

PEAK AND NORTHERN
FOOTPATHS SOCIETY
1894-1970

Annual Report 1969



Memorial Footbridge to Mr. E. E. Ambler—Shire Brook

NATIONAL FOOTPATH WEEK

9th to 17th May 1970

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INTO THE SEVENTIES

LIKE victims of the ancient Chinese curse we are "living in interesting times"—times of rapidly accelerating changes of all sorts by no means all beneficial. Faith in progress is not what it was and prophets of doom abound. Older people who remember horse and trap days have seen the decay and disappearance of many firmly established institutions — railways, cinemas and so on — and are now faced with threats of nuclear or biological war, overpopulation and famine, poisoning by pesticide residues and even pollution of the air we breathe.

Much is being heard nowadays of the need to protect our environment. This is clearly a matter of growing urgency, but unfortunately our present rulers seem disposed to loosen the brakes on industrialisation applied by their predecessors of the same party in the National Parks Act of 1949. The main result of vigorous opposition to unwanted intrusions in the Lake District and elsewhere seems to be a determination to weaken the safeguards. The public must learn to like new reservoirs in National Parks, there must be no hindrance to prospecting for minerals and so on. Government grants for the removal of 'scrub' are being used to uproot hedgerows and create prairie farming conditions in the flatter districts, whilst the relentless spread of subsidised pine forests is blanketing more and more of our hills and moorlands.

We, of course, are on the side of the conservationists, though we are anxious that the public should not be needlessly excluded from any area. We want to be able to walk through a fruitful, well tended and beautiful countryside and not to be confined to car-infested roads. By the end of the century there will probably be three times as many cars as there are today and the need for escape routes will be correspondingly greater. Motorists themselves are increasingly parking in the countryside and exploring the more obvious footpaths. We welcome this and think that roadside signposts are very valuable.

Footpaths are the capillaries of the transport network and like those in the human body are an essential part of a healthy system. We are fortunate in having so many in England and they enable those who will use them to lead a good and healthy life. Present indications leave little doubt that we shall have to fight for them as hard, or harder, in the Seventies than ever before.

"Hold fast to that which is good".

COMMENTARY

The Reith Lectures and the Footpaths

HOW many members of this Society, the R.A., and affiliated clubs heard the 1969 Reith Lectures by Dr. Fraser Darling? Those who did must have been surprised at his praise of William the Conqueror's formation of the New Forest in Hampshire in 1085—the year before Domesday was compiled. For that purpose land within a circumference of 90 miles was laid waste to make a hunting ground, people being driven from their homes in about 108 places — manors, villages or hamlets — and savage forest laws were enacted which were the forerunners of many such from Kings and their imitators until modern times. Indeed the game laws deriving from the mediaeval forest laws were the bane of the rambling community until the passage of the National Parks and Access to the Countryside Act of 1949. What then did Dr. Darling find to praise in William's terrible action?

Simply this: although quite unwittingly, it was a piece of conservation and preservation of our natural resources from over-exploitation. If footpaths, as we are often told, hamper modern intensive agriculture they may well be serving a similar purpose. Dr. Fraser Darling's praise of William should be an encouragement to us and others who find pleasure in just walking, enjoying, and trying to understand and preserve the good things that nature has provided, which are the earth's resources and the heritage of its inhabitants. How essential footpaths are to such activities; how desirable that this should be recognised on the local as well as the national scale. A worthy commentary at the end of our 75th Anniversary year. May the National Farmers' Union, and the County, Borough, Rural and Urban District Councils please note. And ramblers, motorists and cyclists behave circumspectly, impelled by the desire to leave the country with no fewer resources than they found it.

No Excuse for Idleness

Modern governments by the 1949 Act mentioned above, the Highways Acts of 1959 and 1961, Traffic Signs regulations 1966, Town and Country Planning Acts 1962 and 1928, Road Traffic Regulations Act 1967 and the Countryside Act 1968 have laid down the procedure for maintaining and preserving public footpaths. Paper footpaths are useless to everybody. The Society intends that footpaths shall not be allowed to become a dead

letter, and that they shall be sign posted, stiled, gated, bridged, clearly marked on maps, and as clearly marked and walkable on the ground. The public are often charged with vandalism caused by owners and occupiers of the land who have blocked up stiles and gates, built over paths, and encouraged footbridges to decay. Thus they cause the public to trespass, besides destroying their pleasure and its sources. Conversely certain of the Society's footbridges have been used more by the owners and occupiers themselves than by the ramblers and local people for whom they were erected. This is not to say that a few guilty walkers have not done damage and brought ill fame and trouble to some farmers and others living in the countryside.

Authorities not Fulfilling their Obligations

Where footpaths are concerned, unfortunately a great many of the local authorities fall lamentably behind the obligations placed on them, whether these relate to doing things themselves or ensuring that the landowners and occupiers fulfil their duties. That is because they have suffered footpaths to remain at the bottom of their agenda, and we believe this to be tacitly agreed through the country, through the respective council associations.

In our area for example, the Cheshire County Council still have to complete the formalities of the Bucklow, Northwich, Congleton and Macclesfield Rural districts for the production of the final Definitive Map which the 1949 Act determined should have taken place by 1954. The trouble here is that evidence has to be given by the public of 20 years usage prior to that year. This has to succeed at Quarter Sessions which for these areas normally means Knutsford.

Already 15 years behind the allotted time, they firstly blandly dropped the whole scheme many years ago whilst a motor way was constructed, and secondly for the enlargement of the Sessions House. In addition to other excuses we now (December 1969) have two further delays: (a) they have abdicated their functions in this respect to private local solicitors; (b) to quote them: "Quarter Sessions have a very full criminal calendar and this presents difficulties for the Court in giving the necessary time to deal with the applications." They do not expect that the Court will be able to deal with the applications during a normal session and therefore propose to set aside special dates. When these will mature is anybody's guess. Through all this time we have pressed for urgent treatment of footpath cases, to the extent of having them heard, not at Knutsford but at Northwich, Congleton, Stockport, Crewe and other town halls, offices and courts, but without avail, although in the past such places have been used in times of stress, as the records of Sessions in the County Record Office will testify. When Knutsford Sessions

House was being enlarged, they suggested this very solution. We having joyfully agreed, they dropped the idea like a redhot coal. The Derbyshire County Council have also defaulted on their obligations in this matter, and are even farther behind them than Cheshire.

Rural and Urban Councils often argue, when charged with lack of interest and inattention to footpaths that the general public hardly ever use them: "How can a footpath decay and be lost to the public if they are using it extensively?" What we have written above seems an adequate answer to that argument. Few of these councils will face up to the fact that motorists are now taking more interest in walking and the countryside and that this is likely to develop in the future. Here and now is the time to prepare for this contingency and to encourage them to indulge not only in mass rambles but in walking for quiet pleasure and the development of their knowledge of the wild life, the flora, fauna, woodlands and other natural features of Britain. To prevent the countryside becoming overcrowded and its enjoyment stereotyped it is desirable not to concentrate attention on a few specialised areas, but to regard the whole of it as a field for rural pursuits and industry, for the enjoyment of town dwellers and mutual benefit. But without adequate footpaths properly signposted and maintained this is impossible. We hope that a more tolerant attitude will be encouraged amongst countrymen. A single thoughtless act is remembered for as long as thirty years, and the cause forgotten—which might have been the obstruction or removal of stiles, or the fouling of the path — in brief, an attempt to close a footpath irregularly without authority.

Friendship between Town and Country

Happily this Society and others, the Ramblers' Association and Rambling Clubs generally have for many years promoted a spirit of understanding between town and country people and we know of groups and clubs which for over 40 years have included in their syllabuses appeals to their members to avoid inconsiderate acts which cause displeasure.

This should be two-way traffic of course, and one of the encouraging features of the Footpaths Conference at Buxton held in June was the prominent part played by the Clerk of Kesteven (Lincolnshire) County Council, Mr. J. Blow. He told us that they had not only completed their Definitive Map long ago, but are supplying copies of it to the walking public on the 2½in. scale at 5/6d. for the size of an O.S. sheet. County Councils in our area please copy: Cheshire, Derbyshire, Lancashire, Staffordshire, Yorkshire West Riding, and when they do, will they please insert along with them figures and letters forming a code enabling the parish as well as the path to be identified. Those County Boroughs

which have not yet undertaken the production of similar definitive maps ought to take this in hand immediately in the Counties mentioned, and in conjunction with the County Councils issue the kind of maps suggested. It does not appear that the Ordnance Survey will produce maps containing all the paths, named (or coded) and numbered, for quick and easy reference.

Faults of Legal and Property Professions, and of Councils

Footpath users have long suffered from the ignoring of footpaths by the lawyers and estate agents' professions when a farm changes hands. Little attempt has been made to acquaint prospective buyers of the possibility of a footpath being involved, even if appearing on a Draft, Provisional or Definitive footpath map. This has been and still is a flagrant source of footpath obstruction and irregular closures, but we think that the excuses made when the new occupants are confronted with the existence of the paths are thin. But by the time the trouble is discovered it is often too late for it to be speedily remedied.

