

No. 265

December 1970/February 1971

FIVE NEW YEAR HONOURS

Congratulations to those who received awards in the New Year Honours List:

- O.B.E. Mr. Hamish Maxwell, lately Conservator N(S)
M.B.E. Mr. Leonard Morgan, Chief Forester, Cannock, NW(E)
B.E.M. Mr. Kenneth Clark, Head Ranger at Ae, S(S)
Mr. John Jones, tractor driver, N(W)
Mr. Douglas McRobert, tractor driver, N(W)

Mr. John Jones and Mr. Douglas McRobert were rewarded jointly for their very praiseworthy and dangerous task in clearing a large quantity of high explosive missiles which had accumulated from more than 50 years of use on Trawsfynydd, which was formerly an Army firing range.

There being no complete records of the target areas used, clearance had to be by visual search only, and Mr. Jones and Mr. McRobert performed the majority of this operation at considerable personal risk.

During ploughing they turned up, in an 800-acre area, some 900 live missiles and about 20 tons of dead shells. They also dug 3,000 chains of drains whilst working under this constant strain.

VICTORIA MEDAL OF HONOUR AWARD TO MR. ALAN MITCHELL (Silviculturist in Research at Alice Holt)

This award is one of the most distinguished in the horticultural field, and the award to Alan Mitchell is an outstanding honour both to him and to the Commission.

The V.M.H. was established by the Horticultural Society in 1897 by consent of Queen Victoria to enable the Council to confer conspicuous honour on deserving British horticulturists resident in the United Kingdom. Originally, the number of holders was confined to 60, to commemorate the number of years of the Queen's reign. The number was later increased to 63 - her full number of years as Sovereign.

Alan Mitchell has served at Alice Holt since 1952, when he joined the Genetics Section; he transferred in 1963 to the Silviculture Section wherein he has been responsible for research on species and provenance selection, management and development in the Commission's major arboreta at Westonbirt and Bedgebury and, latterly, for work on trees for landscaping and amenity planting. He is a leading authority as a tree taxonomist and arboriculturist, writing regularly in technical journals and the Press on trees and Natural History subjects.

A major Commission Bulletin of his in the form of a "Handbook of Conifers in the British Isles" is in course of production, and he is publishing his first book "A Field Guide to Trees of Northern Europe" in February.

We offer him our congratulations on behalf of all our readers.

BRITISH JUNIOR SKI CHAMPION

Alan Stewart (15), son of Mr. G.G. Stewart, Commissioner for Forest and Estate Management, is the new British Junior Ski Champion as a result of his performance at Brand, Austria, early in January, when he won his event with two first-class runs for a total time of 67.24 seconds - one second ahead of his nearest rival, Stuart FitzSimmons of Edinburgh.

A member of the Glencoe Ski Club, Alan wore his first pair of skis at the age of 3 on a golf course near Edinburgh, being encouraged by his father, who is also a keen skier "but not nearly as good as Alan", he says. From the age of 9 onwards, Alan was skiing regularly and seriously, and has won many cups and trophies.

Last year he was runner-up in the British Junior Ski championships at Aviemore, and did well to come 15th in the Scottish Open championships. Alan's holidays last summer were spent in the French Alps, where he trained with the British Men's Skiing team, and he is now a member of the "Espoir" (up and coming) section of the British team.

Skiing is Alan's first love, but he is also keen on badminton, and has won the Junior Gymnastics prize at Kelvinside Academy, Glasgow, for the last two years. A special gift from his mother for winning his latest laurels was a new badminton racquet.

CHRISTMAS TREE SALES

A considerable amount of effort has gone into promoting our sales of Christmas trees over the past year or two, and the drift of buyers to the "perpetual plastic" variety would have been much greater but for the combined publicity efforts of the Commission and private growers' organisations.

In an effort to counteract the needle-drop of natural Christmas trees - which has undoubtedly put many housewives off them - the Commission has been experimenting with various methods of inhibiting needle-drop and during the weeks leading up to Christmas, some of our forest sales points were selling trees specially dipped in an alginate solution. This experiment received widespread Press publicity.

From post-sales reports sent in by SE(E) Conservancy, which had a very well-organised sales point near Ringwood, it appears that over 90% of buyers were well satisfied with their dipped tree, and enthusiastic about the new process.

