

THE
FORESTER TRAINING SCHOOLS
1904-1971
RECOLLECTIONS FROM EX-STUDENTS
EDITED BY
HENRY SMITH AND GEOFF WAYGOOD

2001

From an idea suggested by Henry Smith

With acknowledgements and thanks to all our contributors and to the Dean Heritage Museum for use of archive materials with apologies to all those whose material we were unable to fit in.

Greetings

When I started the Foresters School in 1904 I do not think that anyone thought it would go on for more than a few years; it seems incredible that it has flourished and got larger and larger and year by year and that it has even been necessary to start four more schools despite the very large number of trained foresters you are turning out each year

When Parkend started there was no Forestry Commission or other forestry department and it was difficult to get foresters jobs for the trained students and it did not seem likely that there would be sufficient demand for the men after leaving the school. All that is now changed; the Forestry Commission is a big department and there is also a demand for foresters on private estates, so that no student need be afraid that he will be unemployed.

I have spent my working life in forestry; three years as a student under Sir William Schlich at Coopers Hill College, then ten years in the Indian Forest Department, fifteen years in the Office of Woods, of which ten years were as Instructor at the foresters school, and finally ten years in the Forestry Commission-37 years service in all; after retirement in 1931 I still took a great interest in forestry matters.

As a result of this long service I have a message to give to the present students. I congratulate them on choosing forestry as a career and wish them all success and a happy life. I always found the work interesting and varied and the life healthy and pleasant; above all it is useful and when one retires one has a satisfactory feeling that the trees remain and that one's work lives on for a hundred years or more.

Now when you get a a foreman or foresters post I want you to realise that it is a very responsible and important position. A forester has a limited area and gets to know every tree in the forest; he is the man who really knows his woods intimately and I have always thought it is he who has the happiest life. In the higher posts the pay is better but there is more and more office work and less time in the woods so the forester is a very fortunate as well as a very important person. All grades in a big department like the Forestry Commission must work together for the common good and there is no reason at all to think that a forester's job is an inferior one.

Of all the years of my forest life I enjoyed my ten years in Dean Forest best, because I was actually in the woods so much and because I had a fine lot of students, many of whom became friends

I wish all prosperity and good luck to the Forester Training School, to the Instructors, and to all the present students.

C.O. HANSON

Thame Cottage
Warborough
Oxford

From The Deansday Book 1954

History of the School of Forestry from 1904-1915.

by C. O. HANSON, I.S.O., M.B.E.

The Departmental Committee appointed by the Board of Agriculture to enquire into the state of British Forestry issued their report in November 1902. They recommended, amongst other things, that systematic instruction should be provided for working foresters and woodmen.

The Commissioners of Woods and Forests took the matter up and decided to open a school in the Forest of Dean. On 1st January, 1904, I was appointed instructor and the school was opened on 11th January, 1904, with 9 students. These men were all already in the Crown service, 7 in Dean Forest and 2 in Windsor Forest. It was not till 1905 that men from private estates were admitted.

The school started in one room in the Deputy Surveyor's office in Coleford, and we worked here for a year. In 1905 the school was moved to Parkend and this was not appreciated as we had to occupy a wooden hut of 2 rooms. In one of these a museum was started and this formed the nucleus of the museum which now exists. The other room was the class-room. It was draughty and cold, and, it will hardly be believed, I was allowed no coal or firewood to heat it. We started by wearing our overcoats at lectures in the winter but, as this was not conducive to good work, I purchased coal at my own personal expense and I have not yet forgiven the then authorities for this disgraceful example of parsimony! This matter was eventually put right on the arrival of a new Deputy-Surveyor. This hut still stands, I believe, under the oak trees by the village green. It was entirely unsuited for the school. A letter was written to the "Dean Forest Mercury" by a visitor on July 24th, 1908. He was very complimentary in his remarks about the work done but the following sentence occurs: "We were permitted to pay a very pleasurable visit to the—we were going to say—buildings. Buildings they are not but a very tumble down wooden structure—a perfect disgrace to the Crown."

In this place we did the best work we could for 5 years and rejoiced when we moved to the new school towards the end of 1910. There existed an old engine house near Parkend station and during 1910 this was reconstructed into an ugly but commodious school-house. This is now part of the present school. Until 1910 all students lived at home or in lodgings. When the new school was occupied, lodgings were provided in it for 8 students, the rest living in lodgings.

The building at that time consisted of the re-constructed engine-house only, of 4 stories with an outside staircase. The upper two stories only were occupied by the school with a museum and class-room on the top floor, and living room and dormitory on the third floor.

The two lower floors were let to the Parkend Institute who had a billiard room and reading room on the second floor and miniature rifle range on the ground floor.

In 1913 the whole building was occupied by the school, and a class-room, museum and instructor's office were built on, and a proper staircase was formed. The Crown purchased the billiard table for school use. At this time the top floor became dormitories, bath-room and drying room. The third floor contained living room and kitchen. The second floor contained the billiard-room, reading-room and two small bedrooms with a large museum built on. The ground-floor was occupied by a caretaker's room, and bicycle store with class-room and instructor's office built on. For the first time we had a really commodious building.

Throughout these years the school course was two years. Instruction was given in the class-room, on walks in the Forest of Dean, and Highmeadow Woods and on excursions to various private estates.

As a rule each class attended school on two afternoons a week, one class on Monday and Thursday, the other on Tuesday and Friday from 2 p.m. till 5 p.m. At first I was the sole instructor and dealt with all branches of Forestry together with some Botany. Later Mr. Roper gave instruction on surveying and, later still, evening classes in Arithmetic and Geometry were given at Parkend by one of the staff of Lydney Secondary School.

Examinations were held by Mr. E. P. Popert, Assistant Deputy Surveyor.

About once a fortnight the two classes together accompanied me on an all-day walk in the forest. During the 2 years' course the students visited with me all interesting woods in the Dean and Highmeadow and much was learnt on these walks. Practice was also given to students on these days in such matters as thinning, pruning and measurement of standing and felled timber.

A special feature was made of excursions to private estates. The chief areas visited from time to time were Tintern Woods, Highnam Arboretum near Gloucester, Tortworth and Thornbury on the other side of the Severn, and Long Ashton near Bristol. On one famous occasion, by making a very long day of it, we went to Chatsworth in Derbyshire.

These excursions were much appreciated and incurred no expense to the Crown. Students were keen enough to pay their own fares and as far as possible we travelled by push-bike (to Tintern and Highmeadow) or by train, taking our push-bikes to places further off. In order to reduce the costs to the students I asked senior officers of the Department, both local and in London, to assist and they were good enough to send me some substantial subscriptions which had the effect of reducing costs to what the students could afford.

These excursions were very pleasant trips and I am convinced that a great deal was learnt. We also got landowners and agents interested in our work. This was an important point in those early days, long before the Forestry Commission was thought of.

On days when the student was not at the school he worked as a labourer in the woods. The school did not work as a gang but each student during his course obtained practice at as many jobs as possible. Thus he would be attached to a gang of timber fellers for, say, two months, to a gang of hedge-layers for two months, to the carpenter's shop for two months, to a nursery in the nursery season, to a gang of planters and so on. Certain picked students also worked in the Parkend office to learn accounts and office routine.

The pay varied from time to time. As a general rule men already working in the Crown woods drew the same pay as they were already getting, usually from 12/- to 18/- per week, school time counting as work time. Men from private estates got 10/- per week from 1905 till 1908, when their pay was raised to 15/-. A student living in lodgings could not support himself on his pay and had to have an allowance from home as well. Board and lodging usually cost from 11/- to 12/- a week. It must be remembered that the agricultural wage at that time was 18/- per week.

