

THE GOYT VALLEY.

To the Editor of the Manchester Guardian.

Sir,—May I add another voice to those already raised in the attempt to save this well-known spot? If the reservoir scheme goes through, the taking of this valley will be, in effect, the cutting off of one of Stockport's own lungs, from the fresh air point of view.

The Goyt Valley comprises an ideal and unique position between Whaley Bridge and Buxton, at such a distance from the larger centres that its advantages are available to many thousands of people. Should the reservoirs be made, the thousands who have hitherto loved and used the valley from the north side will find that they have another seven miles added to their journey from the crowded towns, and will have to seek south of Buxton for any advantages comparable to those found along the Goyt. I think it can be accepted that, if the scheme goes through, such innocent delights as picnicking and tramping will be prohibited, for the authorities have, of course, to safeguard their supplies from impurity.

I hope it will be recognised before definite steps are taken that this question of the unique advantages of the Goyt Valley is one deserving of the most serious consideration. The growth of the vast industrial area of Manchester and Stockport is principally southwards, and one can easily visualise the suburbs reaching up to the Goyt Valley itself. Such a community must have "fresh-air lungs" on its outskirts. The beauty spots local to this particular area are few enough already, and to deprive the increasing population of the use of one of them, and that probably the best, seems very doubtful policy. Is it not possible to form a Goyt Valley Association with the object of doing everything possible to save the district?—Yours, &c.,

JAMES GARNER.

Buxton, October 31.

THE GOYT VALLEY.

Stockport's Water Scheme.

To the Editor of the Manchester Guardian.

Sir,—Your special correspondent who writes in to-day's "Manchester Guardian" completely misses the main point with regard to the preservation of the most beautiful scenery in the Goyt Valley. No one has suggested that Stockport would go out of its way to destroy the appearance of the uplands or moors or the timber above the proposed level of the reservoirs. The real point is that by constructing a reservoir where the Erwood reservoir is shown on your sketch map the peculiar beauty of the Goyt Valley would inevitably be destroyed.

Infinitely the most beautiful part of the Goyt Valley lies in the mile and a half immediately above Goyt Bridge and the stepping-stones. The sides of the valley in that particular portion are remarkably steep—both on the Cheshire and on the Derbyshire sides of the stream. The peculiar formation of the ground, combined with the beautiful timber—chestnuts, beeches, pine, and larch—with which the banks in question are clothed, makes this the most beautiful scenery within the two counties. A reservoir created in that particular part of the valley would entirely destroy the exquisitely beautiful scenery, while nine-tenths of the trees would be below the level of the water—in fact, they would, of course, be felled before the reservoir was made.

There is, as has been previously demonstrated in your columns, no rational argument why Stockport should take the waters of the River Goyt at all. Under an Act of 1851 Manchester supplies Stockport with water, originally from the Longdendale reservoirs, at 2½d. per 1,000 gallons. Under present-day conditions Manchester cannot supply water at that price except at a heavy loss. Surely Stockport should not be aggrieved because Manchester asks to have the price amended so that she may not actually lose by the transaction! Cannot representatives of the Manchester and Stockport Waterworks Committees meet and settle a matter of business and equity on rational lines? By the Haweswater Act of 1919 Manchester is already bound by law to supply Stockport with such water as she may require in future. Manchester, as a matter of fact, will not, when she has carried out her present plans—including provision of the water likely to be required by Stockport and the area she supplies—draw more than one-third of the water she could draw from the Haweswater ground. I also am given to understand on most excellent authority that Manchester can provide Stockport with all the water she is ever likely to require at a cost decidedly below that at which Stockport could supply herself from the Goyt Valley.

Therefore I trust that the Corporation of Stockport will reconsider the question and so save the pockets of their rate-payers and the scenery of the Goyt Valley at one and the same time.—Yours, &c.,

B. B. GREEN.

Disley, November 25.

GOYT VALLEY RESERVOIR SCHEME

A Special Correspondent

The Manchester Guardian (1901-1959); Nov 25, 1929;

GOYT VALLEY RESERVOIR SCHEME.

Uplands and Timber to be Preserved.

(From a Special Correspondent.)

Criticism has been directed from several angles and on a variety of grounds upon Stockport's proposal to use the Goyt Valley as a source of water supply. So far as the Town Council of Stockport are concerned, whilst they do not admit the right of any of the critics to intervene, they are prepared with a defence at all the points of attack. The scheme is declared to be necessary in the public interest, and, far from contemplating any act of vandalism, its sponsors, who are the whole council, as well as their expert advisers, assert that the beauty of the locality is to be preserved in a way that could not be assured if it were left to any of those forms of commercial exploitation to which it might well fall at private hands in the near future.