The Ringwood sales point had an effective polythene packing machine on the spot, and supplied free printed hints on how to get the best out of a real tree. Also on sale was a large supply of assorted fir cones and small pieces of roundwood suitably cut and bored to fit a candle, so that customers could easily make up an attractive table centrepiece.

Finally, all visitors were asked to complete a simple questionnaire which included the following items:-

- 1) Were you completely satisfied with the appearance of the tree throughout the Christmas period?

- 2) Was needle-fall acceptable?
- 3) Was the tree in a centrally-heated room?
- 4) Did you take any of the other measures recommended for preserving Christmas trees (e.g. standing the butt in damp sand or gravel)?
- 5) Any other comments or suggestions?

BEWARE OF IMITATIONS

Mr. R.J. Hurst, D.F.O. Aberfoyle, wrote:-

"You must make more sales", said Tom Robbie, Assistant Conservator H. & M. W(S) after a disappointing response from the trade to his adverts for real Christmas trees. "Have you seen what they can do at Delamere?". As it so happens I had, so with the clearance of the January 1968 gale damage coming to an end we decided to have a go. The David Marshall Lodge car parks are little used in the winter, and Aberfoyle is about as far from Glasgow as Delamere is from Manchester.

"Following Delamere is not easy despite our advance planning; they must be the masters of the retail trade. We thought of car parking, corrals or bays to keep foliage out of the mud, measuring rods, cash desks, string, staff rotas for weekend duties, etc.etc. That is easy, but what about -

- issuing hundreds of receipts quickly to keep queues to a minimum; their cars are occupying valuable car parking space
- access to change at weekends in large quantities; even kids have only 'quids' these days
- night-safe facilities at the local bank (ever hopeful)
- numerous signs showing the way in; only one facing them on the way out saying "Now tell your friends"
- tell the local Tourist Board so that the family can have full service on their day out
- tell the police; it saves embarrassing the customer when stopped.

"When you have overcome those, you are then left with the same feeling as the guy who took his harp to a party but no one asked him to play! No one knows you even exist publicity! Every newspaper, radio, television grab anything that is going, however much you may cringe when gazing at yourself on the box later, thinking, "Did I make those idiotic statements", or 'maybe I do need a toupee'. We did the big tree for George Square, Glasgow, this year and (ever the opportunist) sent a notice with it "Tree from the Queen Elizabeth Forest Park, Aberfoyle", in the hope that visitors would want a smaller edition - well it works with the Eiffel Tower.

"Then they arrive: mum, dad, three kids, a push chair, the dog and grand-dad. The kids scream, the dogs fight, everyone of a thousand trees is turned over and grand-dad disappears under a wigwam of trees brought for him to hold whilst a choice is made. Eventually, they all pile back into a Mini, complete with a twelve foot tree, having made a wonderful start to the festivities. Even the muddy dog is happy. It is the same feeling as the American hunter has when driving home with a deer carcass on the roof. I'm sure half of them drove to and from the office for several days before unroping that tree from the roof rack.

"That's not the end of it. David Robertson (Head Forester, Achray), had to sort out "that return" of trees sold. Ben Thompson (Forestry, Achray) has made a photographic record to incorporate in his 1971 display at the Lodge, thereby ensuring yet more publicity for next Christmas. Watch it Delamere, here we come: imitation is, after all, the finest form of flattery."

SHOW SEASON STARTS

The Commission's travelling show unit will, as usual, participate in all the major agricultural shows throughout the country, viz:-

<u>Show</u>	<u>Date</u>
Shropshire & West Midland	May 19 - 20
Staffordshire	" 26 - 27
Bath & West	June 2 - 5
South of England	" 10 - 12
Three Counties	" 15 - 17
Lincolnshire	" 23 - 24
Royal Norfolk	" 30 - 1 July
Royal	July 6 - 9
Great Yorkshire	" 13 - 15
Royal Welsh	" 20 - 22
C.L.A. Game Fair	" 30 - 31

Among some of the other important events at which the Commission will mount a special exhibit, will be the Chelsea Flower Show (May 26 - 29), Royal Highland Show at Edinburgh (June 22 - 25) and the Royal National Eisteddfod of Wales (August 2 - 7).