Each class consisted of from 8 to 12 students, the total number who went through the school in my time being about 100. In those days there was no Forestry Commission to absorb the men as they left the school. Nevertheless posts were found for them as woodmen or foresters. Many remained with the Crown, several went to East Africa and others found places on private estates. A large number of my old students joined up in the early days of the war; many lost their lives and others were lost sight of. At present many former students are employed by the Forestry Commission.

In August, 1914, came the war, man after man joined up and towards the end of the year so few were left that it was not worth while keeping the school open. The classes ceased, never to be reopened by myself. I was transferred to other work and during the whole of 1915 the school remained in abeyance. Eventually it was reopened by my successor, who will carry on the history of the school in a future number.

In those early days we started and carried on the school with difficulty. Very few people were interested in it and it would be idle to hide the fact that the Deputy Surveyor of the time gave no help at all. He disliked the school, and that made it exceedingly difficult to carry on. It would have been impossible except for the great encouragement given to me by Sir Stafford Howard, Commissioner of Woods and Forests and for the great assistance given by Mr. E. P. Popert, Assistant Deputy Surveyor, to whom I could go for help and advice. On the appointment of Mr. Leese as Deputy Surveyor matters at once improved and the school flourished. I should like to add a word of thanks for the help I received from the Keepers and Woodmen of Dean Forest.

FOREST SERVICE The first forty-five years of the Forestry Commission of Great Britain.

By **GEORGE RYLE**

An extract regarding the Forester Training Schools

Earlier in the development of the Forest Service, most of the foresters-to-be were drawn from young lads who came as labourers into the woods after leaving their primary schools and who showed a keen intelligence and interest in the work. These boys, if they could pass a moderately simple exam, were sent to one of the four Forester training schools run by the Commission, where they underwent an intensive practical and classroom course for two years. Successful students received passing out certificates and returned to the Service as 'ex-school gangers'. Gradually they could rise through the foreman grade and, normally after four or five years, became established Foresters. More recently the job of Forester has been much improved in both status and material prospects, so that it is increasingly sought after by grammar and secondary modern school leavers. Though a preliminary period of practical experience in the woods remains a prerequisite for entrance to the Forester training schools, successful students now come back to the Service directly as trainee Foresters with an assured career ahead of them. Entrance to the schools is still based on a special entrance exam rather below the standard of the normal 'O' level, excepting of course for those who have already acquired their 'O' levels in the required subjects. No doubt this invidious assumption that a Forester can be substandard to the country's usual gauge of a reasonably educated and intelligent lad will soon be changed, as specified 'O' level passes are as essential to a potential Forester as they are to a potential bank clerk, apprentice engineer or policeman.

Though the Forester training schools have always been run by and specifically for the Forest Service, and though successful students have always been guaranteed posts, there never has been any obligation for them to remain with the Commission. Some have gone out into private forestry posts; others have gone abroad. From time to time, too, the Commission has offered vacancies, on payment, to the governments of Commonwealth countries which, for various reasons, were unable to provide satisfactory training facilities for their own young men. As these Commonwealth countries have evolved and built up their own independent forest services, they have generally established their own foresters' schools, modelled largely on those of the Commission.

For some years since the war, private landowners have pressed for these Forester training schools to be more broadly based, the better to fit lads to come into the private industry, but the Forestry Commission has so far opposed this on the grounds that it must have complete control over the manner in which it trains its own men. Yet the principles of forest management are the same whether the woods belong to the state or to private individuals and the wider the schools were thrown open the freer would be the choice of both instructors and students. The Forest Service could still continue to give special instruction to selected recruits in its own particular procedures- mainly departmental paper work- and might even benefit from an 'open' school's probable inclination towards teaching administrative methods in which paper work was still further subordinated to the benefit of efficient management.

Forest Officers have always been drawn from the university forest schools with no special Forestry Commission bias, and have had no difficulty in absorbing the many

oddities of a state organisation. The same would surely apply to young foresters trained at an 'open' school, and so great have the needs of the landowners become for these young men that schools run for the benefit of all types of prospective foresters may yet become a reality.

Nevertheless, the Forestry Commission's schools can boast a notable record over a period of forty-five years, and it has been entirely due to the energy and practical experience of their instructors that a quite exceptional loyalty has developed amongst two generations of Foresters, the backbone of the Forest Service. Certainly, the time has now come for a change in the system, but there is no reason why the new should not preserve the best traditions of the old.

APPENDIX 7

The Forester Training Schools.

1 Parkend, Forest of Dean.

There had been a training school for woodmen in the Forest of Dean for a good many years before the first world war, under the instruction and management of C.O.Hanson, who subsequently became the Forestry Commission's first divisional officer in the Exeter division. The Commission's school, housed in an old industrial building in Parkend, has been enlarged and somewhat modernised from time to time. It was closed for Forester training purposes throughout most of the second world war. In 1940 it was opened for training members of the Women's Timber Corps in timber mensuration and especially in the selection of Post Office telephone poles.

Since 1920 the School Instructors have been A.L.Felton (1920), R.G.Broadwood (1927), W.D.Russell (1935), R.J.Streets (1941), W.D.Haldane (1942), A.Grant (1942), R.J.Streets returned (1946), T.E.Edwardson (1947), J.F.Goodwin (1951 to date).

Updated by Ted Baldwin, Dumfries.

W.J.Hale(47), B.Gale(47), J.D.Leafe(51), S.J.Betterton(51), G.W.Hollis(52),
M.E.S.Dickenson(57), J.T.Webster(57), G.E.Waygood(61), A.Joslin(63),
D.T.Paterson(63), R.W.Twallin(63), J.R.A.Niles(64), R.D.Davies(65), D.F.Solway(66),
G.M.Cowie (68), H.O.Sharp(68), M.H.Stark(68). School closed 1970.

2 New Forest

A school was first opened in 1922 with M.H.Rowe as instructor, but closed down shortly afterwards. After the second world war, another school was opened for about one year with H.Cruikshank as instructor but closed down when the Gwydr School was ready in 1948.

3 Chopwell, Co Durham.

In 1923, A.D.Hopkinson was in charge of the 'School Division' and, for a short time he was also instructor at a small Forester training school situated within Chopwell Wood.

4 Beaufort

Lord Lovat provided facilities for this school, which was opened in 1922 with James Fraser as its instructor. He was replaced by H.Watson in 1928, and in 1930 Beaufort was closed and its students transferred to Benmore.

5 Benmore

This school, in an awkward old mansion but in fine grounds, was opened in 1930 under H.Watson, whose reign lasted for twenty-two years, including the war period. He was replaced for a short period in 1952 by R.Macdonald, who was followed in 1953, by P.C.Gough who retained the post till the school was finally closed in 1965.

6 Lynford Hall.

This mansion, situated in the heart of Thetford Chase, was opened as a Forester training school in 1947 under R.J.Streets, who had previously been at Parkend both before and after the war. Streets handed over to N.W.Tulloch in 1950 but the school was closed down in 1956 when it became clear that earlier plans for expansion of forestry in the country were not going to be fulfilled. The school then became a country club for members of the United States Air Force stationed in the vicinity.

