

Ramble - Sept 30th, 1956

A party of 12 met at the corner of Valley Rd + Sgt. North Rd for the 9.15 a.m. Birch Bus. The ramble should have been led by Mr. Carter but owing to illness he was unable to do this and the ramble was therefore led jointly by committee members present.*

The bus was quitted at the Royal Oak Inn, a mile or two beyond Langley, + we took a path leading to the left immediately behind the Inn. This was quite well marked + followed the field boundaries to reach Minsden Chapel Plantation in which the ruins of Minsden Chapel were visited + the recent grave of a local historian noticed.

The path then led downhill to a road in which we turned right for a short distance + then took a grassy track on the left, leading uphill past the houses of Langley and to a track, fenced for the first few yards, along the edge of a field. At the corner of the field we turned right through a gate on to an overgrown, narrow grassy track which shortly led on to a road. Almost immediately

* No named leader. It appears probable that this walk was accidentally omitted from the comprehensive tables constructed in 1981. It should appear in the Amongst columns.

opposite, a gap in the hedge led into a field in which there was no trace of the path but we carried straight across, with a road a short distance down the hill on our right. The path led to the edge of a plantation which it skirted to the right & then a plainly marked path led to the road, almost opposite the imposing entrance to Stagenhoe Park. We turned left in the road down to St. Pauls Walden & then left of a narrow road round the back of the church & then on to the well known ~~track~~ road into Stagenhoe Park. The rest of the route for the day was practically the same as that for Oct 9th 1955.

An enjoyable picnic lunch was had in King's Walden Park in beautiful sunny weather but a hectic 45 minutes walk followed to reach the Red Lion at Breachwood Green before closing time at 2 p.m. This was accomplished by three members, with 5 minutes to spare, who ordered refreshment for all the party, much to the mystification of the landlord.

A very welcome tea was had at the Red Lion
Codicote after which two or three stalwarts
decided to walk back to the Garden City.

It had been a long day, 15-16 miles
for all the party + 20 miles for those walking
back to W.G.C., but the weather had been
delightful + everybody appeared to have
thoroughly enjoyed the day.

W.B.

Saturday
~~Sunday~~ 13th October 1956.

From Knebworth to Welwyn, by Ninningwood & Massey Heath.
Leader: Ralph Thun. Bergh.

By our less used method of transport, train (2.57) from W.G.C. to Knebworth, went 18 members.

From Knebworth station exit, 100 yards of road southward, then by footpath alongside the Mission Hall, behind the backgardens of a new housing colong, out opposite Gypsy Lane. Here we turned right along not-Gypsy Lane for 200 or 300 yards, and just before reaching the cluster of 2 or 3 cottages we turned left into a field of stubble. The map, however, indicated a path, & we made a bee line across the ^{long} field to the east at the far end. Here, instead of turning right to the "Robin Hood" we went the other way, ~~past~~ ^{along} a hedge full of old bushes (tip for next year's wine makers), and turned right when we reached the lane in a few minutes. A short way along there is an entrance left which raised an amused titter of incredulity, being named NINNING LANE
NORMAN LANE - "Well, which is it, anyway?" was the comment. However, we soon enough found that it fooled, NINNING to the right and NORMAN ahead. We took Normans, which goes straight on through Ninning Wood, and a pleasant enough path it is, coming out of the wood into a little grassy clearing at the ~~end~~ edge of the Woodnet Green - Potters Heath road opposite the Massey Heath gravel pits. These pits have been much enlarged in recent times and obliterated one or two paths. (cut by going

back along the road a short way we soon found one which skirted the dip and bearing south soon hit Hangmans lane which would have brought us out onto the main road near the top of Mandley Hill. But instead we turned right at this point and returned by a way almost parallel to that down which we had come through a most attractive bit of woodland, very like a typical Chiltern beech wood. The sun, low in the west, sent shafts of light across the dip we were climbing, and we saw it at its probable best. Back once more on the little road we kept to it to Pottus Heath, went down the side of the Naresden and by the field path past the water tower, across Daneshury Park road and through the Park to Welwyn where we had tea with very creamy cakes at Rose Cottage, ^{some} two members joining us there.

After tea all but five caught the bus back to W.T.C. The five returned by way of White Hill to Argot Green & through the woods. Distance walked was just over 5 miles to tea, plus 3 after. Weather, coolish, very fine.

R.F.B.

