

The ELASHER

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JUBILEE CELEBRATIONS

A FITTING CLOSING CEREMONY

WHAT will probably prove to be the final commemoration of our Golden Jubilee took place at the exact spot and on the same day of December as the Commission's first planting in 1919 in Eggesford Forest.

To celebrate the occasion, a group assembled at Eggesford Forest on the 8th December which included the present Lord Clinton, great-grandson of the Lord Clinton who planted the first trees, our Chairman, Mr. Leslie A.W. Jenkins, Mrs. Roach, daughter of the late Mr. Tom Brown, M.B.E., who was the original Forester of Eggesford Forest, and Mr. A.G. Fulford, the present Head Forester. Amongst others present were Mr. G.D. Rouse, Commissioner S.W.(E), Mr. M.J. Penistan, Assistant Conservator, Mr. S. Forrester, District Officer, and Mr. Henry Williamson, the author of such well-known books as "Tarka the Otter" and "Sala the Salmon" who lives near the Forest and who has seen it grow up since the initial planting.

Before inviting Lord Clinton to plant the first of the copper beeches, which are to form a glade leading up to the first planting commemorative stone, Mr. Jenkins related the rather disreputable story of how the first planting happened to take place on that spot. The Forestry Commissioners held their first meeting in London on December 7th, 1919. The late Lord Lovat - the Commission's first Chairman - had arranged a formal ceremony for the first planting to take place at Monaughty Forest, near Elgin, for the next day. However, Lord Clinton, one of the Commissioners, and later Chairman of the Commission, travelled back to Devon overnight where he and a small group planted some natural seedlings in Eggesford Forest in the early hours of the 8th December; Lord Clinton was thus able to send off a telegram for delivery to Lord Lovat as he got off his sleeper at Elgin, telling him that the Commission's first trees had already been planted. Lord Lovat's comments are not recorded!

After outlining briefly the Commission's achievements since that date, Mr. Jenkins invited Lord Clinton to plant the first tree. In all, ten trees were planted, other planters being Mr. Jenkins, Mrs. Roach, Mr. & Mrs. Fulford, Mr. Henry Williamson, Lady Clinton, Mrs. Rouse, Mrs. Penistan and Mrs. Forrester. In these activities, those planting trees were greatly helped by the pupils of the local primary school who had come to watch the proceedings and who were invited to assist.

These proceedings were watched by quite a crowd of people, in perfect weather. Amongst the gathering present were the ten forest workers employed in this Forest, whose average service, the Chairman was interested to be told when he met them, was $21\frac{1}{2}$ years.

The Forest's Years

A low sun glinting through the trees,
The robin singing to the breeze,
Not at all like winters day
With sky so blue, no sign of grey.

All is still no noise or fuss,
The forest waiting for the rush
Of children breathless, hushed to see
The special planting of a tree.

Fifty years to the very day,
Other men had passed th is way,
To plant a tree and to proclaim
That Eggesford would be a name
To be remembered - with pride.

Here today on that same ride,
We watch and wait and sense that pride,
The forest too is quiet, still,
The low sun sinking on the hill,
As we are all remembering
That day so long ago.

Although those fifty years have past,
And men pass on - the forests last,
Trees are planted, trees are cut,
The forest may be changing but
Remains a forest still.

D. M. Bemmer.

CONGRATULATIONS

Hearty congratulations go to the members of the Commision's staff who have been honoured by awards from H.M. The Queen in her New Year's Honours List.

Our Director-General, Dr. J. A. Dickson, has been made a Companion of the Bath (CB). Mr. H. P. Wilbraham, H.Q.(B), becomes a Member of the Order of the British Empire (MBE), and Mr. D. A. Jones, S(W), has been awarded the British Empire Medal (BEM).

Congratulations also to the following on their recent promotion from Head to Chief Foresters:-

Mr. G. Bartlett	of D(R)
R. G. Braine	" SW(E)
J. H. Cooper	" New/SE(E)
D. Duncan	" S(S)
R. Main-Ellen	" E(S)
A. C. W. Evans	" N(W)
K. B. Harvey	" N(S)
N. F. Hindley	" S(S)
E. G. Hollowell	" S(W)
C. J. Lewis	" SW(E)
F. M. McAllan	" N(S)
W. M. McGivern	" S(S)
T. Morris	" War Dept.
J. A. Seaton	" E(S)
J. H. Thomson	" D(R)
R. E. Young	" SW(E)

SALARIES - DECEMBER 1969

It is understood that a number of staff did not receive their December salary cheques on the due date.

Whilst any inconvenience caused thereby is regretted, it is pointed out that all salary cheques were delivered to the main sorting office at Basingstoke Post Office on Wednesday, 24th December. Any subsequent delay was, therefore, beyond the control of staff in Headquarters.

It seems that the delay was due to the extremely high incidence of sickness amongst postal workers following the recent influenza epidemic. In fact, a report in the local newspaper states that there was a shortage of 46 postmen due to the 'flu etc. and that postmen from other nearby towns had to be called in to clear the backlog of mail dating back to the Monday before Christmas.

On the other hand, all cases of need and hardship which came to the notice of Headquarters, either direct or through the usual channels, were dealt with promptly.

NATIONAL SUPERANNUATION PENSIONS

(Many Slasher readers will want to know more about the proposed new schemes, so we asked Mr. N. Batchelor of H.Q.(B) to explain it. His article will be in two parts - the second instalment in our next issue. Ed)

The Government is proposing the most fundamental changes in social security since the present national insurance scheme was introduced soon after the Second World War. It states that the present scheme is clearly inadequate, and in a White Paper published last January they set out their proposals for replacing the present national insurance scheme by a new scheme of national superannuation and social insurance, in which both contributions and benefits will be related to the earnings of the individual employee. The target date for the start of the scheme is April 1972.

It will be appreciated that the purpose of this article is to draw attention to the main points of the new scheme, and its effect on pensions paid by the Forestry Commission. The article relates only to pensions and does not deal with social insurance benefits, e.g. unemployment and sickness benefit, attendance allowance.

Earnings-related pensions under the new scheme will only be available to those who have paid the new contributions, and twenty years of new-scheme contributions will be required before the first pensions at the new-scheme rates are paid, to people reaching pension age then. These full rates will normally be adequate - even for those whose earnings have been relatively low to live on without other means, and contributors who reach pension age during the twenty year build-up period will earn pensions at intermediate rates.

So this means that those who reach pension age after the first year of the scheme will get nineteen-twentieths of the present-scheme rate, plus one-twentieth of the new-scheme rate; those reaching pension age after the second year will get eighteen-twentieths and two-twentieths respectively, and so on until the first fully mature new-scheme pensions are paid to those reaching pension age twenty years after the scheme begins.

The new earnings-related pensions will not be available to those who are pensioners already, or who will go on to pension before the scheme starts, but the Government will be required by law to undertake a review every two years of the main rates of benefits in payment, both under the present scheme, and under the new.

As it is now proposed, the scheme will have the following basic objectives:-

- (1) Rights to benefits must be earned by the payment of contributions.
- (2) Benefits and contributions must be related to the contributor's earnings.
- (3) Benefits must normally be sufficient to live on without other means.
- (4) Benefits must take into account changes both in price levels and in general living standards.
- (5) Women will contribute on the same basis as men and earn similar benefits.
- (6) The scheme will be run on the "pay-as-you-go" principle.
- (7) The State scheme will work in partnership with occupational pension schemes.
- (8) People changing their employment will be legally entitled to have their occupational pension rights preserved.

The present contributions for employed persons are in three parts:

- (1) The flat-rate contribution, which is collected through the stamped card system.
- (2) The contribution for graduated pensions, collected through the PAYE system.
- (3) The contribution for earnings related short-term sickness, unemployment and widowhood benefits, also collected through the PAYE system.

Under the new scheme, these three contributions will all be abolished. So will the present system of stamped cards. Instead, all employees within the PAYE system will pay a single type of contribution, collected through that system. This contribution will be a straight percentage of all their earnings in each year, up to a maximum or 'ceiling' of about $1\frac{1}{2}$ times national average earnings. Current national average earnings are about £24 per week and this ceiling at present would therefore be about £36 per week or £1,900 per annum.

The contribution rate payable by employees will be specified in the legislation to be introduced in the present session of Parliament. The percentage rate will be the same for employed men and women; and, in the same way as for other employees, the new contributions will be compulsory for married women and widows who go out to work, and who come within the PAYE system. The lower earners will pay less than under the present scheme, but most people must expect to pay more for their higher benefit prospects.

(In the second part of his article, Mr. Batchelor explains the new retirement pensions, partial contracting out, etc.)

Forestry Commission
Forester Training Scheme

The Secretary of State for Education and Science announced on the 11th December that a centre to provide education at the supervisory level for forestry students would be established at the Cumberland and Westmorland College of Agriculture and Forestry at Newton Rigg. He said that in view of the small numbers involved only one centre would be required at present to meet the needs of Great Britain.

On the same day The Secretary of State for Scotland said he was inviting the Inverness Education Authority to make permanent provision for craft level courses, and to put plans in hand for a new centre at Inverness Technical College. Existing facilities at the college will be used meantime and the craft courses will replace those temporarily undertaken by the Midlothian Education Authority at Esk Valley College.

No further information is available at present and enquiries about supervisory education should be referred to the Department of Education and Science. Applicants should, however, be advised to seek employment which would give them practical experience in the forest industry.

A further notice will be issued by our Education and Training Branch as soon as full details of the new supervisory education and craft training are available.

NOW IT'S WRAPPED

PACKAGING, as most of us know, is a multi-million Pound or Dollar industry and is largely responsible for encouraging us to buy more, or pay more for our everyday goods than we ought. There was a classic case reported recently, where it turned out that the fancy containers of yoghurt actually cost much more than the contents.

However, packaging does have its uses. It certainly promotes sales, protects the goods, and increases the demand for pulp to a considerable degree.

So it is interesting to note the recent increase in the use of packaging for sawn timber from abroad - particularly from Scandinavia and the Soviet Union.

According to a report in Timber Trades Journal, Nordic timber producers say that, more than anything else, packaging makes it possible to rationalise timber transportation today.

This new development, they say, offers all parties concerned several advantages, such as:

- (i) Handling of timber at ports, yards etc. can be mechanised
- (ii) Loading, and especially unloading of vessels is speeded up
- (iii) Individual handling is decreased
- (iv) Freight costs are lower as transport is accelerated
- (v) Waste and loss are diminished

A new product named "Timwrap" is reviewed in the article, which is made from specially stout fibre-net reinforced paper, which is claimed to be moisture proof and re-usable. Timber is first strapped with steel bands.

On the photographs it all looks very neat and tidy and efficient, but what intrigues us is how they manage to wrap up such huge two, or three-ton parcels so neatly, when most of us have quite a job parcelling up a few odds and ends for Johnnie in Australia.

CHRISTMAS CHEER OF YESTERYEAR

SOME years ago, the festival of Christmas was scarcely noticed in Scotland - although Scots children were not short of presents from kind relatives over the Border and overseas.

My courageous little ant pressed on, with the prize on his back wobbling to and fro, and on looking towards the anthill I noticed a small army of ants marching towards it. I was quite perturbed at this as by now my admiration for the ant's efforts was increasing; it scented the approach of the enemy and turned back towards the rock and disappeared for a while in the scrub round the base.