7 Glentress

Opened in 1946 under T.A.Robbie and closed in 1953 when both Robbie and his students moved to Faskally. 1955

8 Faskally

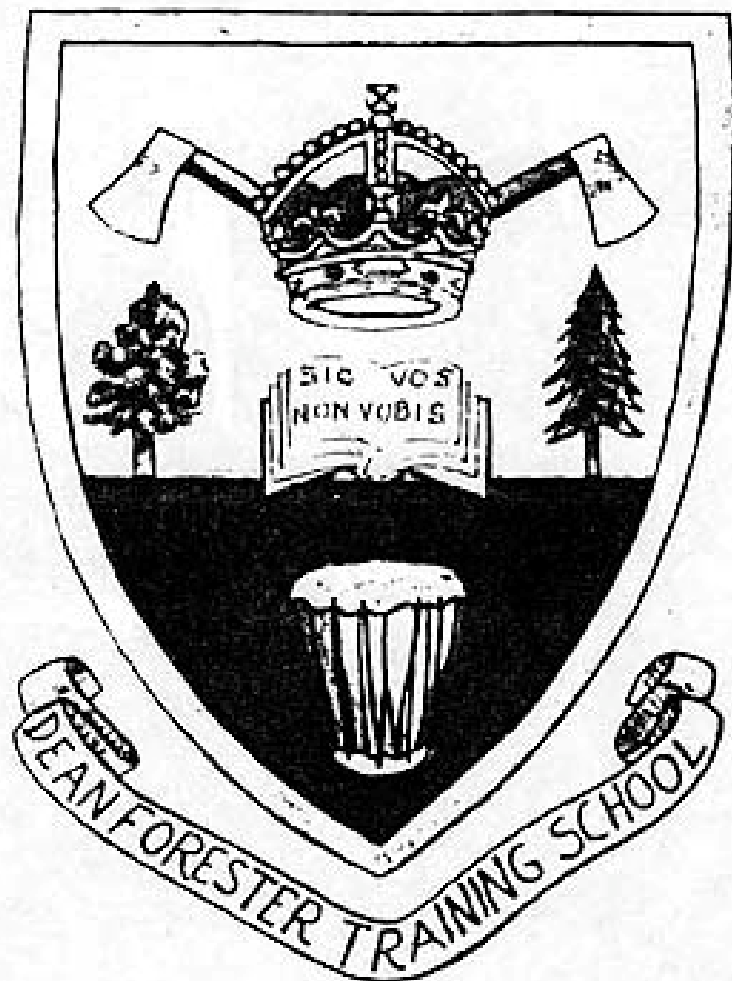
Opened in 1953 under T.A.Robbie, who was followed by H.Cruikshank in 1955 and then by N.W.Tulloch in 1957 on transfer from Lynford Hall. Tulloch's reign continues until 1969 when the school was closed.

Update D.F.Black (57), A.R.Cram(59), R.McDonald(64), R.A.Murray(66), T.G.Queen(68), A.T.Jones(68), J.Cramb(65).

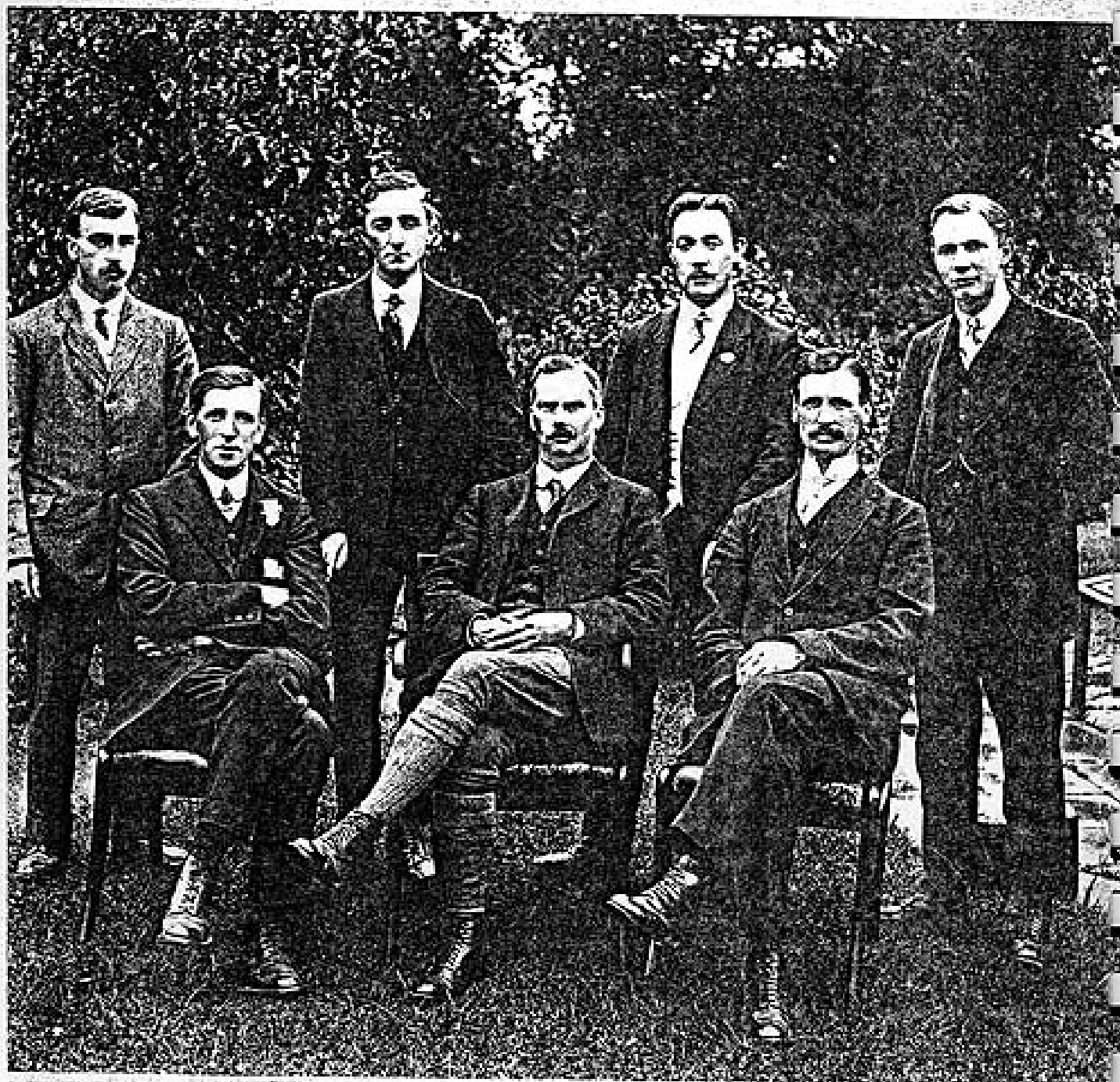
9 Gwydr

The Gwydr buildings, a range of temporary hutments, had been erected during the period of industrial depression before the war to provide accommodation for unemployed miners who were being given useful 'rehabilitation' and toughening-up work in the surrounding Gwydr Forest. In the middle 1950's the cost of maintenance and limited improvements had become so high that the Welsh National Committee felt constrained to condemn the school as unfit for continued use. During the subsequent ten years there was much talk but no action about building a combined Welsh Agricultural and Forestry training centre alongside the university buildings at Aberystwyth. Meanwhile Gwydr, becoming more and more like an ancient monument, remains in constant need of heavy maintenance expenditure, while retaining its reputation for turning out hardy and efficient Foresters. Gwydr has had an exceptionally long list of instructors since it opened its doors at the beginning of 1948, viz; H.Cruikshank (1948), I.O.Robertson (1956), D.Plant (1956), J.H.James (1957), F/B.K.Purser (1959), G.J.Francis (1960), E.H.M.Harris (1964 to present date).

Update, B.S.Thompson(64), J.H.Robertson(64), J.F.Morgan(65), R.T.Wheeler(65), G.F.d'A. Savage(68). School closed 1969.



SCHOOL OF FORESTRY, 1913-1915.



H. W. McKay,

G. W. Jones,

H. Anderson,

C. O. Hanson,

H. Loveridge,

B. Powell,

J. E. Bird,

FORESTRY COMMISSION.PROSPECTUS
OF
SCHOOLS FOR FOREST APPRENTICESIN ENGLAND AND SCOTLAND.