24 OCTOBER
Mid-Herts Footpaths Society, Steady,
28 October, Meet 8.15 a.m., corner of
Valley Road and Doleys Road for 8.25 a.m.
330 bus to St Albans, then by 337 bus to
Creeker Green. (Note change from sub-
urban programme.) Route: Lansbury
Park, Chandler's Cross and the Chess
Valley. Leave Mid-Herts Home office
8.30 and tea south. Home about 7 p.m.
10-12 miles.

WALK 133 136

On the Herts-Bucks Border
Sunday 28th Oct 1965

This walk followed the route used on 30th
October 1965, but in reverse, & when it was
planned we expected to use the 803 Express Bus,
which however was withdrawn from Sunday service
on the new winter time-table beginning on 17th Oct.

Two of us travelled by 330 bus to Swallow
& thence by 321 to Croxley Green L.M.S. station
near the bridge over the Grand Junction Canal.
We walked quite briskly northwards up the
canal for half a mile, as the morning though
fine was inclined to be chilly. At the bridge
we took the path on the left & came through
an avenue of tall trees across the golf course
to Whipperdel Wood. The path through the
wood was delightful & we remembered how
we had seen it last year by moonlight.

At the end of the wood we crossed the
road into Horrocks Wood & wandered a bit before
picking up the broad path to Chandler's Cross.
Here we had our lunch at the inn, sitting
outside at the tables provided, but the pale
sun did not get through enough to warm

us & it was still rather cold.

So off again briskly by the lane & field track to Micklesill Green, right along the road for a short distance, left over the stile to Church End Savatt, through the church yard, & by paths previously used to Savatt Bottom & to the footbridge & ford over the R. Chas opposite Mount Wood. The river here is the boundary between Herts & Bucks. Two men were out of shear boards paddling in the stream.

We then went on to Lathams on the north (Herts) side of the river, gathering pocketfuls of hazel nuts off the ground in one little copse, over the road bridge, & through walk wood to Chermis (Bucks). We crossed the green & took the lane to Mountwood Farm, & soon after passing the farm took a path on the right down through the wood, & stopped in a clearing at the bottom to have our tea. The path (left) then brought us to the path following the river on this side.

We went along this path in the gathering dusk through Choley Wood Belton & on to Landwater & have turned up on to the main road. It was now dark & we had a little light rain, as we walked to Rickmansworth & just caught a 624 bus without any wait at all. We had had a very good day but would have liked it just a little warmer & sunnier!

18 NOVEMBER
 M.H. Herts Footpaths Society, Meet 2.30
 at the corner of Valley Road and Bridge
 Road, Busset, Ayot St Lawrence, Leagrave,
 MK43 9JG. Tea provided. About 9-10.30.

The afternoon was rather dull but this did not prevent twenty people, including two newcomers from gathering at the appointed place and time.

We took the familiar way through Thurand Wood via Six Ways to the Great North Road by Ayot Green, crossing the road to enter Brocket Park by the stile opposite the Haycocks. In the Park we noted unusual signs near the house which proved to be equipment of a film company using the Park as the setting for parts of a film.

Still on familiar ground (though somewhat muddy!) we carried on through the Bluebell Wood to Water End. Crossing the lane north of the pond, we took path 87 (Ayot Water point). The entrance to this path is obstructed and a little later on, up the hill side, there is a further obstruction, consisting of a five-barred gate fixed in position with barbed wire, which caused some delay.

Continuing by this path, which crosses pleasant open country & starts pretty steep (one, also, went cut down - threegover) we joined path 11 at the border of Bowdell Wood & soon emerged into the Coombe - Wheathampstead road.

On the other side of the road, we pushed up path 1, along the edge of Hocking Springs at first, followed by an open stretch which gave us pleasant vistas of autumnal coloring, then followed a shallow gully, shaded by trees & brush whose fallen leaves frequently provided a glowing carpet for our feet.

Emerging into the road near Kansas Corner, we were soon at the "Bracket Adams" at Aryst St Lawrence, where we were joined by three more friends who had come by car, and were soon tacking a substantial tea already ordered.

When the time came to move on, we found to our dismay that rain was falling & the party voted to stick to the roads for the walk home, instead of the Hill Farm path. Our eyes soon became accustomed to the darkness & presently the rain stopped & we made good time to Aryst Green where the party divided to go home by their various ways.

A walk which is always popular, and deservedly so

Sunday November 25th Codrington Langley, Knebworth, Welwyn
harden - Thrapstone then Langley.