A clause ought to be put into either the next Town and Country Planning or Road Traffic Act to make it obligatory on the lawyers and estate agents to put a note in their prospectuses stating that such and such a path or paths exist on the land in question, and showing their number and parish reference, with similar indications on the property or estate map.

There is little excuse for private owners and occupiers to omit this information, but none at all for public authorities to do so. It was a great shock therefore to learn that an R.D.C. in our area which had received a farmer's application to build over a path agreed to it without consulting the footpath map in their office. This building was duly erected before we discovered it and the entrance stile on the road blocked up. Later an objection was raised to the path's existence. This was to have been fought at Quarter Sessions, but a search for witnesses with press assistance, revealed a good many who knew it. One night the irate wife of a farmer 'phoned one of our officers, and said that they meant to do nobody any harm—they didn't want to close the path—and people could surely use another way instead; they only had to go to a gate in another field which only meant walking an extra 500 yards or so. This alternative was actually not public and could have meant the whole path being closed. She said they were intensely annoyed at all the publicity. There couldn't have been a better tribute to the value of the local press. In the old days this society has had such buildings taken down by legal action in a few cases, but we were disarmed this time by the R.D.C.'s failure to consult the footpath map in their offices.

The result? The objection to the path's existence was dropped, a passable alternative round the building has been sanctioned, the stile will be made good again, and the whole procedure will be legalised. But what a lot of unnecessary trouble could have been avoided. The press publicity has been invaluable as a result in uncovering other trouble spots too in the same area. Happily not all councils are as evasive of responsibility as that one.

Animals in Fields

We have had complaints sent to us about ponies in fields, and it would appear that the owner of domestic animals other than bulls, such as horses and ponies, has a right to put them in pastures crossed by a public footpath, or otherwise open to the public. The exception to this is when the animals are known to the owner to be vicious. In a case about five years ago the owners had put two ponies in such a pasture and a young woman using the path was knocked down, had a nervous breakdown and claimed damages. The Court ruled that the owners were not responsible as the animal had not been proved to be vicious, and therefore they were not guilty of negligence.

Greater Activity Needed

One of our greatest difficulties is to induce rural and urban district councils to send somebody to investigate paths themselves and we have not yet been able to overcome this inactivity. In one case a U.D.C. sent a man to repair two stiles which did not need repair instead of to two which did. In another case the U.D.C. Surveyor pleaded illness. And in other cases, an R.D.C., this time, the excuse was that footpath work is so time-consuming.

We also need more activity from our own members, far more than we are receiving—so what about it dear readers? We receive lots of promises, but how seldom are they fulfilled. Now is your opportunity, and take care that you are on a real path. Why not do a bit of sleuthing on your own and let us know the result. First ascertain from the borough, rural or urban council office the numbers of the paths and the names of the parishes you plan to visit or get somebody to do this for you. Better still form a little group, and let us know the result.

Thanks

In addition to the press, whose help has been invaluable, we would like to thank all the farmers, councils and their officials who have helped us in any capacity. And all those who have responded to our invitation for help in resisting attempts to close the public footpaths of our area or to make them impassable.

THE YEAR'S EVENTS

DURING 1969 it has become increasingly apparent that dealing with large numbers of diversion and closure orders is to be our lot for some time to come. Under the Countryside Act of 1968 the time allowed for objections has been reduced to a mere 28 days and decisions have to be taken quickly. Mr. D. W. Lee, who receives the "London Gazette" (and reads it!), has accordingly been appointed "Diversion and Closure Secretary" with power to lodge initial "holding" objections, which can be withdrawn later, if appropriate.

Helpers Wanted

The response to our appeal for volunteer footpath inspectors came nearer perhaps to our expectations than our hopes, and the appeal is repeated this year. Without an adequate and active team of inspectors we cannot deal effectively with complaints of obstruction, etc. Volunteers are provided with maps and all their expenses paid.

We are also looking for a successor to Mr. T. Ewart as Signpost Supervisor. Though not in the best of health, Mr. Ewart has been carrying on the work as far as his circumstances permit.

Firm — But not Unreasonable

Though the Countryside Act contained no provisions for the re-planning and reduction of the footpaths network desired by the N.F.U. and the C.L.A. the idea of "rationalisation" is far from dead. Throughout the year we have been seeing reports of the utterances of an N.F.U. spokesman whose favourite thesis is that rural paths were made by the rural community for their own convenience, and were never intended for use by visitors from the towns. This truly parochial view ignores the legal rights of the public, including non-farming residents of the countryside, many of whom still like an occasional walk across the fields. We believe that every community should have its adequate quota of footpaths and we are much more concerned with them than with artificially created stunt routes from one National Park to another, etc.

At the Annual Meeting of the Dorset Branch of the C.L.A. reference was made to negotiations with the County Council, the N.F.U. and the R.A. on this subject, and it was admitted

that there was a great deal of mistrust on both sides "much of it due to the militant nature of the ramblers' approach." In our view much of the mistrust stems from the ploughing provisions of the 1949 Act which the farmers exploited to the full and with almost no regard for the provisions for reinstatement. Had the Countryside Act provided legal machinery for deliberately reducing the size of the footpaths network, the farmers and their allies would doubtless have taken the fullest advantage of it.

The existing provisions for closure and diversion, which permit of individual examination of each case, go quite far enough, and we are prepared to be reasonable on this basis. Closure for closures' sake we usually resist, but we give fair consideration to any reasoned case and seldom object to minor closures in built up areas, or to satisfactory alterations of route. Our aim is to be firm in the defence of the public's rights, but not unreasonable.

Commons Registration

The period of three years allowed for the registration of common land ended on 31st December last and any commons not registered by that date must be presumed lost. In co-operation with the Manchester Area of the R.A. we secured the invaluable assistance of Mr. Arthur Eaton who, with some help from Mr. J. Willison and Mr. P. Earl, checked up on the registration of all known commons in our part of Lancashire and registered the few that had not been claimed by the local commoners. Mr. A. Smith and Mr J. Baker helped us in Cheshire, and Mr. N. W. Yelland in North Derbyshire, but few large commons have survived in these areas. Miss R. Irlam of the R.A. and our own Secretary helped considerably in the organisation of this effort.

"Harvesting the Leisure Crop"

Those whose business it is to help the farmers and land-owners are, we understand, drawing their attention to the fact that there is money to be made out of town visitors and urging them to "harvest the leisure crop." Farmers in North Wales and many other areas have surely known this for a long time, and even before the war many farmers' wives turned an honest copper out of catering from ramblers. But the object now, we gather, is to reap golden grain. Charges for parking, etc., are fair enough, but some concern is felt at the possibility of charges being made for simple access to uncultivated land, or perhaps even to footpaths. Official opinion seems to be veering in favour of compensating landowners before access agreements are made and making it easier to withdraw from existing agreements. An agreement incorporating advance compensation is under consideration in the Bowland area.

Footbridges

The Broomycrofthead Bridge which the Society erected before the war on the path from Dry Knowl to Torgate (Wildboarclough) has recently been repaired by us at a cost of £8.

We contributed towards the cost of a bridge erected over Shelf Brook on the Doctors Gate bridleway as a memorial to the late Edwin Ambler, for many years Hon. General Secretary of the R.A. (Manchester Area) and the Vice-Chairman of our Society.

75th Anniversary Walk

About 80 people took part in the Anniversary Walk from Hayfield to Glossop via the Snake and Doctors Gate led by our President on August 2nd. Heavy rain fell shortly after lunch had been taken at Ashop Head, but the event attracted many people, young and old. Several had come from distant towns, including a former Stalybridge resident who came up from Bexhill, Sussex.

Meeting with Sheffield R.A.

On 8th November representatives of the R.A. (Sheffield Area) and of our Society met at the Prince's Hotel, Chinley, to discuss the future of footpaths work in the former Hallamshire Society's area. The general feeling of the Sheffield delegates was that they would like to continue the existing associations with ourselves, but they felt that it would help if we arranged a meeting of the Society annually in Sheffield. We hope to do this.

THE EARLY MINUTE BOOKS OF THE SOCIETY

FROM time to time members of the Society have felt anxiety as to the safe custody of the Society's Minute Books, especially the minute books of the early years.

Over a period of 75 years many changes in the officers have occurred. During the past year the General Purposes Committee and the Council have considered the question carefully, and, as a beginning, the first five Minute Books have been deposited with the Archives Department of the Manchester Central Library.

They cover the following periods:

1. 3rd August 1894 to 28th February 1899.
2. 21st June 1899 to 13th May 1913.
3. 4th April 1913 to 19th October 1925.
4. 2nd December 1925 to 5th June 1930.
5. 21st August 1930 to 9th April 1931.

The books have been deposited on the understanding that in the event of any exceptional need arising — such as, for instance the production of the Minute Books in a Court of Law — it would be possible, upon the Secretary's written application, to secure the temporary withdrawal of any volume of the Minutes to meet this need.

The hours of opening of the Archives Department are: 9-00—12-00 and 1-00—5-00, Monday to Friday (and from 9-00 a.m. to 9-00 p.m. on Saturdays, by prior arrangement in the Local History Library).

