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MR. E. C. (TED) HARPER RETIRES

YET another of our best known colleagues

has left us on retirement - Mr. E. C. HARPER,

Chief Clerk in the Education Branch for more than six years.

Ted Harper, as he was popularly known, had a long career in the public service, for he joined the Post Office as a Boy Messenger in 1919. He later became a Sorter and then, after passing the appropriate examination, became a Clerical Officer in 1930 and was posted to the Ministry of Agriculture. In 1936 he was transferred to the Tithe Redemption Commission and then, soon after the outbreak of war, was posted to the Air Ministry, with whom he remained until 1946, in which year he came to the Forestry Commission as a Higher Clerical Officer in the Headquarters Secretariat.

One of Ted Harper's biggest jobs on joining us lay in helping to organise the Empire Forestry Conference held in this country in 1947, and in this he assisted Mr. J. Q. WILLIAMSON, then Chief Education Officer and now Director of Forestry for Wales. It was in this year, incidentally, that Ted Harper was promoted to H.E.O.

After the Conference he went to Alice Holt Lodge as Chief Clerk, his appointment there coinciding with the expansions which were taking place at, or planned for, the Research Station and he was involved in the initial work preparatory to the building of the new wing, as it was called. He was not in office when work on it commenced, however, having been transferred to the Audit Branch at Headquarters in 1956, with which he remained until he joined the Education Branch.

A Londoner by birth and, one might say, a Surrey man by adoption, Ted Harper's qualities are many, not least the possession of a dry humour calculated to put almost any problem into perspective. He is to continue to live in the pleasant little village of Womersley, near Guildford where, he says, gardening ("but not too much of it") and golf will be among his diversions. And, we anticipate, his old love, cricket, will not be forgotten; he has played regularly for his village and, when at Alice Holt, for the Research team, and it is certain that his liking for this game will ensure continued support for the local side, if only from the shade of the pavilion.

A presentation was made to Ted Harper before and on behalf of many wellwishers. The gift - a slide projector - was handed to him by Mr. J. H. JAMES, Chief Education Officer.

**MR. A. D. PALMER

ANOTHER tribute to Mr. A. D. PALMER, whose retirement was reported last month. A

correspondent writes: "In all his varied offices, 'A.D.P.'s' first thought was for the efficiency of the Commission and, as a close second, the wellbeing of the staff whose interests he had served both as a member of the staff side and as Deputy Establishment Officer for so many years. His keenness to do his best for the Commission is illustrated by the fact that he acquired a Land Agent's qualification when he was little more than a youngster. As a colleague he was always well liked and respected for his honest Yorkshire frankness, combined with a cheerful disposition and a gift for the amusing and penetrating remark. Men now in middle age and the younger generation with us have cause to be grateful to him for the kindly way in which he helped them to settle down and learn their jobs."

****DEATH OF MR. R. WORTHINGTON**

WE greatly regret having to record the death of Mr. RONALD WORTHINGTON, at the comparatively early age of 52. This was the more tragic since it occurred suddenly on a day after he had been working in the office and, seemingly, had been in normal health.

Mr. Worthington came to the Commission from the Foreign Office in August, 1952, and as a Clerical Officer had served continuously with the Chief Education Officer at Headquarters. His wife, Mrs. ELAIN WORTHINGTON, will be remembered as having served in the office of Director, England, until she retired in late 1961; to her we offer our sincere sympathy.

****ANOTHER CAUSE OF FIRE**

WE have our own list of unusual causes of forest fires, including such oddities as a flaming squirrel falling into the plantations after coming into contact with a power line, and seagulls dropping lighted material among the trees following, probably, an "anting" session on a burning council refuse dump. We are not alone - Mr. J. S. OAKLEY, District Officer now on secondment in Uganda, writes: "During the course of recent trouble on the Uganda-Congo border two aeroplanes attacked some houses and buildings, and the tracer bullets started a fire in the woods. Fortunately no one was injured and my forester and his staff promptly and courageously got the fire under control. This, incidentally, was in Pinus patula, five years old and 20-25 feet high! A substantial increase by comparison with the growth rate of Sitka spruce in the Borders!

Onlookers stared unbelievably at the driver of a fire engine in the Dean the other week as he took his vehicle to the scene of a woodland blaze. Not surprising, really, for he was wearing a top hat, white shirt, black tie and frock coat. When told that his dress seemed rather more suitable for the stationmaster at Paddington than attendance at a forest fire, he explained that he had been about to assist at a funeral when he heard the local siren.

This fire note may also be of interest. Recently, on a warm still day, Head Forester R. J. JENNINGS was standing on top of an old colliery spoil heap in Russells Enclosure, the Dean, looking around for stray sheep, when he noticed flakes of a flimsy nature and grey in colour floating in the air around him. He caught a few of these in his hand and could see that they were the burned ash of dried leaves and grass.

