

NEW DERBYSHIRE "LAKE"

Stockport's Reservoir in the Goyt Valley

From our Special Correspondent

BUXTON, . . . DAY.

Derbyshire's new "lake," in the Goyt valley, sparkled and glowered in turn as grey clouds and sunshine alternately ruled the sky. Till you see the cranes that are still working at the north end it is quite possible, as you approach it from Buxton, to believe that the long and slender body of Stockport Corporation's Fernilee reservoir really is a natural feature. On the hither side smooth green fields slope down in fairly gentle curves, though the descent from the road is a hundred feet or so. The land across the water rises more suddenly, ending in rugged wooded heights, along which runs at the top the old Roman road. But neither precipice nor gentle slope has any quarrel with the reservoir. The new feature has been admitted to the landscape. It is difficult to realise that a year ago the "lake" was not there.

That is the picture the reservoir presents when it is full. As the water sinks the artificiality of the walls will, of course, appear. The straightness of the road at the north, from which a small tower is projected at the end of a jetty, will be apparent all the time. Also the trustful-looking farms on the opposite slope are to be demolished, and one can feel the pity of that aesthetically as well as in sympathy with the families to whom they have been home. They give such perfect subdued relief to the scene even when their walls are whitened. The grey ones have a timeless beauty that is past telling. But Stockport needs this reservoir's thousand million gallons of water, and when one has become reconciled to the scheme as a whole the depopulation of the large area that forms the gathering-ground has to be accepted also.

The depopulation has now affected twenty-five homesteads, and a total of

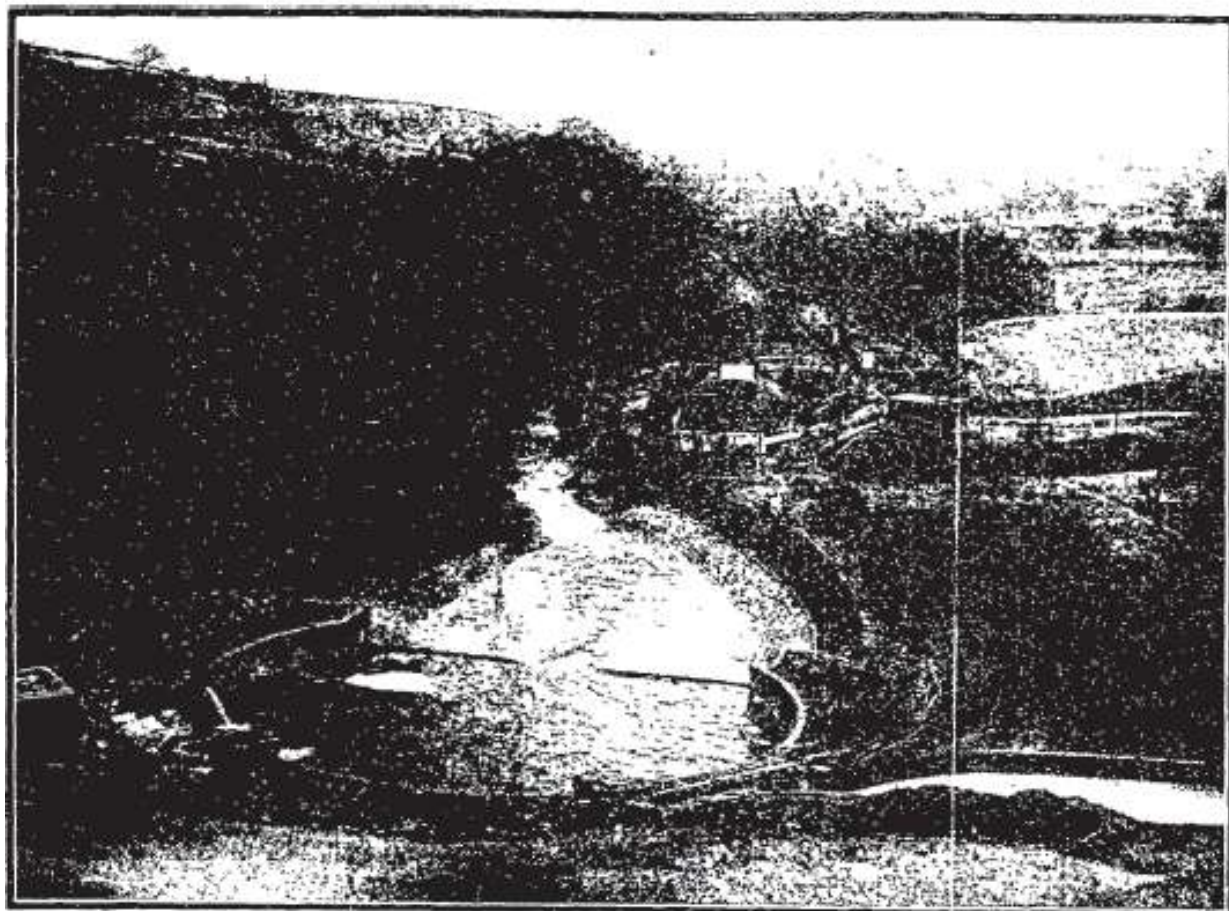
about a hundred people, and many of the families displaced have extremely deep roots in the district. The last ten notices expired on Lady Day, and all the houses except one or two of which the occupants have found it difficult to get other holdings are now empty.

Approached from Manchester, the reservoir as a part of the scenery is unimpressive. It begins a little less than three miles beyond Whaley Bridge. That way the road at its head comes first, and the road on which one is travelling is too winding to allow a view of the water's full length unless one has the altitude which the return journey provides.

Fernilee reservoir covers eighty-six acres of land, and its length is a mile and a half. The water has been steadily rising for several months, but during the early part of the winter it was necessary to keep it as low as possible, for the pitching of the walls had not been completed. That work being done, the overflow level was rapidly reached, and a picture of the first overflow appeared in the "Manchester Guardian" a month ago. see page 2

The principal work that remains to be done near the reservoir itself is the completion of the filter-house, through which all the supply will pass before it is transmitted for consumption. The building is now roof-high, but it will be about a year before it can be used, and none of the water from the reservoir is likely to be drawn till then. Work is also continuing on the wave-wall of the road. And besides the work at Fernilee there remain the secondary mains from High Lane to Cheadle and Reddish to be completed. The time the scheme is taking is close to schedule. Stockport Corporation's bill allows for the construction of a further reservoir to hold six hundred million gallons.

THE GOYT VALLEY RESERVOIR



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The overflow from the new Goyt Valley reservoir, which supplies water to Stockport.