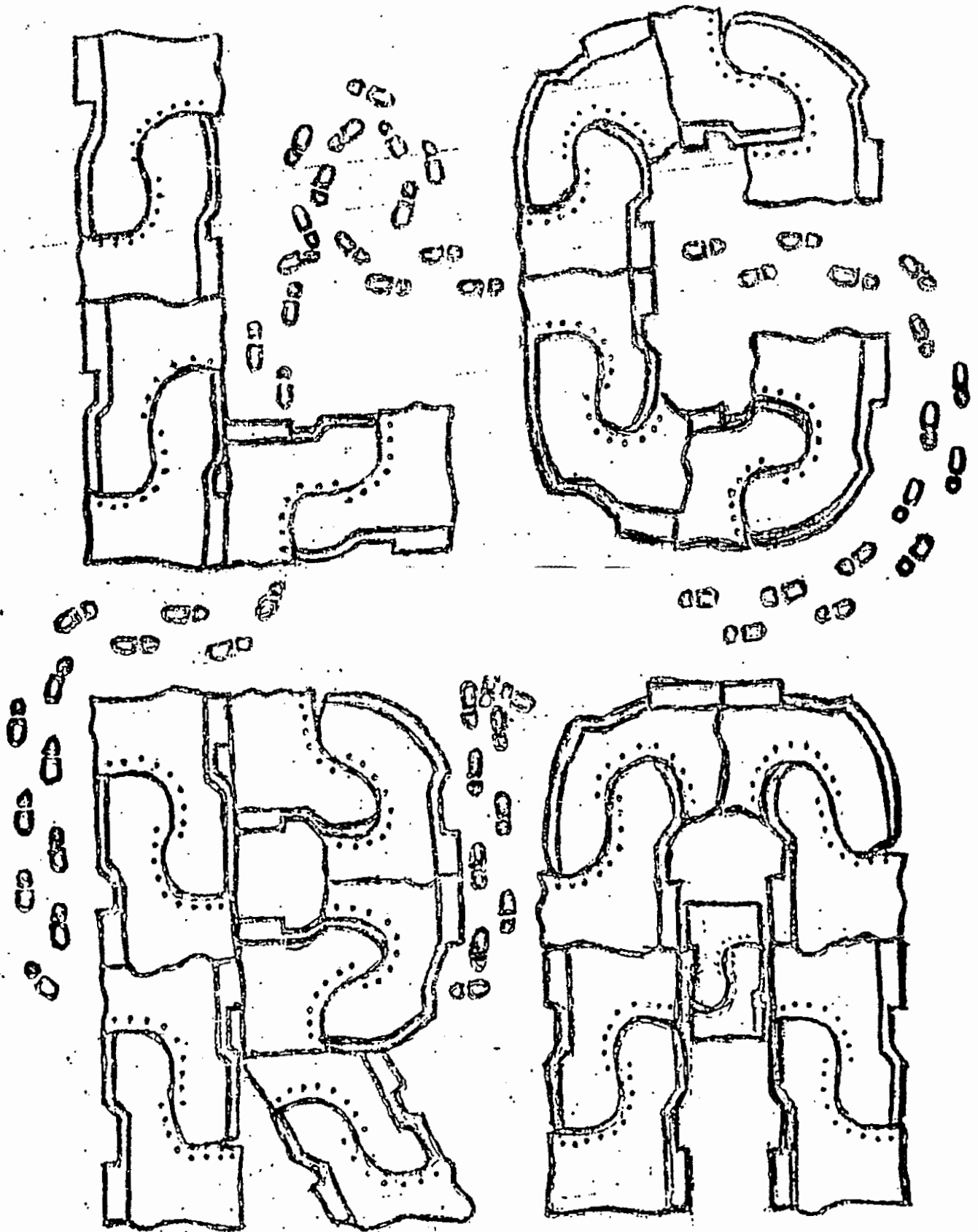


# Liverpool Catholic Ramblers Newsletter

May 1999

7th Series Issue 19



**EDITORIAL** Our front cover was first engraved on wax thirty years ago by an artistic member no longer walking with us. The Seniors' Section have excelled in this edition by giving us four ramble write-ups. In contrast the General Section had to import our stories from across the Channel! There must be some budding writers out there who can do a few ramble reports or even give a short report on some of our social events. Anyway, thanks to all who contributed towards this newsletter. Give (or send) your articles for the next edition to me at 7 Abbots Way, Billinge, Wigan WN5 7SB. Thanks. *DAVE NEWNS*

## Ramblerite

**OUTSIDERS** sometimes associate rambling as being a bit boring. We, of course, know better! There have been many memorable walks recently, often with breathtaking scenery, like the snow-topped peaks of the Lake District in mid April, or trekking along the impressive coastline of Barmouth. We often need to get out for a break, but unfortunately Carol recently got the wrong break when she got her right wrist entangled with Crinkle Craggs. However, she is on the mend, and is much happier now that she has learnt to lift a pint glass with her left hand!