Looking directly west on the side of Barnhill in Nagshead he could see columns of smoke rising vertically from the cutters' browst fires. The ash was ascending on a quiet day in the hot air and being deposited at a point two miles distant.

****MORE OFF-BEAT UTILISATION**

FOLLOWING up our note in March, Mr. M. E. S. DICKENSON, District Officer, West Sussex, writes: We, too, have itinerant purchasers of minor produce, and one of the items purchased is ash coppice for walking sticks.

There are two itinerant persons who come to Slindon Forest most winters. They cut ash coppice in young beech plantations and bundle the sticks. The bundles are checked and the charge is $\frac{1}{2}$ d. per stick for walking sticks and 1d. for Scout Staves. The material is then sold to a manufacturer. For this help with our cleaning we received £94 last winter for some 40,000 sticks.

Recently one such itinerant took his wares to a manufacturer and said he would have to put his prices up; the purchaser agreed reluctantly, bemanning the fact that everything was going up. "Yes," said the vendor, "we even have to buy the stuff now!"

Incidentally, a great many walking sticks are exported to countries all over the world, one of the largest orders being for Texas - it's a long walk from the Cadillac to the elevator or the golf trolley! And if you travel to Chile you may meet one of the natives helping himself up the Andes with a stick from Slindon Forest.

****TRAINEE AT THE PALACE**

CONGRATULATIONS to KEITH FOLLETT, Forester School trainee at present working on the Dunwich Beat of Aldewood Forest, East England, who recently went to Buckingham Palace to receive a gold medal under the Duke of Edinburgh's Award Scheme.

To qualify for the award, Keith obtained Red Cross and First Aid certificates at advanced level; qualified as a Cub instructor and led a pack for 18 months; made a trip to the Black Mountains, spending three nights in the open; took a Master Cook's badge in the Boy Scouts; served as Quartermaster at the annual camp; and also passed the standard list requirements in athletics, swimming and gymnastics.

****THE PIPER**

OUR note in March in which readers were invited to speculate as to the identity of the piper who scared the young builder in the Dean has brought in a number of letters. All correspondents name the piping Forest Officer as Mr. A. D. HOPKINSON who, before he retired a considerable time ago, was Conservator, East England.

Mr. T. E. ANDERSON, retired Head Forester, writing from Pickering, Yorkshire, says: "He (Mr. Hopkinson) used to parade each night at Parkend in full Highland regalia and entertain us. His house was separated from the one in which I lived by about 100 yards so that we had a grandstand view; and, being from the north, we enjoyed the pipes. Mr. G. W. HOLLIS, also a retired Head Forester, living at Tiverton, Devon, writes: "Mr. Hopkinson was transferred to Chopwell Wood, County Durham, in the early summer of 1922 when I was training at the Forestry School there. Our quarters were near his residence and it was almost a nightly event during the light evenings, to see the piper marching up and down the lawn producing sounds strange to the Southerner."

Head Forester W. G. GRAY, of the Research Nursery at Kennington, Oxford, also has memories of the piper in 1922 when, like Mr. Hollis, he was at the Forestry School. "Mr. Hopkinson," he says, "was then Divisional Officer in charge of the old No. 1 Division and resided at Chopwell House. The performances used to last about an hour".

****FOCUS ON GRIZEDALE**

WE were interested to see the first copy of a "newsheet" devoted to news of Grizedale Forest, North West England and, remembering this forest's close association with wild life matters, appropriately entitled "Field Glass". The Forester-in-Charge, Mr. BILL GRANT, is the editor and rightly makes at the outset the point that the Commission's primary role at Grizedale is and must be the production of timber; nevertheless, he goes on, the forest contains a great complex of animal, bird and plant life within an area of exceptional beauty, making Grizedale an ideal area in which to implement the policy of multiple land use. Within this, the recreational assets of the forest can be explored and expanded and in two years a reputation has already been won among educationalists, conservationists and naturalists - in 1964 there were 2,000 visitors and there are indications that this figure will be exceeded this year.

Just a few more points from the newsletter: On the timber side, production this year will be about 3,500 tons, mainly for pitwood, stakes and fencing, and saw logs. There will be an important change when the new boardmill at Workington is completed. Many nesting boxes have been erected in connection with the national recording scheme run by the British Trust for Ornithology. Mallard have been resting on the lake overlooked by the unique "Treetops" observation platform and special hides have been made for the benefit of photographers among the visitors. And so on. We wish "Field Glass" well.

****FOREST TRAIL OPENED**

A Forest Trail (as distinct from nature trail) has been laid out in Oversley Wood, one of a number of woods which are remnants of the old Forest of Arden, in the North West England Conservancy. This Forest Trail was officially opened this month, the ceremony being performed jointly by Mr. C. SMITH-RYLAND, Chairman of the Warwick County Council, and Mr. J. R. THOM, Director of Forestry for England, who planted trees in a new aboretum destined to contain a collection of all forest trees commonly grown in Warwickshire.

Much hard work in bringing the Forest Trail into being has been done by the Conservator, Mr. J. S. R. CHARD, and his staff in association with the staff of the Warwickshire County Museum, and this will surely pay dividends to the Commission in their efforts to educate children in forestry. It is designed primarily for children and has, so to speak, been graded for different ages; through the County Education Committee its facilities are to be made available to all schools in Warwickshire.

On the subject of forestry and schools in general, it is gratifying that the interest of teachers has grown substantially in the last two or three years. Requests for help and guidance, particularly in the starting of a forestry project in class, continue to reach the Information Section at Headquarters in great measure and, last year, Conservancies and Divisions helped enormously by accepting several hundred parties of schoolchildren who visited forests in widely separated parts of the country.

At the moment the Information Section, with the help of the Chief Photographer at Alice Holt, is producing a short film on school forestry, based on the work of children of a junior school at Hemel Hempstead who have "gone in" for forestry studies in a big way and have their own school forest. The film will, in fact, be unassuming technically, but its contents should appeal to teachers. Furthermore, when complete it should be useful ammunition for those of our officers who do such sterling work in spreading the forestry gospel among young people. More anon as to when the film will be available.

**TRANSFERS

THE following transfers have been notified to Headquarters. Divisional Officers: A. Bennett from Aberdeen E.(S) to Inverness N.(S); C. A. H. Gascoigne from Inverness N.(S) to Shrewsbury N.(W). District Officers: N. Dannatt from Santon Downham, D.(R), to Alice Holt D.(R); J. E. Everard from Fort Augustus N.(S) to Fochabers E.(S); T. S. L. Findlay from Creebridge S.(S) to Dumfries S.(S); J. G. Grevatt from Fochabers to Inverness; W. A. J. Johnson from Dumfries to Glasgow; G. K. Murray from Glasgow to Aberdeen; S. A. Simmonds from Lyndhurst, New to Woking; A. Whayman from Aberdeen to Work Study, D.(R); G. O. Williams from Shrewsbury to Cardiff.

Foresters: W. J. Blair from Ae, D.(R), to Inchnacardoch D.(R); J. G. A. St. Bland-Flagg from Thetford, D.(R), to Yardley, Hastings, D.(R); F. Cameron from Black Isle N.(S) to South Laggan N.(S); K. E. Cox from Ebbw S.(W) to Hay S.(W); G. W. Jones from Radnor N.(W) to Aeron N.(W); P. Mowat from Newcastleton S.(S) to Glentrool S.(S); T. Nelson from Kilgrammie S.(S) to Dalbeattie S.(S). Assistant Foresters: R. B. Angus from Kielder, D.(R), to Bush Nursery, D.(R); D. A. Bell from Rothbury (P. & E) to Thetford (P. & E); J. L. Bryson from Dalbeattie S.(S) to Carrick S.(S); D. S. Coutts from Sunart N.(S) to Grizedale, D.(R); P. R. Dewey from Glentress S.(S) to Dundough S.(S); P. Fligg from Carrick to Kilgrammie; G. C. Webb from Grizedale, D.(R), to Westonbirt, D.(R); D. L. Willmott from Bush Nursery, D.(R), to Kielder, D.(R). Superintendent of Works: J. M. Stables from Fort William N.(S) to Inverness N.(S). Higher Executive Officers: A. F. Musto from Bristol to London, D.(E); W. O. Wittering from Thetford, D.(R), to Olney, D.(R). Executive Officer: R. S. Elliott from Edinburgh to H.Q.; C. M. King from H.Q. to Bristol; J. J. Richardson from London, D.(E), to Alice Holt, D.(R). Clerical Officers: W. A. Bleasdale from London, D.(E), to Chester; W. Gleicher from London, D.(E), to H.Q.; A. L. Rae from Dumfries to Edinburgh. T/Clerical Assistant R. H. Cannon from London, D.(E), to H.Q.

**EX-SLASHER CORRESPONDENT WEDS

MR. SAM CAVEN, Clerical Officer in the South Scotland Conservancy and formerly Slasher Correspondent, was married on 25th March to MISS SUSAN JAMIESON of Dalbeattie.

Mr. A. I. D. HORNE, District Officer, stationed at Aylsham, was married on 27th March to MISS LINDA BROWN, of Norwich.

To all the parties, we offer our congratulations.