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The FLASHER

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THE QUEEN'S HOUSE REOPENED

THE historic Queen's House at Lyndhurst, in the New Forest, which has been fully restored, was reopened this month as the local administrative centre of the Commission. The ceremony was performed by LORD ASHBURTON, Lord Lieutenant of Hampshire and the Isle of Wight, who was introduced by our Chairman, Mr. LESLIE JENKINS, who said the house was not simply a picturesque survival for it would continue to play its part in the daily life of the Forest, while standing as a reminder of traditions something like 1,000 years old.

The Queen's House is the principal Crown building in the New Forest. It is, in fact, in its first origin, a manor house and it is possible that a building to serve this end has stood on the present site since the days of the Saxon Queen Elfrida, widow of Edward the Martyr. The first record of such a building dates from about 1300, in the reign of Edward I, when an order was issued for "twenty oaks to make laths for the use of the Queen's manor house at Lyndhurst." During the reign of Henry VIII (1509-1547) the house was repaired and enlarged. The main rebuilding as a royal abode was carried out between 1634 and 1672. It was begun by Charles I and completed, after the Civil War, by his son Charles II. The money was at least in part raised by the sale of timber from the New Forest. Charles I and his son and possibly James II hunted from Lyndhurst; thereafter the only sovereign to stay at the Queen's House was George III. The last Royal occupant was His Royal Highness Adolphus, Duke of Cambridge, seventh son of George III, who lived there from 1827 to 1849. Subsequently the Queen's House has served as the offices of Deputy Surveyors and, latterly, has been let privately.

And so the Queen's House has evolved over seven centuries to meet its varied and changing functions, the latest of which has been the movement, from the Red House across the road, of our New Forest colleagues.

Among those at the ceremony were Mr. M.

COMPTON, Commissioner for Administration and Finance; Mr. GWYNFRYN DAVIES and Mr. F. SELLERS, Commissioners; LORD RADNOR, formerly our Chairman, and LADY RADNOR; LORD MALMESBURY, Official Verderer; and a number of officials and others representing various local interests. Mr. G. B. RYLE, formerly Deputy Director General of the Commission and now a Verderer, was also there; and it was pleasing, too, to meet again Mr. E. WYNNE JONES, whose name is synonymous with a long, outstanding term of office as Deputy Surveyor. Mr. W. A. CADMAN, the present Deputy Surveyor, served as tour leader during an inspection of the building.

**DEATH OF CHIEF FORESTER

IT is with deep regret that we record the sudden death of Chief Forester LESLIE THOMAS EDWARDS (known almost universally as "L.T."), of the South Wales Conservancy, at the relatively early age of 59. Mr. Edwards joined the Commission in March 1920, starting as a labourer at 13 years of age.

District Officer S. J. C. WEST, an old friend and colleague of "L.T.", writes: The sudden death, in harness, is indeed painful to comment upon. I first met "L.T." in my Parkend student days in 1928 when he was a ganger in the Dean, and renewed acquaintance with him on my appointment to Brechfa in 1936, where he was already installed. We worked together very closely until the second world war sent "L.T." to Timber Supply, while I looked after his beloved Brechfa beat until he returned to take charge, as it proved, for life. He amassed a great knowledge of forestry and whenever one met him his conversation was always on this

subject, interspersed with shrewd comments on current problems. He earned great respect during his long service, as was shown by the presence of more than 100 of his colleagues at the cremation service at Morriston. Indeed, a long chapter at Brechfa has closed with the passing of such a well liked and loyal servant; it is very sad to think that he did not live to enjoy some years of well earned retirement with his wife and family, to whom our deepest sympathy is extended.

**PROMOTIONS

FURTHER promotions to post as Chief Forester include those of Mr. J. LIDDELL (New Forest); Mr. J. E. W. LLOYD (South Wales); and Mr. R. J. JENNINGS (the Dean).

**VISIT TO SWEDEN

LAST month Messrs. E. G. RICHARDS, G. D. ROUSE and L. TROUP took part in a field trip and discussion in Sweden on the latest harvesting methods. The occasion was the Sixth Session of the FAO/ECE/ILO Committee which deals with questions of forest working techniques and training of forest workers. The Committee last met in Edinburgh in June, 1964, when Britain was host country.

Over 100 delegates and observers travelled by bus and train over that part of Sweden bounded by Sundsvall, Ostersund, Falun and Galve. The observers included several members of our home timber trade and forest officers from Australia, India, Africa and South America.

In the most advanced harvesting systems shown by the Swedes the trees are felled by power saws, collected into bunches by a special tractor and skidded to roadside by another type of tractor. At roadside the trees pass through a Sund processing machine which removes the branches, cross-cuts and sorts saw-logs from pulpwood. Mechanical loaders then put the produce on to huge articulated trucks for delivery to the mills. The Sund machine is complicated and expensive and it was interesting to see the prototype of a much simpler machine for removing branches. This is called the Screw, and it is quite likely that we shall hear more about it in years to come.

Much of Sweden's forests is owned by farmers. Not only are the individual woodlots small, but they are often interlocked into a fantastic jigsaw pattern of ownership. In the old days the farmer went out in the winter with his handsaw, his axe and his horse, felled a few trees and dragged them quite long distances to the nearest roadside. He did not really cost his labour and indeed it used to be said that many a man preferred to go wood cutting than to put up with his wife's sharp tongue during the long snowbound winter days. But all that is finished. Many have abandoned their farms for the towns and a farmer can no longer afford to spend six months of the year working inefficiently. In the Province of Jamtland one of the many co-operative forest owners' associations was seen in operation. The members have combined to build a forest road and had helped to finance the purchase of up-to-date logging equipment. In this way they had once again converted their forests into a useful source of income.

Training of foresters for the many new machines in use in Sweden is undertaken by County Forestry Boards, which come under the Royal Board of Private Forestry. In Sweden the State Forestry Service comes under a separate board and is nearer to a nationalised industry than our Forestry Commission, since it is only concerned with managing state woods and has no connection with the administration of private woodlands.

One of the many County Forestry Board schools for forest workers were visited. This is residential, with modern up-to-date architect designed buildings and a complex of training workshops. Here forest workers receive a thorough drilling in all aspects of operating and maintaining tractors, hydraulic cranes and other equipment. The school is wonderfully equipped with every modern teaching aid and the staff, although mainly foresters and logging engineers, have all received further education in the art of teaching.

Back in Stockholm the Committee went into Plenary Session, to discuss its future programme of work. But there was also a symposium on the use of tractors in forestry. The Scandinavian and Russian delegates thought that we had now entered a new era when forestry would rely, at least for logging operations, on special purpose built tractors. The Middle and Southern European speakers thought that there would always be a place for the agricultural tractor to be used in harvesting.

Although Britain has a comparatively small area of forest the Commission representatives were active in the various proceedings. Mr. Rouse, Chief Harvesting Officer, was elected rapporteur for the session, which meant that he had to burn the midnight oil producing a report of each day's proceedings. Mr. Troup, Chief Work Study Officer, was one of the discussion leaders during the symposium on tractors, and during the field trip and the first half of the plenary session Mr. Richards was Chairman of the Committee. Half way through the meeting he handed over to his successor, Mr. C. Voronizin (USSR).

At the end of the meeting Mr. Richards was presented with a set of 21 tumblers to mark his retirement after nine years as Chairman. Each tumbler is engraved with the name of the country which donated it.

****FIRE PROBLEMS IN SOUTH WALES**

FROM South Wales, Head Forester D. M. MORGAN, Cymmer, writes: "Regarding the article in your May issue I wish we, in this area, could share Mr. Connell's optimism.

"We have, indeed, large acreages in the thicket stage which Mr. Connell refers to as the 'pyromaniac's heaven'. We have, also, thousands of acres of young plantations in the course of establishment on molinia, the forester's hell. Given the right conditions and one 'nut-case', and there are many, either deliberately or accidentally dropping a match, a fire here could reach four figure proportions - and this in spite of all the modern equipment, aids, gadgets and foresting techniques.

"Any forester who has served any length of time in this inflammable area of Coed Morgannwg has a built-in warning system, no matter what the instruments forecast.

"For instance on 23rd April the FDR was zero yet there was a fire at Rheola; in the evening I was by the plantations overlooking the Rhondda valley and on the mountain behind the Rhondda there was a roaring grass fire - that's molinia for you. Again with the FDR at zero, on the following day there was a fire at Penllergaer.

"In one particular beat of Coed Morgannwg in 1961, 103 acres were burned in one fire and the following year 200 acres in one fire; these acreages were reached despite all available help and every brigade for miles around. Water is usually everywhere until you want it, or if pumps are got to water by then the fire has gone elsewhere. We find that instead of filling Rovers with pumps, hoses and whatnot it is better to fill them with men with beaters and he who gets there 'fastest with the mostest' has the smallest fires - with luck!!"

****RETIREMENT OF MR. FRED WILLIAMS**

MANY friends and wellwishers said farewell to Mr. FRED WILLIAMS, Forester at Deudraeth, North Wales, who has retired. To mark the occasion, he and Mrs. Williams were presented with a pair of garden chairs and the balance of a sum subscribed by colleagues and others.