A suggestion has been made that Stockport launched the Goyt Valley scheme because of some difference with Manchester and so that her present partial dependence upon the city for water should not be increased. Any such interpretation is repudiated with dignity in Stockport. The borough's attitude is that this development is no affair of Manchester's and that there

building the reservoirs if we took more water from Manchester, but that could only be a temporary measure. So far we have bought the agricultural land that puts us astride the valley. In that way, even if we do not go forward with the scheme immediately, we have already made sure that the valley shall not be spoiled by industrial development. Our lake has improved Kinder, and the two lakes that we shall make in the Goyt Valley will have better natural cover and surroundings than that. The uplands will remain as they are in perpetuity: it will be our business to preserve them and their timber, and the public will not be excluded, except, of course, from the immediate proximity of the water.

In constructing the reservoirs the natural formation of the land will be preserved on three sides, and a short earth dam be built across the fourth. The productive capacity of Goyt Valley will be greater than that of Kinder, and because of the hard nature of the ground, contrasted with the moss and peat of Kinder, the yield of water comes off quicker after rain. It would be a crime not to preserve such a splendid natural supply, and there is no other community to which it so properly belongs.

Already our demands are up to our capacity, and a summer such as the last presents us with real difficulties. In looking ahead we must provide for abnormal years as well as for normal development. If we were responsible only for the people who live in Stockport we should be all right without any further supply, but outside our own closely gathered 125,000 people there are other 75,000 in quickly developing residential districts for whom we are also made responsible, and it is for them we have to think.

is no quarrel between the two authorities, except that Stockport will persist in her opposition to paying an increased price for the million gallons of water per day that the city is legally obliged to provide for her. This is an obligation that Parliament put upon the city when, in Stockport's phrase, "she settled down on our birthright on the River Etherow and so headed off the stream which not only flows into this town but from which we were actually drawing part of our water." The borough view is that the city is now trying to vary the price that was to be paid in perpetuity for that interception, but that that has nothing whatever to do with the Goyt, and that even if Manchester wished or was able to supply Stockport with all the water she now requires at anything like the price that has been mentioned it would not affect the ultimate need to proceed with the Goyt scheme.

Stockport's position was explained by one of her leading townsmen in the following statement:

The Goyt Valley is a natural source of water supply which should be preserved, first, in the national interest and, second, in the interests of the district which it naturally feeds, if that district has need of it. Like the Etherow, the Goyt flows into Stockport. It descends from a height of 900 feet, so that it can be directed to the highest points in our territory without costly artificial pumping. Disley is about 700 feet above sea-level, and Manchester water would have to be lifted several hundreds of feet to reach there. Even if we had all Manchester's Longdendale supply we could not distribute it over a considerable part of our area without expensive pumping. The Goyt water comes the same way as our Kinder mains, and will work well in conjunction with them.

We have been on the look-out for a new source of water supply for many years, and this valley has been under consideration ever since the war. We might postpone

The area for which Stockport supplies water is eighty-one square miles in extent and has a population of 200,000. From Alderley Edge on the south the territory reaches over the Lancashire border to Reddish on the north, and comprises roughly all one can see in that direction when standing on the Edge. It includes such urban localities as Alderley, Bredbury and Romiley, Cheadle and Gatley, Handforth, Hazel Grove, Bramhall, and Marple, every one of them undergoing fairly rapid development residentially, and some of them likely to become industrialised in the not distant future. The smaller populations dependent on Stockport include Disley, Lyme Handley, Nether Alderley, Northen Etchells (which Manchester contemplates incorporating), the considerable suburban village of Poynton, and Woodford, that quaint retreat lifted into modern life by the arrival of the aerodrome.

Within a reasonable distance of time and because of the normal overflow of the populations of Manchester and Stockport and the development of quick transport it is obvious that nearly all the area indicated is destined to be much more closely populated. In addition to that consideration every year sees an appreciable increase in the consumption of water per head of the population. It is said that the average individual to-day uses twice as much as was used a generation ago.

Stockport's present sources of supply include the Bollinhurst and Horse Coppice reservoirs, fed from the Disley area gathering-ground, which covers 1,400 acres. These two reservoirs have a total storage capacity of 157,000,000 gallons. The Kinder reservoir has a capacity of 515,000,000 gallons, and is supplied from a catchment area about Hayfield that covers 2,130 acres



STOCKPORT'S WATER SUPPLY.

Govt Valley Scheme.

BILL APPROVED BY COUNCIL.

(From our Correspondent.)

STOCKPORT, WEDNESDAY NIGHT.