Prior notice by letter or telephone of an intended visit is very desirable to prevent delay in consulting the records.

Archives Department Telephone 061-236 7401 Ext. 42.

H.E.W.

LIBRARY

The library is housed in the Central Library, Manchester. Books will be issued to members, who hold a current ticket, by the staff at the central service counter on the first floor.

A list of books was published in the 1968 Annual Report.

TROUBLESONE TRACKS

by DONALD W. LEE

(*Footpath Inspector and Closure and Diversions Secretary*)

THE YEAR 1968 saw the Society organising walks to assert the public's rights — at Simister, Ashworth and Castleton (Derbyshire), but 1969, our 75th Anniversary year, has seen a shift of emphasis by dealing with our differences through negotiations, inquiries, or, in one case, a prosecution. In this article I shall deal with five recent cases, all of which in their own way were important to the footpath cause.

The paths concerned are all urban as opposed to rural ones; indeed at Heaton Park, Denton, Milnrow, Diggle and Little Lever, they could hardly be called anything else. There is a reason for this. This last year has seen a great interest — which seems to be snowballing — in the re-discovery of previously neglected paths adjacent to the edges of towns. For many reasons, including increased leisure time, the provision of new footpath signs (one result of the Countryside Act, 1968 — incidentally, regarding signposting, Hale, Kearsley and Whitefield Urban District Councils deserve a special mention as being some of the quickest off the mark in the Greater Manchester area) increased sales in 2½in. maps, the re-printing of Ordnance Survey Sheet 101 (Manchester) indicating "rights of way" for the first time, or just as a relief for getting away from the roads — for all these reasons and more, people are now enjoying seeking out these half-forgotten tracks known only to a handful of local inhabitants. Accordingly it is of importance that these paths, often in the most unlikely of places, should be adequately protected. Fortunately, the enthusiasm seems to have spread into official quarters too — many local authorities looking again at their network of paths for either "green finger" proposals or for suitable routes to signpost. In this respect Oldham Corporation deserve praise. For years their paths were, to put it kindly, left to look after themselves. Now, they have decided to adopt the survey provisions of the 1949 Act and their Planning Department is contributing to the Medlock Valley and Oldham Edge schemes, including plans for country parks, new footpaths and reclamation of derelict areas for recreation.

One further development which has taken place in 1969 seems worth mentioning. The Society began to feel the full impact of recent changes in legislation which reduced the period for objection to official footpath alterations from 3 months to 28 days. The maximum time is often needed to investigate and

publicise footpath alterations, including, where necessary, organisation of opposition, and we had to face the changes with alterations in our procedure. We began to subscribe to "The London Gazette" (£14 5s. 0d. per annum) which is issued three times a week and lists all official footpath alterations as soon as they are announced. I was appointed "Closure and Diversions Secretary" and elected to receive the "Gazette" and to take appropriate action in suitable cases. Happily I can report that we have successfully mastered the technique needed for handling cases in the reduced period now allowed, possibly to the surprise of those having little time for footpaths.

Heaton Park/Simister

Members may remember the trouble we had in 1968 with Farmer Warhurst over Footpath 28 and owing to the publicity over that episode, local interest regarding footpaths has been maintained at a high level. Consequently, when, in January, 1969, the Lancashire County Council announced proposals for the construction of a portion of The Manchester Outer Ring Road (Simister to Middleton Road section) there was speculation as to what was going to happen to the footpaths at the back of Heaton Park, Manchester's largest open space. The original plans indicated that the direct path from Simister Village — officially Prestwich Corporation's Nos. 28 and 29 (2½in. O.S. Sheet SD80. 831 058 to 834 053) was to be cut by the new road with no overbridge or underpass. The diverted path as planned would double the distance between the village and the Park; it would be indirect and people might tend to lose their way; and part of the proposed diversion would be along a road open to traffic. No time was lost in objecting and explaining the position to people via the local press, with the result that the authorities were swamped by objections to their proposals.

Subsequently, I received a visit from Mr Priestley, the Assistant Surveyor of the County Council, with whom we have a very cordial relationship. Although it proved impossible, for technical purposes, to have a crossing on the line of the original path, the County did agree to (a) fully signpost the diversion (b) bring back to full usage a little-known section of path past Heywood's Farm (c) turn Old Hall Lane, part of which will be used in the diversion, and at present used by traffic, effectively into a footpath by putting only a footbridge across the new road (d) make a new access gate into the back of Heaton Park and lay a new path inside the Park. This will shorten quite considerably the distance Simister residents will have to walk to reach the Park.

In view of the County's reasonableness we withdrew our objection, but the County had not finished yet. They held a well-

attended meeting at Simister in March to explain the new proposals to the villagers, after which local opposition quickly dissolved. These events clearly demonstrate how, by making a little noise, motorway proposals can be modified for the benefit of the walking public and at little extra cost to the authorities. Thanks for the outcome are due to the Lancashire County Council and in particular their Mr. Priestley; also to "The Manchester Evening News" and "The Prestwich and Whitefield Guide" for publicity; and to local people who stood beside the Society when we objected originally.

Diggle/Saddleworth

A Spring-time encounter we had at Saddleworth over their Footpath 107, or "The bridge and tunnel path" proved an interesting example of authorities working together in an attempt to close a path they genuinely thought was not needed for public use. The path from Huddersfield Road, Diggle (2½in. Sheet SD90, 000 073) crosses a stream by a concrete footbridge and then runs to the north of Dobcross Loom Works to go under the Huddersfield Canal by a fascinating old tunnel. After this, the path crosses over the main Manchester/Leeds railway line by means of a footbridge and eventually peters out in a small housing estate (2½in. Sheet SD00. 004 074).

Gradually, both bridges and subway became dilapidated and the power-that-be evidently decided that instead of incurring repair costs, it would be much better to close the path. However, with the housing site developing, the old path proved to be a short-cut for its residents to the main road. The track had always been of use to ramblers for access to the canal towpath and to the moors, the border of the Peak District National Park being only half a mile away and the Pennine Way barely 2 miles distant. Thus, the path had considerable potential, both for recreational and utilitarian purposes and there appeared to be very good grounds for objecting. A letter explaining the case for retention was published in "The Oldham Chronicle" and this resulted in a substantial number of objections to the proposed closure. As a result of the publicity we made contact with the Saddleworth Civic Trust, surely one of the most energetic and enthusiastic branches of the Trust in the region, who were themselves carrying out a footpath protection scheme. Whether their intervention as objectors was the final nail in the coffin we shall probably never know, but shortly afterwards, the Saddleworth U.D.C. announced that they had abandoned the closure proposals.

As it turned out, the announcement of the closure has done the footpath movement a good turn by bringing together two organisations who now co-operate closely. Time after time, the Society has received useful contacts and new members whenever

there has been some footpath trouble locally, so that afterwards in an area there is usually a hard core of vigilantes ready to keep us informed of irregularities.

Milnrow

The well-named Uncouth Sewage Works path caused the Society problems during the Summer. Milnrow U.D.C. decided to close Footpath 290 where it ran between the River Beal and the Council's Uncouth Sewage Works (2½in. Sheet SD91. 925 134 to 922 137). The path, although in undistinguished surroundings, made up for the aroma by being direct, level, of good surface and away from traffic. Its main advantage was that it connected the built-up part of Milnrow with amenity paths leading to Clegg Hall, the Canal and Hollingworth Lake.

For eighty years, path, pedestrians and "pong" had co-existed amicably until 1969 when the Council, tired of vandalism and the danger of trespass, decided to apply to the Magistrates for closure of the path. They offered a "diversion", true, but it was three times as long, went uphill to come down again, crossed over a tip and forced walkers to share a narrow road with heavy lorries. The society entered an objection and suggested that a more reasonable alternative would be to take the path along the far east edge of the works away from the river and sewage plant, but the Council did not own that small length of land, whereas they did own the land over which they proposed to take their diversion. The "Rochdale Observer" gave good publicity and there were probably a fair quota of local written objections. What really went against the grain was the use of Section 108 of the Highways Act, 1959, for this closure. This section is normally kept for the closure of superfluous streets in demolition areas and not for footpath closures. The Section 108 closures are heard by Magistrates and written objections are not read out (or at least they were not on this occasion) and the hearings are held during working hours. Unfortunately, the Magistrates decided that the Council's proposed diversion was "nearer or more commodious" and granted the application for closure.

Matters did not end there and the secretary of the Commons Society, Ian Campbell, LL.B., was consulted. He informed us that we had a remedy under Section 275 (2) of the Highways Act, 1959, for appealing to Quarter Sessions. Happily, it proved unnecessary to take this step because shortly after the Magistrates' decision, the Clerk of the Council, Mr. C. Haigh, indicated to me that if the Society were to request his Council to create a new path along the line we had ourselves suggested, then it would receive consideration. As I write, negotiations are in progress between the landowner and Council for the new path and so in the end it looks as though both sides will be satisfied.

Thanks are due to Mr. Haigh and to the local people for their support; also to "The Rochdale Observer" for the extensive publicity on the topic.

Haughton Green/Denton

Footpath 63, Denton, proved to be a sad little storm in a teacup but well illustrates the attitude of a builder who erects houses seemingly without regard to the feelings of local residents or the existence of public footpaths. I first read of the trouble at Haughton Green in the "Denton Reporter" (for 3.1.69) which gave prominence to the blockage of a path leading from Gibraltar Lane to the River Tame (2½in. Sheet SJ99 937.936). Apparently a building firm, Poole & Foster, were building a bungalow and had blocked the path which was adjacent to the site: Local residents were up in arms at the builders' action, and a statement attributed in the paper to one of the partners, Mr Foster, that people would have to use an alternative route, could only have inflamed matters. The publicity had ensured the reopening of the path, a short but well-used one, as I found on inspection. It did not bisect the site, nor did it interfere with the building in any way, merely running down one side of the plot. There was most certainly room for both path and bungalow to exist, literally side by side, although I had a suspicion that more would be heard of the path.

Sure enough, an official proposed closure notice was posted with almost indecent haste. It was an excellent example of closure for closure's sake and as such we opposed it. A site inspection made after the proposals had been issued and after the new residents had moved into the bungalow, confirmed that we should have the active support of local residents headed by local historian, Burley Key. I was told that all sorts of ruses had been tried to dissuade the public from using the path — like turning children back, swearing at old people, placing a private-looking gate across the path, dumping earth on it, making it slippery and planting trees that dangerously overhung onto the path.

Continuous publicity by the "Reporter" assured a flood of objections and a subsequent hearing was ordered by the Ministry. At the hearing, the locals were in fine voice and Mr. Key produced a petition of some 200 signatures, all being people who lived locally and who objected to the proposed closure. Farce entered into the proceedings when Mr. Foster of the builders told the Ministry inspector that he thought it was all right to take a path as no-one seemed to use it. He went on to say that he did not care whether the path remained open or not and this caused some raised eyebrows, as it was, of course, his firm that had requested closure in the first case.

At the time of writing the Ministry decision on closure or otherwise is not known, but whatever the result I visualise that the fight over Footpath 63 will go down in the pages of the local history of the district when it eventually comes to be written by Mr. Key. Thanks, of course, are due to him and all the other local people involved, the "Denton Reporter" also meriting special mention for the considerable publicity involved.

STOP PRESS: The Minister of Transport announced that he intends to keep the path open.

Little Lever

Nineteen sixty-nine saw the Society's first prosecution for many years for illegal obstruction of a public right of way. This was at Little Lever and concerned a portion of the towpath of the Manchester, Bolton and Bury Canal. Some towpaths have never been admitted as public footpaths although most of them on this canal have managed to get on to the Definitive Rights of Way Maps. One such portion is that from Nob End towards Ladyshore Colliery and numbered by Little Lever U.D.C. as Footpaths 38 and 40 (2½in. Sheet SD70. 752 065 to 758 066). Adjacent to this stretch at 756 064 is Broadbent's Paper Mill now owned by Trinity Paper Mills.

In the late 1940's, after the canal had become disused for commercial traffic, the mill owners bought this stretch of canal and towpath and although they used part of it for extending their buildings, there was no interference with the towpath—that is until 1966 when they erected a 6 ft. high stout wire fence all around their property which effectively blocked both ends of the towpath. On coming across this obstruction, I made enquiries and learned that the mill owners had erected the fence due to vandals entering their property. Before doing this, they had checked with the Little Lever U.D.C. to ascertain that there were no public rights attaching to the towpaths. The Council told them that there were none, even though the Definitive Map quite clearly showed the section in question to be public. The Council later informed the mill owners of their mistake, but unfortunately the barriers were by that time erected. The mill owners elected to leave things as they were and refused to move the obstructions. An impasse was reached and although solicitors acting for them promised to put forward a legal diversion, nothing was done in this direction.

In 1969, the obstructions still remained with no sign of a diversion on the horizon. The U.D.C., understandably perhaps, did not want to take proceedings. We passed the file to our solicitors to endeavour to negotiate, but still the other side would not budge, so a summons for illegal obstruction was issued. The

case was heard at Bolton County Magistrates' Court in October, where Trinity Paper Mills pleaded guilty and were fined. In December I walked the towpath and the obstructions had been removed.

So, although we would rather settle matters of this nature amicably, there is always a final remedy for hard cases. The publicity attracted plenty of attention and we benefited considerably.

Summing up, our activities this year have been very successful. We have of course co-operated with many friends in the local authorities and trust that this will continue and develop through the "public participation in planning" years ahead. Two facts above all however, stand out and these must be clear to all readers by now. If it had not been for the support and interest of the local people and of local newspapers in reporting footpath matters, our successes would have been much less. Getting to "grass roots" level and looking after the walking public, whether they like to call themselves ramblers or not, is our basic function although this year's results, only some of which I have described here, have not been achieved without a struggle. They demonstrate how we intend to stride into the '70's, firmly resolved not to relax our efforts where the protection of rights of way is concerned.

FOOTPATH INSPECTORS REQUIRED

The Footpaths' Society needs additional Inspectors to cover its operational area in the counties of Cheshire, Derbyshire, Lancashire, Staffordshire and the West Riding and invites applications from any members willing to act. They may suggest their own area of operation in the first place, but it may have to be modified to avoid overlapping. An outline of the duties is given below, and the Society will reimburse Inspectors for all reasonable travelling expenses incurred in the work.

Duties of Inspectors

The primary duty of an Inspector is to investigate footpath complaints made to the secretary and to take appropriate action. Time permitting, he should also inspect the paths in his area.

Complaints may arise from misleading notices, deliberate obstruction or removal of stiles, disappearance of footbridges, locking of gates, blocking of paths by undergrowth or overgrowth, ploughing without reinstatement, or personal intimidation by landowners, tenants, uncontrolled dogs, bulls, etc. All of these call for positive action on our part.

On receipt of a complaint the Inspector should first visit the path in question and establish the facts. Complainants sometimes encounter obstructions because they are not on the path. For this purpose $2\frac{1}{2}$ -inch maps are essential and the Society will provide them. It is also desirable, but by no means essential, to consult the official "definitive map" of footpaths (if there is one) at the Local Council office. Inclusion of a footpath in such a map is conclusive evidence that it is a right of way, *but the opposite is not true*. An omitted path may still be public, though it will be much harder to prove that it is. It is useful to be able to refer to a definite map and quote the official F.P. Number, but inability to do so need not deter an Inspector from following up a complaint.

If the complaint is confirmed, a tactful approach to the owner may help in some cases, but it is best to avoid involvement in disputes. It is unwise to remove an obstruction unless you are quite sure the path is public, and then only so much of it as is necessary for *you* to get through.

Having fully ascertained the facts, Inspectors should report to the Secretary who will then write to the appropriate local authority. Inspectors should also attend Council Meetings and submit brief factual reports on their work. They will be supplied with a copy of a recently issued booklet on the "Law of Footpaths."

Offers of help should be addressed to the Society's Secretary.

FOOTPATH INSPECTORS AREAS

Inspectors' Areas are under revision. All complaints should be sent direct to the General Secretary.

A

South-east Lancashire, approximately south of east-west grid line 420, bounded on the south by the Cheshire border, on the east by the Yorkshire districts and on the west by and excluding Bolton C.B.

Northern districts include: Heywood M.B.; Littleborough U.D.; Ramsbottom U.D.

Southern districts include: Manchester C.B.; Salford C.B.; Stretford M.B.; Denton U.D.; Urmston U.D.

Eastern districts include: Oldham C.B.; Ashton-under-Lyne M.B.; Mossley M.B.; Crompton U.D.; Lees U.D.; Milnrow U.D.; Royton U.D.

Western districts include: Bury C.B.; Eccles M.B.; Farnworth M.B.; Radcliffe M.B.; Kearsley U.D.; Little Lever U.D.; Tottington U.D.; Worsley U.D.

Central Districts include: Rochdale C.B.; Middleton M.B.; Prestwich M.B.; Swinton and Pendlebury M.B.; Audenshaw U.D.; Chadderton U.D.; Droylsden U.D.; Failsworth U.D.; Whitefield U.D.

B

South-east Lancashire and West Yorkshire districts of Whitworth U.D.; Wardle U.D.; Todmorden M.B.

C

South and Central Lancashire, north of the River Mersey, north of Warrington and the Cheshire border, bounded on the west and excluding the county boroughs of St. Helens, Wigan and rural districts. On the north by Preston R.D.

The north and certain western districts include the twenty parishes of Chorley R.D.—Anderton; Anglezarke; Bretherton; Brindle, Charnock Richard; Clayton-le-Woods; Coppull; Croston; Cuerden; Eccleston; Euxton; Heapey; Heath Charnock; Heskin; Hoghton; Mawdsley; Rivington; Ulnes Walton; Wheelton; Whittle-le-Woods; and also Adlington; Blackrod, Chorley; Horwich and Withnell; the western districts are Aspull; Ashton-in-Makerfield; Abram; Haydock; Ince-in-Makerfield; Hindley and Newton-le-Willows; the south side includes Golborne; Irlam; etc.; the east side includes Turton; Tottington; etc. The central district Atherton; Bolton; Leigh; Tyldesley; and Westhoughton complete the area.

