLIC PATHS.—Three complaints in Derbyshire and one in Cheshire were brought to the attention of the police, and while no prosecution resulted, the personal calls of police officers on the farmers concerned, will no doubt result in the farmers exercising greater care in the future. The Derbyshire by-law is more satisfactory from the walker's point of view than the Cheshire by-law.

CHAINED GATE ON BOWSTONEGATE RIDGE ROAD.—After further correspondence with the Cheshire County Council and the Macclesfield R.D.C., a satisfactory gap stile has now been provided.

FOOTPATH FROM MOOR LODGE, OLLERSETT.—Complaints were received regarding the dangerous condition of stiles over two high walls crossing this footpath. The New Mills U.D.C. were notified and two new ladder stiles of a very

substantial character have now been fixed, the U.D.C. in this case having provided the timber.

NEW ACCESS TO LYME PARK.—The Stockport Corporation have advised the Society that as soon as possible stiles would be placed in the Lyme Park boundary walls at or near the two points suggested by the Society.

FOOTPATH REDCLYFFE ROAD TO LOSTOCK ROAD, URMSTON.—This footpath, closed by the Military Authorities during the War, has now been re-opened.

FOOTBRIDGES NEAR PIGLEY STAIR BRIDGE, AND PATHS NEAR DAVENPORT GREEN.—Following representations made to the Hale U.D.C., a letter has been received from the Council indicating that the landowners concerned had been asked to carry out repairs to the paths, and that the Council would repair the footbridges.

FOOTPATH FROM MOSS HALL FARM, GOULBORN LANE, TO ARLEY VIEW FARM, HIGH LEGH.—Mr. Watson investigated this case of obstruction of stiles and barbed wire fences and secured promises from the farmers concerned to open out the stiles.

REQUISITIONED LAND AND WAR WORKS ACTS, FOOTPATHS AT BROUGH.—The Ministry of Transport announce that they propose to make an order permanently diverting one footpath and permanently closing the other, at Brough Works, providing no objections are received. The Society have entered an objection, since it is clearly against the public interest that the Ministry of Supply should barter public rights of passage along footways in order to secure a higher selling price from a steel manufacturer whose evidence at the 1947 enquiry gave no convincing reason why the footpaths should be closed or diverted.

FOOTPATH, FLITTOGATE FARM TO PICKMERE LANE.—The Society drew the attention of the Bucklow R.D.C. to this complaint and received an assurance from the R.D.C. that they had called upon the farmer concerned to remove the barbed wire.

CHESTER FOOTPATHS.—Mr. Watson has investigated several complaints in regard to obstructions of Cheshire foot-

paths. Many footpaths have been used very little in recent years and it is often very difficult to secure authentic information from country dwellers who feel very little concern for the preservation of cross country footpath connections.

The above cases are only a few of the issues which have engaged the attention of the officers of the Society during the past 12 months. The Agenda of the Council meetings often contains 30 separate cases.

EDWIN ROYCE MEMORIAL.—It is hoped that the Memorial will be completed and formally handed over in the near future. Mr. Arthur Smith with a small party of volunteers carried the stones with which the pillar will be constructed, to the summit of Lantern Pike. A bronze plate bearing compass markings and neatly engraved with the names of the prominent hill tops within range, will serve as a fitting permanent memorial to one who had devoted so much energy in the struggle to secure the freedom of the hills.

DIRECTION POSTS.—Direction posts have been dealt with during the year as follows :—

Six posts have been erected on the Westend-Alport bridle path in the neighbourhood of the hamlet and the footbridge in order to clearly define the route of the path through the farmland. Two posts have been erected in Grindsbrook, appealing to all who use the sufferance path to adhere to the line of path through the farmland and to avoid starting fires, etc.

A new post has been erected at Dissop Head at the cost of the City News Fellowship. This post marks the commencement of the path by Lantern Wood to Lyme Hall.

A new post has been erected near Blackshaw Farm, Hayfield as a memorial to Messrs. Watson, Robinson, Stewart and Hanson and was the gift of members of the Art Museum Field Club and the United Field Naturalists' Society.

A new four pointed direction post has been erected near Kinder Low End to replace the Society's post which had decayed and finally disappeared. New wood arms have been fixed to two of the Society's posts at Hayfield.

A direction post at Hazlehead has been refixed.

A new post has been fixed to the Society's direction plate at Goyt's Bridge.

Two fallen posts on the Derwent-Moscar bridle path have been re-erected.

Many of the Society's direction posts and plates have been repainted during the year.

The Society's finger-post on the riverside footpath from Castleton to Hope, erected in order to define the true line of path at one point where visitors had often taken a wrong turn, has been uprooted and removed by persons unknown.

The Oldham Moorwardens in deciding to disband have offered to defray the cost of a direction post to be erected at Grains Bar.

FOOTPATH LIBRARY.—The following additions to the Society's "Footpath Library" housed in the Special Collections Department on the Fourth Floor of the Manchester Central Library, have been presented during the year —

Sheffield Clarion Ramblers' Handbook, 1949-50.