During the winter months much new ground in the exhibition field has been broken:

November 1970. (2 weeks)	Exhibit at the International Caravan & Camping Exhibition, Earl's Court.
November 1970. (1 month)	Standing exhibit in Watford Town Hall.
January 1971. (2 weeks)	Exhibit at the Outdoor Holiday Show (COLEX), Olympia.
January 1971. (3 weeks)	Displays of Commission publications in the Library of the Houses of Parliament.
February 1971. (2 weeks)	Exhibit at the Boat & Leisure Life Exhibition, Birmingham.
March - May 1971. (3 months)	Standing exhibit in Natural History Museum, London.

Both at the Caravan Show and at COLEX the Commission's exhibit, which featured camping and recreation, attracted considerable attention and appreciable sales of publications were made.

NORTHERWOOD HOUSE SOCIAL CLUB

The rules of the Northerwood House Social Club stipulate that two Committee Members must be elected annually.

Mr. H. Gulliver, A. & F.O. Woking has retired, and Miss Anne Frost, HEO HQ(L) has completed her term of office. Miss Frost has kindly offered herself for re-election. Mr. Denis Boyd, SEO HQ(B) has been duly nominated to fill the other vacancy.

Other nominations are invited from any members of the non-industrial grades down to HEO and Head Forester (or analogous grades in other classes), and should reach Education & Training Branch, Basingstoke, by mid-March. If no other nominations are received by that date Miss Frost and Mr. Boyd will be regarded as elected.

DEAN SCHOOL REUNION

The Dean Forester Training School will close when the present course is completed this year: it is proposed to hold a reunion for old students during the week commencing 28th June, 1971, following the final prize-giving function.

The reunion is likely to take the form of a tour (or tours) of the Forest, and a celebration dinner at which certain ex-students will be asked to speak.

It is hoped to make firm plans at an early date; anyone interested should apply for details to P.C. Gough, Dean Forester Training School, Parkend, Lydney, Glos, GL 15 4 JB.

PENNINE WAY SURVEY

To help in the planning of their survey, the Countryside Commission would like to contact people (preferably those living in either London or Birmingham) who have walked the Pennine Way recently. It would be appreciated if anyone who is able to co-operate in this way would write to the Editor, Recreation News, Countryside Commission, 1 Cambridge Gate, London, N.W.1.

HARE MORTALITY

An investigation into the causes of mortality in brown hares is proceeding at the Agricultural Research Council Institute for Research on Animal Diseases at Compton, Newbury, Berkshire (Telephone: Compton 343).

This work will be carried out over the next three years, and it would be helpful if any occurrence of disease or deaths of hares could be reported to Mr. A.P. Sargent at the above address.

FORESTRY SURVEY

The seventeenth annual report for the forest year 1968 on private forestry costs in England and Wales is available (price 10s) from the Forest Economics Section, Department of Forestry, Commonwealth Forestry Institute, Oxford University.

The average percentage of broadleaved (hardwood) planting in 1968 was 10% compared with 12% over the 5 years to 1968. In the regions hardwood planting was 25% in the east Midlands while the east, north-west Midlands, and north-east followed with 18, 16 and 15% respectively.

Norway spruce continues to be the most popular of the species planted, and in 1968 was above the average for the previous five years at 24%.

SCOTLAND'S LIVING LANDSCAPE

The National Trust for Scotland have organised a series of lectures in Edinburgh and Glasgow under the heading 'Scotland's Living Landscape'. These are part of a move to maintain the interest generated by European Conservation Year (1970), and to cultivate the public's growing awareness to the need for conservation of the countryside.

Mr. George G. Stewart, Commissioner for Forest and Estate Management, and Miss Sylvia Crowe, the Commission's landscape consultant and adviser, will speak in both places (in Edinburgh on February 9th and in Glasgow on February 10th) as part of the lecture programme. With them will be such other authorities on the countryside as Dr. J. Morton Boyd (the Nature Conservancy's new Director for Scotland) Mr. John Foster (Director of the Countryside Commission for Scotland) and Viscount Arbuthnott (Vice-Convenor of the Scottish Landowners' Federation).

COUNTRYSIDE FESTIVAL 1971

The Wester Ross Tourist Organisation have announced details of the Countryside Festival to be held in the area from May 17th to 29th.

Among the many and varied attractions for those who may decide on an early holiday in this lovely part of Scotland, there will be special sea cruises from Ullapool, Kyle and Gairloch to the islands and along the magnificent coast, and a Beinn Eighe Nature Reserve Week, with campfire talks, guided nature trails and wild-life excursions; ceilidhs, fishing, sailing, sea angling (among the best in Britain), and a host of other countryside events.