D

North Cheshire districts of: Altrincham M.B.; Sale M.B.; Bowdon U.D.; Hale U.D.; Lymen U.D.; and the Bucklow R.D. parishes of: Dunham Massey, Carrington, Partington, Warburton.

E

South Cheshire districts of: Congleton M.B.; Congleton R.D.; Alsager U.D.; Sandbach U.D.

Congleton R. D. Parishes are: Archid; Betchton; Bradwell; Brereton; Church Hulme; Church Lawton; Cranage; Elton; Goostrey; Hassall; Hulme Walfield; Moreton-cum-Alcumlow; Newbold Astbury; Odd Rode; Smallwood; Somerford; Somerford Booths; Swettenham; Tetton and Twemlow.

F

East Cheshire districts of: Macclesfield M.B.; Bollington U.D.; and Macclesfield R.D. parishes of: Adlington; Bosley; Eaton; Gawsworth; Hurdsfield; Macclesfield Forest; Marton; Pott Shrigley; Poynton-with-Worth; North Rode; Siddington; Sutton; Wincle; Widboarclough; Withington.

G

Central Cheshire districts of: Knutsford U.D. and Bucklow R.D. parishes of: Agden; Ashley; Aston by Budworth; Bexton; Bollington; High Legh; Mere; Millington; Peover Superior; Peover Inferior; Plumley; Pickmere; Ollerton; Ringway; Rostherne; Tabley Superior; Tabley Inferior; Tatton; Toft.

H

North-east Cheshire districts of: Stockport C.B.; Dukinfield M.B.; Hyde M.B.; Stalybridge M.B.; Bredbury and Romiley U.D.; Cheadle and Gatley U.D.; Hazel Grove and Bramhall U.D.; Marple U.D.

I

North-east Cheshire and South-west Yorkshire districts of: Longendale U.D.; Tintwistle R.D.; Holmfirth U.D.; Saddleworth U.D.

J

North-west Derbyshire and East Cheshire districts of: Buxton M.B.; Chapel-en-le-Frith R.D. and parishes of: Chinley; Buxworth; and Brownside; Hayfield (part); Peak Forest (part); Wormhill (part); Macclesfield R.D.; parishes of: Kettleshulme; Lyme Handley; Rainow; Disley U.D.; New Mills U.D. (south part); Whaley Bridge U.D.

K

North Derbyshire districts of: Glossop M.B.; Chapel-en-le-Frith U.D.; parishes of: Aston; Bamford; Brough and Shatton; Castleton; Charlesworth; Chisworth; Derwent; Edale; Green Fairfield; Hartington Upper Quarter (part); Hayfield (part); Hope; Hope Woodlands; King Sterndale; Peak Forest; Thornhill; Wormhill (part).

L

West Derbyshire districts of: Bakewell U.D.; Bakewell R.D.; parishes of: Abney and Abney Grange; Aldwark; Ashford-in-the-Water; Baslow and Bubnell; Beeley; Birchover; Blackwell; Bradwell; Bushfield; Calver; Chelmorton; Cubar; Edensor; Elton; Eyam; Eyam Woodlands; Flagg; Froggatt; Gratton; Great Hucklow; Great Longstone; Foolow; Harthill; Hassop; Hartington M.Q.; Hathersage; Highlow; Hazelbadge; Ivonbrook-Grange; Little Hucklow; Little Longstone; Litton; Middleton and Smernill; Monyash; Nether Haddon; Over Haddon; Offerton; Outseats; Pilsley; Rowland; Rowsley; Sheldon; Stanton; Stoke; Tideswell; Weston; Winster; Youlgrave; Wardlow; Grinlow; Chatsworth; Stoney Middleton; Taddington.

M

North-east Derbyshire districts of: Chesterfield M.B.; Clay Cross U.D.; Dronfield U.D.; Staveley U.D.; Chesterfield R.D.; Parishes of: Ashover; Barlow; Brackenfield; Brimington; Calow; Eckington; Brompton; Hasland; Holmesfield; Heath; Morton; North-Wingfield; Shirland and Higham; Stretton; Sutton-cum-Duckmanton; Tupton; Temple Normanton; Unstone; Walton; Wessington; Wingerworth.

N

North-east Derbyshire and South Yorkshire W.R. (approximately south of River Don and north of grid line 370) districts of: Sheffield C.B. (part); Chesterfield; R.D. parish of Killamarch; Clowne R.D. parishes of Barlborough; Clowne; Elmton; Whitwell; Bolsover U.D.; Rotherham R.D.; parishes of: Aston-cum-Aughton; Bramley; Brinsworth; Catcliffe; Dalton; Denaby; Heaton-Levitt; Hooton Roberts; Orgreave; Ravenfield; Thrybergh; Treeton; Ulley; Thurgroft; Whiston; Wickersley; Kiverton Park R.D.; parishes of: Dinnington St. John's; Firbeck; Gildingwells; Harthill with Woodall; Letwell; Thorpe Salvin; Todwick; Wales; Woodsetts; North and South Anston; Doncaster C.B. and Doncaster R.D.; parishes of: Braithwell; Conisbrough Parks; Edlington; Loversall; Stainton; Rossington; Wadworth; Warmsworth; Bawtry.

O

South Yorkshire W.R. (approximately north of River Don), districts of: Sheffield C.B. (part); Rotherham C.B.; Doncaster R.D.; parishes of: Cadeby; High Melton; Sprotborough; Wortley R.D.; parish of Bradfield.

P

East Derbyshire district of Alfreton U.D.; Blackwell R.D., and parishes of: Ault Hucknall; Blackwell; Glapwell; Pinxton; Pleasley; Scarcliffe; Shirebrook; South Normanton; Tibshelf.

Q

West Derbyshire (approximately south of grid line 360). Parishes of: Ballidon; Brassington; Bradbourne; Callow; Carsington; Eaton and Alsop; Hartington Nether Quarter; Hartington Town Quarter; Hopton; Ible; Lea Hall; Newton Grange; Parwich; Tissington.

R

Central Derbyshire. Matlock U.D. and districts of: Bonsall; Cromford; Darley; Matlock; Matlock Bath; Tansley; Wensley and Snitterton; Wirksworth U.D.; Belper R.D.; and parishes of: Alderwasley; Ashlehay; Crich; Dethick Lea and Holloway; Pentrich; South Wingfield.

S

North Staffordshire (approximately north of grid line 340): Leek U.D.; Leek R.D.; and parishes of: Alstonefield; Bradnop; Bagnall; Butterton; Endon and Stanley; Fawfieldhead; Grindon; Heathylee; Hollinsclough; Heaton; Horton; Leekfrith; Longnor; Longsdon; Onecote; Quarnford; Rushton; Sheen; Tittesworth; Warslow and Elkstones; Ilam; Wetton; Cheadle R.D.; parishes of: Alton; Blore with Swinscoe; Cheadle; Cheddleton; Consall; Cotton; Farley; Ipstones; Kingsley; Oakamoor; Waterhouses.

Areas Covered by Adjacent Footpath Societies

Alderley Edge, Wilmslow and District Footpaths Preservation Society covers an area within a five-mile radius of Alderley Edge, i.e., Alderley Edge, Chelford, Henbury, Marthall, Mobberley, Knutsford (east side), Mottram St. Andrew, Lower Peover, Nether Alderley, Ollerton, Over Alderley, Over Peover, Prestbury, Wilmslow, Woodford, Warford Chorley, Siddington, Snellon.

Barnsley District Footpaths Society covers Barnsley C.B.; Darton U.D.; Dodsworth U.D.; Worsborough U.D.; Hoyland Nether U.D.; Wombwell U.D.; Darfield U.D.; Cudworth U.D.; Royston U.D.; Stocksbridge U.D.; Wath-upon-Dearne U.D.; Dearne U.D.; Penistone U.D.; Denby Dale U.D. and Denby Emley, Clayton West, Skelmanthorpe, Cumberworth; Kirkburton U.D. Parish of Flockton; Penistone R.D., Parishes of Langsett (part), High Hoyland, Cawthorne, Silkstone, Stainborough, Thurgoland, Oxspring, Hunshelf, Gunthwaite and Ingbirchworth; Wortley R.D. Parishes of Wortley, Tankersley Ecclesfield; Rotherham R.D. Parishes of Wentworth, Brampton Brierlow; Hemsworth R.D. Parishes of Ryhill, Havercroft with Cold Hiendley, South Hiendley, Shafton, Brierly, Billingley, Great Houghton, Little Houghton; Wakefield R.D. Parishes of Sillington, West Bretton, Crigglestone, Woolley, Chevet, Nottton, Walton, Wintersett; Doncaster R.D. All land within the Peak District National Park is excluded.

