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BIRTHDAY HONOURS

WE note with much pleasure that Mr. ALISTAIR CAMERON, Head Forester, Strathyre, has been appointed a Member of the Order of the British Empire (M.B.E.).

Mr. Cameron started the planting of Strathyre in 1935 and apart from a short period during the war he has been in charge of the forest ever since, the 5,000 acres or so reflecting the care and attention he has consistently given to his woodlands over the years. His keenness to improve various techniques has always been marked. For long his work has brought him into close association with the public, since thousands of visitors each year have come to see the Commission nursery and, indeed, his own gardens, which are nearby.

Mr. THOMAS WALTER DALGLEISH, of Kilmarnock, the well-known forestry consultant and former President of the Royal Scottish Forestry Society, has been appointed an O.B.E. (Officer of the same Order). Mr. KENNETH HENDERSON MACARTHUR, who is with I.C.I. at Dumfries, receives the British Empire Medal; he is probably one of the greatest authorities on the control of roe deer in Scotland and his work in this connection has been of exceptional value to the Commission.

Receives Territorial Decoration

Congratulations are also offered to Mr. MARTIN ORROM, District Officer stationed at Kendal, North West England, who has been awarded the Territorial Decoration. Mr. Orrom gained this for service in a unit of the Intelligence Corps concerned solely with photographic interpretation. He became interested in this sort of work at University, when he wrote on the identification of individual trees by use of aerial photographs. Joining the Air Photographic Interpretation Unit, comprised almost entirely of officers, in 1952, he has served continuously and for a while was part of a specialist section which studied the possibilities of mapping soil types from air photos. This involved co-operation with scientists at Oxford and Cambridge and was most rewarding.

****LEAVING FOR CHILE**

HIS many friends throughout the Commission will learn with great interest of the pending departure, later this year, of Mr. JOHN Q. WILLIAMSON, who is to take up an appointment with the Food and Agricultural Organisation in Chile. To do this he has been granted a year's special leave of absence from the Commission.

Mr. Williamson has always enjoyed popularity with his colleagues and will consequently be missed, even for a relatively short time; on the other hand, all will join in wishing him good luck in what should prove a most interesting new venture. His post as Senior Officer for Wales will be filled on an acting basis by Mr. J. W. L. ZEHETMAYR, who will take the rank of Director; in turn, Mr. Zehetmayr's post as Conservator, West Scotland, will be filled on an acting basis by Mr. G. G. STEWART, now in South Scotland, on temporary promotion to the rank of Conservator.

****"FIELD DAY" AT THORNTHWAITE**

WHEN 84-years old EDWIN DALZELL, of Keswick, helped with the first planting at Thornthwaite Forest, Cumberland, in 1920 he little thought that 46 years later he would be back on the site to mark the first tree for felling to help supply the new £6 million mill at Workington with pulpwood. But return he did, accompanied by two former workmates, veterans HEXHAM CLARK and LANTY BARNES, both also long retired.

The ceremony of marking and felling the first tree, subsequent felling and extraction and loading of the first lorry-load to leave for the mill was witnessed by the Press and television cameramen, together with Commission officials and representatives of the pulp and board mill now under construction by Thames Board Ltd. The supply of raw material to this undertaking testifies once more to the Commission's foresight in encouraging planned development of new markets for our rising production of softwood, and that of private estates. When deliveries are under way in 1967 more than 200 tons of pulpwood--or nearly 20 12-ton lorry-loads--a day will leave Commission woods alone for Workington. By 1970 this figure will have reached 70,000 tons and, by 1975, more than 100,000 tons. Supplies will at first be drawn from Thornthwaite, Dunnerdale, Ennerdale and Greystoke, all in Cumberland, and from several forests in the South Scotland Conservancy, namely Ae, Castle O'er, Newcastleton, Wauchope, Cardona, Dalbeattie and Kirroughtree. By September this year forests in the North East England Conservancy will also be engaged and by March next year 19 separate forests will in all be supplying pulpwood to the mill.

The party was welcomed to the ceremony by Mr. J. S. R. CHARD, Conservator, North West England and included Mr. G. GODWIN, Conservator, North East England, and Mr. G. G. STEWART, representing Conservator, South Scotland.

**LAMENT FOR A FLAGPOLE

VISITING Northerwood House for the first time in several months we were saddened to see the once majestic flagpole, which for years so proudly bore the Commission's own flag high over the New Forest, lying forlornly in lengths on the grass opposite our educational establishment. Of course it had to be, sooner or later, for time, unrelenting, took its inevitable toll, rotting this hitherto unique symbol of our sovereignty to the point where it was no longer considered safe. The pole, when erected, was thought to be the biggest flagstaff in home grown timber in the whole of Britain; formerly a Douglas fir grown in the New, it was 108 feet high in its finished form (the tree from which it came was 125 feet tall) and weighed three tons. Its erection at Northerwood coincided with the first appearance of the Commission flag, which was "broken" by our late Chairman, LORD ROBINSON, during one of his regular visits to Northerwood.

