

**HEATED DEBATE**  
**In Christchurch Council**  
**THE CONDITION OF CREEDY PATH.**  
Coun. H. Druitt alleges "Impudence."  
**LADY MAYOR FIGURES PROMINENTLY**  
July 1929

"Before the Council makes a fool of itself, as it is in the course of doing, I should like to point out that it does not control the path. I wish to point out to you that it is time people here minded their own business."

The comments made by Councillor Herbert Druitt at last night's meeting of the Christchurch Borough Council, upon the recommendation of the Roads Committee that the Borough Surveyor (Mr. H.G. Farmer) be instructed to arrange for Creedy footpath to be properly repaired, led to heated exchanges with the Mayor (Councillor Miss M. B. Robinson).

As chairman of the Roads Committee, Councillor Russell Oakley moved the recommendation, stating he had visited Creedy path and considered that the level required raising to that of the land on each side.

Councillor Druitt maintained that the surface of the path could not be raised, and denied any suggestion the path was waterlogged. "It is time people began to mind their own business," he repeated. "Creedy path is a right-of-way, and is privately owned. Two-thirds of it, for which Miss Druitt and myself are responsible, is kept constantly in good repair, and it is a lie to say that it is kept anyhow else."

**"SPITE" ALLEGED!**

"It is in excellent condition," he continued, "and I warn the Council not to interfere with other people's property. The Council will be fools to pass a resolution such as this, which is dictated by spite. This was brought up by Councillor Shave and seconded by Councillor Hiscock in the Roads Committee. Where is Shave—he is not here!" observed the Councillor.

Proceeding, he maintained that the path had never been repaired by the Council except in consultation and with the leave of the owners. If the Surveyor had been consulted, he said, the committee would have learned that he (Mr. Druitt) consulted him some time ago, and it was agreed that it was in a perfectly good condition. "I warn you that you had better leave it alone—that is my advice to fussy people," was Councillor Druitt's concluding remark.

The Mayor replied as one who was in the habit of using Creedy five days a week. She maintained that in wet weather it was "one long line of pools of

water," and: I have pointed out provision of a foundation to the path. She asked the owners to allow the Council to make the laying of that foundation possible. Miss Robinson reminded the Council that it was bad for children to have to walk through pools of water.

### **"A SORE POINT."**

Councillor Druitt interpolated with an observation again denying that it was ever waterlogged, whereupon the Mayor stated that she decided to be as reasonable as possible. "One wishes to be quite frank," she went on. "The children do go through water there. It is a very sore point, because I cannot understand why it is you disagree with the Council putting in a firm foundation," she added, addressing the member concerned.

"This is sheer impudence. Mr. Mayor—pure exaggeration," retorted Councillor Druitt. "You are always talking about the little children.

"Not at all," replied Miss Robinson. "I can take an oath—it is ridiculous," she added.

Councillor Druitt: I have pointed out to the Council that they are only making fools of themselves by trying to take control of somebody else's property.

The Deputy—Mayor (Councillor H. J. Martin) intervened, and moved an amendment to refer the matter back to the Roads Committee.

### **MAYOR'S AMENDMENT**

The amendment was carried, but when it was tabled as a substantive motion, Miss Robinson moved another amendment: "That the owners of Creedy path be written to and asked to put the path into a proper state of repair, and if they refuse, to give a reason for so doing."

Alderman Clarke seconded, with the remark that it was the proper step to take.

Replying to the debate, Councillor Russell Oakley supported the amendment as the proper way to proceed. When the matter was discussed in the committee, he said, he had no knowledge whatever that the path was private property. He said he would have hesitated considerably had he known the path was private property, in sanctioning the expenditure of public money to repair. In view of the motives imputed. Councillor Oakley said he thought the proper course was to communicate with the owners.

The amendment was carried, and when it was put forward as a substantive motion, Councillor Druitt rose again.

## **VERBAL COUNTERS.**

"I want to move another amendment—that the Town Council do mind its own business," he said heatedly. He also asked for a statement from the Surveyor.

The Mayor: I cannot put such an insolent resolution before the Council.

Councillor Druitt: Then you do not wish to hear what you Surveyor has to say?

The Mayor: The Surveyor had plenty of chance at the Roads Committee.

Councillor Druitt: Why shouldn't he say it here in public?

"If Mr. Druitt puts forward a resolution of some sense he might get the information from the Surveyor," interposed Councillor F.E. Abbott.

## **MEETING INSOLENCETH WITH INSOLENCETH.**

The Deputy Mayor intervened again with the reminder that the Council should set an example. "Because one or two come here and lose their tempers, there is no reason why we should meet insolence with insolence," he commented, declaring that the proper course would have been to refer the matter back, as he desired.

The Borough Surveyor asked for permission to make a statement, and this was granted. Mr. Farmer recalled that when he first came to Christchurch he had instructions to repair the path. Thinking that it was a public path he sent his men there and they were properly ordered off... Ever since, the repairs had been done with the permission of the owners.

Estimates had been prepared. It would involve an expenditure of £15 to treat the path with gravel, and £50 to place it in a permanent and satisfactory state with tar paving. The Surveyor stated that the path required repair, but not all over.

## **OWNERS TO BE WRITTEN TO.**

It was agreed to delete the last portion of the amendment relative to the refusal and the request for a reason.

Seven voted for the amendment as a substantive resolution, and seven against. The Mayor exercised her prerogative and gave her casting vote in favour of the motion.