

THE PEAK DISTRICT AND NORTHERN COUNTIES
FOOTPATHS
PRESERVATION SOCIETY.

REPORT

OF THE

COUNCIL

FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31st DECEMBER, 1906.

MANCHESTER:
ABEL HEYWOOD & SON, 56 & 58 OLDHAM STREET.

1907.

THE PEAK DISTRICT AND NORTHERN COUNTIES
FOOTPATHS PRESERVATION SOCIETY,

1908.

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- ROBERT BURN, 12 Charlotte Street, Manchester.
- LUKE GARSIDE, Hayfield.
- ABEL HEYWOOD, Oldham Street, Manchester (Chairman).
- EDWARD G. HILLER, 22 St. Ann's Square, Manchester.
- CHARLES DE-JONGH, High Lane, Chorlton-cum-Hardy.
- T. A. LEONARD, Park Hall, Hayfield.
- A. W. MASSEY, 33 Dale Street, Manchester.
- THOMAS MOWER, Market Street, New Mills.
- T. J. THOMPSON, 79 Piccadilly, Manchester.
- J. H. WRIGLEY, 23 St. Clement's Rd., Chorlton-cum-Hardy.

Together with the Honorary Officers of the Society.

Hon. Solicitor :

L. CARADOC EVANS, Town Hall, Salford.

Hon. Treasurer :

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

Assistant Hon. Treasurer :

F. W. WIGELSWORTH, Langford Road, Heaton Chapel.

Hon. Surveyor :

Col. H. T. CROOK, M.Inst.C.E., J.P., Albert Square Manchester.

Hon. Auditor :

WILLIAM GREGSON, Edge Lane, Stretford.

Hon. Secretary :

J. OGDEN HARDICKER, Solicitor, Northern Assurance Buildings,
Albert Square, Manchester.

Assistant Hon. Secretary :

ALFRED E. HANSON, Solicitor, c/o J. Ogdan Hardicker,
Northern Assurance Buildings, Manchester.

Inspector of Footpaths :

THOMAS MOWER, Market Street, New Mills.

REPORT

FOR THE YEAR ENDING DECEMBER 31ST, 1906.

The Council of the Society beg to submit to the Members the report for the year ending the 31st December, 1906.

The work of the Society continues to extend in volume and usefulness. Every effort has been made within the powers of the Council to protect public rights of way in all cases brought to their notice where there appeared to be sufficient evidence to justify their intervention, and during the year the Members of the Society have had the advantage of the Council's advice on matters which have from time to time come under their notice.

Inspector of Footpaths.

The thanks of the Council are due to Mr. Thomas Mower, the Inspector of Footpaths, for the time and trouble he has given during the year to the inspection of footpaths and to the superintendence of the erection of guide-posts on public footpaths.

Guide-plates and Signboards.

The Council have continued to pursue the policy which was adopted two years ago of erecting guide-plates and signboards on public footpaths in Derbyshire for the guidance and assistance of the public. During the year 1905 the Council selected positions for and erected 22 name-plates and signboards, and during the past year have erected 9 more.

This work is somewhat expensive, but the Council are of opinion that it is of the greatest utility in the preservation of public footpaths, as it removes the possibility of claims

being made which might at some time in the future be urged against the public rights.

The notices are of cast iron, with the letterings in strong relief, and they are mounted on good wooden posts sunk well into the ground.

The following is a list of the guide-posts erected during the past year:—

- No. 23. Footpath to Birch Vale via Ridge Top and Bridle Road to New Mills, over the hill top. Altitude, 1,085 feet.
- No. 24. Lydgate Footpath to Buxton via Coombs and to Fernilee, Taxal, and Whaley Bridge via Tunstead Milton. Altitude, 973·4 feet. (See illustration.)
- No. 25. Path to Winhill Peak. "On sufferance only. and The P.D. and N.C. Society request all who go No. 25a. to return by this path and not to trespass." Altitude, 1,432 feet.
- No. 26. Footpath from Bamford to Miller's Dale via Abney, Great Hucklow, and Tideswell. Altitude, 491 feet.
- No. 27. Footpath to Eccles and Chinley Station via Whitehough. Altitude, 859 feet.
- No. 28. Footpath to Bugsworth via Hill Top Farm, near Tunstead Milton. Altitude, 680 feet.
- No. 29. On footpath to Hayfield at the junction of the Snake Inn and Car Meadow Roads. To Hayfield, $1\frac{1}{2}$ miles. Altitude, 1,090 feet.
- No. 30. At Hayfield end of Snake footpath. "This footpath to the Snake Inn via William Clough and the Ashop Valley, dedicated for ever, May 29th, 1897." Altitude, 785·6 feet.

The Inspector and the Council have given much care and attention to the selection of sites for the above guide-posts, and a careful oversight over the numerous public footpaths

in the Derbyshire district has been observed in order to detect any cases of obstruction to public rights of way. This is important work, for it is frequently found that the continued existence of locked gates or obstructed stiles leads to the loss of undoubted rights of way, and while in some cases the owners of the land through which the paths pass are liable to repair the stiles and gates, they neglect to do so. As a result the paths become gradually disused and their existence is sometimes even forgotten. The altitude of each guide-post is approximate to the nearest ordnance bench mark. (Note the broad arrow on the stone on illustration No. 24.)

Footpaths from Ambergate to Crich, from Whatstandwell to Fritchley, and Ambergate to Whatstandwell.

These three footpaths were reported to this Society as having been closed to the public, and after the Inspector of Footpaths had visited the same and obtained evidence from the locality, the cases were handed over to the Derby Footpaths Society to deal with.

Footpath to the Top of Winhill.

The Council have pleasure to report that after a meeting between the Sub-Committee and representatives of the owner, on the site, they were successful in inducing the landowner to give to the public a permissive right to use a footpath branching from the path from Hope to Ashopton up to the pike at the top of Winhill. The landowner and this Society have shared the expense of erecting notice boards on Winhill requesting all who use the footpath to go and return by the path and not to trespass.

Ancient Moorland Roads to the West and North-west of Bolton.

The attention of the Society was called to these footpaths early in the year, and a Sub-Committee was appointed

to inspect the footpaths in question. The Sub-Committee visited Bolton and went over the footpath at Ancient Lomax Wives Road, and also considered various maps, papers, and correspondence, and ultimately the Council decided to express no opinion as to whether there is at the present time a footpath at Ancient Lomax Wives, as the matter was being investigated by the Bolton Corporation. The Council will, if necessary, again consider the matter when the report of the Bolton Corporation has been received.

Walshaw Dean Footpath from Blake Dean to Stanbury.

This footpath, which traverses the heart of the moorlands which inspired the Brontés, has been partially obliterated by the construction of reservoirs by the Halifax Corporation, and although the Corporation, in a letter bearing date October, 1902, promised to provide a new link in place of the one destroyed, they have declined to carry out their promise because Lord Saville, who is the owner of the moorlands beyond the reservoir, now contends that the obliterated footpath was a private one, and that persons attempting to use it had been repeatedly stopped and sent back.

The Council have been in communication with the representatives of Lord Saville and also the Halifax Corporation Waterworks Committee with reference to the matter. It appears that the Corporation have obtained Parliamentary powers to destroy the path in question, and this circumstance seems to complicate matters somewhat. The whole of the public authorities in the district, representing Haworth, Oakworth, Wadsworth, Heptonstall, Hebden Bridge, and Erringden are interested, along with a number of influential individuals, in restoring this moorland footpath to the public.

The Society are hopeful that the Halifax Corporation will ultimately be induced to provide a track across the embankment of their reservoir, the cost of which would be very small, and thus link up the partially obliterated footpath, and at the same time carry out their promise of four years ago. Negotiations by this Society are still pending, and a Sub-Committee of the Corporation have the matter under their consideration at the present time.

Eccles Pike.

The Commons and Footpaths Preservation Society of London called the attention of this Society to the footpath to the summit of Eccles Pike, and the Inspector of Footpaths has the matter in hand. The Council are hopeful of being able to obtain for the public a permissive right over the footpath similar to No. 25.

Greenclough to Marple.

This footpath has been obstructed by the landowner, or someone on his behalf, a stile having been taken away, evidence of which is in the possession of this Society, and the Society and Inspector have been in communication with the owner on the matter. The present agent, who has only been agent a few years, maintains that he has no knowledge of there having been a footpath. There is evidence of a public footpath, and the officials are at the present time engaged in obtaining further evidence, and such steps as may be found necessary will be taken to have it restored to the public.

Beresford Dale.

With regard to this matter it appears that the landowner has blocked up the footpath on the Staffordshire side of Beresford Dale, but as there is a public footpath on the Derbyshire side of the Dale, the Council have not up to the present felt justified in taking any action in respect of

the obstruction. The matter is, however, still under the consideration of the Council, and every effort will be made to safeguard any public rights which may prove to be imperilled.

The Council have decided to place a notice at the entrance of this path in the village of Hartington.

Doctors Gate.

This ancient bridleway has been under the notice of the Council for a number of years. It is a Roman, if not pre-Roman road, and down to the time of the construction of the new turnpike road from Manchester to Sheffield was the highway from Glossop to the Woodlands. So far no record has been found of any legal measures having been taken to close it either at the time of the construction of the turnpike road, which passes to the summit of Doctors Gate by another valley, or subsequently. If any such exist it should not be difficult for the landowner to prove the fact.

It appears that Lord Howard of Glossop has closed the road by causing notices to be erected thereon. There are also now a number of obstructions right across the road. The Society is in communication with Lord Howard on the matter.

Ordnance Maps.

It having been observed that certain public footpaths in Derbyshire are not shown upon the last published ordnance maps, copies of photographs of the stiles on such footpaths, together with the old 6-inch maps showing the footpaths in question, were forwarded to the Ordnance Survey Office, Southampton. This Government Department replied thanking the Society for the information, and promising to consider the same at the next revision of the maps. The examination of ordnance maps, especially those on the larger scales (6 inches and 25 inches to the mile), as soon as issued is a most useful work in the interests of footpath preservation, one in which many members may from time to time find opportunities to assist. The representation of a road or foot-

path on the maps is not evidence of a right of way, but it is evidence that a road or path existed at the date of the survey. The instructions to the ordnance surveyors are to show all roads and paths recognisable on the ground at the time of survey, but a very little experience will show that very different views are taken by different surveyors, or by the examiners who go over the surveyors' work previous to its publication as a map. Sometimes, too, footpaths are ploughed up or overgrown at the time of the survey, and may thus be inadvertently omitted, or the surveyor, taking an official red-tapean view, may consider the pathway "unrecognisable."

Parliamentary Bill.

The Society, through the Secretary, has during the past year kept a very careful watch upon local authorities and companies seeking Parliamentary powers to divert or obliterate public footpaths in Derbyshire, in order that negotiations might be opened up for the purpose of obtaining substituted roads in the place of those intended to be destroyed.

This is an important work, inasmuch as it is almost impossible to induce local authorities and others to provide substituted roads after they have obtained Parliamentary powers.

There have not been many obstructions during the past year, and consequently the labours of the Council have not been very heavy, but in addition to the above matters a large number of letters have been received from time to time by your Council seeking advice and information relating to public rights of way, and have been dealt with by the Honorary Secretary of the Society.

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

The Council will also be pleased to take into consideration suggestions which any member may have to make for the erection of guide-posts and notice boards where public footpaths exist, but which are not generally known.

The Members of the Society and the public generally should be careful to bear in mind the importance of exercising their rights over public footpaths strictly, as complaints are often made by landowners that the public do not limit themselves to the public rights of way, but trespass over adjoining lands.

The Council desire to acknowledge the kindly spirit in which owners of land have generally treated the Society. Experience has shown that owners recognise that no complaints are made by the Society without foundation, and its representations generally receive gratifying attention.

Finances.

There is a credit balance shown by the balance sheet annexed hereto, but this should not be regarded as a sufficient reason for members withholding any part of their subscriptions, for at any time the Society might be involved in great expense in resisting interference with public rights of way over footpaths and preserving their rights to traverse beautiful dales and valleys of the Peak and other districts, which rights may be lost for ever unless the Society is in a financial condition to offer strong opposition. The Council also desire to continue the erection of guide-posts, and sign-boards, and therefore urge members to get their friends to subscribe funds for this purpose.



No. 26.



No 24.

The Peak District and Northern Counties Footpaths Preservation Society.

Balance Sheet for the Year Ending December 31st, 1906.

RECEIPTS.	PAYMENTS.
	£ s. d.
Balance from 1905	75 19 0
Subscriptions, 1906	15 5 0
Defence Fund (1906)	15 16 0
	31 1 0
	107 0 0
Bank Interest	0 14 11
	£107 14 11
	£ s. d.
	9 9 9
Printing, &c.	1 1 0
Hire of Hall	20 0 10
Work & Materials, Repairing Footpaths and Notice Boards, &c....	5 0 0
Footpaths' Inspector (Honorarium) ...	5 0 0
Clerical Work	0 7 0
Gazettes	2 0 0
Hon. Secretary's Expenses (Stamps, &c.)	0 15 0
Hon. Treasurer's Expenses (Stamps, &c.)	0 4 2
Cheque Book	63 17 2
Balance in hand	£107 14 11

Hon. Treasurer—J. B. ELVERSTON,
ST. ALBANS VILLA,
HEATON CHAPEL.

Audited and found correct,
WM. GREGSON, *Hon. Auditor.*