For full details write to: Mr. Nicholas Thomas, Area Tourist Officer, Wester Ross Tourist Organisation, Ullapool, Ross-shire.

GOOD LORD DELIVER US

The following is an extract from Hansard of January 13th:-

"The Marquess of Aberdeen and Temair: My Lords, the noble Viscount, Lord Hanworth, has allowed me to intervene out of turn for five minutes because I have engagements elsewhere. I have passed the age of being a driver of a motor car, but I have had a good deal to do with it in my life. The main observation that I wish to make is a very short one; namely, that all those who normally drive a motor car should, before they begin the drive from their house, put to themselves the question, "Can I be quite sure that I have been kind to everybody else?"

"I do not know whether people like to hear such things, but in my own case I would put in what is really a prayer before starting to drive. It reads:

"From domineering driving, from the vanity of power and the infection of speed, good Lord deliver us.

"From carelessness and indifference, from the demon of impatience and the tyranny of time, good Lord deliver us.

"From ignorance and ungraciousness, from harsh judgement and the flood of invective, good Lord deliver us.

"From inattention and monotony, from the delusion of drink and the obscurity of fatigue, good Lord deliver us.

"Grant us, good Lord, a divine courtesy to all. Awake in us an abiding care for the slowness of age and the rashness of youth. Let our vehicles become instruments of thy purpose, bringing happiness to all who travel with us and leaving no man weeping at our passing. This we beg in Christ's name. Amen."

"That little prayer can be read over while you are warming up the engine before starting your drive. As soon as this is done, off you go. You are thinking of that all the time, instead of thinking what horrible people there are. As I explained, I wanted to put that point forward, although I do not myself now drive a motor-car because I am too old."

FORESTERS AND VOLUNTARY SERVICE OVERSEAS

The Food and Agriculture Organisation of the United Nations (FAO) are on record as saying that "Forestry will be a key factor in the fight against hunger if rationally exploited, the forests can become a major source of profit, a starting point for booming industries which will increase national income and raise living standards". Thus, though at first the thought that forestry can be important to a

developing country in which babies may be undernourished or crops failing, may be strange, but when looked upon from this aspect its relevance can be understood.

For some years now, since 1965 to be precise, Voluntary Service Overseas (VSO) has recruited men from the Forestry Commission and sent them to forestry jobs in different parts of the developing world for periods of from one to two years. To-day the need is even clearer. With the closure of forestry schools in this country, coupled with the rising demand for foresters from overseas, demand from overseas is far outstripping supply. VSO could place fourteen more people this year with ease, yet have a total of only six certificated Foresters - mainly in Nigeria, Tanzania, Zambia and The Gambia. It so happens that all these countries are in Africa, but in the past foresters have been placed in the West Indies, Guyana (South America), and Fiji.

Space does not permit more than a brief outline of terms and conditions of service with VSO. Volunteers' flight out and back are paid and they are also given a grant of £40 before going out (to buy equipment), and a grant of from £75 upwards on return. Whilst at work volunteers are paid pocket money of perhaps £4 per week, and board and lodging is provided free.

People of any age can be accepted, not just people newly out of forestry school and, though most of the volunteers are single, it is possible to consider some married men - a married Forester is now serving, with his wife (a teacher), in North East Nigeria.

Anyone interested in this should write to:-

David Addis,
Agricultural and Forestry Officer,
Voluntary Service Overseas,
3, Hanover Street,
LONDON, W1R 9HH

SLASHER CORRESPONDENTS

In order that we may bring our list of Slasher Correspondents up-to-date, will present Correspondents kindly send a note of their names, present location, and area (or office) covered, to Information Branch at Savile Row.

May we take this opportunity of again thanking all Correspondents for their valuable and much appreciated contributions over the years. We could do with many more regular contributors and correspondents, and are not only interested in reports of retirements, but in all events which take place within the Commission.

CALLING ALL ARTISTS

Following on the great success of the 1970 Forestry Commission Christmas card project, from which the Benevolent Fund benefits by almost £60 through the sale of over 300 dozen, a competition is now open for the best two designs for the 1971 cards.

