(5) Willow Garth, Knottingley
17th - 18th October 1987.

Seventy four traps were laid in three lines, pre-baited and locked open on the 16th October.
Trap line A - 23 traps - neglected meadow near phragmites bed and old mixed hedgerow.
Trap line B - 24 traps - on top of ditch bank.
Trap line C - 25 traps - in planted willow bed; dense and varied ground cover.

The trap was poorly attended; five members and three others assisted at the 17th (am.) lift, as only one member was available for the Sunday morning it was decided that the trap would be concluded on the Saturday. Only two members were present for the Saturday evening lift therefore the only information it was possible to record was species caught.

Species Caught	Trap Line A		B		C	
	am	pm	am	pm	am	pm
Micromys minutus	1	-	-	1	-	-
Sorex araneus	4	4	1	2	3	3
Microtus agrestis	2	-	-	-	1	-
Clethrionomys glareolus	2	4	1	2	1	1
Apodemus sylvaticus	-	-	9	6	4	5
Total animals caught	9	8	11	11	9	9

Two harvest mouse nests were found on Trap Line C. A fox bolted from cover from the same area. Two woodmice were found dead in a discarded milk bottle. One bank vole was found dead on a footpath.

6) Poppleton Church graveyard survey.
Carried out during the last two weekends of November 1987.

There were limited findings from this survey, the dominant small mammal being the woodmouse *A. sylvaticus*. A number of Longworth traps were laid, but few mammals trapped.

Other field activities included a badger watch at Hazelwood on 8th June 1987 (reported elsewhere in this edition of Imprint), and the launching of the new 10 kilometre mapping scheme around York, of all mammals in the area, covering 9 ten kilometre squares.

All in all, this represents a great deal of effort on the part of the membership of the Group, with nine traps being carried out during the year. Not all were well attended by the membership, and at some there were hardly enough members present to carry out adequate field work. More often than not the same stalwart members turned up to lay and pre-bait, before the lifts. However, that being said, the findings of the traps make interesting reading.

Michael J.A.Thompson.

A REVIEW OF BADGER PERSECUTION IN YORKSHIRE.

C.A. Howes, Museum and Art Gallery, Doncaster.

Introduction

"Throughout all time the badger seems to have been misunderstood, misrepresented and maligned. Even today (1914) 'brock' is not immune from slander and misconception... there are a few estates on which badgers are rigorously preserved, but they are only a few, and it is not an exaggeration to say that 18 out of 20 properties where on badgers have for years made a home they are systematically harrassed, dug-out, baited, shot and so on to the death." (Blakeborough and Pease 1914).

Over the past century similar bouts of outrage have been expressed, but unlike the above example, criticism has often been founded on generalization, isolated cases or unsupportable claims. A considerable volume of documentary information on which to base informed comment does however exist, though its discovery, abstraction and analysis is probably more labour intensive and exhausting than badger digging itself.

At the request of the RSPCA data has been gathered from a wide range of published and archival sources, though principally from the extensive YNU records, and presented here as an accessible record of badger persecution in Yorkshire. The study is, however, far from definitive in that police files have not been consulted, press reports only sporadically monitored and levels of gassing and poisoning, apparently high during the 1950s to 70s, have not been elicited from NFU or Ministry of Agriculture sources.

The apparent abundance of allusions during the 19th century and relative paucity in recent times need not reflect changing levels of persecution or indeed badger populations, but is perhaps an indication of changing public attitude. At one time the defeat of a badger was viewed as a heroic and skilful act to be noised abroad. Today such action is celebrated in private and of course gassing can eradicate entire populations without fuss or publicity.

Bounty payments for badgers.

In 1566 'An act for the preservation of grayne' came into force, its aim being to encourage the destruction of a wide range of what were regarded as "ravening byrdes and vermyn." From the first quarter of the 19th century the practice of paying head money declined rapidly and the Act was finally repealed in 1863.

Records of payments for badgers, dating from 1587 to 1767, have been traced in the accounts of only 8 of 50 Yorkshire parishes found to contain bounty payments. Allusions were in a number of forms and spellings including brock, boorh, bawson or more frequently badgo, badgy, baggar, bager, gray or grayhead. Payments also varied, 4d, 6d and 12d or 1s being noted, variations probably relating to the animal's size or age.