

Ramblers Gems



A Spring Vale Rambling Class Publication

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Winter Hill Mass Trespass

The mass trespass of Kinder Scout in 1932 is famous as the time working people asserted their right to roam when they challenged the landowners who wanted to close off ancient footpaths.

A similar protest took place 36 years earlier on Winter Hill above Bolton in September 1896 when wealthy landowner, Colonel Richard Ainsworth, erected a gate across Coal Pit Road to prevent the public accessing the moor.

A commemorative walk is planned for Sunday, September 5th 2021, to mark the 125th anniversary of the original 'mass trespass'. Assemble adjacent to Halliwell Health Centre Linfield Rd BL1 3RG at 10:00am. The walk commences at 10:30am. It is also possible to join the walk at Smithills Hall at approx. 12:00 and continue over Winter Hill. The walk will continue to the footpath where, 125 years ago, the gate was erected to keep walkers out.

Here there will be another pause to recognise the significance of the spot, and then the walk will carry on to the summit of Winter Hill. It will continue downhill, to Belmont where refreshments can be obtained at a restaurant or pub. Expected time of arrival is between 2pm and 3pm. Buses will be available to ferry walkers back from Belmont to Smithills or to Bolton town centre.

The walk is about 6 ½ miles long on some rough moorland tracks. Sturdy walking gear, water and any refreshment are recommended.

History of the Trespass

On Sunday 6th September 1896, ten thousand Boltonians marched to pull down a gate that was preventing access onto Winter Hill. The main confrontation was at this gate which the landowner Colonel Ainsworth had erected to stop people accessing the track. A small party of police and gamekeepers were no match for the huge crowd of protesters, who broke down the barrier and continued their way along the disputed stretch of road to the top of Winter Hill. They continued to Belmont village before heading home. The demonstrations, organised by the local socialist, continued over the next two weekends, gaining in numbers as they tramped through the working-class areas of Bolton and onto the moors.

Ainsworth issued writs against the leaders and the case was heard in March 1897. They were represented by Richard Pankhurst, husband of the suffragette leader Emmeline. Ainsworth won his case, with costs, the people of Bolton were behind the campaigners and the fines were quickly paid off. The road remained closed for nearly another hundred years.

Glenda B

Insects by John Clare

These tiny loiterers on the barley's beard,
And happy units of a numerous herd
Of playfellows, the laughing Summer brings,
Mocking the sunshine in their glittering wings,
How merrily they creep, and run, and fly!
No kin they bear to labour's drudgery,
Smoothing the velvet of the pale hedge-rose;
And where they fly for dinner no one knows--
The dew-drops feed them not--they love the shine
Of noon, whose sun may bring them golden wine.
All day they're playing in their Sunday dress--
Till night goes sleep, and they can do no less;
Then, to the heath bell's silken hood they fly,
And like to princes in their slumbers lie,
Secure from night, and dropping dews, and all,
In silken beds and roomy painted hall.
So merrily they spend their summer day,
Now in the cornfields, now the new-mown hay.
One almost fancies that such happy things,
With coloured hoods and richly burnished wings,
Are fairy folk, in splendid masquerade
Disguised, as if of mortal folk afraid,
Keeping their merry pranks a mystery still,
Lest glaring day should do their secrets ill.

Little Folks in the Grass

by Annette Wynne

In the grass
A thousand little people pass,
And all about a myriad little eyes look out,
For there are houses every side
Where the little folks abide,
Where the little folks take tea
On a grass blade near a tree;
Where they hold their Sabbath meetings,
Ass each other, giving greetings,
So, remember when *YOU* pass
Through the grass;
Little folks are everywhere;
Walk quite softly, take great care
Lest you hurt them unaware,
Lest the giant that is *YOU*
Pull a house down with his shoe,
Pull a house down, roof and all,
Killing children, great and small;
So the wee eyes look at you
As you walk the meadows through,
So remember when you pass
Through the grass!

Submitted by Pesto Cenorr

Ghost Tales from Rivington

Dawn was breaking as the foreman arrived at the workshop forge that used to stand next to Rivington Reservoir. It was his job to arrive ahead of his work colleagues to get the forge burning at the right temperature ready for the day's work. As he glanced across the reservoir to the remains of Rivington Castle (also known as Liverpool Castle) on the opposite side, he was amazed to see a brightly glowing figure atop of the castle remains. As his work colleagues arrived, they all watched in amazement as the figure moved amongst castle remains. After a long time observing the figure, it disappeared behind some remains and never did reappear.



