Sheffield Round Walk

The Round Walk provides a unique feature which gives ready access over a 10 mile route through 445·5 hectares of picturesque public open space in the south and south western districts of the city. Much of the inspiration for realising the potential of these areas can be attributed to the considerable assistance financially from Alderman J. G. Graves, J.P., in his lifetime and later from The J. G. Graves Charitable Trust, without whose land acquisitions the scheme would not have been possible. Full details of the acquisitions are included in Appendix I. The first Parks Manager (1940 to 1957) Mr. E. O. Sadler, M.B.E., A.R.I.C.S., provided much assistance and the Round Walk is an apt memorial to his foresight and planning.

The walk, which is clearly signposted, may be taken in easy stages as Public Transport services are available at various points—see Appendix II.

The Route of the Round Walk

The walk commences at the Hunter's Bar entrance to **(1) Endcliffe Park.** This park is 15·4 ha in extent and was acquired by the Corporation in 1885, 1888 and 1927. 2.3 ha were presented to the City by Colonel Sir H. K. Stephenson, Bart., D.S.O. The River Porter flows through the park where there are pleasant riverside and woodland walks, a grassland playing area of 6·1 ha, children's playgrounds, ponds with numerous species

of waterfowl, and a cafe from which light refreshments may be obtained. Site for informal games and exhibitions, formerly the venue of Sheffield Flower Show. In 1929, because of traffic problems in Sheffield City Centre, the Queen Victoria Memorial Statue was transferred to Endcliffe Park and was erected adjacent to the Hunter's Bar entrance.

At this point it may be of interest to note the course of the River Porter through Endcliffe Park, Whiteley Woods and Forge Dam, and its relationship to the growth of the cutlery trade and allied industries in Sheffield. Although the Shepherd Wheel in Whiteley Woods is the only complete industrial unit remaining on Recreation Committee lands in the Porter Valley, there is still evidence of the sites of other Wheels as indicated by the dams which provided the necessary water power. The first of these dams may be seen when walking through Endcliffe Park from Hunter's Bar, it is named Holme Wheel Dam and until recent years was used for boating. Continuing towards the Rustlings Road entrance, Nether Spur-Gear Wheel Dam will be noted on the left of the path. The island in this dam is now a waterfowl habitat.

Cross Rustlings Road to the entrance of Whiteley Woods. High on the hillside to the left of the path through Whiteley Woods lies **(2) Bingham Park,** area 6·5 ha, which was acquired by the Corporation in 1911, 1913 and 1927, 4·4 ha of which were presented to the city by Sir John E. Bingham, Bart. This open space consists mainly of woodland from which a commanding view of Ranmoor can be seen.

From Rustlings Road enter **(3) Whiteley Woods**—39·3 ha—of which in addition to the 3·8 ha presented by the Graves Trust, 1·9 ha were presented by T. Walter Hall, Esq., and 2·4 ha by the Town Trustees. The lands were acquired by the Corporation in 1897/8, 1911, 1913 and 1932. Recreation facilities comprise 2 bowling greens, 16 tennis courts and a miniature golf course.

Three dams will be observed along the course of the River Porter through Whiteley Woods—from the Rustlings Road entrance—Ibbotson Wheel Dam, Shepherd Wheel and Wire Mill Dam (formerly known as Whiteley Wood Rolling Mill). **(4) The Shepherd Wheel** derives its name from its connection with a Mr. Shepherd who, in 1794, employed ten men there. Previoulsy it was called 'Potar Wheel' as recorded in the will of William Beighton of Stumperlowe, Cutler, dated 1584. Over a period of a hundred years three generations of the Hinde family worked at Shepherd Wheel and in the 17th century the Wheel is frequently mentioned in the rent books of the Earl of Shrewsbury. The commercial life of the Wheel ended in the 1930's. The restoration of Shepherd Wheel was first conceived by the late Mr. David Flather when he was Master Cutler in 1926 and over the intervening years negotiations proceeded for its preservation and restoration, culminating in 1954 with the formation of the Council for the Conservation of Sheffield Antiquities who, together with the help of numerous firms and volunteers, carried through a programme of restoration to the buildings. In 1967 the Shepherd Wheel passed to the control of the Sheffield

Corporation Libraries and Arts Committee and the renovation of the surrounds and the dredging of the Dam commenced in the spring of 1968.

Shepherd Wheel is open Wednesday to Saturday 10.00 – 12.30 and 13.30 – 17.00, Sunday 11.00 – 12.30 and 13.30 – 17.00. Closed on Mondays and Tuesdays.

Another feature of industrial interest in Whiteley Woods is the Memorial close to Wire Mill Dam, erected in April 1929 by Mr. David Flather to the memory of Thomas Boulsover, the inventor of Old Sheffield Plate. The memorial is within a few yards of the site on which the Boulsover mill was erected in 1762.

The path through Whiteley Woods continues along the course of the River Porter and at the junction with Brookhouse Hill the next stage of the walk is reached—**(5) Forge Dam**—on the site of which formerly stood The Old Forge. This open space extends to 1·2 ha. Boating and fishing facilities are available and refreshments may be obtained at the Forge Dam Cafe. A slight detour from the path around the boating lake will take you to a woodland which was planted in the year of the Festival of Britain, 1951, which between 1970 – 1976 supplied a source of large trees for city redevelopment. The long-term plan for this area is to plant a comprehensive collection of trees in the form of an arboretum.

Continue on the path around the boating lake and proceed through the picturesque Mayfield Valley, where many of the farms are in Corporation ownership, to **(6) Porter Clough,** an area of 7·3 ha. The magnificent wooded slopes, with Scots Pines and Beech predominating, will be noted, and the footpath gently rises towards Fulwood Head.

The route continues left along Fulwood Lane to the hamlet of Ringinglow 1,000 ft. above sea level, where the Norfolk Arms hotel, erected about 1820, will be noticed, and at the junction of the Ringinglow and Houndkirk Roads stands the octagonal shaped 'Round House' which was built between 1758 and 1760 and used as a toll bar house until 1830 when the newly constructed Fox House road claimed many of the travellers. In the early 1800's a type of out-crop coal mining was carried on the Ringinglow district. Pass the Round House and proceed along Houndkirk Road for a few yards and take the public footpath on the left leading to **(7) Limb Valley**—area 19 ha. The scenery here changes to an expanse of natural beauty, woodland streams, waterfalls and moorland. Just before reaching Whirlow Bridge a diversion on the right leads by a woodland path to **(8) Whirlow Brook Park**—area 15·8 ha 750 ft. above sea level. This property has been a most valuable acquisiton to the Sheffield parks system from a landscape point of view. The grounds to the Whirlow Brook residence were landscaped by specialists, possibly during the late 1920's, and one of the prominent features of the design is the clever use of the rock garden to merge with the existing contours. The middle pool provides a linkage between the pond constructed as a feature of the rock garden and the lower lake, now used for canoe training. The informal planting of Corsican