As I anxiously awaited its reappearance, with one eye on the enemy, it suddenly lurched out from the scrub at a higher point round the rock and started to manoeuvre its way towards the anthill, which seemed to confound the other ants as they did not attempt to climb up after it. I heaved a sigh of relief and continued to watch my little friend's progress; he went on to the base of the anthill, where once more other ants started to approach him, so I threw some crumbs a little way to the other side of them and thus diverted their attention, enabling my little ant to proceed.

It started to climb the anthill and went higher and higher, being attacked on the way by one or two other ants but always managing to side-track them and keep the precious burden intact on its back, until it came to the highest entrance on the anthill, into which it disappeared, doubtless to present its offering to the Queen ant. Never did a Queen have such a loyal and hard-working servant.

This process took over half an hour and I tried to imagine what it would have been like if translated into human terms - it seemed to me to be on a par with Pilgrim's progress! [Have we found another John Stenibeck? Ed.]

FOUR MILLION POLES

NO need to argue about the height of the telephone pole down the street - the pole itself will give the answer. That group of figures cut into the wood at eye-level is its "birth certificate".

The topmost figure is the overall length of the pole in feet: it is usually carved 10 feet from the end that is embedded in the ground. The second figure gives the year in which the pole was proofed against decay: it will have been erected within two or three years of that date.

Whenever possible, telephone cables are laid underground but in many areas this would be too costly. So there are still more than four million GPO poles marching alongside the roads of Britain and occasionally taking a short cut across country - and they will be needed for some time to come.

The first "pole route" - a telegraph line between Slough and Paddington - was put up well over a hundred years ago: the first recorded telegram over this circuit led to the arrest of a murderer. Now, as then, Scots pine is used for the standard pole. Treated with creosote under pressure, it has an average life of 30 years: some poles have been recovered that have stood for well over 80 years.

Most of the poles come from Scandinavia but the Post Office takes as many as it can get from home plantations, and will also accept home-grown European larch or Douglas fir.

It takes a practised eye to select possible poles among standing timber and, to assist owners of woodlands, the Post Office Supplies Department employs Pole Inspectors who are ready to go anywhere at any time.

The Pole Inspector who is called upon to visit a wood does not select standing trees for cutting. But he does give valuable advice on the suitability of trees and on their size, quality, preparation and delivery - on everything, in fact, except price. This service is free and without obligation and a visit by the Pole Inspector often results in a contract to supply the Post Office with British poles.

REPORT FROM "DOWN UNDER"

MR. W. F. Stoddart, writing from New South Wales, says: "I have been quite astounded by the rate of growth for a large variety of tree species in Australia, even the growth of some *Pinus radiata* which I planted as one year seedlings in my back garden slightly more than one year ago, are now 3 feet in height. This set me to thinking about the establishment costs per acre of this species in N. S. W., and I came up with the following information from Commission headquarters in Sydney which might be of interest to my former colleagues at home:

Average spacing:	8' x 8' (680 per acre)
Cost of establishment:	80 - 100 dollars per acre (£37-£46)
Age & height of first thinngs:	15 years and 60'
Mean annual increment:	250 cu. ft. per acre on average sites.
Stems removed in the first thinning:	Thinning is controlled by basal area. First thinning to 90 sq.ft. leaving about 200 stems. 900 cu.ft per acre.
Saleable value of first thinnings:	25-35 dollars per acre as pulpwood. £12 - £17.
Intervals of second and subsequent thinnings:	5 year intervals.
Number of stems left at final crop stage:	40
Rotation for conifers in N.S.W:	50 years at present
Anticipated total return in volume and cash per acre at the end of rotation:	12,500 cu.ft., worth about 1300 dollars (£610), spread over the period 15-50 years.
High pruning of conifers:	Is done at about 11 years, and the height to which high pruning is done is one stage to 16'. The number of trees per acre high pruned is 120.
Markets supplied:	First and second thinnings produce pulpwood for particle board, hardboard etc. Subsequent fellings supply sawlogs and a few posts and poles are supplied for pressure treatment."

Mr. Stoddart ends by sending greetings to all his former colleagues of the Commission.

NOTES ON THE GNOULE

CONTRIBUTOR Mr. H. F. Clarke writes:

"That "Lion" at Cannock Chase came up in conversation the other day and I wondered - can the following be an explanation? It came to my notice recently when browsing through an old natural history magazine which had culled the article from a

publication of 1702. The article is entitled "Some Notes on the Characteristics and Habits of the Gnoule": at least this is what Mr. Clarke would have us believe!

The writer, being dismayed at the lack of interest shown by his fellow naturalists, in what he considers to be one of our most interesting mammals, hereby seeks to repair the omission, having sought in vain for any treatise on this beast from time past. Anyway, here is the result of his "Research".

"The GNOULE (Rumpus rumpus) is a beast of the forest, as so many of them are. It grows to the height of a man's paillet*; the colouring is of a greyish brown, being overlaid with black hairs, and it is the preponderance of these black hairs which determine whether this interesting mammal is a "black un" or a "natural". (The writer does not enjoin the current substitution of a term elsewhere used to describe illegitimate offspring.)

The male is properly called a "Grop" and the female a "Nudder", whilst the young may be known as a 'Chew'. After the first year the male Gnoule is called a 'Grop chew' then progressively a 'Peet', a 'Ray Peet', a 'Narl Peet' until, at 5 years and thereafter, it is called a 'Gummet Grop'.

This interesting mammal feeds mainly on soft herbage, though the nudder, in late age, likes to suck eggs. The chung is brown, oviform, and opicola (tasselled) and is clearly distinguished from the puny fewmets of Dama dama. The sound it makes may be likened to EKE and it is curious to note that in the mating season, which is properly called the 'Trug', the cry is emitted in a reverse fashion, EKE.

The trug is ridiculously short, poor things, being confined to Easter week. The mystery of how these interesting mammals can tell when Easter falls remains for solving. One exceedingly interesting theorem is hardly tenable since it is based on no established fact. The period of gestation is 149 days, which accounts for the beast having short legs.

It is fortunate that the Gnoule is one of our protected herborivae and the close season is from the first day of April until the last day of March. A licence to kill can be got only from the Master Vergerer at Old Pennywick House in Rootlebury Green, RU 1 BF during the period 'Lammas-come-a-fortnight'. It is prayed that this grievous arrangement may soon be amended and a bill is even now being sat on in the Parliament.

The Gnoule does not go a great distance on its own, being observed to have a limit of some 100 roods in one direction. This interesting mammal is better studied from a pit, which should be below ground level and of which several are excellently wrought, being for one person or for two persons or a large one, (greatly esteemed) for mixed parties up to six in number.

It is prayed that this short account will redden the faces of those black-hearted scoundrels who ruthlessly ignore this noble beast and rout it out and do it a mischief."

- * This dates the article fairly accurately; a paillet was a kind of surcingle worn across the lower breast.
(Tewk. Forms and Mannerisms of 17th cent. Costume)

WELL, FANCY, THAT NOW!

READERS with an enthusiasm for entomology will be interested to hear of the finding in Deuorzeth Forest of a large hover fly hitherto unrecorded in Great Britain,

writes Forester R. T. Jones of Ffestiniog, Merioneth. The fly, *Eriozona Syrphoides* is a 'first' in both genus and species in these islands.

In volume 81 of 'The Entomologist's Record', the finder, Mr. Peter Crow writes:

....."I was busy looking for lepidopthous larvae and my attention was caught by this fly, which was sitting on a flower of the Devil's Bit Scabious about twenty yards away. Something told me I must not miss this from the way it was sitting on the flower, and fortunately I netted it in spite of my intense excitement."

A genial figure of considerable energy, the well-known entomologist, Mr. Crow, now intends to work on the syrphids' life history which is unknown. "Meanwhile", he writes "who knows what good fortune awaits me in the glorious Merioneth countryside, so completely untapped seriously by entomologists."

For the entomologist's record, Mr. C. O. Hammond has produced a fine line drawing of this fly.

VULTURE ... OVER DOVER

ALTHOUGH the entymologists who discovered a hover fly in Wales (Preceding item) may well have every reason to be excited, can you imagine the consternation of the simple peasants of England's south coast who saw a magnificent wild American Black Vulture eyeing them stonily from the topmost branches of a tall beech tree.

For this did happen last August, when the vulture was first spotted near Sandwich Bay, in Kent, and then flew off to settle further southwards in a more secluded area of the Downs, just north of Dover.

This is believed to be the first time that a vulture has ever been seen in Europe, but ornithologists who positively identified it say there is no reason why a vulture should not arrive here from America, as other far smaller and less powerful American birds (feathered variety) have crossed the Atlantic on the strong westerlies at the end of August.

"DO IT YOURSELF"

FOR many years, and we wonder how long it will last, everyone has given thought to having a hedge against inflation. So have you thought about a "Do It Yourself" Heirloom?

This occurred to Mr. Alan Freeth, Head Forester at S.E. England Conservancy, about 3 years ago when, at the Horsham Evening Institute he began classes in hammered silverware. Almost 200 hours of painstaking work later, and using 37 ozs. troy of silver, he had designed and made a very elegant four-piece tea service - tea pot, milk jug, sugar basin and tongs, all duly hallmarked.

For this splendid effort he has obtained an award of £5 from the Civil Service Council for Further Education. Together with thirty-one other prize winners from other civil service departments, he was presented with the award on December 11th by Mr. Donald Grattan, Director of Education Programmes, B.B.C. T.V.

Good for you, Alan!

IT'S A 'JAM LABEL' WORLD

MANY Slasher readers who have from time to time attended seminars, courses, exhibitions, conferences and the like, must have thought - as have I - how ridiculous people look drifting about, all bearing their names on tags or badges of various shapes and sizes.

There is something of a hint of "Convict" about the habit, or alternatively, that of a bunch of latter-day evacuee children who must be clearly labelled ere they get lost - or worse!

A contributor to New Scientist also feels this way and says that the growing compulsion to treat human beings like jam jars and plaster them with labels ranks high amongst the more grievous infections which have drifted across the Atlantic. He points out how it is now becoming increasingly difficult to attend any gathering of more than two people without having to suffer the indignity of wearing a badge of sorts displaying one's name, rank and place of employment to the world at large. ".... previously only Cain, criminals, military deserters and little doggies were so publicly marked with personal details," he says.

"To one bred through centuries of insularity and silence in railway carriages, the exhibition of such a 'jam label' represents a self-inflicted invasion of privacy, and such crude self-advertisement can do nothing but eventual harm to the egos of men (and women) conditioned to feel it unthinkable to speak to another biped before being formally introduced."

The writer suggests a British Association for the Abolition of Lapel Badges at conferences should be started. Alternatively, lightning strikes should be staged when on an agreed signal, all would slip off their identity discs and toss them into ashtrays - what enjoyable general confusion would follow if delegates changed over badges with each other in random sequence every half hour!

Inscription on the collar of Frederick, Prince of Wales' canine read "I am His Highness's dog at Kew. Pray tell me, Sir, whose dog are you?"

LEGION ENTRANGER

MR. M. J. Penistan, Assistant Conservator
S.W.(E), writes:

"My Commission tie is twenty, yes, twenty years old. It is nicely weathered but still recognisable among friends when it is brought out on special occasions. It has been worn with pride in quite a few countries, and recognised in the Commonwealth where it is also worn by members of the Commonwealth Forestry Association.

Occasionally, it can lead to embarrassment; I have not been a member of the Brigade of Guards. In South West Ireland the colours are those of the I.R.A., as I have been told by one or two bartenders who approved of it. Its most glamorous possibility was revealed at the Bush Exhibition when a French friend asked me when I had served in the Foreign Legion.

Visitors of military age to French overseas possessions be warned.

Editor's note:- New ties of correct colours - and therefore less subject to mis-recognition - may be obtained from the Purchasing Officer at Basingstoke for 12/6d. each - cash with order.

DEER CAN BE DEAR

ONE of our N.W.(E) Correspondents writes that as foresters become increasingly aware of the potential, both social and financial, involved in the multiple use of our land assets, it may be of interest for readers to note the value in terms of cash which accrued to the Commission, through the exercising of four permits to shoot deer.

These permits were used at Grizedale Forest, and brought in total receipts of £720 for the stalking of 5 red stags. The receipts were made up as follows, and include stalking fees.

Permit 1.

Cull Stag (switch)	-	£34. 10. 0.
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Permit 2.

15 Pt. Trophy)	-	£283. 0. 0.
9 Pt. Cull)		

Permit 3.

10 Pt. Stag	-	£75. 0. 0.
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Permit 4.

10 Pt. Stag	-	£85. 0. 0.
		£477. 10. 0.

In addition, receipts from venison from these beasts amounted to £242. 14. 0., making a total income of £720. 4. 0. The permits were issued as part of the management plan, and indicate the vast potential which has only to be organised and harnessed to play its full part in the much wider use of our forests in the future.

GAINS FOR RESERVES

THE Nature Conservancy has announced additions to three National nature reserves in Northumberland, Durham and Cheshire, and the relinquishment of a small part of another reserve in Westmorland.

Upper Teesdale reserve in County Durham has been increased by more than two thousand acres, making a total area of nearly 8,600 acres.

In Northumberland, two areas on Holy Island amounting to 350 acres have been added to the Lindisgarne reserve, bringing the total up to 8,718 acres, and a further 51 acres have been added to the Rosthorne Mere reserve in Cheshire, making it 378 acres in all.

Forty-four acres of riverside alluvium and drift on the Moor House reserve in Westmorland were required for the Cow Green Reservoir, but the reserve is still left with nearly ten thousand acres.

There are now 128 National Nature Reserves amounting to 265,101 acres.

GAME CONSERVANCY RESEARCHER

THE Game Conservancy, recently formed as the result of a merger between the Game Research Association and the Eley Game Advisory Station, has appointed Mr. T. H. Blank, B.Sc., to the post of Assistant Director (Research).

Terence Blank, who studied under Professor Harvey at Exeter University from 1933-36, and has had wide experience in the field of gamebird biology, joined the staff of the I.C.I. Game Research Station as a Research Biologist in 1948. For

eleven years his work was mainly concerned with wild partridges, and his methods of marking individual birds and censusing gamebird populations over large areas are now used by game biologists on many other species throughout the world. More recently, he has been involved with the acclimatisation problems of released pheasants and partridges.

TREE LOVERS OF TOOTING BEC

ON a cold and wet morning last month, a few hundred children, whose ages ranged from about five to twelve, lined up on Tooting Bec Common to plant a selection of fourteen different types of tree, as their own little part in keeping London green, and providing lasting pleasure to a large number of local residents for many years to come.

All were pupils of the Henry Cavendish Junior School, under the care of their headmaster, Mr. L. R. Saunders, who was anxious that his "kids" should have all the credit for the enterprise.

Although ably assisted by the Parks Department of the G.L.C. and others, it was very much their own effort. Not only did they plant fourteen trees, but clearly they had done a lot of 'homework' because the school corridors were festooned with all sorts of informative displays about trees, conservation, fire prevention and the like, and in addition they had published a 24-page foolscap size brochure to mark the occasion, packed with botanical details about the trees they planted.

We were intrigued by one item the children had 'lifted' from the magazine "Drive", about the oak tree:

- It can grow 125 ft. high, 40 ft. in girth, sink its roots 15 ft. deep and weigh 100 tons. It is worth £50 to £250 before felling.

- It drinks 100 gallons of water a day.

It has 200,000 leaves and grows 10,000 acorns a year.

- It is home for 500 species of insects.

- It provides nests for 20 species of birds.

- It is disappearing from the countryside at the rate of 100,000 trees a year!!

JOIN THE "TT" SET

TOWARDS the end of the summer readers may have noticed a considerable amount of correspondence, news items and articles in the Press (particularly in Scotland) on the subject of the rapidly increasing numbers of caravans which are said to be causing much delay and congestion, particularly on the narrower or secondary roads in areas of scenic beauty.

Personal experience leads us to believe this situation does exist, and as more people are turning again towards holidaying in this country instead of in Europe, it is bound to increase. Neither can folks be blamed for turning to camping instead of hotel holidays; the present high cost of hotel or boarding house accommodation for a family man with wife and two or three children, may easily present a hotel bill for a fortnight of £100 or more. This outlay could be about quartered by caravanning.

However, what may help the individual caravaner only serves to increase congestion on the roads, and there is something to be said for the opinion that the overall size of trailer caravans should be curtailed.

Unless we all want to change over to tents - and we can't see 'granny' going much on that - the only compromise solution is the fairly recently evolved trailer-tent, which is a happy and ingenious hybrid of tent and caravan. These come in a variety of shapes and sizes, ranging in price from roughly £120 to £400, depending on whether one purchases a D.I.Y. kit or a completely assembled unit beautifully fitted with four or more bunks, fluorescent lighting and even the kitchen sink.

Among the obvious advantages of trailer-tents is that they are comparatively small, light to tow, and easily manhandled either on the camp site or at an awkward situation on the road. The average (once a year) caravaners' nightmare is that they'll find themselves in the position of having to perform a tricky reversing manoeuvre on the highway, or in trying to park in a city. With the "TT", one simply has quickly to unhitch and manhandle if one gets into that awful jack-knife position.

Other assets are that it is of low height, thus giving full rear visibility: plenty of extra gear can be stowed in most of them, and they are easily and quickly erected once you get the hang of it. They are (or claim to be) both watertight and warm, and certainly with the tent extension sections and canopies available, they are much roomier than the average caravan, although without certain refinements such as wardrobes and fitted toilets. Another good point is that, come the winter, you can store the "TT" in your garage either on end or on its side, and it takes up little room.

MITCHAM CARDBOARDS NEW LABORATORY

A new technical services laboratory has been officially opened by Mitcham

Cardboards Ltd., - a subsidiary of Thames Board Mills Ltd., - at their Croydon factory.

Speaking to senior technical personnel representing major converters of Mitcham board at the pre-opening luncheon, Dr. S. W. Kingsnorth, Technical Director, Thames Board Mills, referred to the uniformity of testing that the new laboratory would ensure. "By using the added facilities objectively and enthusiastically", he said, "higher quality standards would be assured for the future".

The new laboratory embraces quality control and the complete testing for delivery of satisfactory material. The formation of a strong technical liaison with converters is sought by the firm to ensure that the tests they are making on products and materials are uniform with, or at least comparable to, the tests being made by converters.

APPOINTMENTS

The following appointments have been made to the Board of Directors of Mitcham Cardboards Ltd: Mr. Peter L. Herring, Director with special responsibilities; Mr. C. J. Norris, Sales and Marketing Director.

Mr. Herring was previously Sales Manager, Special Converters, for Thames Board Mills. An economics graduate of Southampton University, Mr. Herring held commercial appointments at Thames Board Mills before joining the sales and marketing organisation.

Mr. Norris was previously Sales and Marketing Manager of Mitcham Cardboards. A science graduate of London University, he was Machine Sales Manager at Tetrapack (London) Ltd. before joining Mitcham Cardboards, and had previously been Technical Officer at British Visqueen Ltd.

"SKULPTURED" TIMBER

READERS who may be contemplating decorating their lounge or "Den" with real timber (as though you would use anything else!) may be interested by a report in

Timber Trades Journal of November 22nd 1969 which describes an entirely new line called "Skulptured" timber, which comes from New Zealand.

The strange effects which the climate of New Zealand have upon the locally-produced Douglas Fir timber has produced (almost "by accident" according to the report) attractive decorative planks.

Cut from trees in the exotic forest regions of New Zealand's "thermal wonderland", the trees are given special additional processing which, at least from the illustrations, serve to deep etch or highly accentuate the natural graining of the wood.

Any form of side illumination, as would be obtained from a standard type lamp, serves to increase the relief even further with dramatically beautiful effect.

The firm handling this product in the U.K. is Alvin Morris Ltd., of Leeds.

NEW AIDS TO METRICATION

AS timber from 1st April 1970 will be sold in Britain in metric measure, the Timber Research and Development Association has undertaken the production of various 'aids' to familiarise designers, specifiers, builders and the general public with the new timber metric sizes.

TRADA has now produced a coloured poster (size 952 mm x 635 mm) illustrating the new range of metric lengths for softwood timber. These will begin at 1.8 m and will rise by increments of 300 mm.

The main aim of the poster is to show that the new metric lengths will be shorter than the existing ones in feet by a constant factor of 1.6%: thus 1.8 m will equal 5ft 10 $\frac{1}{2}$ in, and not 6ft; and 4.8 m will equal 15ft 9in, and not 16ft.

The poster - which has been produced in collaboration with Educational Production Ltd. - is printed on heavy quality paper. It is available from the Timber Research and Development Association, Hughenden Valley, High Wycombe, Bucks, at 5s each, or £1/10s/0d for ten, or £6/5s/0d for fifty (all inclusive of postage and packing in the UK).

FASKALLY STUDENTS FIRST & THIRD

THE firm of Chain Saws Scotland Ltd., of Perth sponsored an open tree felling, snedding and cross-cutting competition for professional timber cutters and contractors in Perthshire on Saturday 29th November, and among the 33 entries were five Faskally students.

Results were:- FIRST: Senior Student Mike Blackith with a score of 169 points out 200, (13 points above his nearest rival).

THIRD place was taken by Junior Student John Cox, with 151 points.

Mike received a new Chain Saw worth £100, a cup which he keeps, and a shield which he holds for a year. John received saw equipment to the value of £20.

OUR ROOTS ARE OUR BRANCHES

A young friend remarked to us "You Forestry Commission people must be spending a fortune in all these advertising films on at the cinema these days". "Which advertising films?" we asked. "The ones showing the men in the trees and the slogan "Our Roots are our Branches", he replied.

The only excuse we could think of as to why he had apparently failed to notice that this particular short advertising film is part of a publicity campaign by the Westminster Bank, is that this young man has an extremely attractive girl friend.

So perhaps he was otherwise engaged and didn't get the full message from the screen. Pity - now he won't know where to invest his four and ninepence!

TO MAKE A HEADLINE

A bold, double-banked headline across five columns of a London evening newspaper proclaimed "If Christmas makes you cry, then throw away your tree."

The introduction to the article on the Science Scene said that people who got watering eyes, a running nose, wheezing and skin rashes, could well be suffering from "Christmas tree allergy".

This appeared three days after a Press facility visit jointly organised by the Commission and the Timber Growers' Organisation, with the object of promoting the sale of natural Christmas trees. As a great many people are too rushed to read all of an article, and absorb their "news" by scanning the headlines and perhaps the introductory paragraph, this was indeed hurtful.

But if we go on to read the small type we discover that it is all only a theory, and the doctor who propounds it (from one of America's lesser-known universities) selected sixteen known allergy-prone patients-people who were allergic to a variety of substances such as house dust, moulds etc.- and exposed them to a mixture of needle scrapings of various types of 'Christmas' trees and found that twelve of them reacted to this also. The trees included white and red pine, Australian pine and juniper.