Rivington or Liverpool Castle

The less known legend today is that of the Spectre Horseman whose mount *"treds the bog without wetting a hair of its foot"*. This is said to be an old Lancashire folk tale. The story as told involves the local squire and his hunting party trapped by weather in Rivington Pike which was years ago used as a hunting lodge. One of the party goes a bit strange and is drawn to the Two Lads cairn, on the moors behind the Tower, from where the spectre horseman is said to issue forth and ride across the moor to Noon Hill where there is another ancient burial cairn. Apparently, as the story goes the spectre is able every thirteenth year to try and capture another soul who will have to be the horseman for the next few years.



Rivington Pike

Tony C

Beating the Bounds

Rogation Week - The annual tradition of 'Beating the Bounds' or 'perambulations' has been carried out for many centuries in our parishes in England. The custom has taken place in Britain in a variety of forms for 2,000 years and has developed from many different cultures from across Europe and beyond. It was part of Celtic customs and later, the Anglo Saxons changed a largely lawless society, and through land ownership, established a new rule of law that needed periodic enforcement. It was crucial that demarcations between neighbouring communities were clearly recognised to avoid boundary disputes breaking out. Beating the Bounds would have played an important part in reinforcing Anglo Saxon charters. It was a method of reaffirming the parish boundaries from way before the introduction of maps.

In some parishes, this annual ritual is still very much part of village or town life. The Great Harwood Civic Society host one on the first Saturday in June each year. Walkers trace the traditional 11-mile route to encourage the people to preserve Great Harwood's natural boundaries. Foulridge and Barnoldswick are two more towns in East Lancashire that preserve the tradition. Long Preston near Skipton has a web page on the history of Beating the Bounds. [LINK](#)



Great Harwood Beating the Bounds 24 May 2021

'going about' walks from Angle Saxon times became a religious practice and there were many reasons for the ceremony, but the parishioners believed that it would 'avert great calamities'. It would affirm their devotion to God; ask him for forgiveness from sins and for protection from evil and to bless the congregation and the fruits of their labour.

Other phrases were used for this ancient custom; 'Rogation Week' (from the Latin word 'rogare' meaning to ask or to pray), the 'Common Walk', 'Gangdays' and 'going a- ganging'.

Rogation Week is also known as Rogantide, the week in which Ascension Day falls in May, beginning with Rogation Sunday, the Sunday before Ascension Day.

Religious ceremonies would take place over a period of three days of this week; Monday, Tuesday and Wednesday, involving the parish priest, churchwardens and other officiates of the church. Old parishioners mixed with the young to pass on the knowledge of the boundaries.



The youngsters of the parish, usually boys, would be armed with long birch or willow twigs to beat the specific landmarks such as an old tree or stones. In some cases, the boys themselves were beaten with the sticks, so they should never forget the crucial information passed on to them by their elders. Usually, the boys would have their heads bumped against the boundary marker whilst prayers were read from the Litany of Saints. The girls and women would wear and carry garlands of flowers and foliage. The Milkwort flower (*Polygala vulgaris*) is also dubbed the Rogation flower and was often used in the garlands.



Milkwort flower

You can still keep the ancient Rogationtide tradition alive by beating the bounds of other open spaces enjoyed by the public, or by walking your parish boundary. The Open Spaces Society has information on how to organise [Beating the Bounds](#). <https://www.oss.org.uk/> The Open Spaces Society has been defending open spaces in England and Wales since 1865.

Barbara S

16 Beautiful and Isolated walks in Lancashire

According to Lancashire Live

I can't speak for other SVRC members, but I spend far too much time, on the internet looking for walk ideas etc. I came across Lancashire Live's list of 16 "best walks" – do you agree and are there areas we should look at for next year? Or perhaps you need somewhere to take the grandkids during what remains of the school holidays.

- Beacon Fell Country Park – areas of wood, moor and farmland, with an abundance of wildlife.
- Gisburn Forest – Network of forest walk, and Stocks Reservoir.



- Rowley Lake, Burnley – seven acre body of water on outskirts of Burnley with walking trails.
- Masons Wood – Belongs to the Woodland Trust and is one of the top ten bluebell woods, located near Fulwood. Best to visit April and June.
- Forest of Bowland – needs no description, just a good navigator!
- Queen's Park, Burnley – Victorian park in Burnley, with a playground, a cycle track and floral displays.