We've also had amusing incidents recently such as when one of our newer members sank up to her waist in a deep and treacherous bog near Seathwaite. Not so amusing for Noireen who blamed Dave, the leader, for not catching her properly when he shouted "Jump!" But he did manage to hang on and catapult her out of said bog, both then rolling over into the heather out of danger. A complete change of clothing from waist down was necessary. Joe came to the rescue with a spare pair of red Y-fronts and there was a high stone wall nearby for modesty. Who said rambling was dull!

Coach hire prices have now gone up slightly so we need to fill them more, otherwise there will have to be another (Oh no!) coach fare increase. To counteract this we are trying to recruit more members, possibly a few more outdoor types who use the new Liverpool Youth Hostel (we've put an advert on their notice board).

Walks to the Lake District seem more popular than the Welsh ones so we have geared the summer programme accordingly. We could soon end up with fully booked coaches again, so don't leave it too late to book. OK!

**NEW MEMBERS** We welcome all new members who have joined us recently. We hope you will share many happy memories and with us on our future walks.

### DISCIPLINE

Certain members keep flouting some of the club's common-sense rules on discipline.

It is a matter of safety that everyone stays together. If you constantly race on ahead of the leader the obvious question is: Why did you join a club if you prefer to walk on your own? This poem might jog culprits into deciding whether they want to stay with us or not.



*We joined a walking club - 'twas the trend,  
Went up hills and paths that never end.  
Not fast enough for us, was our plight,  
We raced on ahead, out of their sight.  
Leaders got angry, and so they stressed:  
That we slow down and stay with the rest.  
We're fitter than them - got a strong chest.  
We can't understand, they're not impressed!  
The club sent us a warning letter,  
Didn't make me feel any better.  
I still ignored leaders - raced ahead;  
Sometimes got lost - don't like being led!  
So now I'm just a lonely bear cub,  
My fault, they threw me out of their club!*

### DOORS ON COACH LUGGAGE COMPARTMENTS

Doors have often been left dangerously open on our coaches, often when a party is getting dropped off en-route for their walk. Please ensure that the doors are closed after use. Leaders should check but often get distracted.

### COACH DROP-OFFS

Remember to take your gear **INSIDE** the coach with you if you are to be dropped off on return journeys. The boot is **NOT** the place for luggage if you are getting dropped off on return trips. It is common-sense not to delay the coach for more time than is safely necessary.

### LEADERS DUTIES

New leaders and old leaders should all have a copy of Leaders Duties. See Will Harris if you haven't got a copy. For the information of all members and leaders we will print a copy in the next newsletter.

# Social Events at the Cornmarket

May 13th	OPTIONS QUIZ	
May 20th	STAND UP QUIZ	Ray McIntosh
May 27th	BINGO	Helen and Mike
June 3rd	SANDWICH NIGHT	
June 10th	BEER QUIZ	
	There should be a few experts after the Keswick weekend!	Tony Bond
June 17th	WHO WANTS TO BE A MILLIONNAIRE-ISH	Will Harris
June 24th	TV AND FILM QUIZ	Irene and Ray
July 4th	CHEESE AND WINE	

## MEMORIES OF THE PAST

A COPY of the clubs's first printed rambling programme is shown here. During the formative years the club used to just send postcards to members with details of walks

## BUYING A MOUNTAIN

Following the appeal to buy Moel Findeg, near Maeshafn in North Wales and the late Joe Rourke's association with Maeshafn Youth Hostel the club have made a contribution and a certificate has been displayed at the youth hostel to Joe's memory.

His widow, Audrey, has been sent a copy and she, in return, thanked us all in a letter to the club for everyone concerned. Joe had many friends in our club and she said he would have been deeply moved by our generosity.

## Catholic Ramblers Association and Holiday Guild.

HON. SEC.—

MISS R. M. FITZGERALD, 11, SPENCER ST., EVERTON, LIVERPOOL.