The pole was the subject of much comment and admiration over the years, though it might be said that occasionally it was treated with some irreverence; older members of the staff will recall that, perhaps inevitably, it was used for purposes other than bearing our flag, when certain university students were in residence at Northerwood. Among the mentionables, pyjamas once waved in the breeze just above or below the flag, which was also joined on another occasion by a bicycle!

Incidentally, newcomers to the Commission may not even know we have our own flag, though it is widely flown at agricultural shows and with our national emblem and those of other countries, it has helped grace various events attended by overseas visitors. It comprises brown bars on a green background to symbolise the soil and trees and bears a traditional crown and the words Forestry Commission in gold.

**BEARS IN YOUR FOREST?

A revolutionary and controversial proposal is made by BRUNSDON YAPP, senior lecturer in zoology at Birmingham University, in an article in the June issue of Wildlife. He considers the case for re-introducing extinct (to this country) predators, including the bear and the wolf. The place of carnivores in the balance of nature, he says, is well shown by the case of our red deer. In the Highlands, where there are no predators and where deer are protected from the attacks of man, they increase to such an extent as to over-graze their pastures and become a nuisance. The considerable fall in the size of the stags since pre-historic times is presumably due partly to the lack of selection. A few wolves or lions would keep down their numbers and probably increase the size of individuals by removing the weaklings. In terms of conservation there is everything to be said for reintroducing predators, adds Mr. Yapp.

It seems that danger from large carnivores has been exaggerated, he goes on. Brown bears and wolves still exist in parts of Europe but reports of their attacks on man are seldom heard. The same is true of the

"grizzly" in North American National Parks, where of course the smaller black bear, U. Americanus, is a tourist attraction. Although there are some accidents, these happen because people approach too close to take photographs or offer food. Even in those parts of Africa where lions still exist, says Mr. Yapp, reports of attacks on humans are almost non-existent. Brown bears and lions are, however, marginally dangerous and public opinion would presumably not accept them unless they were within a good fence. But Lord Bath's experiments with lions deserves encouragement, especially if it could lead to an even larger reserve and more natural conditions.

The ecological niche of the bear could, however, be well filled by its smaller black cousin, which is plentiful in the Rockies and the Sierra Nevada and from which there is no danger. "Since it feeds largely on small mammals such as mice", says Mr. Yapp, "it would be economically useful and introduction to some of the larger of the Forestry Commission's forests, such as Kielder, would do no harm to anyone.....it would soon be accepted as a delightful tourist attraction. Whatever the wisest thing to do about the larger carnivores, there is nothing to be said against reintroducing or encouraging the smaller ones. The addition of the Lynx lynx to the Scottish forests would be the best way of dealing with the excessive population of roe deer."

What do our readers think about all this?

**DOWN MEMORY LANE

FORMER Members of the Aberdeen office soccer team, now well distributed throughout the Commission, may be interested in these reminiscences of a correspondent.

There we were, he says, lined up on a summer evening in 1950, looking very "spruce" in white shirts and "pining" for the kick-off in our first match against a forest soccer team. From the comparative security of a deep-lying centre-half position, I confessed to misgivings as to how we would shape, but I need not have worried. Up the wing to the bye-line cork-screwed our right winger, across the goal came the ball, in went our centre-forward, and from his head the ball rocketed into the net - time played 30 seconds.

Alas, we were never again to reach this standard, though we really had a serviceable team. We could boast of an ex-"Civil Service Stroller" and others played in minor soccer grades in the city. We even once had the services of a Scottish League International (unknown, of course, to the S.F.A.). Of some 20 games played we won about 15 though when we lost there was never any doubt about it. We were probably the pioneers of the modern link-men trend with an inside forward and wing half who took control of ten square yards in mid-field and provided effective cover for each other. Our "system" would have been the envy of any Busby or Shankley. Not for us the orthodox 4-2-4 or 4-3-3 but a very fluidly operated 1-0-9 or 9-0-1. The afore-mentioned "1" in our attacking system was our Chief Clerk (LENMAN by name) who worked the off-side plan with slide-rule precision.

Several notable characters and events grace our hall of fame. One Divisional Officer charged to mid-field uttering an Indian war cry after scoring his first goal. I can't recall that he ever scored another. Divisional Officer No. 2, a scrum-half cum right-back, squatted so heavily on a small opponent that we thought the game would have to be abandoned out of respect.