C.P.R.E. Annual Report, 1948-49.

C.P.R.E. Sheffield and Peak District Annual Report, 1949.

Commons and Footpaths Society's Journal, Vol. 8, 1946-47.

FINANCE.—The accounts speak for themselves but it will be seen that once more our expenditure has exceeded income by £59 8s. 1d. and thus further reduced our reserves as was the case last year. The total membership stands at 429 members and 66 affiliated Societies against 401 and 70 respectively for 1948.

During the year 63 new members were enrolled but 35 failed to renew their subscriptions compared with 62 and 80 respectively for 1948, which shows an improvement in the position.

Five new affiliations were obtained but nine did not renew. Last year we obtained eight new affiliations and lost none.

The Defence Fund has increased by £25 4s. 8d. to £483 6s. 9d. and the Post-War Reserve by £1 18s. 0d. to £42 6s. 5d. Once more our friends of the Sheffield Clarion Ramblers have donated £10 to the Defence Fund, £1 to the Alport Bridge Fund and £1 10s. 0d. to the General Fund—a most noble effort. It is interesting to note that the average contribution per member amounts to over 5s. against a minimum of 2s. 6d.

The erection of signposts and their maintenance has accounted for £85 of which £25 has been contributed by Societies on whose behalf certain posts were provided.

MEMBERSHIP AND AFFILIATION.—The terms of membership are simple, involving no formalities other than the payment of a minimum subscription of 2s. 6d. per annum for individuals and a minimum subscription of 10s. 6d. per annum for Clubs and Societies. The Council of the Society recommends that the minimum individual subscription shall be raised from 2s. 6d. to 3s. 6d. per annum for *next* year, but for the current financial year the 2s. 6d. minimum remains unaltered. Members are urged to give the Society the utmost financial support.

If you are not yet a member, please send your subscription or donation to the Hon. Treasurer, Mr. G. S. Cooper, 13 Duffield Road, Salford 6, or to the Secretary.

Affiliated Rambling Clubs & Societies

1949

Accrington Naturalist & Antiquarian Society.
Alderley Edge, Wilmslow & District Footpaths Preservation Society.
Art Museum Field Club.
Ashton-under-Lyne & District C.H.A. Rambling Club.
Bury & District C.H.A. Rambling Club.
Bolton C.H.A. Rambling Club.
Bramhall Ratepayers' Association.
Barnsley C.H.A. Rambling Club.
C. E. Holiday Homes, Ltd.
Camping Club of Gt. Britain & Ireland (L.C. & N.W. District Association)
Central Rambling Club (Sheffield).
City News Fellowship (Ramblers Section).
Co-operative Holidays Association.
Comradeship of the Christian Endeavour Holiday Homes (Manchester Sec.)
Comradeship of the Christian Endeavour Holiday Homes (Stockport Sec.)
Comradeship of the Christian Endeavour Holiday Homes (Oldham Sec.)
Crescent Rambling Club.
Derbyshire Footpaths Preservation Society.
Derby C.H.A. & H.F. Rambling Club.
Eastwood Ramblers.
Eccles C.H.A. Social & Rambling Club.
Friendship Holidays Association (Manchester) Rambling Club.
Goyt Rambling Club.
Holiday Fellowship Rambling Club.
Hollyrood Ward Ratepayers & Collectors Association.
Hallamshire Footpaths Preservation Society.
Holiday Fellowship Limited.
Holiday Fellowship (Oldham & District Group).
Holiday Fellowship (Manchester Group).
Karabiner Mountaineering Club.
Lido Ramblers.
Macclesfield Field Naturalists.
Macclesfield & District Field Club.
Marple Residents' Association.
Marple Field Club.
Manchester A.E.I. Rambling Club.
Manchester Amateur Photographic Society.

Manchester & Salford Council of Social Service Benevolent Fund.
Manchester C.H.A. Rambling Club (Section "A").
Manchester C.H.A. Rambling Club (Section "C").
Manchester C.H.A. Rambling Club (Section "D").
Manchester C.H.A. Rambling Club (Section "E").
Manchester C.H.A. Club.
Manchester H.S.C. Languages Rambling Club.
Manchester Field Naturalists & Archaeologists Society.
Manchester Pedestrian Club.
Manchester Rambling Club.
Manchester & District Rambling Club for the Blind.
Moorland Rambling Club.
North Staffordshire Field Club.
North-Western Naturalists' Union.
Northwich Urban District Council.
Oldham & District C.H.A. Rambling Club.
Oldham Holiday Fellowship.
Oldham Photographic Society.
Ramblers' Association (Sheffield & District Federation).
Ramblers' Association (Liverpool & District Federation).
Ramblers' Association (Manchester & District Federation).
Rochdale C.H.A. Rambling Club.
Rucksack Club.
Rochdale Field Naturalists' Society.
S.E. Lancashire County Scout Council.
Sheffield C.H.A. Rambling & Social Club.
Sheffield Clarion Rambling Club.
Stockport C.H.A. Rambling & Social Club.
Stockport Field Club.
Stockport Seconians Association Rambling Club.
Sutton-in-Ashfield & District Rambling Club.
United Field Naturalists Society.
Vegetarian Society Social & Athletic Club.
Willersley Sidholme & Sidstrand Ltd.
Workers' Educational Association (Rambling Section) Stockport.
Workers' Travel Association Ltd.
Y.M.C.A. Rambling Club (Manchester).
Youth Hostels Association (Sheffield Sub-Regional Group).
Youth Hostels Association (Manchester & Salford Sub-Regional Group).
Youth Hostels Association (Prestwich Area Group).
Youth Hostels Association (Altrincham Group).
Youth Hostels Association (Burnage & Levenshulme Group).