So what? He may quite easily have got the same result by exposing his patients to powdered Christmas pudding - or Thanksgiving turkey.

DID YOU KNOW?

THAT among the many wonderful products which spray out of aerosol cans is one which, in an emergency, is claimed to give motor tyres up to three times the grip on snow and ice of untreated tyres.

One application of Delco General "Liquid Tyre Chain" will last for quite a few miles, and a 12/6d. aerosol pack will treat your car tyres three or four times. Could be a handy tip for you motorists this winter.

PRE-HISTORIC HARVEST

A Lincolnshire farmer is 'harvesting' an unusual and difficult crop from his 60-acre holding at Bourne, and when it is all in, he is going to pile it in a heap and burn it!

For his 'harvest' is bog oak and pine, which is believed to be the remains of a forest which existed there some ten to twenty thousand years ago, and which is thought to have been blown down by gales. Peat built up after floods, and buried them. With oxidation and blowing, the peats are now shrinking, bringing the oaks nearer the soil surface.

Farmer Brian Watts said that he expected to find the odd bog oak on fen peat, "... but on one 12-acre field I have dug out several hundred over my 13-year tenancy", he said. So numerous were these ancient tree remains, that it took him more than a week to plough one acre.

Recently Mr. Watts took over an additional 11 acres of black fen from the local council, and found that the bog oak problem on this lot was even worse than before. So he's been granted six months free of rent to give him time to clear it.

With a massive ripping tine mounted on a 132 HP tractor, he hopes to clear the newly acquired acres in one go. "At 6 ft. intervals, the oaks come out of the ground like matches" said Mr. Watts.

TOP BRASS SAND PIT

IT has been said that the well-adjusted American business executive is the one whose intake of pep pills overbalances his consumption of tranquilisers by just enough to leave him with sufficient energy to go for his weekly visit to his psychiatrist.

Now hope comes from Canada which may mean that the tense executive will soon be able to dispense with his weekly lie on the psychiatrist's couch and untie the knots in his neuroses without leaving his office.

The new boon to the human race comes in the form of a sandpit, fifteen inches high and three and a half feet square - being marketed in America by Opus International of Toronto - costing about £200 and described as ".... creative pieces of furniture, and an excellent pacifier".

Such an obviously essential fitting for the executive suite could well take its place beside the nervous tic and the key to the top - brass loo as an external status symbol of success.

Although one can easily visualise the great benefits to be derived from one or two of these strategically situated in "You-know-whose" offices at Savile Row and Priestley Road - especially as there should be no shortage of seedlings with which to play at creating vast new forests - as yet, there is no indication that any have been ordered.

It is believed that £200 is too expensive, and that Alice Holt may be asked to produce a few locally.

AN APPRECIATION

MR. A. D. HOPKINSON

FORTY-EIGHT years ago this month, very soon after the end of the Kaiser War,

Major Hopkinson interviewed a young and not very large candidate for the post of Foreman in the Forestry Commission's new forest of Glenbranter. His amused but encouraging smile when the candidate, with the conceit and inexperience of youth, claimed to be unafraid of controlling a squad of navvies from Clydeside, won a recruit, inspired by the knowledge that he had acquired a truly great chief.

Throughout his life in the Service the inspiration of his leadership continued. "Hoppers" as he came to be called in North-east England, struck his staff as a big man, not only physically but mentally. He had a strict code of honour and one felt it would not have been possible for him to do anything which was not absolutely straight.

He always spoke his mind and seemed to relish a battle with headquarters, especially if he detected any suspicion of foolishness in bureaucratic control, or of badly misinformed superiors. He was undoubtedly a bit of a rebel and, as in the case of other famous characters in the Commission's history, it was better to serve under rather than over him.

Early days spent with him on the hill, a strong kilted figure laying out rides and roads and even drains, stand out in the memory; so does the sound of his bagpipes coming from the larch-wood of an evening. It was the "Geddes Axe" which packed him off to England, but though his heart was in Scotland he was unable to return until his retirement some twenty years ago. Nevertheless, he did reign over the north of England for many years, and made his mark by insisting upon standards which neither he nor his employers should ever have cause to be ashamed.

Instructions to his men were always definite and clear, and he expected them to be carried out to the letter. But he was always absolutely fair - a job well done did not necessarily earn much praise because he expected it to be well done. But if something was wrong he could, and did, administer a rocket which left no one in doubt about his displeasure.

A true countryman at heart he was never happier than when he was able to get away with his tent and explore every corner of a forest or of a prospective acquisition. Few Conservators (Divisional Officers) in the thirties knew their forests with the same intimacy, or knew and loved the wild life and especially the birds so well.

When war broke out in '39 his detailed plans for Timber Supply were ready, and so well thought out that their execution was a model of efficiency. However, he himself was soon back in the forestry side and took charge both in the Forest of Dean and finally in East Anglia.

Eventually, a long and happy retirement followed in a delightful home overlooking the Solway with a famous garden containing many shrubs which are difficult to establish in more rigorous climates. On an extension to the garden he took pains to establish an orchard and saw many eucalyptus thrive.

He and his wife, whom he married in his Chopwell wood days, were keen members of the Royal Scottish Forestry Society, and on one excursion to The Bannan only a few years ago, both he and Sir James Hunter Blair, who had been his District Officer when the first plantings were made in the early twenties, inspected their handiwork - Douglas Fir and Spruces over eighty feet high. To mark the occasion Mrs. Hopkinson opened a new bridge.

Only fairly recently they attended, and indeed enjoyed, the Commission's jubilee celebrations at Dumfries - that was his last forestry outing. Sympathies of all good foresters go out to the wonderful companion of a great colleague.