The Stockport Town Council to-night approved a Parliamentary bill which seeks to empower the Corporation to construct reservoirs in the Goyt Valley and to cover in the River Mersey from Lancashire Bridge to Wellington Bridge in the centre of the town.

Councillor W. Slack, chairman of the Waterworks Committee, said that although in the Manchester Corporation Bill for the Haweswater scheme a clause was inserted by which Stockport, along with other authorities, was entitled to share in the water obtained the terms of the clause were such that Stockport must first convince the Ministry of Health that other sources of supply were not available. Also Stockport must state in advance the quantity of water required at a certain date; pay for that quantity whether taken or not; take the risk that the water required might not be available as Manchester had first call; and pay 5 per cent on the proportion of the capital cost of the works in relation to the quantity of water ordered while the works were being constructed.

From the evidence given at the time the estimated cost of that water was 1s. 2d. per 1,000 gallons, and the water would be delivered at such a pressure as would entail pumpings to supply Stockport or necessitate the laying of a main from the proposed reservoir at Bury, a distance of fourteen miles from the boundary of the Stockport district. As the Goyt Valley was available and the other terms were so onerous the Committee decided to take no steps to obtain a supply from Haweswater. Last year the Waterworks Committee considered the question of increasing the supply, as the demand was growing so fast, the population having increased by 50 per cent and the consumption per head 60 per cent.

Alderman Charles Royle advised caution in the spending of such a large sum of money as would be entailed if the Goyt Valley scheme were carried out, and said every effort should be made to explore the possibilities of obtaining water from Manchester.

Other councillors expressed the view that the opportunity should be taken to acquire such an excellent gathering ground as the Goyt Valley and that the work of constructing the reservoirs should be pushed forward to relieve the unemployment in the town.

THE GOYT VALLEY WATER SCHEME

A Case for Co-operation?

To the Editor of the Manchester Guardian.

Sir.—The Stockport Corporation have now decided to proceed with their Parliamentary bill to construct waterworks and submerge the Goyt Valley above Taxal. On the other hand, the Manchester Corporation have hesitated in accepting the unemployment conditions offered by Mr. J. H. Thomas on account of the additional charges on the capital expenditure that will occur by expediting the work in advance of the expected rate of increase of consumption and sale of water.

May I suggest that there is a strong case here for co-ordination? If Stockport is needing further supplies of water in the immediate future—and presumably this is the case,—would it not serve a threefold purpose for Manchester to agree to supply them from the Haweswater project and so expedite their work, relieve unemployment, and save the Goyt Valley? It is true, of course, that the Stockport scheme would absorb unemployment, but under the most favourable conditions work could not be begun for some months, whereas the new Haweswater works could be put in hand immediately.

In conclusion, may I suggest further that the Manchester and District Joint Town planning Advisory Committee should consider the question of preserving the Goyt Valley, in view of the alternative means of water supply available for the Corporation of Stockport?—Yours, &c.,

E. L. LEEMING, Engineer and
Surveyor Barton-upon-Irwell
Rural District Council.

Council Offices, Green Lane,
Paticroft, December 6.

THE GOYT VALLEY WATER SCHEME.

To the Editor of the Manchester Guardian.

Sir,—I welcome the closely reasoned suggestions of Mr. Leeming in your issue of to-day concerning the Goyt Valley water scheme. As one who is above all things interested in preserving unspoilt the Lake District, I have never ceased to regret the imminent destruction of the old Mardale and Haweswater that we know. But since this has to come about, we can at least hope that the vast additional supply of water will be sufficient to prevent other schemes, destructive of the amenities, coming into existence. One would therefore be more inclined to forgive the Haweswater scheme if one could be assured that in it lay the means of saving that most beautiful stretch of Pennine, gritstone valley—the Goyt. If the unique variety in the beauty of the Goyt is not sufficient in itself to call for its preservation, its easy accessibility for Manchester and its conurbation should assure this.

We trust that the recently appointed National Park Committee are viewing their subject as part of a national planning scheme. In this there would seem to be room for two kinds of park: really national domains, such as the Lake District, Snowdonia, the New Forest might be; and the extra-municipal parks, such as are already in existence in the Lecky Hills, the Longshawe Estate, and Richmond Park. Surely it is time that Manchester—and Stockport—sought the preservation of some beautiful area to meet the rapidly increasing demand for this kind of thing. They have at hand this unrivalled valley. The land is already municipal property; the work at Haweswater has already started. It remains for Stockport to take a larger view of the situation, and, as Mr. Leeming says, for the Advisory Town Planning Committee to do the rest.—Yours, &c.,

KENNETH SPENCE.

Sawrey House, via Ambleside,
December 9.