Peak District and Northern Counties Footpaths Preservation Society

INCOME AND EXPENDITURE ACCOUNT FOR YEAR ENDING DECEMBER 31ST, 1949

Dr.					Cr.
1948					
	To EXPENDITURE :—		£ s. d.	£ s. d.	
26 0 0	Printing Annual Report	...	26 12 0		
5 0 9	Distribution :—Circulars, Postage, Envelopes, etc.	...	8 4 11	34 16 11	
31 0 9					
11 0 0	Hire of Rooms	...	8 5 0		
21 1 3	Printing and Stationery	...	15 4 10		
3 3 8	Insurance Premiums	...	3 10 0		
44 4 6	Signposts Erected and Maintained	...	85 8 9		
	Less Contributions received	...	25 0 0	60 8 9	
2 2 0	Subscriptions to Commons, Open Spaces and F.P. Society	...	2 2 0		
2 2 0	Affiliation to Four Branches C.P.R.E.	...	2 2 0		
7 0 0	Advertising	...	26 0 0		
4 1 2	Sundry Expenses	...	1 9 8		
2 2 0	Maps and plans	...	3 0		
1 15 0	Cost of 1948 Annual General Meeting	...	8 6 0		
	Honorariums :—				
	Secretary	...	26 5 0		
	Footpath Inspectors	...	27 10 0		
	Treasurer for 1948 and 1949	...	10 10 0		
57 10 0			64 5 0		
22 17 3	Footpath Inspectors' Travelling Expenses	11 1 11			
2 14 6	Other Officials' Travelling Expenses	5 0 11			
17 18 9½	Postages and Telephones	...	16 2 10		
8 4	Cheque Books (3)	...	12 11 5½		
16 0	Bank Commission	...	1 3 0		
5 0			1 15 6		
38 18 11	Subscriptions for 1950 carried forward	...	2 16 0		
	Deficit brought forward	...	—		
£271 1 1½			£259 19 1		£259 19 1 *

DEFENCE FUND AT 31ST DECEMBER, 1949

Balance brought forward from 1948 ...	£458 1 11	Balance carried forward to 1950 ...	£483 6 7
Add Donations received during the current year	25 4 8		
	<hr/> £483 6 7		<hr/> £483 6 7

SPECIAL RESERVE FUND AT 31ST DECEMBER, 1949

Balance brought forward from 1948 ...	£1,251 6 8	Transfer to General Fund to cover deficit for 1949	£59 8 1
	<hr/> £1,251 6 8	Cost of "Survey" to December 31, 1949	46 5 3
		Balance carried forward to 1950 ...	1,145 13 4

POST-WAR RESERVE FUND AT 31ST DECEMBER, 1949

Balance brought forward from 1948 ...	£40 8 5½	Purchase of Equipment	£20 0 0
Odd Donations received during the current year	1 18 0	Balance carried forward to 1950 ...	22 6 5½
	<hr/> £42 6 5½		<hr/> £42 6 5½

MANCHESTER & SALFORD SAVINGS BANK DEPOSITS AT 31ST DECEMBER, 1949

Balance brought forward from 1948 at 2½% ...	£567 14 5	Balance carried forward to 1950 ...	£1,611 7 9
Interest received to December 31, 1949	14 3 6		
	<hr/> 581 17 11		
Balance brought forward from 1948 at 2½% ...	1,082 8 10		
Interest received to December 31, 1949	27 1 0		
	<hr/> 1,109 9 10		
Less transfer to General Fund ...	80 0 0		
	<hr/> 1,029 9 10		
	<hr/> £1,611 7 9		<hr/> £1,611 7 9

CASH POSITION AT 31ST DECEMBER, 1949

1948	1948		
74 14 1	Cash at Bank ...	£6 14 7	Balance at Credit of Defence Fund ...
1,650 3 3	Cash on Deposit with M. & S. Savings Bank	1,611 7 9	£483 6 7
25 4 8½	Cash in hand ...	37 0 0½	1,145 13 4
<hr/> £1,750 2 0½	<hr/> £1,655 2 4½	<hr/> £1,750 2 0½	<hr/> £1,655 2 4½

G. S. COOPER, Hon. Treasurer, 28th February, 1950.

G. SMITH, Hon. Auditor, 28th February, 1950.