EDITOR'S NOTE: This appreciation was not to hand in time for the last issue, but we felt it should appear in this one, in addition to the obituary notice which appeared in the Oct/Nov. "SLASHER"

RETIREMENTS

MR. D. F. M. MURRAY, B.E.M.

DAN Murray (N(S)) retired at the end of November and at the annual Civil

Engineering meeting in Inverness received a presentation (two tankards, slide case and cash) from the Conservancy Civil Engineer, Mr. P. Malcolmson, on behalf of the Conservator and staff.

Dan completed more than twenty two years of government service, having been with the Department of Agriculture & Fisheries for Scotland before joining the Commission at Torlundy to carry out roadworks in the Fort William area. During his

service with D.A.F.S. he was awarded the B.E.M. in recognition of the emergency restoration and improvement works he completed in the Moray flood area.

Being a man of many interests, especially horticulture in which he is a regular prizewinner, it is certain that he will continue to lead a very active life. All of his colleagues wish him a long and happy future.

MR. JACK LEGG

A Ranger, very well known by name wherever squirrel control is a problem, and much respected by many foresters in the South of England, retired recently at Queen Elizabeth Forest, S.E.(E) Conservancy. Jack Legg spent 29 years with the Forestry Commission after many years as gamekeeper with the Bonham-Carter estate at Buriton.

His keen observation of squirrel behaviour in the early post-war years led to his development of methods of squirrel control and the design of cage traps, which are used wherever squirrel control is carried out. His original work was an outstanding contribution to forestry.

His colleagues paid tribute to him and to John Cronin, who had served for 37 years at Queen Elizabeth Forest, when they were presented with a cigarette box and clock respectively, by K. W. Wilson, District Officer, West Sussex.

OBITUARIES

MR. A. S. MACNAIR

ALISDAIR MacNair died on November 13th at the early age of 38, after a long illness which he had borne with great fortitude. Graduating from Edinburgh University in 1952, where he gained a Rugger Blue, he went into the R.A.F. for National Service and in 1954 he was posted to the West (Scotland) Conservancy of the Forestry Commission.

After training spells in Kintyre and at Stirling, he took over the important Aberfoyle district in 1958 and quickly made a name for himself as an excellent manager and silviculturist. He was promoted to Grade 1 District Officer in 1960 when he was only 29, and it was clear that he had a most promising future.

Alisdair was a farmer's son and he had a wonderful eye for nature. He got to know his district and all the foresters and workers within it exceptionally well. A big man, fair and direct in all his dealings, he was greatly respected.

It was thus a widely felt tragedy when in 1965 he contracted the disease which finally killed him. His courage in trying to overcome the effects of the two major operations he underwent, were beyond most people's experience.

He leaves behind his wife Isobel, who had nursed him with great devotion during his illness, and three young children. An irreparable loss. A large number of colleagues and friends attended the cremation at Glasgow Crematorium (Maryhill) on the 17th November, 1969.

The undermentioned Non-Industrial Staff changes have been notified during the month of November, 1969.

NEW APPOINTMENTS

Name	Grade	Location	Remarks
Ashton, C. J.	T/AEO	D(R)	

TERMINATIONS

Watt, A.	Commissioner	H.Q.(L)	Retirement
Murray, D. F. M.	Supt. of Works (Tech. Wks. III)	Fort William N(S)	Medical Retirement
Powell, A.	Head Forester	Gwydyr F.T.S. H.Q.(E & T)	Secondment to Esk Valley College
Dewey, P. R.	Forester	S(W)	Voluntary Service Overseas

It is with regret that we record the death of the following Officer:-

MacNair, A. S.	D(F)O I	Aberfoyle W(S)	
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TRANSFERS

Name	Grade	Old	New
Forrest, G.	Works Group Directing (Senior Officer - Scotland)	H.Q.(Edin.)	Bristol SW(E) Reversion to Asst. Cons. (E) upon dis-establishment
Stewart, G. G.	Conservator	Glasgow W(S)	H.Q.(L) On promotion to Commissioner (F.M.)
Jones, E.	D(F)O I	Llandoverly S(W)	Ruthin N(W)
McGillison, A.	D(F)O I	Fort William N(S)	Glasgow W(S) On promotion to Asst. Cons. (Forest)
Ogilvie, J. Y.	D(F)O I	Inverness N(S)	Fort William N(S)
Smith, W. A. Lindsay-	D(F)O I	Oswestry N(W)	H.Q.(B) (Est.Man.)
White, A. H. H.	D(E)O I	Bristol SW(E)	Chester NW(E) End of temporary promotion
Muddle, W. J.	Tech. Wks. Grade I (Mech.)	Mile End H.Q.(O/S)	H.Q.(B) (Eng) On promotion to Tech. Wks. Grade 'B' (Mech.)
Farrelly, F.	Head Forester	Clwyd N(W)	Coed-y-Brenin N(W)
Laird, D. M.	Head Forester	Achnashellach N(S)	Naver N(S)
Wheeler, R. T.	Head Forester	Gwydyr F.T.S. H.Q.(TTS)	Coed-y-Brenin N(W)
Hytch, F. A. L.	Forester	Kerry N(W)	Clwyd N(W)
Mackell, N.	Forester	Bush D(R)	Lairg D(R)
Ratcliffe, S. R.	Forester	Minard W(S)	Alice Holt D(R)
Rodgers, M.	Forester	Tulliallan D(R)	Drumtechtly D(R)
Searson, K. N.	Forester	Gwydyr N(W)	Lleyn N(W)
Turner, A. S.	Forester	Glenbranter H.Q.(TTS)	Ae H.Q.(TTS)
McSorley, J. F.	E.O.	E(E)	H.Q.(Edin.) (Audit)
Bell, R. J.	E.O.	H.Q.(Edin.) (A&D)	H.Q.(Edin.) (Audit) on promotion to H.E.O.