After a period of sharp frost the morning was a little disappointing being warm and damp. 11 of us went by bus to Codrington, turned down Heath Road and climbed up on to the heath. Here the leaves under foot were still thick and recent and although the trees were fast becoming bare there was a general effect of dull gold and reddish brown. Dropping down to Green Lane we followed this to Hampton Hill where we inspected the new bridge before turning right up the lane past Rye-end cottages to the Hoe Lodge. Here we left the path by a gate on the right and followed a rather long way through the fir tree plantation and the newly chopped down area beyond. Bearing right to Three Houses Lane we turned left and entered the field just past beyond the house(s), around to Hill Top's wood and along its edge by footpath 35. At the house we turned up to Pulling End and entered the field on the right by the Pylon. We followed the line of Pylon's right across to the Road at Langley where we swerved right opposite the chapel (now a cafe) and back over road by having a hot lunch there. This was a great success. We had roast joints, baked and boiled potatoes, greens and mint sauce followed by apple and either rice or custard. Together with either tea or coffee the price was 3-3^d a head which we thought very reasonable.

After lunch these members left by Buckton on the last
 afternoon appointments and the rest of us turned right behind the
 chapel along the lanes (footpath 14) through the narrow grass
 strip north of Buntingford road and across the open field to
 Buntingford farm. Passing through the fence we continued by
 path 34 to watergate wood leaving left to the green wooden
 bridge over the lake and then left along the edge of the lake to
 the wooden gate on the descent. There were many stones here showing
 in that the last part of our walk had been trespassing but as
 the path is shown on the draft map we felt reasonably confident
 about it. We turned right to St. Mary's church remarking on the
 rather terrible architecture of Knebworth House as we passed it
 and the church we turned right to the lodge and coming to the
 gate directly opposite we passed a plantation wood on our right
 turning right along the South Eastern edge & then dropping down
 past the swings ~~to~~ ^{to} Park house Knebworth. We turned right for
 a few yards then left by the school on to footpath 16. We entered
 across the fields, then it was wood & left down the road to the Robin
 Hood and Little John. Here we kept left to the ~~the~~ T Junction
 and right towards Potters Heath. We left the road at the side
 again and followed path 31 down to Downbury Lodge Park, leaving
 right for a few yards along the road before leaving it on footpath
 39 across the chicken farm & Downbury Park to the church.
 This latter part of the walk was very lovely as we had a magnificent
 sunset. From the church we made our way to Welwyn church and so by
 bus home. Raining here before 5 o'clock which was very pleasant on the
 evening was turning cold.

Dinner & Social Saturday Dec 1st 1956

A party of 18 assembled at 6.30 pm at the Wellington Hotel, Nelson. This was rather a smaller party than last year but all were in very cheerful spirits. Promptly at 7 pm we adjourned to the private dining room where a very good dinner (7/6) was quickly served.

Two very good friends were missing from the party, Mr. Butterworth & Sir Francis Peake, on account of illness. A letter from Sir Francis to the Society was read & good wishes were sent to both members for their speedy recovery.

During the dinner, the secretary was presented with a compass by the Society & he expressed his appreciation of this very unexpected, but very welcome, gift.

A programme of entertainment followed consisting of quizzing games, Community singing (not very successful), a short story (a brilliant original story by Mrs. Nechem) & a short Beetle Drive. The evening closed at 10.30 pm with the general opinion that the occasion had been most enjoyable & successful.

VB

Saturday 8th December 1956. The Tunnels; meet at Valley (Bridge Rd)
2.15 for 2.30. Leader Ralph Thompson.

And eleven met - 9 at the official starting point and 2 more in the woods as we went the usual way through to Monk's Wall and down to Digwell. Across the new road, by path over the Hertford road up "between the houses" to The Dip, and then finally out into the open field and by the path over the railway tunnel.

The day was damp and misty looking, though without rain, and the atmosphere gave the views a spaciousness which greatly ^{enlarged} ~~increased~~ the Hertfordshire hills and valleys and made them at times look almost imposing. This was particularly noticeable between the two tunnels looking westward across the short stretch of railway line toward Welwyn, and a curious illusion of moving fields was created for a moment through the white steam of a passing train which fell and trailed slowly away, blanketing the ground before it thinned away.

At Hornersgreen wood we turned left along the edge of the wood, then down through fields of Broadbents and into Loughley Park, through which we went to Welwyn at the clock, and finished the walk with a quick supper at Rose Cottage before catching the bus home. We walked about 5 miles; modest but pleasant.