One centre-forward missed an open goal and took a header over a spectator's bike. Another, wary of a very tough centre-half, achieved the unique feat of putting the ball over the cross-bar from one foot range. An unforgettable character was the tattooed war hero whose debut in goal coincided with his Waterloo as a custodian. Balls rained upon him like bullets and he dodged them as though they were. One forest borrowed four strangers, stars from the Scottish Highland League, to help spank us 9-2. Diplomatic relations with that forest were strained for a long time.

The object of the games, to foster good relations between office and field, was not always achieved but they engendered a healthy and mutual respect. After many a game, the office staff was temporarily depleted through annual leave for rest and recovery purposes. It might have been said of any one of us that: "He's fitba' crazy, fitba' mad, and the fitba' it has robbed him of the wee bit sense he had."

****FIGHT TO THE DEATH**

AN UNUSUAL sight witnessed by Mr. COLIN MORE, road foreman, at Farigaig Forest, above Loch Ness, was a roe buck battle ending in death, writes Forester H. MacKAY. The clicking of horns and pig-like grunts drew Colin's attention to the wild scene 120 yards away. The younger beast was in an exhausted state and each time it struggled to its feet it was met by a head-long charge resulting in its being rolled over and over; the victor followed this up by literally jumping into the air and stamping on the fallen roe. It then viciously attacked a near-by larch but returned to its victim snorting, grunting and squealing. When Colin had approached to within 20 yards the attacker got his scent and then made off, leaving the other roe gasping his last. Subsequent skinning showed that the dead beast had 17 stab wounds, many of them two to three inches deep, together with multiple bruises. The opinion was that damage to hind leg tendons early in the fight prevented the defeated animal from retreating, as would normally have been done from what was known to be the older buck's territory.

****IDEAS WANTED**

RABBITS remain a major pest and Forester E. V. ROGERS would like to hear from any Forester or Warrener who has comment to make on his booklet on rabbit control -- "but not on the snare drawing!", he adds. Any ideas -- presumably on content and presentation -- would be welcome and would, if sound, be included in the revised edition. Forester Rogers' address is: Forestry Commission, Pot Kiln Lane, Beaconsfield, Bucks.

Unhelpfully, we offer the following to Mr. Rogers. A correspondent in North West England relates that during the past planting season a rabbit chewed a hole in the polythene bag and gave birth to a healthy litter of young among the young plants. The moral to this can only be that planting bags should not be left lying about the forest!

****DRAMA GROUP SUCCESS**

THE recently re-formed Broughton-in-Furness Drama Group, includes Head Forester M. S. ALLCOCK and Mrs. ALLCOCK as prominent members; not only do they play lead parts but Mrs. Allcock also produces the shows. When Mr. Allcock got an assistant, CHARLES BLACKWOOD, he was of course immediately enrolled in the group, so that the Forestry Commission representation is now strong. This year the group was successful in the Furness and District Rural Drama League with their entry - Act I of "The Cradle Song" by Gregoric and Maria Martinez Sierra - and was awarded the Dobson Shield. In all, eleven plays were entered from seven drama groups, making the Broughton achievement all the more praiseworthy.

****NEARLY 100 DANCERS**

AN annual staff dance has been arranged regularly in Aberdeen since 1950. The most recent was attended by nearly 100. It says much for the popularity of this event that every county in the Conservancy was represented. Among those with full or near ever-present attendance records are Assistant Conservator R. J. G. HORNE and Mrs. HORNE; Chief Forester D. ANDERSON and Mrs. ANDERSON; Head Forester G. McBAIN and Mrs. McBAIN; Head Forester J. A. SEATON and Mrs. SEATON; Head Forester G. J. A. M. MURRAY and Mrs. MURRAY; and Head Forester J. B. THOW and Mrs. THOW, whose daughter, Miss ANGELA THOW, has attended every dance since she was eight years old!

The Conservator, Mr. G. I. MACKENZIE, welcomed the following guests: Mr. F. OLIVER, former Conservator; Mr. and Mrs. T. H. WOOLRIDGE (A. G. & W. J. Riddoch Ltd., Timber Merchants, Rothiemay); Mr. MacRAE and Mr. THORNTON (Timbuyers Ltd., Aberdeen) and their wives; and Mr. P. MALCOLMSON, formerly Conservancy Engineer and now in the North Conservancy, and Mrs. MALCOLMSON.

Mr. A. WHAYMAN, now with Work Study, and Mrs. WHAYMAN, were absent for the first time. "We hope for a record turn-out next time", says our correspondent. "It would be especially nice to see more of our retired colleagues coming along."

****PROPOSED MOTOR CLUB**

MR. B. E. SUTTON, Forester at Chiddingfold, South East England, asks whether readers would be interested in joining a motor club. If there were sufficient members, he writes, we could have a branch in each Conservancy, or at least in each country. Activities could be both social and competitive. Readers interested in the proposal please write direct to Mr. Sutton at Stroud Lodge, Grayswood, Haslemere, Surrey.