- Johnson Hillock Locks – North of Chorley, a stretch of the Leeds-Liverpool canal with stunning views.



- Abbeystead – Abbeystead Reservoir Trail, leading to huge, curved weir. Has a car park and picnic area
- Hoghton Tower – Hoghton Bottoms
- Nicky Nook – well signed and popular area with walks for all ages and you can visit the Barn after for luscious cakes.



- Guild Wheel, Preston – walking and cycling route circles Preston. 21 miles, and passes through Brockholes wildlife centre
- Longridge Fell – well known to SVRC -
- Rivington Pike – at 363m is the most westerly point of Winter Hill.
- Williamson Park – at the heart of Lancaster, woodland walk, the Ashton Memorial with fantastic views to the Lakes, Dales and Coast.
- Worden Park – is the largest park in South Ribble, 60 hectares of meadows, woodlands and playing fields. Not isolated but also has range of attractions within its historic grounds. And is now grade 2 listed by English Heritage

Jane C

J. T. Fielding - Founder

While I was researching the history of Spring Vale Rambling Class I came across this article published in The Methodist Leader dated 29th December 1927 written by F Etherton Blake

A Lancashire - Layman Jonathan Turton Fielding

Jonathan Tuton Fielding was born three days after Christmas, 1857, the son of James and Alice Fielding, the originators of Primitive Methodism in Great Harwood, Blackburn. James Fielding was the local poet of Methodism, Sunday-school superintendent, and choirmaster. For fifty-three years he was neither late nor absent from Sunday or week-night services. During the last seventy years the choirmastership and the Sunday-school secretaryship of Great Harwood have been held successively by his three sons—William (R)owe Fielding, Jonathan Turton Fielding, and now by James Albert Fielding.

In 1881 Mr. J. T. Fielding came to Darwen, and for more than forty years held a headmastership in teaching and his career as a preacher began in 1887, and herewith is a mere outline of his preaching, teaching, lecturing literary activities:—Preached in Darwen pulpits for forty years, and preached every year without a break in the following churches:—Low Moor United Methodist, 35 Years; West Bradford United Methodist, 33 years; Barley Primitive Methodist, 25 years; Barrowford Primitive Methodist, 24 years; Dwell Vale Primitive Methodist, 24 years; Waddington Wesleyan, 23 years; Melbourne-street Primitive Methodist, Oswaldtwistle, preached and lectured.



These churches have honoured Mr. Fielding with gifts expressive of their appreciation of his long and talented services. As a lecturer Mr. Fielding has delivered an average of forty-two lectures per season for the last twenty-two years and exhibited hundreds of lantern slides made by himself from photographs he has taken of people and places in England, Scotland, Wales, Isle of Man and Norway.

Thirty-two years ago, he founded the Spring Vale Rambling Society, which averages fifteen rambles every summer in pursuit of scenical, botanical or historical interests. The founder and leader has missed only nine of these Lancashire, Yorkshire, Cheshire or Derbyshire rambles throughout the thirty-two years. Concerning these Mr. Fielding has published two volumes of "The Rambler," illustrated with 210 photographs of birds, butterflies and historical landmarks. He is also the author of the book entitled "Sights and Scenes in the Ribble Valley."

Interested ramblers have shown their gratitude to Mr. Fielding for this ministry of Nature by giving to him such gifts as a display walnut cabinet, a dinner service, cases of fish-eaters and cutlery, and two writing desks. Around the tea or supper table in many a Lancashire home you may hear glowingly told stories of Mr. Fielding's life and labours. Methodists will proudly tell you of a powerful sermon he preaches on "The Swellings of Jordan," or of wonderful addresses on, say, "Pins and Buttons," "Next to Nothing, Nothing and Nobody," "A Queer Place for Jewellery," "Jack of All Trades and Master of Every One," or perhaps inform you about a famous lecture like the one on "Mirth, Magic and Mystery."

If you enjoy the privilege of knowing Mr. Fielding personally you will readily acknowledge that you are in the presence of one of Lancashire's most brilliant Primitive Methodist laymen. Ask his opinion about the contrast between past and present congregations, and he will tell you that in the olden days congregations sang as they felt, but nowadays they sing by machinery. Yesterday an audience was more critical because it knew the Bible; now in these days the audience does less individual thinking and takes everything for granted. Jonathan Turton Fielding is a distinct gift to Primitive Methodism and shines in his seventieth year with increasing splendour

Michael C