Derbyshire Footpaths Preservation Society covers south of the southern boundary of Bakewell R.D. and the U.D.s. of Matlock and Wirksworth, i.e., approximately south of east-west grid line 350 which includes Ashbourne R.D. and Parishes through which this grid line passes. i.e. Thorpe, Fenny Bentley, Kniverton, Atlow, Hognaston, Kirk Ireton, Idridgehay and Alton, Shottle and Postern, Belper U.D., Ripley U.D., Heanor U.D.

The Mid-Cheshire Footpath Society, bounded on the east by all Runcorn R.D. and all Northwich R.D. and parishes of Acton, Cuddington, Oakmere, Little Budworth, Darnhall, Crowton, Delamere, Tarporley, Utkington, Rushton and the enclosed Urban Districts of Northwich, Winsford and Middlewich. The Runcorn parishes are: Antrobus, Appleton, Dutton, Grappenhall, Great Budworth, Hatton, Moore, Stockton Heath, Stretton, Walton and Whitley, All Tarvin R.D., Nantwich and the western parts of Nantwich R.D. bounded on the west by Chester City and Chester R.D. north-west of the canal.

SIGNPOSTS

List of signposts, etc., maintained by the Society in Lancashire, Cheshire, Yorkshire (W.R.) and Staffordshire.

Post No.	Grid Reference	Position
29	981 778 -	Near Summerclose Farm, Kettleshulme.
46	722 786 -	At Yew Tree House, Tabley.
50	192 986 -	On Mickleden Edge at junction of paths.
51	198 006 -	At Little Brockhouse, near Hazelhead.
52	197 015 -	At Hazelhead, near old Flouch Inn.
76	219 912 -	At Foulstone Delf, Strines.
79	962 086 -	At Grains Bar.
81	707 782 -	Near Flittogate Farm, Knutsford.
82	997 726 -	On Macclesfield-Buxton Rd., south of Stake Farm.
83	983 691 -	On Cart road to Shutlingsloe Farm.
90	707 806 -	Near Hollow-wood Farm, Tabley.
91	692 806 -	Near Littley Farm, Arley.
102	988 836 -	On Disley-Whaley Bridge old road at Higher Disley.
103	003 694 -	On Buxton-Allgreave road S.E. of Sparbent.
104	989 692 -	Near Clough House, Wildboarclough.
105	000 710 -	On path one mile south of "Cat and Fiddle" Inn.
109	979 820 -	At Dissop Head Farm. Path to Lyme Park.
115	982 804 -	Near Lower Cliff Farm, Lyme Handley.
116	973 809 -	South of Bowstonegate Farm.
119	963 841 -	Near Elmerhurst Cottages, Lyme Park.
120	002 905 -	West side of Gun Lane, opposite Gun Farm.
123	137 905 -	Near Townend Cottage and junction of paths, Ilam.
126	990 820 -	Opposite Bowstonegate Farm.
127	676 156 -	Near Belmont Village, north of Wright's Arms.
129	702 179 -	On Darwen Road near the late Old Green Arms.
130	703 181 -	On Darwen Road north of the late Old Green Arms.
131	991 688 -	Near Crag Hall, Wildboarclough.
132	998 686 -	On Buxton-Allgreave road, east of Crag.
134	987 807 -	On lane opposite Handley Foot Farm.
135	722 865 -	Opposite "Ye Olde No. 3" Inn, Altrincham-Lymm Road.
136	713 862 -	East side of A56 road at Agden Brow.
137	712 854 -	On Agden Lane, south-west of Agden House.
138	724 851 -	Opposite Booth Bank Farm.
139	726 858 -	On Reddy Lane, near a cottage.
140	746 778 -	On lane near to Blackhill Farm, Knutsford.
141	730 763 -	On Sudlow Lane, opposite to a cottage.
142	979 696 -	On Shutlingsloe path prior to a stepboard stile.
143	970 703 -	On Shutlingsloe path near a plantation.
144	975 698 -	Close to wallside.
145	997 799 -	On Saltersford Road, south of Green Head Farm.
146	983 052 -	On footpath Burnedge Lane to Dobercross.
147	146 509 -	Post west of Stepping Stones in Dovedale.

148	982 827 -	South of Bolder Hall, Higher Disley.
149	889 696 -	South-west of Gawsworth Church.
150	981 832 -	South end of Green Lane footpath, Disley.
151	977 830 -	Near East Lodge, Lyme Park.
152	984 826 -	Moorside Hotel, Higher Disley.
153	- -	On Erwin Lane, north of Buxterstoops Farm.
154	935 805 -	Keepers Cottage, Pott Shrigley.
155	955 807 -	Keepers Cottage, on F.P. for Higher Poynton.
Six finger posts between Slippery Stones and Cut Gate End, Derwent.		
One finger post at Bradfield Gate Head, Derwent Edge.		
One finger post (No. 22) between plates 90 and 91.		
One finger post (No. 23) near Castle Mill.		
One finger post (No. 24) near Castle Mill.		
One finger post (No. 30) near Mellor Church.		
One footbridge, near Broomycrofthead, Macclesfield Forest.		

Derbyshire County Council maintain the direction posts and footbridges erected by the Society within the administrative area.

FOOTPATH WALKING SCHEME

The work of Footpath Inspection in conjunction with the R.A. continued during the last 12 months and although there was a slackening off in intensity much useful work was done especially by a few ever willing enthusiasts. The mid-week rambles were well supported and during the summer of 1970 these will be held twice monthly. Volunteers are needed to assist with the mid-week walks and on the survey generally. Contact A. O'Brien, 62, Beechfield Road, Milnrow, near Rochdale.

MID-WEEK WALKS

1970.

April	8—Whaley Bridge	...	...	...	...	...	Piccadilly	09-45
	22—Marple	...	...	...	...	...	Piccadilly	10-00
May	13—Glossop	...	...	...	...	...	Piccadilly	10-15
	27—Knutsford	...	...	...	...	...	Oxford Road	10-21
June	10—Bolton Moors	...	...	...	Victoria	Bus Station	10-00	
	24—Greenfield	...	...	...	...	...	Lever Street	10-01
July	8—Alderley Edge	...	...	...	...	...	Piccadilly	09-51
	22—Marple	...	...	...	...	...	Piccadilly	10-00
Aug.	12—Hadfield	...	...	...	...	...	Piccadilly	10-15
	26—Disley—Whaley Bridge	...	...	...	...	...	Piccadilly	09-45
Sept.	9—Knutsford	...	...	...	...	...	Oxford Road	10-21
	23—Higher Poynton	...	...	...	Lower	Mosley Street	10-05	

Times should be checked—They may have been altered.

PLEASE USE THESE FOOTPATHS

CHESHIRE

Goostrey 2 and Twemlow 3. From Goostrey Lane, at or near a school, Goostrey Footpath 2 goes South to the Twemlow Boundary Division and Twemlow F.P. 3, which Footpath runs South to Twemlow Lane, at or near Blueslade Farm and the Traffic (Railway) Bridge at Twemlow Green.

Marple 101. From Rush Lane, East of "Hilltop", going South East to Shiloh Road. East of "Briar Grove Slack".

Marple 139. From Black Lane, just West of "Cross" Site, Primrose Lane and Napkin Piece Junction, going North West to Cobden Edge Road, opposite Cobden Edge House and Farm.

DERBYSHIRE

Great Hucklow 10. From the Village, South West of school, going North West, passing an old Lead Mine Site, to Hazlebadge Boundary Division and continuing Footpath (Hazlebadge 2). Direction still North West (South of Quarters Farm), to join another Footpath (Hazlebadge 1) which runs North to road.

Grindlow 2. From the Village, going South East to the Foolow Boundary Division and continuing Footpath (Foolow 13) to the Foolow—Eyam Road.

Little Hucklow 1. From road at Windmill, going North West to road, East of Village and Inn (P.H.).

Stony Middleton 3. From Middleton Dale, West of Village (B.M. 7.49), going South, then South West to Coombs Dale.

Stony Middleton 13. From Middleton Dale, opposite Eyam Dale, going mainly South West, passing Site of Old Lead Mines—Middleton Pastures—to point opposite Lane Head and commencement of Black Harry Lane. (Bridle Road).

LANCASHIRE

Ashton-under-Lyne 49. From Lily Lanes, North East of Hartshead Inn (P.H.) Lees Road, going South and passing through Greenhurst Clough, then West to join Ashton-under-Lyne Footpath 50, which goes to Lees Road.

Ashton-under-Lyne 52. From point on road, midway between Lily Lanes (N.E.) and Hartshead Green, going East then mainly South, to point near Knott Hill, where the direction becomes South West to crossing point in Greenhurst Clough. Then South to Gorsey Lane.

Ashton-under-Lyne 67. From Mossley Road, roughly 2½ miles North of the Junction Inn (P.H.) at Hazelhurst, going North to stream crossing point, then North West and South West to "Windy Bank" and supporting Footpaths to road by Mission Church.

Ashton-under-Lyne 58. From Mossley Road, roughly 1½ miles North of Hazelhurst Road Junction at or near the Junction Inn (P.H.), going South West, just South of Dirt Farm to join Ashton-under-Lyne Footpath 57 and supporting Footpaths to Knott Hill Reservoir.