1. The Schools are open to young men who in the opinion of the Forestry Commissioners are suitable for training as working foresters. Selected applicants must be able and willing to perform the ordinary duties of a woodman. They may be required at the discretion of the Commissioners, to undergo a medical examination before admission.
2. Apprentices should be between the ages of 19 and 25 years inclusive on the date of admission. Apprentices over and under these ages can only be admitted under special circumstances.
3. The course of training which extends over a period of 2 years is given free. No charge is made for tools, books, and stationery used by the apprentices.
4. Apprentices will be provided with free board and lodging, fuel and light, and a money allowance of 10/- per week over the 2 years. In addition, a bonus at the rate of 2/- per week will be paid in one sum at the end of the first year, provided that the progress and conduct of the apprentice have been satisfactory and that he undertakes to attend the prescribed course for the second year. At the end of the second year a bonus will be paid at the rate of 5/- per week, subject to continued satisfactory conduct and progress. Any apprentice leaving the School before the expiration of the course and without the approval of the Forestry Commissioners, will forfeit the above mentioned bonus.
5. Candidates are expected to serve the full term of their apprenticeship and to take up the occupation of forestry on conclusion of their course of training.
6. While there is every likelihood of posts being available for capable men who have completed their apprenticeship satisfactorily at one of these Schools, the Forestry Commission can give no guarantee of employment.
7. Students will not as a rule be admitted until they can produce evidence of having had at least 6 months' experience in practical estate Forestry. They may, however, submit their names as candidates before this qualification is obtained.

8. Apprentices must perform any duty allotted to them and a refusal to obey or any negligence in the performance of the work entailed, or any misbehaviour, will render the apprentice liable to dismissal from the School. The decision of the Commission in this respect will be final.

9. Apprentices may be transferred from one Forest Apprentices' School to another, or from a School to any part of the Country to take part in afforestation work for the State.

10. The hours of work and the time allotted to theoretical instruction will be regulated according to season. Every Saturday is a half holiday. In addition to the Bank and public holidays, leave of absence not exceeding 18 working days per annum may be granted by the Instructors at the Schools, provided that the general course of study is not thereby disturbed. Normally such leave will be given at the end of the first year and at the conclusion of the Course; the money allowance will be paid during leave, but no allowance will be given in lieu of board, lodging, etc.

11. Periodical examinations bearing on the theoretical instruction and the practical work of the course will be held. Apprentices who satisfy the examiners will receive Certificates.

12. Each applicant for admission to one of the Forest Apprentices' Schools must prior to his acceptance for training, sign a form to the effect that he has read and understood the foregoing regulations and agrees to be governed by the same. This form in the case of an applicant under full age must also be signed by the applicants parent or guardian.

13. Applications for admission should be addressed :-

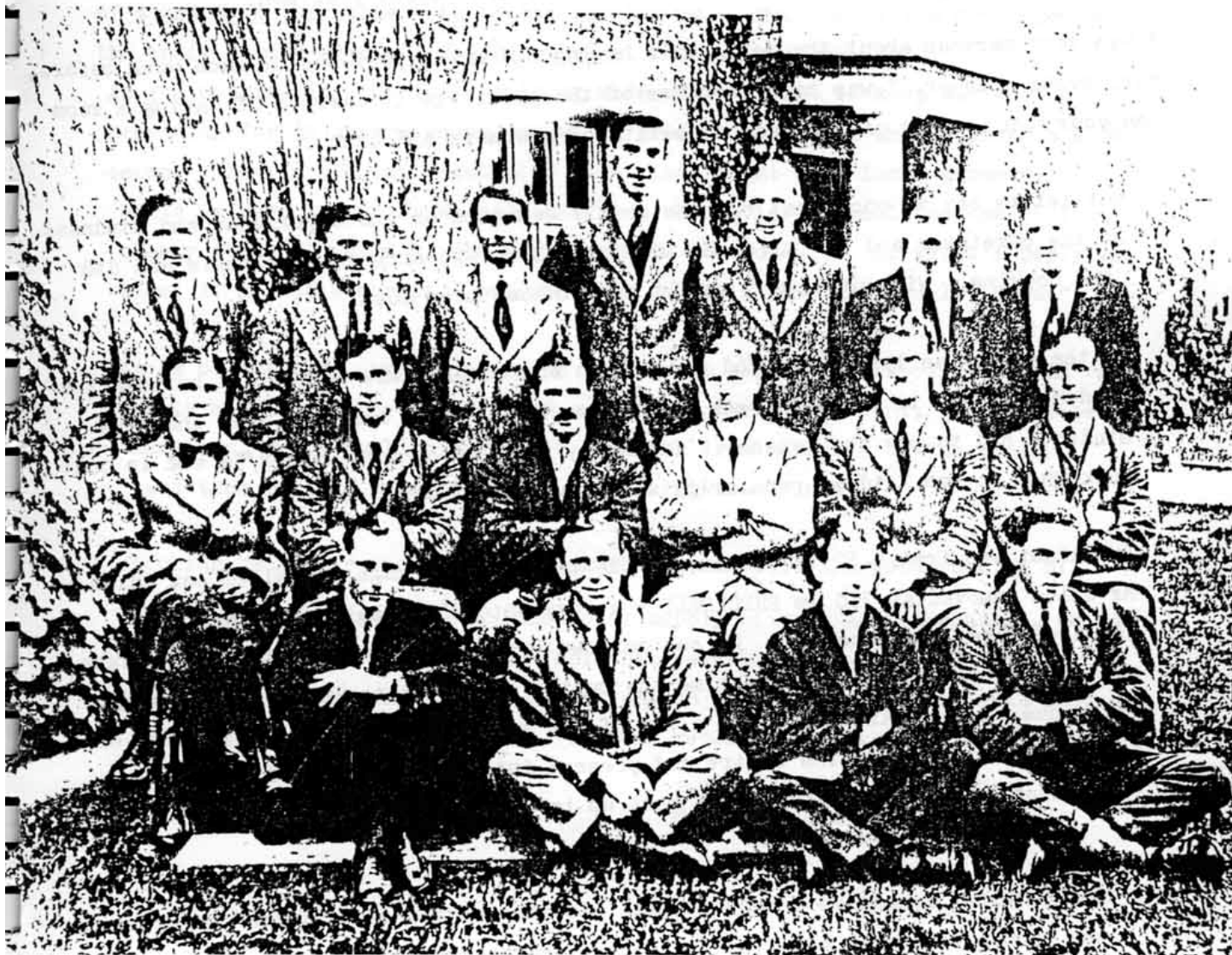
The Secretary,
Forestry Commission,
22, Grosvenor Gardens,
London, S.W. 1.

or to the Assistant Commissioner for England & Wales,
1, Whitehall,
London, S.W. 1.

or to the Assistant Commissioner for Scotland,
25, Drumshough Gardens,
Edinburgh.

August, 1921.

DEAN SCHOOL OF FORESTRY 1919-21



Back Row: S. H. A. Paterson, H. S. Fletcher, H. C. Dyer, A. H. Gosling, W. R. Collins, C. Argent, E. J. Marsh.
Middle Row: R. W. Paterson, H. A. Lewis, Mr. A. H. Popert, Mr. A. L. Felton, A. E. Wilson, A. Cousins.
Front Row: S. H. Beasley, H. McClelland, A. F. Fermor, E. J. Mounsey.

THE FOOD CONTROLLER - JOYS AND SORROWS IN 1929by MAURICE NIMMO

The Forestry Commission allowed 2/6d a day for the food for each student and the buying in of supplies was the responsibility of the Food Controller who was elected each year by the students themselves from one of the second-year men.

I was very nervous about the job, never having had any experience of such work before, but, being a loner, I was happy because of the privilege it carried of having a room on your own because of the responsibility of accounts and cash.

But let me say at once that success really depended on the experience and kindness of the caretaker and his wife, Mr and Mrs Wilce, who arranged the meals and did the cooking. Without them I should have indeed been lost.

If the cost was less than 2/6d a day then the surplus was shared out between the students and paid out each week, but conversely, if it overshoot 2/6d then the students had to pay the excess. During my year the average was 2/3d and in one week when it was 2/1d my popularity really went up!

Breakfast was from 6.30 to 7.0 am and the tea was in a huge enamelled pot which Mr Wilce removed at 7.0 am PRECISELY - a very unpopular, but a good way, to discourage late comers. We cut our own bread and cheese sandwiches to take out in the morning, and at one time the butter was disappearing at an alarming rate, due to the methods used by a few of the men who each cut a large piece of bread, made a hole in the centre and pressed into it about 1/2lb of butter! This soon stopped when the charge went up to about 2/6d!

One Saturday lunchtime I made a fatal mistake - we had some tinned cherries and the stones were shot all over the room by squeezing them between thumb and forefinger! We never had them again!

On a day when his wife was away Mr Wilce had an old army friend to help him. The friend was carrying the huge tray of liver and bacon but tripped in the doorway and the whole lot went - on the floor! We all waited with baited breath for Mr Wilce's reaction but all he said was "I could have b-well done that myself"!!

THE FOOD CONTROLLER continued

Needless to say, we picked it all up and ate it!

To my surprise tinned salmon was very unpopular in those days - but now most people would welcome it! Each day two students were chosen, by the spinning of a knife on the table - to do the washing-up. Much skill was developed and the knife hardly ever stopped, pointing at the man who spun it!

As you can imagine the local butcher made a big effort to keep our custom - providing for 32 hungry young men was a great help to him and he gave us good terms. Nearly all the vegetables were also bought from local growers.

While we were there, Mr Wilce's daughter, Edna, left school and one of the cheeky students asked if she would work in the school. Mr Wilce's reply was wise, if a trifle abrupt - he said "not b-likely with all you lot about"!

It is of interest why Golden Syrup was always called "clock-oil" . In the early morning of the last day of one of the terms a student, who shall be nameless, poured golden syrup all down the iron handrail of the stairs and then put the remainder into the dining-room clock!

Looking back over the years I think that, thanks to the good cooking of Mr and Mrs Wilce and to the fine local supply of meat and vegetables, we fed well and this was shown by the fact that remarkably few men had any sick leave despite the awful winter of Jan.-March 1929 when there was much snow and hard frosts (34 degrees of frost Fah. was recorded at Parkend and 40 degrees F at nearby Ross on Wye,

Maurice Nimmo.

"The Deansday Book."

THE MAGAZINE OF THE
DEAN FORESTRY SCHOOL.

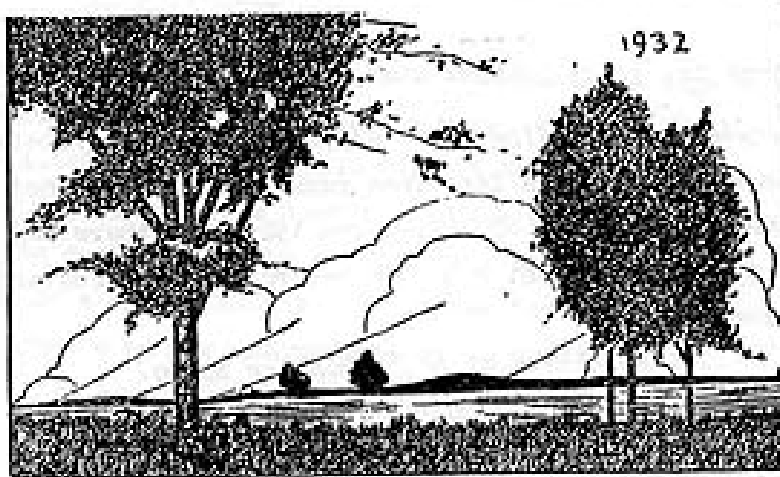
[FORESTRY COMMISSION OF ENGLAND AND WALES].

Our School, now in its twenty-seventh year, has produced many foresters and much good work and it is in the hope of preserving the record of this splendid development and in the endeavour to implant within the minds of our Students some realisation of the tradition behind them, that this magazine comes into being.

"Sic Vos Non Vobis."

1931

Not for ourselves do we sow the seed,
Or trees on the moorland plant,
But that those to whom we bequeath our axe
May never for timber want.
Our work will be done e'er the acorn small
To the sturdy oak matures,
And the good leaves lost as in Autumn-fall—
Yet the fruit of our labour endures.
Thus we now reap of the timber yield
Nurtured by hands that are gone,
Whose finger directs the path we must tread
And urge us to still *Carry on*.
"Sic Vos non Vobis," the motto has been
Which through turmoil of time has endured,—
A noble ideal, an honourable code
That forests for man has assured. A. M. McK.



Sic Vos Non Vobis.

O mortal man! Take thou thy hours of toil,
And consecrate them to thy after-men:
They who shall come and find within this soil
Their heritage—good and great woods, and then
Shall bless thee deeply, that thy back was bent
To plant one little tree that now is grown
To its full service. All thy labour's lent
Unto descendants. Not for thy purse alone
Nor for thy glory; for no men will ask
Thy name or purpose, but will judge thy task,
This, thy memorial: the mighty glade
Once conjured into being by thy spade.

C. B. PULMAN.

Memories.

I am afraid my recollections of the period when I had charge of the School are all too few and far from clear. The twelve strenuous years that have elapsed since leaving the Forest have left me with certain distinct memories but on the whole very little to form the subject of a history of the period in any way comparable to Mr. Hanson's excellent narrative.

I remember well arriving in uniform one cold wet night at Parkend sometime early in January 1919, having come almost directly from France. My arrival was not unexpected but I found it necessary to hunt round the village to find someone who would give me a bed for the night. I eventually landed at the village "pub" and managed to withstand the smell of stale beer and tobacco (apparently of fumigation quality) for several months. Anyhow it was better than gas shells. Eventually I was "turfed" out of this salubrious lodging for what reason I cannot remember but not, I am almost certain, for forgetting to pay my bill or being "drunk and disorderly." I then took refuge in the Speech House Hotel but here "mine host" took practically all my pay off me in what he considered just remuneration for services rendered and goods supplied. Eventually Mrs. Ebsworth took pity on me and I lived comfortably for the remainder of my time in her cottage on the hill above Parkend. Two things I remember about my sojourn there. One, the appalling noise of the overlasting pumping operations in a pit nearby and the other the delights of a weekly hot bath in front of the sitting-room fire after a strenuous day in the woods.

But to return to the School. About March eighteen ex-warriors returned from the War and filtered down to Parkend. They were a mixed crew as soldiers are wont to be. "Tinker's son, tailor's son, son of a —," no he did not turn up. Anyhow the idea was that I should convert the rabble into trained foresters in two years and so we got to work. I have not much recollection of the means adopted to bring about this conversion or what luck eventually attended the efforts of those concerned (the Crown Woodman and myself) but I expect it was as varied as the original crew.

Three men I remember and these were men—men after my own heart—Wilson, Robert Paterson and his elder brother Samuel. The first, to my great regret, did not enter the State Service. The second made rapid stride towards the success that would undoubtedly have been his had not a doubly tragic sawmill accident at Glenbraanter deprived the Commission of a most able forester and me of a very good friend. The third is now a Grade I Forester in our Service. Wilson inevitably became head student and things went with a snap when he was second in command.

Sometime later my friend Alan Patten was appointed Assistant Instructor. Clever, keen, gay, with his charming Irish manners, he soon endeared himself to all—students and Woodmen alike, but here again tragedy was even then stalking him from the shadows of the forest and now he is no more.

What did we do all day? Patten lectured and I lectured on certain days of the week and the various Woodmen took over the students on certain other days for practical work—much the same as probably goes on now. Discipline—yes, there was discipline. Certain over-exuberant spirits had to be checked and one or two of Life's little failures had to be shown the door. Apart from minor irritations which are inseparable from such a "show" we lived a peaceful and happy existence. We made a nursery. We made the Parkend Nursery. After the explosive experts had made an almost complete failure of blowing up the stumps we set to work and "hiked" them out and this, I may tell you, was no mean task. After the last root had been torn out we set to work to dig the ground and as far as I can recollect it was trenched to a truly abyssal depth.

Another "stunt" we undertook was to plant a certain enclosure by the railway on the way to Coleford. Coming from Scotland where I was accustomed to men planting 700-800 trees per day with a Schlich Spade, I grew weary of the garden methods in vogue in the Dean and decided we would have a demonstration of how it ought to be done. So we set out to plant the whole enclosure in one day. I have forgotten the exact area but it meant every man had to plant about 1,000 trees. Everyone was up

bright and early on the appointed day, determined "to do or die." The planting was completed by nightfall and I remember the "All Highest" coming round to inspect and shaking his head over such revolutionary methods. Someone has since told me that the resulting plantation might have been more successful. Well then, the species must have been unsuited for the ground.

Once a batch of Australian officers descended on our quiet existence, clamouring for instruction in the arts of forestry as we knew them. They stayed with us for a few months only to return to their native land leaving some of the village lassies disconsolate.

So much for work. What about play? I don't think there were any organised School teams but keen footballers and cricketers were in demand for local clubs and got plenty of playing. Life was strenuous but there was time for a little relaxation now and then. Dances and courting the village maidens filled up these odd moments. Personally I have not much recollection of the latter but I remember well rare and elusive forest pheasants which Patten and I chased with varying success every Saturday afternoon during the winter. In company with one or two of the Woodmen—often Crown Keeper Watson and his wonderful Setter—we marched miles through the forest tearing our clothes to bits on the brambles and feeling quite contented if we returned home with one brace. Not infrequently we slaved all the afternoon without so much as the sight of a feather.

The law of the land was that all the game shot was to be laid at the feet of the "All Highest," but this game law we all considered harsh and oppressive so the unworthy system arose of having two bags, an official which was surrendered in accordance with the law, and an unofficial which I distributed for meritorious service during the chase. But hush! this is giving away secrets which I have hitherto only shared with the Woodmen concerned, some of whom may yet smile if they perchance cast an eye over these words.

The Crown Woodmen were my best friends in the Dean and many a long and happy day I spent in their company learning the lore of the forest. Gone are some to their rest but others will remember perhaps yet.

In July, I think it was, 1920, Scotland called me home and joyfully I responded to the call but not without sad farewells.

In my dining-room stands a clock and on that clock is a certain inscription. I am proud of it and am grateful to the students who one and all played the game when I was at Parkend.

13th May, 1932.

A. D. HORSBROS.

A Peep at your Scottish Rivals

Broadcast by R. R. DONALD, Practical Instructor, Benmore.

"Far away North of the Tweed
You find England's upper storey,
Where we good Foresters breed
For the Land of Hope and Glory."

Benmore calling the Dean ; no, not the Dean of Westminster, but one great seat of learning calling another, in true brotherly spirit, proving that in spite of efforts by our worthy Scottish Nationalists there still exists a bond of friendship between the Thistle and the Rose.

Here is an S.O.S. :—Save our Schools.

Would the person or persons who threatened to endow our National Schools of Forestry give information to "In Foresta," Benmore, Argyllshire, or The Dean, Lydney, Gloucester.

Here is the Weather Forecast :—

A temporary depression is now passing over the Forestry Commission but it is hoped that it will evade the two Schools already mentioned as even the slightest tremor will be detrimental to the future of our noble profession. Further outlook is unsettled, but rays of hope are prevalent, and in the near future the Forestry Commission should go from strength to strength and their Foresters and others shall receive their due reward.

General News Bulletin :—(Copyright reserved).

Benmore Forest School and Hostel comprises what was formerly known as Benmore House ; a stately mansion nestling beneath one of those rugged mountains for which Scotia is famed.

The house is overshadowed by beautiful trees of many species which were the pride and joy of the previous owners of the estate. The entire estate was gifted to the nation by Mr. Younger, whose generosity will go down through the ages, and lovers of nature shall revel in these grounds from generation to generation.

Since the inauguration of the Forest School at Benmore the full quota of twenty-four trainees has been sustained. Every July one dozen stalwarts are sent o'er a' the airts, to uphold the Forestry Commission and bear witness of a training creditable to the nation.

Like true Cocks of the North they are up in the morning early and need no "Kruschen" to insite the noble desire to increase their knowledge.

To the observant trainee profound knowledge is within easy reach. Arboretums, Pinetums, Shrubberies and Gardens are there, and with reference books as keys, the door is opened so the store can be replenished at will. Alas ! Alas ! when spotting tests come along many are weighed in the balance and found wanting. Resolutions are then rashly made but I fear during the brighter evening hours, sports, etc., encroach upon the fundamentals of future careers and resolutions easily made are even more easily forgotten.

Owing to the exceedingly heavy rainfall no specified days for indoor work can be allocated, as every opportunity must be grasped to progress with outdoor work. A stretch of hillside approximately twelve miles in length has been set aside for afforestation by the trainees. Fencing, draining, Scrub cleaning, planting and weeding are engaged in on this area. Other general estate operations are undertaken periodically which are of educative value to the Student. The men are divided into gangs and sent out to the respective operations, a Senior being appointed to take charge of each gang. He is held responsible for the squad in general—that is the care of tools and the behaviour of the squad. Of course all Seniors have the privilege of taking charge of a squad at some period during their second year so that the suspicion of favouritism cannot be entertained. Naturally during such an elevated period chest expansion is an unnecessary item in the "Ganger's" daily routine.

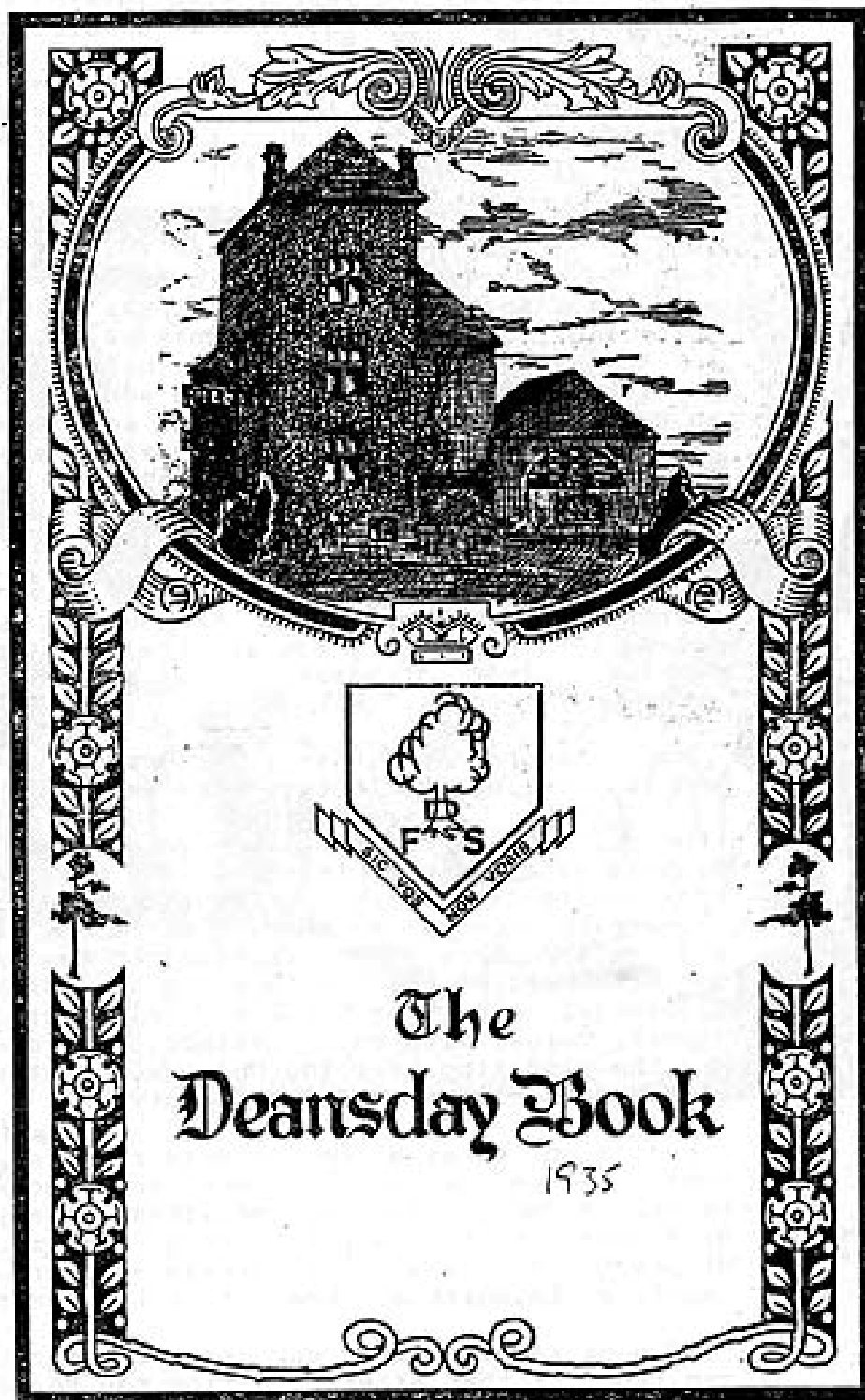
The time the man is left on a certain job depends entirely upon the amount of previous experience which the man has had on that job. Great care is taken to develop a man in the operations at which he is rather a green hand, (e.g. if a man has never opened a drain before he must be kept with his nose in the mud until he develops the air of a typical navvy).

A Nursery of approximately three acres in size comes under the control of the School. Sowing, lining out, and the growing of green crops are carried out by the trainees. Frequently local seed is collected and extracted so that the men become veritable "Tarzans."

Surveying and Mensuration are given on the hillside and in the forests. These lessons will prove beneficial when the trainees are working areas as well as bring in an extra "Bawbee" in their spare time when a neighbouring farmer wishes his turnip land measured or somebody wishes levels taken for a tennis court.

As already stated lectures are given in the Classroom when mere men cannot face the elements, and these are the days that try the temperament of the modern youth. It is stated in History that Ralph the Rover tore his hair, but our examinations days produce many such "Ralphs" and more perspiration is lost on those days than during the hottest day in Summer.

(Sport :—) Football is the principal sport engaged in and since this School opened a good team has been formed every year. Each year we have won two out of three local cups and at present we are the top of the League, so that we are hopeful of seeing the three cups come home at the close of the season. Perhaps when the Forestry Commission gets its full grants restored we might have international matches for Foresters, say Benmore versus Dean one Summer and Dean versus Benmore the next. Naturally I would support Benmore, but if you come North and win the Laurels I shall congratulate you sincerely.



SOME MEMORIES OF LIFE IN THE DEAN FORESTRY SCHOOL 1934 _1936.

C. J. LEWIS

The School was in charge of an Instructor (District Officer) grade, and a Practical Instructor (Forester grade).

The course was two years, with intakes every year, the second year students referred to as Seniors.

When I entered the School in the Autumn of 1934, Mr. R.G. Broadwood was in charge but he was almost immediately replaced by Mr. G.D. Russel; the Forester Instructor was Mr. D.N. Williams.

Every year, a School Foreman was selected from the Seniors; it was his duty to see that all the rules were obeyed and to report serious matters to higher authority: another of his duties was that of Food Controller - arranging the supply of all victuals. For the year 1934/35 the School Foreman was Vic Hall and for 1935/36 Bob Hendrie. In addition to the above, an Orderly Officer was appointed, and each student did a stint, in turn. This duty involved waking everyone each morning, and ensuring that all were out of the school by the appointed time, and that they were in each evening by 10pm. and that all lights were out by 10.30pm each evening.

Breakfast was prepared by the Cook (Mr. Rees ?) and served at 7.00am. Each man prepared his own lunch - there was plenty of bread, butter and jam, and occasionally cheese, if you were quick.

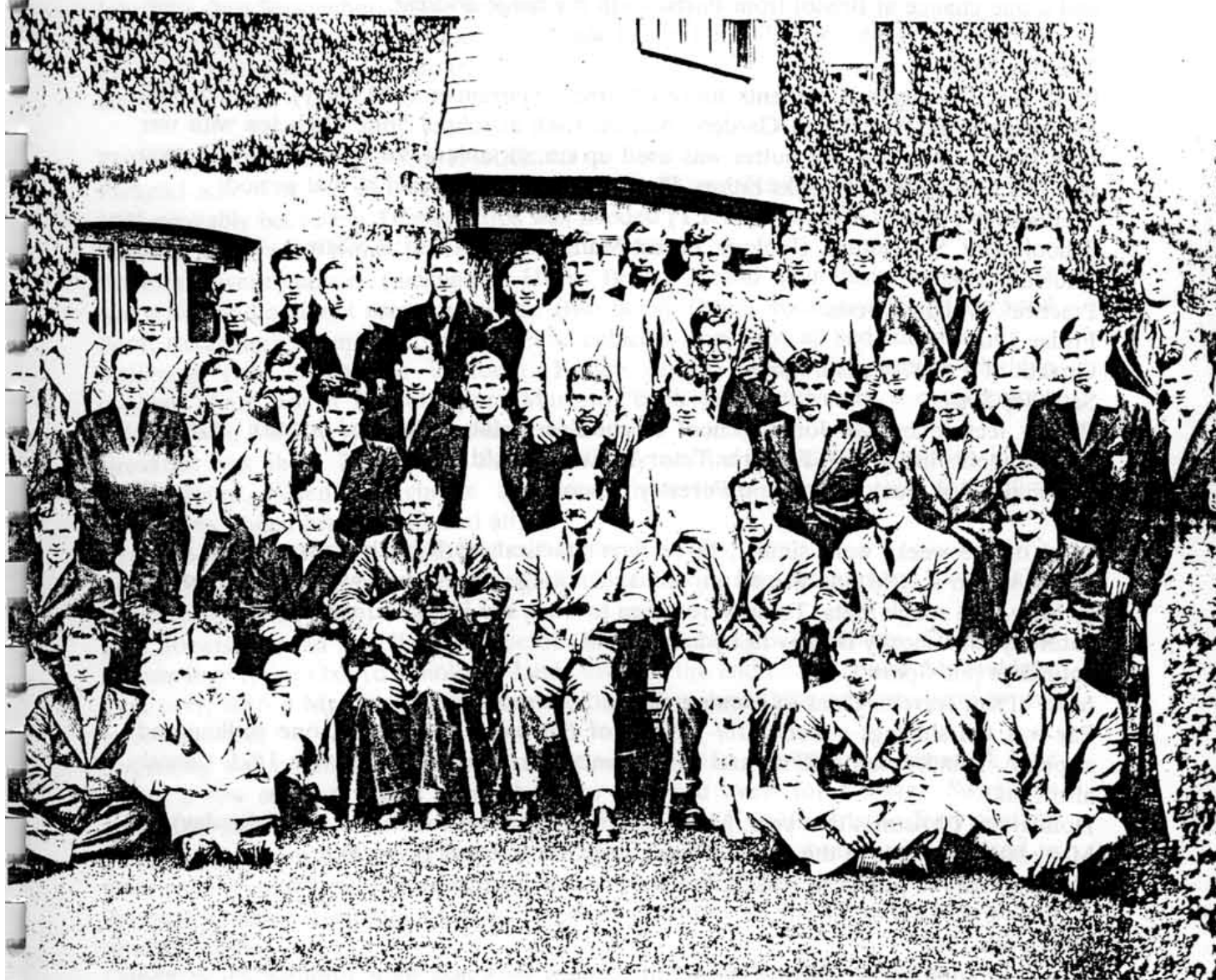
We were supposed to have a lecture day once a week, but in practice our lecture days were when it rained.