### PROGRAMME OF WINTER RAMBLES, 1930-31.

Date.	Destination and Meeting Place	Leader.
1930		
Saturday, 4th October	IRBY Island opposite Liver Building, Pier Head, 2 p.m.	Miss M. Walsh
Sunday, 19th October	HUYTON Woolton Tram Terminus, 2-30 p.m.	Mr. Marquess
Saturday, 1st November	HOVLAKK Liver Buildings, 2 p.m.	Mr. T. Joyce
Sunday, 16th November	INCE WOODS Moor Lane, Crosby, 3 p.m. St. Vincent St., L'pool, 2-30 p.m.	Mr. T. Joyce
Saturday, 6th December	HALEWOOD Bowling Park Tram Terminus, 3 p.m.	Mr. F. Harvey
Sunday, 21st December	HINDERTON Liver Buildings, 2 p.m.	Mr. J. Shaw
1931		
Saturday, 3rd January	MYSTERY RAMBLE Liver Buildings, 2 p.m.	Messrs. F. Harvey J. Shaw & T. Joyce
Sunday, 18th January	NESTON Liver Buildings, 2 p.m.	Mr. A. Rooney
Saturday, 7th February	EASTHAM Liver Buildings, 2 p.m.	Mr. R. Jöycc
Sunday, 22nd February	WALLASEY Liver Buildings, 2 p.m.	Miss Fitzgerald
Saturday, 7th March	CAVTON Liver Buildings, 2 p.m.	Mr. G. Gr
Sunday, 15th March	ST. HELENS Sefton Place Tram Terminus, 2-30 p.m.	Mr.

SUBSCRIPTIONS FOR 1930-31 ARE NOW

## The Patron Saint of Ramblers

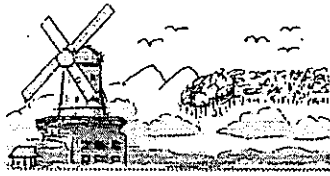
I RECENTLY read about some folk who travelled to the French village of Louvex, in the Ardèche region, to spend some days walking. The scenery was one of valleys, with woodlands of Silver Birch and pine trees, hamlets with windmills and isolated farms. It came of some surprise, therefore, to find in such a place a grand basilica consecrated to Saint Regis, the patron saint of ramblers.

Apparently this man was a priest who went on foot, in all kinds of weather, to the numerous hamlets of the region visiting his flock. Jean-Francois Regis was born on the 31st January 1595 at Fontecouverte near Narbonne and was raised by the Jesuits of Béziers. He died in 1640 aged 45 after a rather grim trip during a snow storm.

There was so much snow he was forced to spend the night sheltering in a ruined barn. The next day he painfully forced his way along a path through a field in glacial conditions. Arriving at Louvex he fell gravely ill and died there.

For his endeavours he was canonised in 1737 with the glorious title of Apostle of Velay and of the Vivarais.

The village has a museum illustrating his life and of course his tomb which has been attracting many people - tourists and pilgrims - for three centuries. *Richie Cannon*



## Clochemerle revisited

*The saga of a little French village and the crucifix adorning its town hall*

THE SCENE has been set, typical of a farce from the stories of the fictitious French village of Clochemerle. But this is a true story. The actual place is Joué-sur-Erdre in Brittany. The background - the 1904 law of separation of Church and State passionately maintained with regard to all forms of religious belief whereby all public buildings, etc, are banned from having any religious adherence.

Despite these restrictions the town hall at Joué-sur-Erdre was set up in a former presbytery housing a large wooden crucifix bearing a depiction of Christ in gilded bronze.

Everyone lived in peace there until the day when the Anti-Crucifix Association arrived and demanded the removal of the cross which now hangs in the great reunion hall.

The mayor of 25 years, Countess Isabelle de Gualès de Mezaubran, called a meeting in the town hall. Unanimously the councillors voted yes for the crucifix and its upkeep.

Furious, the president of the Anti-Crucifix Association appealed to the Nantes administrative tribunal, who declared it to be a decorative object and as such it could stay.

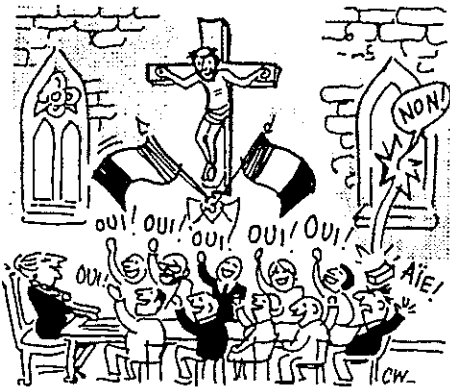
The president then decided to appeal to Nantes Administrative Court of Appeal who finally decreed it should be removed.