CONSERVATION

The following is a letter to the local press from one of our members:

Sir—In his Reith Lectures, Dr Fraser Darling has said that every acre, not only of Britain but of the globe, demands thought before its biological and visual relations are altered; that it is a question of whether our lives are to shrink to a condition of life in death, or whether we are to look outward and proclaim that we live in a beautiful world in which we believe and which we intend to maintain. What is needed is that each individual should care for his surroundings, should want a better environment, and be willing to pay and work for it.

This forthright declaration by so eminent an authority, coming at the beginning of Conservation Year, forms a fitting introduction to the new decade which has just commenced, a decade during which the necessity for taking very much stronger measures to deal with pollution and desecration of environment will become of ever increasing urgency.

The declaration also indicates the degreee of acceptance now accorded to views which, when first put forward by our association in relation to the Marple environment some 15 years ago, were regarded by those in authority as being "cranky" if not worse. Yet we have always found that such views have been fully appreciated by the thoughtful public, and in this connection, I can not do better than to quote what a writer in the "Sunday Telegraph" said recently in an open letter addressed to Mr. Edward Heath.

"You would be very wrong, I think," he said, "to shrug all this off as something trivial in relation to such issues as the Common Market and trade union reform, for in doing so you would be demonstrating a lack of awareness of what we the ordinary people, really care about, a lack that has proved fatal to many a politician before. If a referendum were taken to measure the public interest in — say — trade union reform, Britain's entry to the Common Market and pollution (or preservation) of our air, coasts and countryside, the last subject would win hands down." ("Sunday Telegraph," December 28th, 1969).

Let politicians of all parties and of none be ever-increasingly reminded of this as a General Election draws nigh, and let it be made abundantly clear to them that what the public demands is decisive action and not specious promises. Fifteen years ago, Mr. Harold Macmillan said that "in National Parks, amenity is to be the over-riding consideration."

What in fact has happened is that both of the political parties which have since been in power have allowed the desecration of the National Parks to proceed to such a disgusting extent

that the Countryside Commission (an official body set up to advise the Minister) has recently made a strong protest and has expressed the gravest fears for the future. If this is the situation in our most beautiful scenic areas, it is not hard to judge how desperate is the position elsewhere.—Yours etc.,

W. F. BEECH,

Secretary,

Marple Branch of Cheshire County
Federation of Ratepayers.

COMMONS REGISTRATION

The Commons Registration Act of 1965 provided for the registration of common land during a period of three years from 2nd January, 1967, to the 1st January, 1970. Any common land, town or village green finally registered will become established conclusively as such; any land which has not been registered will cease to be common.

The Peak & Northern Footpaths Society and the Manchester Area of the Ramblers' Association formed a Joint Commons Registration Committee, holding its first meeting on the 30th September, 1967, at which it resolved to try and ensure registration of all common land within its areas.

The first move was to write to the County Councils of Cheshire, Derbyshire and Lancashire, also the various County Boroughs, and ask them to advise us of the common land and village greens in their areas and state whether these had so far been registered. After this, there was a great deal of correspondence with other local authorities, amenity bodies and individuals, checking-up on actual and possible registrations. By February, 1969, however, it was felt that some more intensive work required to be done, and it was therefore decided to try and recruit one or two field workers to carry this out.

Now that the end of the registration period has been reached, I think that the Joint Registration Committee can feel some satisfaction at the result of its work. In Cheshire, for example, thanks to assistance from Mr. Arthur Smith and Mr Jack Baker, who spent a considerable amount of time checking on locations and registrations with the County Authority—and thanks also to the County Registration Authority itself which has been most assiduous in its work—it can be said that probably all registerable land in the county has been duly entered. In Derbyshire, where the county authority was not particularly helpful, not much required

to be done as there was little common land in our part of the county. Mr. N. W. Yelland, of Whaley Bridge—coming late into the work force—was able to assure the Committee that there was not, in fact, any land in the county which could be registered by us, except for possibly one small piece. In Lancashire we had quite a considerable amount of moorland to check upon. Most of this was in the south-east of the county and covered by the East Lancashire Commoners' Association. Mr Arthur Eaton, assisted by Mr Jock Willison, did sterling work here, both at Preston and on the ground, and as a result, the Joint Committee was assured that all the common land in its part of Lancashire, had been duly registered by the end of December, 1969.

In addition to those already mentioned, our thanks must be extended to Mr. Paul Earl of Bolton, to Dr. Beech of Marple, members of various local amenity or civic societies, and others.

RUBY IRLAM, Hon. Secretary, Joint Committee.

FOOTPATH INSPECTION AND GENERAL REPORT

During the past year, many cases of footpath obstruction were investigated. These referred to stiles and gates in disrepair, or obstructed by fencing or barbed wire erections, footbridges in decay or missing, paths ploughed in or obstructed by outgrowing trees.

As soon as circumstances permit reports are passed to the local office of the Rural District Council concerned, or in some cases to the particular farmer and/or landowner.

Unfortunately, however irritating, delays are often met with before some action at local level is taken to put matters aright.

Against this, however, it must be conceded that certain authorities are very helpful and obliging in their attention to footpath clearance.

Another setback to the work progress, is the geographical position in the more remote areas, in which the society operates. With the increasing withdrawal and curtailment of public transport, it is growing more difficult to pay other than fleeting visits to these attractive areas.

These splendid walking areas are in danger of becoming neglected and lost to the walker.

In the meantime, rambling organisations and other like bodies, could help materially when arranging their seasonal programmes to include path routes in North and Central Derbyshire and Cheshire.

Members and friends are asked that when obstructions are encountered, the facts should be reported to the Hon. General Secretary, Mr. E. A. W. Newton, accompanied by a rough plan of the locality, so that the affected routes may be traced without difficulty.

DIVERSION AND CLOSURE ORDERS

Copies of Statutory Orders concerning diversion and closure of footpath lengths were received and dealt with during the year.

Again, it was mainly the result of urban development in the particular area—natural footpaths giving way, and being replaced mainly by metalled ways. It is regretted that many rural footpaths are destined to disappear in this way, but the claims of housing must obviously be conceded.

The Society, however, would attempt to get such proposals altered or modified, if considered to be against the interest of the public.

Many attractive footpath routes may be threatened by this onrush of urban development.

It is important, therefore, that members and friends keep close watch for official announcements in the local Press, which may well affect a footpath link.

If such announcement is noticed, then the Hon. General Secretary, Mr. E. A. W. Newton, should be advised as soon as convenient in order that appropriate action may be commenced, before closure date mentioned.

Notices received during the year, respecting closure and diversion of footpaths affected routes in the counties of Cheshire, Derbyshire, Lancashire, Staffordshire, Yorkshire (West Riding).

The Society again desires to express its sincere thanks to the Commons, Open Spaces and Footpaths Preservation Society, and also to the Central Rights of Way Committee, both of London, for continued assistance in providing information relative to footpaths diversion, and closures.

A list of some of the lesser known footpaths has again been prepared, and will be found elsewhere in this report.

TREASURER'S REPORT FOR 1969

MEMBERSHIP

		1968	1969
Ordinary (1 Death, 22 New) ...	...	315	336
Ten-year Members .....	...	39	47
Husband/Wife (4 New) ...	...	184	188
Junior .....	...	10	6
Affiliated Bodies ...	...	93	91
Local Authorities ...	...	22	7

The total membership now stands at 571 as compared with 499 for 1968 which has justified our hope last year that arrears would be made up. There was, however, quite a number of members who had not renewed at the financial year end but the position is improving steadily.

FINANCE

Total income for the year shows an all-round decrease on 1968 which it is hoped will improve during the coming year.

Expenditure on the other hand shows a considerable increase caused by higher printing costs and some non-recurring expenditure. Travelling expenses have risen due to increased activity as foreshadowed last year and money has been granted to the C.O.S. and F.P. Society for its map fund.

Once again we have benefited by legacies from the late Mr. Pye (£311) and Mrs. Ingle (£100) which has enabled us to show a useful surplus of income over expenditure. Transfers have been made from surpluses to build up the special funds which still remain in deficit over the year.

Donations from Local Authorities

Again we are able to report that the local authorities have contributed to our funds. This year, 1969, we have received contributions from seven authorities.

County Council: Derbyshire.

County Borough: Oldham.

Municipal Borough: Bacup.

Urban District Councils: Bowden; Dronfield; Marple; Penistone.

IN MEMORIAM

The following donation has been received in memory of a late member:—

Received from:

Miss E. M. Meadowcroft.

In memory of:

Mr. Herbert Meadowcroft.