Ramble - Sunday Dec 23rd, 1956

This, the Society's Traditional ramble at Xmas, was this year held on the Sunday before Xmas, & marked the end of the fifth year of existence of the Society.

A party of ten assembled on a rather dull & misty morning, leader M. Bavin, & followed the same route as used on Boxing Day 1955, namely across Bushy Park & Waterend & Wheatthampstead, then over the hill to Nonansland & the Three Oaks for lunch.

The going was very muddy in parts & we noted that the path from Wheatthampstead was being rapidly encroached upon by a new building estate.

Regrettably, the leader went slightly astray just before reaching Nonansland but no great delay was occasioned.

We were made welcome, as usual, at the Three Oaks &, being the festive season, rather more ~~the~~ alcoholic liquor was

consumed there is our work on rambles. However, the party started off in good spirits (!) after lunch for the remainder of the walk. The weather deteriorated steadily & a persistent drizzle started accompanied by a thickening mist.

However, we pursued our way past Nonmandale Farm, to Sineshyde Wood & Fungyfield Wood, eventually emerging on the W. Albin's D. Road, at the rear of the de Hainlland airfield.

Here, the party divided, some walking back to Stambur' & the rest walking down to the main road for a bus back to W.G.C., where we arrived in good time for tea.

LEADER ANTHONY GOODMAN

15, Salisbury Avenue,
 Tuesday, 15th Jan. St. Albans,
 Herts.

St Albans Walk, Saturday
 afternoon, January 8th

First a look at the Abbey. We noticed especially the Watching Loft, made early 15th century to guard St Albans' treasures. The beam of which involving its two stones is covered with everyday scenes e.g. bear-baiting, a mouse milking, a shepherd piping with his sheep, men wrestling, copying, threshing; then the Pedestal of St Albans' stone, early 14th century, with holes in the base for mortars to put decorated timbers in; a carving of the saint's life, including his execution, with his head in the air; finally the chantry chapel of Duke Humphrey of Gloucester, d. 1447, with a masonry under which are steps leading to a grille through which his vault can be seen, but containing his few remaining bones.

Then we walked through Verulamium a grandstandway, past the Park, from the hill opposite which is a fine view back over the Thimbleale road to the Yew; also to

Chiddesley which has a too neat village (the pews in excellent repair but not working) N.B. The path from the Haspden Road Lodge B.7 916-7 has been

planted in the second field between Kilmont's spring wood
and Butch Wood, which it should cross diagonally, and
a stile still exist at the point where it would meet
Bath Wood, but cut off from the field by a hedge.

Also Townsend Estate now extends directly to the
Municipal Boundary. Rain fell from Chelmsick Green
back to the town but previously we had ideal walking
weather, grey and not too windy.

1978. p.p. Anthony Goodman

16 members turned out for this Sunday morn-
 ing walk & we started off by having a look at the new Stadium
 in course of construction on the old Gravel Pit site in Stanlow
 Lane. Proceeding round the top edge of the Stadium towards the
 railway we then passed the spot where the recent train crash
 happened. A little further on we crossed the railway bridge and
 continued along a path on the east side of the railway until
 reaching a stile. Without crossing it we turned sharp left &
 over a meadow towards a small wood, and after negotiat-
 ing two barbed wire fences we joined the remaining part of the
 once popular footpath (No. 68) which used to start at the corner of
 Woodhall Lane but disappeared when the new was constructed. Pro-
 ceeding along this path until it merges with the farm road which
 comes out on to Millgreen Lane we turned right & down the hill to
 The Green Man.

Continuing along the Hatfield Rd in the direction of Hatfield
 as far as the hodge into Hatfield Park, we crossed a stile and
 diagonally over a recently ploughed field to another stile & on
 to the lane. Crossing the bridge over the Lea we kept on this road
 to Hillside Farm, turned left along path (9) which goes through
 the farmyard then into a meadow we continued in an
 easterly direction until reaching a narrow lane. Turning
 left & then right at the bottom of hill we continued

over the meadows for some distance until reaching another bridge over the Lea, up the east road & out on to the Hatfield/Westford Road again.

Turning in the direction of Hatfield we walked along the wide verge until reaching a lane on our right which brought us back into the Garden City near the Hollwellhyde Crossing. From there most of us found our way to the "^{handwritten}Woodhall Arms" where we enjoyed a little refreshment before going our different ways home.

The weather had been ideal for walking & remarkably sunny & warm for a January day, and we were particularly pleased to welcome one new member & two old ones, making their reappearance after a long absence due to illness.

A.R.L.: