

The FLASHER

**FORESTRY
COMMISSION**
News & Views

Issued by
**INFORMATION
OFFICER**

No. 203

November, 1964

SOME VISITS ABROAD

MR. E. G. RICHARDS, who is in charge of Sales and Utilisation branch at Headquarters, was recently in Rumania, in company of our Chairman, LORD WALDEGRAVE, and the Director General, SIR HENRY BERESFORD-PEIRSE.

Mr. Richards writes: "Nowhere does the hackneyed phrase 'a land of contrast' apply more than to Rumania. In Bucharest, the capital, large parts of the town are being rebuilt and, cheek by jowl with the modern apartment blocks, lie streets of one-storey houses and shops, their eastern, bazaar-like appearance contrasting strongly with the adjacent modern slab architecture. The new city, however, will be broken up into sectors by large areas of parkland and, as it is, the parks of trees and flower beds, with their large artificial lakes and swimming pools, compare favourably with any in the world.

"In the mountains shepherds in their ancient sheepskin clothes still take their flocks from pasture to pasture, now and again taking a short cut along some highway to the complete disruption of the traffic. The skyline may be broken here and there by the tall derricks of oil wells, and magnificent forests of beech and spruce and fir run down to modern petro-chemical and heavy engineering works in the valleys. The well known Rumanian beech, much imported by Britain, may be converted in a modern integrated factory where the British Stenner and Wadkin band mills run alongside a production line for facing hardboard or chipboard with the latest synthetic plastic veneers.

"In the Danube Delta net fishermen living in summer huts of reeds can hear the amphibious harvesting machines cutting and bundling reeds for the nearby pulp mill, built largely with British 'know-how'. And in the ancient port of Tulcea I saw two brand new 10,000 ton fishing ships moored alongside a small British-built steamer of 1902. Practically the whole population of Tulcea and the surrounding countryside had come to see the new stern trawling ships which, complete with processing plants, can stay at sea for nine months at a time.

"Rumania is one of Europe's largest producers of wood. She is increasing the yield of her existing forests and embarking on an ambitious poplar and willow afforestation programme in the flatter areas unsuitable for agriculture. Her new integrated factories for the production of sawn lumber, plywood, fibreboard and furniture, and her new pulp and paper mills, are adding enormously to her forest industry capacity. To provide the necessary skilled supervision she is turning out at Brasov Polytechnic 360 graduates a year in silviculture and forest management, timber technology and forest engineering alone. Such is the demand for qualified managers at all levels in the forest industry that some of the newer enterprises have boards of directors whose average age is 25 years, with the oldest not yet 30 years."

Wildlife Management in Hungary

Rumania), also sends us an interesting report.

MR. P. F. GARTHWAITE, who visited Hungary with Mr. Richards (the latter went on to

"My visit," he writes, "was a fascinating experience. The forestry and wildlife management was full of interest, and the glimpses obtained of living and social conditions, superficial as they inevitably were, showed unexpected facets.

"Modern Hungarian forestry is firmly based on a very thorough site survey of the whole country, giving a clear guide to the ruling principle of selecting the species most suited to each site, leaving industry to adapt itself to find economic ways of using the resulting timber. Industrial research is proceeding at such a pace that there is complete confidence that the timber grown on

each site can be put to satisfactory use. The area of forest is some $3\frac{1}{2}$ million acres, about 14 per cent of the land surface; and 96 per cent of the forest is broadleaved, mainly beech, oaks of various species, limes, ash, hornbeam and poplar. Future planting plans involve a great deal of pine, Scots and Corsican, and on the most difficult limestone sites, Austrian pine.

"We had one day studying the wildlife management side, and deer management in particular. This is intensive and a great asset to the country. The aim, with all species of deer, is to have small numbers of very high quality animals, with minimum damage to the forest. This is achieved by scientific culling, introduction of fresh stock of superior genetic type, and by feeding, which also diverts browsing damage. Normally about 0.5 per cent of the forest is devoted to "deer meadows", where a variety of crops are grown; in the three Game Management Demonstration Forests, totalling about 130,000 acres, one of which we visited, the stock of deer is higher and the area of special food crops is accordingly increased to about 2 per cent of the total area, to minimize damage to trees and surrounding agricultural crops.

"Deer to be shot each year are allocated between the Hungarian Hunting Associations and the foreign Tourist Agency. Hungarians have to pass a kind of 'O' level examination in game biology, recognition, safety, marksmanship and knowledge of the game laws to become members of a Hunting Association. Only members are allowed to apply for a rifle or shot-gun licence. The tourist sportsman has to pay handsomely for his sport. In addition to high charges for board and lodging in the excellent forest hunting lodges, and the stalking fee to the forest Game Ranger who must, by law, accompany him, the scale of charges for his trophy are very high indeed. Payment is by antler weight and for a good red stag, say 10 pointer with antlers weighing about 22 lbs., he will be charged about £600. For a "Gold Medal" stag, antlers of 20 points and 26 lbs. or more in weight, the charge is £1,200 plus! Similarly, an outstanding fallow buck can cost £400 to shoot, and a roe buck £220, with charges for normal good specimens about half this. There is also a charge for each miss, e.g. to miss a red stag costs £18.

"We were in Hungary during the red deer season, and outside our hotel every day there were one or two cars, usually Mercedes from West Germany, with two to four sets of antlers worth around £2,000 tied to the roof rack.

"The Forest Minister, who had been in England earlier this summer with the FAO/ECE/ILO party, honoured the Forestry Commission by inviting me to shoot one of these famous stags (the last recipient of such an honour being President Tito) and I had a most exciting, interesting, and, I must add, tense three hours stalk with the Game Ranger. It culminated in the near dark, with moonlight beginning to flood a clearing in the forest in which a most magnificent stag of about 500 lbs. in body weight was roaring away with four or five hinds in attendance. Eventually the stag the ranger wanted me to shoot came out to challenge the leader, and I got him with the aid of the telescopic sight, as it was by then too dark to see with the naked eye.

"The antlers of all deer (of all species) shot in Hungary by anyone, visiting sportsman, Hungarian Hunting Association, Forest Game Ranger, and so on, must by law be sent, after cleaning, to the central record office in Budapest, where they are weighed, measured, photographed; the details are recorded and only then are the antlers released to the 'hunter'. In this way a highly scientific documented record of stock from each forest is built up, enabling the officer responsible for wildlife management to assess the needs of each forest, whether for genetic improvement by more culling or transfer of better strains into the area, or by improving the feed.

"Among the presents we took to give our hosts were several delightful 'flower' buttonholes made from roe deer hide and hair by the ladies of Satterthwaite, in the Lake District."

****BAKETHIN BRIDGE OPENED**

BAKETHIN BRIDGE at Kielder, Northumberland, was duly opened last month by LORD WALDEGRAVE. This is a 90ft. span structure crossing the River North Tyne and it replaces the old bridge built by the Commission during the War, and which had deteriorated.

The new bridge was built for the Commission by 32 Field Squadron of 38 Corps Engineer Regiment, Royal Engineers as a military exercise and to a design prepared by Commission Engineers. Assistance and supervision on the project was given by a team of Forestry Commission Engineering staff led by

Mr. T. A. MURDOCK, the Commission's Conservancy Engineer for North East England. It has two mass concrete abutments with a central pier consisting of four cased piles, these being surrounded in concrete to form a slender central pier. The main joists are provided by 24 x 7½ inch steel beams and the decking consists of precast concrete units cast by the Commission's Engineering staff in Yorkshire.

Approximately 100 men, stationed at Ripon, were employed on the job - 50 for the first four weeks and the remainder for a second period of similar duration. During this time, with their Officers, they occupied a tented camp by the old railway station at nearby Plashetts village.

A bridge building task such as this provides excellent training for troops. As well as gaining considerable technical experience of a type it is sometimes difficult to obtain in peace, the men have the satisfaction of knowing that their work is to be of permanent value.

The bridge is one of several of various types constructed in recent years which have demonstrated the value of the close and cordial association between the Commission and the Royal Engineers. For us its opening means easier extraction of timber and it is expected that something like 100,000 cubic ft. will be taken over the bridge in the next year by 7 to 13-ton lorries.

Troops formed a guard of honour for the Chairman, who cut a ribbon with a powerful stroke of a slasher. He was supported by Major General H. T. ALEXANDER, C.B., C.B.E., D.S.O., Chief of Staff, Northern Command, and Mr. GERALD PALMER, Forestry Commissioner. The Commission was, in fact, well represented, for those attending also included Mr. J. R. THOM, Director, England; Mr. G. J. L. BATTERS, Conservator, N.E. England; Mr. W. T. SMITH, Divisional Officer; Mr. T. A. MURDOCK, Conservancy Engineer; Mr. K. W. WILSON, District Officer, Kielder; and Mr. T. BASSEY, Area Civil Engineer.

****CAN YOU HELP?**

FROM time to time we have enlisted the aid of readers in locating "off-beat" items for inclusion in agricultural show exhibits. Here is another appeal - one which, at first glance, will seem to have little relation to forestry!

Quite a number of colleagues, we know, are widely travelled. Have you, then, a photograph (black and white) which you could lend us of either of the following cities?

Brussels; Tehran; Kabul; Mandalay; Peking.

The illustrations required should show some prominent feature of each city - a notable square or monument, public building, or even some national "rite", celebration or other custom being followed against a general background scene.

We must explain the reason for this request. In the travelling show exhibit next year we shall be making incidental reference to the Commission's achievement in building thousands of miles of forest roads. The total length of such roads now maintained is, in fact, 7,000 miles. Now this is equal to the distance from London to Vladivostok, so that all being well the point will be illustrated by lights which will flash in sequence above photographs of the capital cities named above, and photographs of others which we already have.

The size of the photographs still required is not material, provided they are "sharp" enough to permit our copying them to the common dimensions required.

If you can help, please communicate with the Information Officer at Headquarters, who will be most grateful for any co-operation you can give.

****MR. M. L. DAVID PROMOTED**

THE numerous friends made during his spell with the Commission will be delighted to learn that Mr. M. L. DAVID has been promoted to Assistant Secretary. It will be recalled that Mr. David was with us as a Principal some time ago, on secondment from the Ministry of Agriculture for an agreed period. During that time he became known for his unfailing helpfulness and his wise counsel. One particularly exacting task which he

tackled with great efficiency was that of secretaryship of the Committee on the Marketing of Woodland Produce, usually referred to as "the Watson Committee", whose report may be said to have led to the setting up of the Timber Growers' Organisation and the Scottish Woodland Owners' Association.

****BOOKLET WITH A DIFFERENCE**

WE must confess to a sense of pleasurable shock on seeing the latest Commission publication, for at long last there has been a break with tradition and we have something which by its simplicity, humour and at the same time directness must surely achieve its purpose - the prevention of accidents. We refer to No. 1 in the new Safety Series, the product, we understand, of some down-to-earth thinking and psychology on the part of Mr. J. H. HOLROYD, Principal at Headquarters, and Mr. J. H. JAMES, Chief Education Officer, and no doubt others, last but by no means least among whom are Mr. D. T. PATTERSON, Forester-Artist, of the Dean School and Mr. R. A. W. LEY of Headquarters, Safety Officer.

This, we think, is the first occasion on which, in any of its publications, the Commission has relied so substantially on the cartoon technique to convey its messages and exhortations, and how well this new pamphlet does the job. The title itself -- DON'T READ THIS BOOK -- is intriguing enough to make one turn quickly overleaf to read further: "if you want to be added to those who have an accident in the forest. Here are some examples of mistaken practices that produce accidents." Then follow 22 splendid, full-page cartoons in colour from the pen of D. T. Patterson, each a story and lesson in itself. They are not only well drawn, they are funny at first sight: and, paradoxically, they carry an almost macabre warning for anyone given to being unwary at work or to taking the slightest chance with the tools he uses.

Doubtless the authors will want to give this booklet the widest possible circulation, perhaps outside the Commission as well as in. Private woodland owners would, we feel, be far from disinterested in its potentialities, not only for the humane purpose of preventing mishaps -- perhaps even saving life -- but for its role in ensuring that forest operations are not disrupted as the result of a moment's carelessness.

****TRANSFERS**

THE following transfers have been notified to Headquarters.

Divisional Officer E. M. CONDER from London, D(E) to York, NE(E). District Officers, G. A. DEY from Cairnbaan, W(S) to Cardiff, S(W); S. FORRESTER from Work Study, to Cairnbaan; J. V. S. H. CROSSLAND from Kendal, NW(E) to D(E) London; E. H. M. HARRIS from Cardiff to Gwydyr, Education; J. W. HENDERSON from Neath, S(W) to Llandrindod N(W); R. T. HURST from Wakefield, SW(E) to Work Study; A. H. A. SCOTT from Exeter to Work Study.

Foresters G. D. H. J. BLAND-FLAGG from Hereford, SW(E) to Work Study; E. A. HOWELL from Planning and Economics to Brechfa, S(W); R. H. McGEACHY from Glenrickard, W(S) to Glenbranter, W(S); J. P. McRONE from Loch Ard, W(S) to Strathyre, W(S); T. ROBERTS from Dyfnant, N(W) to Dovey Bryncynfil, N(W); D. A. ROBERTSON from Strathyre to Loch Ard; D. R. THOMAS from Sherwood to Walcot, NW(E); T. W. THOMAS from Dovey, N(W) to Aeron N(W); J. P. HAMILTON from Aeron to Dyfnant; V. WILLIAMS from Brechfa to Rheola, S(W); H. YATES from Ennerdale, NW(E) to Kershope, NW(E).

Assistant Foresters C. R. ALPE from Dartmoor, SW(E) to Alice Holt, Planning and Economics; D. A. BELL from Kidland, NE(E) to Rothbury Planning and Economics; R. D. BOYD from Barcaldine to Strathyre Planning and Economics; D. G. CAIRD from Whitelee, W(S) to Glenrickard; D. CAMPBELL from Glenurquhart N(S) to Loch Ard; W. ELGER from Garclochhead, W(S) to Achnamara, Planning and Economics; I. C. EMBRY from Brighthing, SE(E) to Alice Holt, Planning and Economics; H. J. GRIFFITHS from Brechfa to Giedd; P. B. HUNT from Working Plans to Brightling; P. HUTCHINSON from Mortimer, NW(E) to Ennerdale; G. N. KEARNS from Wark, NE(E) to Alice Holt, Planning and Economics; M. D. LAMSON from Draethen, S(W) to Mynydd Ddu, S(W); P. W. LANSDOWN from Poorstock, SW(E) to Work Study; D. J. LYONS from Glenrickard to S. Kintyre, W(S); T. B. MacGREGOR from Blade Isle, N(S) to Conor Bridge, Planning and Economics; A. MACINTOSH from Glenduror, W(S) to Rowardennan; D. F. McCALLUM from Glenrickard to Whitelee; C. G. MITCHELL from Cotswold, SW(E) to Alice Holt, Planning and Economics; T. B. MOORE from Kershope to Blidworth, Planning and Economics; T. J. QUEEN from Rowardennan to Ft. Augustus, Work Study; P. G. RISBY from Aylesbury to Coleford, Planning and Economics; M. SHAW from Barcaldine to Strathyre; I. J. L. TILLOTSON from Working Plans to Cranborne Chase, SW(E); P. J. WEBB from Alice Holt to Hartland, SW(E).