Mr. Williams' career, reviewed by Mr. J. F. OSMASTON, District Officer, started in 1919 with the Office of Woods in the Forest of Dean. Put out of work by the slump in 1931, he rode his bicycle all the way to North Wales, where he secured a job at Gwydyr Forest. Since then he has not looked back for the past 23 years he has been responsible for Deudraeth, seeing it expand from 400 acres to its present 3,000 acres. Mr. Osmaston thanked Mr. Williams for his loyalty and co-operation over the past 11 years and concluded by asking Mr. J. H. JAMES, Conservator, to make the presentation. Mr. and Mrs. Williams have bought a house in Ffestiniog for their retirement and so will not be lost to their many friends.

Retirement of Forester D. H. FARRANCE

Mr. D. H. FARRANCE, formerly Forester at Goytre, has retired after 36 years' service. Joining the Commission in 1930, he served at Hay and Brechfa before moving to Goytre where for the past eight years he had been in charge.

Mr. Farrance received a cheque from his colleagues, presented by Mr. JOHN Q. WILLIAMSON, Senior Officer for Wales, who wished him a happy retirement.

****DEATH OF HEAD FORESTER**

WE deeply regret having to report the death of Head Forester A. H. SPENCER, in hospital at Brecon, at the early age of 46. "Bert" Spencer had been engaged on Work Study duties. He was unmarried. The funeral took place at Westbury on Trym and was attended by Work Study colleagues.

****WINDSPREAD MEASURED FROM TOWERS**

WHILE applauding any "new ventures" in forest meteorological research (The Slasher, April, "More Work for the Computer") writes Mr. P. WOOD, Forester at Elsham, East England, I feel that credit for previous important work in this field (or rather forest) should be given where it is due. Towers were, in fact, erected in various forests in Germany as long ago as 1894 and in 1898 Danklemann published results of anemometer and other readings at various heights within and at the edge of forest stands, and compared them with similar readings in open country. In Britain in 1952 Best and others used a 100 ft. mast at Rye, in Sussex.

All this information is well displayed in the new translation and publication of "The Climate near the Ground" by Rudolph Geiger (Harvard University Press, 1965). This book should be on every forester's shelf though I think only one copy is held at the Forestry Commission Library, and there are none at the Forester schools. Of course the latest refined methods, tapes, computers, and so on will produce more accurate figures but the basic principles and formulae, together with graphs, diagrams and figures relating to many current forest problems are admirably set out. For instance the problem of substitution felling (S.P. to C.P.) is discussed in relation to gap-size and frost and a formula given which, if used, might result in more success and less beating up.

Mr. Wood makes the point that the volume in question costs about 94s. but copies appear to be available through the public library service - Grimsby for example, says Mr. Wood, has a brand new copy.

****DISTRICT DINNER**

STAFF of No. 2 District, East England Conservancy, wined and dined last month at the "Black Horse" Inn, Grimsthorpe. Arrangements were made by District Officer J. D. LEEFE and Head Forester A. L. MITCHELL. Of the district staff, Head Foresters A. L. MITCHELL and H. G. MUGGLETON and Forester J. D. SNOWDEN are moving eastwards to Norfolk and Head Forester S. J. LAW is changing forests within the district.

Mr. S. R. PAYNE, formerly Assistant Conservator of Forests, was invited to be the guest of honour but unfortunately a previous engagement prevented his appearance. (It is understood that the present financial restrictions on foreign travel are delaying his plans to travel to India in a Land Rover). However, his former colleagues have already equipped him with a gold automatic wrist watch to ensure accurate time-keeping, and as a mark of esteem.

****EDUCATIONAL VISIT**

WITH the weather set fine, members of the York Office staff set off by minibus (no mini skirts in the party) on their annual educational visit, this time to York Forest. They were greeted on arrival by the District Officer, Mr. IAN MARSHALL, who gave an interesting introductory talk on chemical weeding in the forest, a subject which provided the main theme for the morning. He compared the "old fashioned" hand and mechanical methods of forest weeding with chemical control and demonstrations were given by forest staff. Later a felling demonstration was followed by a visit to a stand where selected trees had been high pruned.

Lunch was taken in the grounds of the Castle Howard Estate, where in the afternoon the party was shown round one of the estate woods. Various aspects of private estate management were inspected with emphasis on the integrated forestry and sporting interests. A conducted tour round 6astle Howard House, one of Yorkshire's stately homes, concluded the official programme.

Cricket

A Conservancy team met a timber merchants' eleven at York in the annual match for the Place Cup. Batting first, our Conservancy colleagues made 99 runs, due mainly to some Yorkshire grit in the middle order. The timber merchants were never happy batting against the opening attack of B. STOCKDALE (4 for 33) and G. CHAMBERS (6 for 18) and were soon dismissed for 76. Thus the trophy returned to the Conservancy after a year's absence.