For practical work students were divided into various groups, with a Senior in charge and each group allocated to a particular Forest Operation in some part of the Forest or perhaps Nagshead Nursery. Work in the woods ceased at 4.30pm. and all students returned to the School and prepared for "the meal of the day" usually a traditional meat and vegetables or perhaps Liver and Onions, followed by a sweet usually served with burnt custard. (This meal was "Dished Up" and the resulting "Washing Up" was undertaken by a group of Students allocated for this duty".

During our first Winter we were required ^{to Attend} the local Council School on one evening each week for mathematics instruction by the Headmaster MR. Sing and attend Botany instruction by Mr H. Jones usually in the Lecture Room of the Forestry School or sometimes on a Saturday morning outdoors. (Mr. Jones was an excellent Botanist and teacher at Lydney Grammar School.

I cannot remember what our gross remuneration was, but I can remember that after deduction for Board and Lodging we were given Ten Shillings a week from which sixpence was deducted for Sport Fund i.e. Table Tennis, Football Snooker. The School ran a Soccer Team and two Table Tennis Teams - all in local leagues.

DEAN FORESTRY SCHOOL, 1936-37.



W. D. Milson A. C. W. Evans W. P. Smith H. B. James C. L. D. Newell J. P. Wimblush V. Mitchell
 E. J. Ruddock J. H. Cooper F. B. Jones E. Brown A. J. Stannard W. Arnott T. J. Flemons AM MORRIS
 J. Mosley C. C. Plumb J. MacCormack R. S. Whale W. Everitt L. C. Gibson J. Hislop FRANCIS
 G. Hutchison H. P. Davies T. E. Daghish F. H. Smith W. T. Jenkins T. L. Jenkins J. Beanland G. Parker
 Seated:—H. G. Law G. L. Oxley J. M. Bruce Mr. W. D. Russell Mr. A. P. Long Mr. D. N. Williams Mr. H. Jones T. Morris
 Front Row:—E. W. Lloyd A. H. Harrison J. Aston P. Wheel

PARKEND 1941-1942 EXTRACT FROM DIARY REG WOOLLARD.

Arrived Parkend school 16.15 hrs. on September 15th 1941, this was a Monday and a and a one change at Bristol from Portsmouth my home address.

Tuesday 16th.

06.45 rise. Twenty two students toured Nursery (Foreman H.M.Parry), Church Hill Plantation, Fire Post, Dean Garden! Arrived back at school 5pm. High tea with war time ration allocation! All butter was used up on all tables. We were told by Matron that this was the whole weeks ration. Clothes were also rationed in that period.

Wednesday 17th.

School work. Silviculture, Geology, Forest Management. Tutor R.S.Street.

Thursday 18th

Practical. Weeding trees.

Friday 19th.

Growth of a tree. Mensuration.

Saturday 20th.

Botany lecture by Mr Jones, school teacher at Lydney. Finished lecrure at noon. Refreshments in Lydney. Forester Tutor W.Arnott, field practical.

Concludes first week at Parkend Forestry School.

Most of the weeks were similar, three days practical work in the surrounding Dean Forest within a cycle ride five to ten miles., On longer away work we were transported by lorry with rough seats. Tools were taken to work site in the Forester's van.

Saturdays am. mostly Botany in Lydney.

Saturdays pm. Sport.

Most of our travelling was to evening classes 2-3 times a week.

Pay was ten shillings a week (10/-). Most of this went on haircuts, one shilling and sixpence, laundry one shilling and three pence(per week), local dances 1/6d, cinema also 1/6d.

Holidays at Christmas that year, Monday 22nd December to 5th January (Monday).

Many students were in the Home Guard, parades were twice a week.

Planting trees in practical work, 250-400 trees per day (average).

March 6th 1942.

Sheep impounding in 3ins. of snow, the money collected went towards our school dance, a very popular local event! Forestry students played locals or services at football and cricket - we often won.

Swimming took place in Lydney and Cannop Lake.

April 1st 1942.

Term ends for Easter until 8th. Took coach back from Southampton- Lydney, then bus to Parkend. Started 09.15 arrived school 16.20.

Practical work.

Planting trees throughout April. Students often involved in Forest fire fighting. On Tuesday 5th April at 20.30 a large fire near charcoal burning site fought until midnight when A.F.S. took over. Green Goddesses.

More holiday from 15th May- 20th (Wednesday).

Train back from Southampton 10.00, arrived Parkend 15.00.

Other deductions from our 10 shillings, Library 2 pence, hospital fund 6 pence.

19th July 1942.

Another big fire at St. Briavels again in the evening. Arrived back at school at midnight. Showered and bed.

July 29th -2nd September. More holidays.

Cycled to Southampton (120 miles) via Bealy Ferry. Left 0730 arrived 1730. Stopped for a rest and sandwich for 1 hour.

Here diary ends.

PERSONAL MEMORIES OF PARKEND

Parkend school closed shortly after the outbreak of war. Re-opened September 15th 1941 probably because a Timber corps was needed (T.P.D.) Pitprops-Trench warfare. Students ages varied from 16-40 something.

Bedrooms were cubicles (nicknamed Horse Boxes) spread over three stories. There was a sick and accident recovery cubicle (two beds). Dining room and kitchen ground floor. Recreation room first floor also bed cubicles. Top floor all bed cubicles.

Rationing (war time) was in force. Ration books handed in, except clothing coupons. There was a housekeeper (Matron), cook and handyman, a conscientious objector who was a very skilled cabinet maker.

Breakfast was about 7am. When in class all day we had a mid day sandwich in the dining room. When out cheese and jam (from home parcels) was the filling. Sometimes tinned brawn (hair and all).

Accommodation was very basic, bed and locker.

Saturday PM was mainly sport or music fans listened to Jazz sessions on Radio, table tennis played (one table)

Bob Streets was an excellent instructor. Mr Peace taught Pathology, Dr Chrystal Entomology (both Oxford Scholars). Later towards the end of the course Mr Haldane took over, then a Mr Grant. War time was upsetting everything and everyone as was to be expected.

Swimming was popular in Cannop Lake, it was free but but tasted of charcoal. One winter a few students swam when the lake was iced over- for a wager. Swimmers saved the day once when on way back from an outing we found the ferry tied up (boat held ten) on the wrong side of the River Severn. Two students volunteered to swim over (starkers) to the other side and bring the boat across. Due to the current the boat beached a quarter of a mile downstream. But all the 22 got across and in time for supper.

One or two fights did occur, must have been rationing or pre- exams tension.

Eleven PM was return to school time after an evening out, but ways were found to beat the curfew. Climbing to the second floor windows, so cooperation with other students was necessary. When there was a fresh supply of coke at the back of the building this was climbed up to the back window but so noisy. Mr Streets would request offenders of the 11pm curfew to attend his office in the morning .