Despite this setback, the Municipality is standing its ground declaring its intention to bring the affair before the

Council of State, the supreme court of the Republic. The conflict has become philosophical, national and political but the die-hard old Bretons are only amused by all this, suggesting their village be renamed "Clochemerle." Others think that this is much ado about nothing by people trying to look important in what is really only a parochial matter.

The question now being asked is that if the Republic wants to apply the law strictly, why does it permit the presence of crosses on public

memorials to the dead? Will it go on to declare all saints days and feast days, Christmas, Easter, etc, as working days? France enjoys more feast days than any other European country. Not a popular vote-catching idea I would have thought! *Richie Cannon*



Joué-sur-Erdre Town Hall

## Keswick Youth Hostel Weekend

4th June to 6th June. Mini-bus departs William Brown Street Friday between 5 and 5.30pm

Cost: Two nights bed and breakfast £26.50, Day ticket to Beer Festival £5, Mini-bus £10. Total = £41.50.

*Note: If you are booked for the mini-bus but opt to go by car at the last minute, leaving an empty seat on the mini-bus, you will still be charged £10 for that seat - ie: no refund!*

The weekend is now fully booked for the hostel but there are a few who are making their own arrangements for accommodation. For further details or enquiries contact Bob Carney 427 5373 or Will Harris 486 6541.

**All cash including mini-bus fare must be paid by Sunday 16th May**

# Recent Seniors' Section Rambles

## Soggy Butties near Burscough - 28th February

THIS ramble coincided with the SW Lancs monsoon season. Twelve intrepid but nevertheless foolhardy ramblers met at Ruff Wood, ready to be soaked. I was one of them despite having promised myself that I would not be going on any more of this leader's walks simply because I always get soaked!

However, everybody was in the best of spirits as we set off, and what is more, continued in that vein! Our route took us down Lady's Lane (a gradient of one in two hundred) which we would have to ascend on the way back. After about a mile, someone who will be nameless, was heard to ask whether it was possible to shorten the walk and Helen, by far the youngest member of the group and "an Ormskirk local," suggested that she knew a short way (wade?) back. The Seniors' reputation clearly had gone before them!

In fact we stopped for soggy butties except for Maureen and Amy who were reported to be having a three-course meal, probably consisting of very watery soup and soup and

soup. We continued past the remains of the Augustinian Priory near Burscough now overtaken by Mammon in the guise of a caravan park. Numerous stiles and muddy paths later, we reached St John's Catholic Church at Burscough, crossed a bridge and soon found ourselves walking a footpath through a field of leeks.

Our next landmark, and there had been very few, was Needless Inn Farm, inhabited though showing no sign of life. Clearly the natives, except Helen, keep their heads down in the monsoon season. Soon we were in sight of Our Lady's Walk and that long ascent we had all been looking forward to. Thanks everyone. GEFA

## At Loggerheads with Llanarmon - 14th March

WE set off for Wales on a lovely sunny morning taking the Mersey Tunnel route to the M53 to Queensferry through to Loggerheads, stopping briefly at the Visitor's Centre for a quick cup of coffee and meeting up with six other members of our party, who were of the same mind as ourselves in taking advantage of the facilities.

Making our way to the official start and feeling duly refreshed, we only needed our leaders to show up when Molly and Tony arrived looking as though they had been for a "dry run" over their chosen walk. Greetings dispensed with - our party now totalled ten, we commenced our walk, which took us out of the village of Llanarmon-yn-Ial. Soon we reached a gate from where Tony pointed out a large cave which had generated some archaeological interest after a flint arrowhead had been discovered. We then took the path through the gate where we encountered THE MUD! Clinging cloying gooey stuff . . . there was no escape.

The more careful we were the more chance we had of becoming bogged down. All this mud and we were climbing too.

After about sixty-ten miles of this carefully churned up track, about 400 yards anyway, with boots getting heavier with each step, we at last reached the end of the track onto some moorland and were able to admire the beautiful scenery with the Clwydian range as a backdrop. Soon there

were mumbles about butty breaks and so our intrepid leader called a halt and we were soon tucked into our combed beef sandwiches - or a particular couple were.

Replenished we were soon on our way again through some dusty quarry residue which is in the throes of being landscaped with a footpath running through it. We then reached a huge quarry which must stretch for a square mile.

Continuing on our way, we reached a road to Eryrys ready to turn at a pink cottage which strangely appeared to be yellow (surprising how the scenery changes colour through the seasons). After a short climb up hill we followed a footpath past some old mining engineering works including the Eryrys engine house and chimney. Dropping down to a road we were soon back in the village of Llanarmon and our starting point.

Many thanks to our leaders Molly and Tony for a super walk (see I have already forgotten the mud!).