PEAK AND NORTHERN FOOTPATHS SOCIETY
INCOME AND EXPENDITURE ACCOUNT FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31st OCTOBER, 1969

INVESTMENT RESERVE ACCOUNT AS AT 31st OCTOBER, 1969

1968			1968		
£	s.	d.	£	s.	d.
4,090	5	1	Balance brought forward from 1968	5,034	5 4
944	0	3	J. A. Pye Legacy	5,034	5 4
—	—	—	Investments made during year	97	2 6
<u>£5,034</u>	<u>5</u>	<u>4</u>	<u>£5,131</u>	<u>7</u>	<u>10</u>
				<u>£5,034</u>	<u>5</u>
					<u>4</u>
					<u>£5,131</u>
					<u>7</u>
					<u>10</u>

GENERAL EXPENSE RESERVE ACCOUNT AS AT 31st OCTOBER, 1969

1968			1968		
£	s.	d.	£	s.	d.
595	10	0	Balance brought forward from 1968	1,021	9 9
425	19	9	Surplus from Income and Expenditure Account	461	4 10
—	—	—			
				<u>1,021</u>	<u>9</u>
					<u>9</u>
<u>£1,021</u>	<u>9</u>	<u>9</u>	<u>£1,482</u>	<u>14</u>	<u>7</u>
				<u>£1,021</u>	<u>9</u>
					<u>9</u>
					<u>£1,482</u>
					<u>14</u>
					<u>7</u>

DEFENCE FUND AS AT 31st OCTOBER, 1969

1968			1968		
£	s.	d.	£	s.	d.
1,509	13	9	Balance brought forward from 1968	1,518	17 9
9	4	0	Donations received during year	5	10 2
—	—	—	Transfer from General Expense Reserve Account	549	5 1
<u>£1,518</u>	<u>17</u>	<u>9</u>	<u>£2,073</u>	<u>13</u>	<u>0</u>
				<u>£1,518</u>	<u>17</u>
					<u>9</u>
					<u>£2,073</u>
					<u>13</u>
					<u>0</u>

SURVEY ACCOUNT AS AT 31st OCTOBER, 1969

1968	f s. d.	1968	f s. d.	1968	f s. d.
166 18 10	Balance brought forward from 1968	149 11 4	25 0 0	Survey Expenditure	26 9 5
7 12 6	Donations received during year	11 9 3	149 11 4	Balance carried forward to 1970	200 0 0
---	Transfer from General Expense Reserve	65 8 10	174 11 4	Account	226 9 5
	<hr/>	<hr/>	<hr/>	<hr/>	<hr/>
<hr/>	<hr/>	<hr/>	<hr/>	<hr/>	<hr/>
£174 11 4		£226 9 5	£174 11 4		£226 9 5

SIGNPOST ACCOUNT AS AT 31st OCTOBER, 1969

1968	f s. d.	1968	f s. d.	1968	f s. d.
353 3 4	Balance brought forward from 1968	365 8 4	17 6 0	Signpost Maintenance and Erection	60 5 0
29 11 0	Donations received during year	12 4 6	365 8 4	Balance carried forward to 1970	317 7 10
---	<hr/>	<hr/>	<hr/>	<hr/>	<hr/>
<hr/>	<hr/>	<hr/>	<hr/>	<hr/>	<hr/>
£382 14 4		£377 12 10	£382 14 4		£377 12 10

EDWIN ROYCE MEMORIAL COMMITTEE GRANT FOR SPECIAL PURPOSES ACCOUNT

1968	f s. d.	1968	f s. d.	1968	f s. d.
91 2 3	Balance brought forward from 1968	91 2 3	91 2 3	Balance carried forward to 1970	91 2 3
---	<hr/>	<hr/>	<hr/>	<hr/>	<hr/>
<hr/>	<hr/>	<hr/>	<hr/>	<hr/>	<hr/>
£91 2 3		£91 2 3	£91 2 3		£91 2 3

BALANCE SHEET AS AT 31st OCTOBER, 1969

1968			1968			1968					
£	s.	d.	£	s.	d.	£	s.	d.			
5	2	8	Cash in hand	2	3	6	1,518	17	9		
447	10	9	Petty Cash	—	—	—	365	8	4		
7,664	3	10	Cash at Bank	66	1	2	149	11	4		
65	10	0	Deposits and Investments	8,498	11	5	1,021	9	9		
			Accrued	—	—	—	5,034	5	4		
						—	91	2	3		
							1	12	6		
									Subscriptions paid in advance		
									Accrued		
<hr/> £8,182	<hr/> 7	<hr/> 3	<hr/> £8,566	<hr/> 16	<hr/> 1	<hr/> £8,182	<hr/> 7	<hr/> 3	<hr/> £8,566	<hr/> 16	<hr/> 1

REPORT OF THE AUDITOR TO THE MEMBERS OF THE PEAK AND NORTHERN FOOTPATHS SOCIETY.

I have obtained all the information and explanations which to the best of my knowledge and belief, were necessary for the purposes of my Audit. In my opinion proper books of account have been kept by the Society so far as appears from my examination of those books. I have examined the above Balance Sheet and annexed Income and Expenditure Account which are in agreement with the books of Account. In my opinion and to the best of my information and according to the explanations given to me, the said Accounts give a true and fair view of the state of the affairs of the Society as at 31st October, 1969, and the Income and Expenditure Account gives a true and fair view of the excess of Income over Expenditure for the year ended on that date.

London, 1st February, 1970.

A. IRVING, Auditor.

LIST OF AFFILIATED BODIES, 1969

Alderley Edge, Wilmslow and District Footpaths Pres. Society.
Altrincham and District Natural History Society.
Barnsley Mountaineering Club.
Boy Scouts' Association, S.E. Lancs.
3rd Altrincham Grammar School Scout Group.
Hazel Grove, Bramhall and District Boy Scouts' Association.
Bramhall Ratepayers' Association.
British Naturalists' Association Manchester Branch.
Buxton Field Club.
Camping Club of Great Britain and Ireland, Lancs. and Cheshire Assoc.
Camping Club of Great Britain and Ireland, London.
Camping Club of G.B. and I. North West Region.
Cheadle Heath and District Residents' Association.
Cheshire County Federation of Ratepayers and Kindred Associations.
C.E. Holiday Homes, Liverpool Section.
C.E. Holiday Homes, Manchester Section.
C.E. Holiday Homes, Sheffield Group.
C.E. Holiday Homes, Stockport Group.
C.E. Holiday Homes Ltd., Warrington.
The C.H.A. Manchester.
The C.H.A. Altrincham and District Rambling Club.
The C.H.A. and H.F. Ashton-u-Lyne and District Rambling Club.
The C.H.A. Barnsley Rambling Club.
The C.H.A. Bury and District Rambling Club.
The C.H.A. and H.F. Buxton Rambling Club.
The C.H.A. Eccles Rambling Club.
The C.H.A. Leicester Rambling Club.
The C.H.A. Leigh and District Rambling Club.
The C.H.A. Manchester 'C' Section Rambling Club.
The C.H.A. Manchester 'D' Section Rambling Club.
The C.H.A. Mansfield Rambling Club.
The C.H.A. Oldham Rambling Club.
The C.H.A. Rochdale Rambling Club.
The C.H.A. Sheffield 'A' Section Rambling Club.
The C.H.A. Sheffield 'B' Section Rambling Club.
The C.H.A. Stockport Rambling Club.
The Crescent Ramblers, Northwich.
Derbyshire Footpaths Preservation Society, Derby.
Derbyshire Pennine Club, Sheffield.
The Disley Society.
Good Companions Rambling Club, Sheffield.
Halcyon Rambling Club, Sheffield.
Hanliensian Rambling Club, Stoke-on-Trent.
Hazel Grove Townswomen's Guild.
Holiday Fellowship Ltd., London.
H.F. Bolton Group.
H.F. Bury Group.
H.F. Manchester Group.
H.F. Oldham and District.
H.F. Rochdale Group.
H.F. Sheffield Group.
Kindred Spirits Walking Society, Dob Cross.
L.I.M.D.O. Staff of AEI Ltd.
Macclesfield and District Field Club.
Macclesfield Rambling Club.
Manchester Associates Rambling Club.

Manchester & District Blind Rambling Club.
Manchester Fellowship (Ramblers Section).
Manchester Pedestrian Club.
Manchester Rambling Club.
Marple District Rambling Club.
Marple Residents' Association.
Mid-Cheshire Footpaths Society.
Moor and Mountain Club.
Mossley Civic Trust.
North Western Naturalists' Union, Manchester.
Peak Wardens' Association.
Pedestrians Society for Road Safety.
Ramblers' Association, Derbyshire Area.
Ramblers' Association, Liverpool Area.
Ramblers' Association, Manchester Area.
Ramblers' Association, Nottingham Area.
Ramblers' Association, Sheffield and District Area.
Rucksack Club.
Saddleworth Civic Trust.
Sale and District Social Rambling Club.
Sheffield Clarion Ramblers.
Sheffield Rambling Club.
Sheffield Co-operative Rambling Club.
Spires Rambling Club.
Stockport Field Club.
Sutton-in-Ashfield and District Rambling Club.
Thelwall Owner-Occupiers' Association.
United Field Naturalist Society.
Wayfarers Rambling Club, Manchester.
Wayfarers Rambling Club, Nottinghamshire.
Whaley Bridge Amenity Society.
W.E.A. Stockport Rambling Club.
Y.H.A. Longton Group.
Y.H.A. Sheffield Sub-Section.
Y.H.A. Stockport Area.
Y.M.C.A. Manchester Mountaineering Club.