

## KINDER MASS TRESPASS – 1932

### HARVEY JACKSON

In 1932 I was an 18 year old apprentice living on Mottram Road, Stalybridge, in those days we worked Monday to Saturday with only Sunday off. This was the day with friends we loved to head for the Derbyshire Hills, as Ewan Maccoll wrote in his song the 'Manchester Rambler' "I may be a wage slave on Monday but I am a free man on Sunday", we were typical of the type of people he wrote the song for.

We knew the moors were closed to public access but could not see why we should not be allowed to walk on them, we did no harm as we all loved and respected wildlife and the countryside, many times we had confrontations with landowners, keepers and agents. Our usual route was from Stalybridge through Mottram and Charlesworth, Monks Road to the top of Chunal, onto the moorland to Mill Hill and our destination Kinder Downfall.

We had heard about a planned trespass protest for 24<sup>th</sup> April, 1932, and decided to do our usual walk and hopefully meet up with the main party which we did near the top of Kinder. When the party started to move down to Hayfield we joined them and on arriving in the village found a large party of Police and land owners and staff.

The Officers in charge of the Police was Assistant Chief Constable James Main Garrow who I was to meet up with in years to come. Leaders of the party were soon picked out and arrested, in those days to get yourself arrested and in court could lead to losing your job so we decided to avoid trouble, we would retrace our steps to the top of Chunal and head home. On arriving there we were met by a group of so called keepers, more like hired thugs, who set about us with sticks and boots, gave us a savage beating then pushed us in to a bed of nettles. We did not dare complain as this would have been trouble for us.

We later read about the court proceedings and imprisonment of Benny Rothman and others and the prejudiced way they were prosecuted. In 1935 I decided on a change of career and applied to join the Police Service, I applied to a number of forces and found myself at Derby for interview. I had a large head of bright ginger hair and was known as 'Ginger Jackson'. The interview panel was chaired by none other than the now Chief constable Garrow. He gave me a hard stare as if he thought he had seen me before, on looking at my application he saw my pastimes were swimming and hill walking he said to me quite firmly @Jackson we do not like hill walkers in Derbyshire they are not welcome'.

This did not put me off, I served my time in the force, my son Peter followed me into the Derbyshire Police and adopted my love of the hills. He served in the Peak district nearly all of his service, spent many years of the Mountain Rescue service and as a part time National Park Ranger and gave a lot of time helping young people to enjoy the area through the Duke of Edinburgh's Award Scheme.

In 1992 I attend the 60<sup>th</sup> Anniversary celebrations of the trespass and was able to meet Benny Rothman who now was a friend of my son. On seeing the creation of the National Park in the 1950's I realised how worthwhile it had been for campaigners to fight for access to the hills which are now accessible for all to enjoy and how they looked after so well by the park staff.

John Harvey Jackson