"ALF TUPPER"

## Billinge and a Horse with a Moustache - 28th March

IT being such a lovely morning and bearing in mind the leader's reputation for bad weather walks, one wondered if he might call the whole thing off.

However, all twelve were soon into Goyt Wood, walking up the bed of the stream, leaping from one bank to the other, scrambling under fallen trees - and this was supposed to be the easy walk! As we took lunch it started to cloud over and people started to eye George. Would it? Could it? We set off again, fingers crossed, minds focussed, tongues wagging. A brief stop at Blakeyhurst Farm to admire the rebuilding and we were soon at Newton Road.

The next footpath took us round Tatlock's Hillock and then a little problem finding the way - clearly marked on the map - but blocked by a barbed-wire fence. Open access indeed! Another scramble and we were on our way again. Not a murmur of complaint from anyone, no ribbing of the leader despite having to do an extra half mile. But then the company was so good!

In a little while we came to Longshaw Common, picked our way past some building works, admired a horse which was sporting the latest in moustaches and crossed the main

road to ascend Billinge Hill. Visibility was moderate. We could pick out the Clwydian range and The Orme to the West and Rivington in the East. Tea was taken here as we sheltered from a stiff westerly. As we descended, a police vehicle approached and as we were all preparing our excuses for getting under that barbed-wire we were asked if we had seen an errant motor cyclist, and two of our party were able to supply vital information.

As we descended we could scan the whole South Lancs Plain before us and soon came to the Promised Land. It would seem that the promise is yet to be fulfilled as most of the few buildings had seen better days. Billinge Hall now came into view and clearly that is now about to see better days. We had about a mile to go now and no-one was flagging. For those who wished, there was tea and biscuits back at Freda's and an excellent day was concluded with dinner in the 'Bottle and Glass'. Thanks to everybody.

GEFA

## **SENIORS' SECTION FORTHCOMING RAMBLES**

May 27 (Thurs) CHALET, 11.30am

June 13 WYCOLLER (Pennines, between Colne and Haworth). George Skillicorn 01744-892823

June 27 WHITEWELL WAY. Bill Potter - 486 7952

## **SENIORS' SECTION FORTHCOMING HOUSE MEETINGS**

June 3 BILL POTTER

July 1 AIME PRITCHARD

### **Another Seniors' Section Ramble**

**HOGHTON TOWER - 12th April. Leaders George and Freda Skillicorn**

*(Note: Houghton Tower is east of Preston and has no connection with Aughton Towers near Stoke)*

The meet for this walk was in the Houghton Community Centre Car Park.

A hotpot was being prepared in the Centre and the 'facilities' were made available to us, but to Bill, the facilities extended to a cup of coffee! How Bill always manages to land on his feet I've yet to learn - and he's not telling!

There was a motorcycle event on at Houghton Tower - sprint racing, at the Hall at the top of the long drive. Despite being obviously walkers, kitted out in all the appropriate gear, and not a crash hat between us, an official questioned our intent and tried to prise £2 from us - some hope!

The initial path started half way up the said drive and traversed the base of the hill for half a mile before descending to more level terrain, where from a bridge spanning the local railway line, the state of repair (or lack of it) was discussed with the help of a professional eye.

The afternoon weather, fitfully sunny, windy, warm, chilly - a cocktail of conditions kept us on the move. The quagmire of the pioneer had improved to mere muddy paths and patches, but one still had to keep one's wits about one, or lose one's dignity! Daffodils were losing their glory, but bluebells were making their modest contribution to the developing season, but the maiden still shyly veiled her glories.

In the depth of a wood we came upon a surprisingly sturdy bridge, over which alum was transported to the cotton industry, giving the name to Alum Scar Lane, which we ascended, and at the top of which we took tea and gossiped to a local, out with his dog, who turned out to be a teacher (the man, not the dog!), and had worked in Leigh, same as George. He gave us some local colour, inasmuch as we were sitting outside the gates of a multi-multi-millionaire's daughter's house, and the deserted Bolton Hall had been the home of the Thwaites Brewery family. We were walking in exclusive circles.

The River Derwent skirts the eastern flanks of the hill, upon which Houghton Tower is built. Here Bill thought he spotted an Eider Duck, but when later he insisted a heron was a gull, I began to question the quality of his binoculars! As we rounded the hill, the full force of the westerlies hit us, and forced us to gather our remaining energies for the last mile to the car and the Boar's Head for a very welcome and appreciated meal.

George and Freda led the ramble with their customary information and consideration, and a good day's walking was enjoyed by all.

G.