Mr. Dennis Boyd (HQ Basingstoke) writes to say that as there is clearly a demand for the Commission to have its own Christmas cards, it has been decided to produce a choice of two for this year. One will be a modestly sized, simple card to sell at about 2½p, and original sketches, illustrations, or other suitable designs are called for. Photographs are not required for this one.

The other card will be a 'colour job' which will sell at about 5p and will embody either an original (colour) painting or photograph of particular reference to the Commission and Christmas.

Entries must reach Mr. D.G. Boyd (Non-Industrial Establishments) at Basingstoke headquarters by June 1st. at latest, and the Sports and Social Clubs of HQs London and Basingstoke have each agreed to present a token prize of £2.00 to the winners.

Entries will be judged by a panel consisting of Miss B. Landimore and Mr. J.P. Lenman, HQ(L), and Mrs. P. Tucker and Mr. D.G. Boyd, HQ(B), and a representative of the Information Branch.

Please send in your entries as soon as possible for this enterprising project; the cards will also carry an acknowledgment to the designer, and all profits from sales will again go to the Benevolent Fund.

Mr. Boyd would like to thank everyone throughout the Commission who sold the 300 dozen 1970 cards, and also the purchasers. Mrs. J.M. Fleming of Inverness office sold the greatest number, closely followed by Mrs. Anne Vandeleur-Boorer of Research and Mr. Maurice Keir of SW(E).

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NEWS FROM THE CONSERVANCIES

London Headquarters

THE DAY HE HAD WAITED FOR!

ON Thursday, 14th January, in the most economical way possible, Mr. Cormack, Controller of Finance, said farewell on behalf of the colleagues and friends of MR. HARRY HANSFORD who had gathered to wish him well on his retirement, and to present him with a cheque for an amount which had been collected.

Using as few words and spending as little time as possible, Mr. Cormack paid tribute to Harry as a friend and colleague, interrupted by some acceptably rude remarks by Harry himself, which were sufficiently amusing to disturb the pigeons in Trafalgar Square.

It seems that Harry is officially identified with the cash account and, in his leisure pursuits, with finding the target on the dartboard. Nevertheless, his interest in the A.177 does not make 'double seven' Harry's favourite double. Many rude remarks were enjoyably exchanged between the two contestants before Mr. Cormack finally handed over Harry's cheque, and four sixpences which had come in rather belatedly.

The occasion was improved by the lovely card which Margery Peal got people to sign as she gently extracted contributions from them. At the time of going to press it is not known whether Harry accepted Mr. Cormack's offer of all the plants, and everything else Harry could lay his hands on in Mr. Lenman's room which was used for the presentation.

Harry made a suitable reply, including a reference to the fact that he had been waiting for this day since he first started work at the age of 14. There was some doubt, he explained, whether his wife would allow him to enjoy the leisure that he had been preparing for all this time. However it may turn out, Harry departed with best wishes from all his friends and colleagues.

Office of Senior Officer, Scotland

RETIREMENT OF

MR. J. M. MASSIE.

A PRESENTATION ceremony to mark the retirement of Mr. John Massie took place

at 28 Drumsheugh Gardens on Christmas Eve in the friendly and festive atmosphere of the office Christmas party.

Mr. E.G. Roberts and Mr. Callum Nicholson, who jointly presented Mr. Massie with a handsome clock on behalf of his colleagues past and present, both spoke of Mr. Massie's varied career in the Commission which spanned a period of 30 years. Special mention was made of the important role which he had played in both the Forest Machinery Exhibition of 1962, and more recently, the Jubilee Exhibition of 1969.

In reply, Mr. Massie thanked everyone for their kindness and generosity, and said that his keen interest in forestry and the work of the Commission would be maintained through his love of the countryside and his Youth Hostel activities.

North West England

CHIEF FORESTER LEN MORGAN

RETIRES

ON the evening of December 9th, some 50 members of Conservancy and Cannock Forest

staff, together with retired colleagues, gathered at Slitting Mill Village Hall to say

good-bye to Len Morgan.

Mr. J.S.R. Chard, Conservator NW(E), presented a barometer and cheque on behalf of Len's friends and associates. In doing so he recalled that Len had accomplished two feats unlikely to be exceeded in the future. Firstly, he had completed 46 years' service by the age of 60, and in doing so had held every grade from juvenile forest worker to Chief Forester. Secondly, he had completed over 40 years' service at Cannock Forest, the last 10 years in sole charge. During this time he had helped transform bare heathland into the present thriving forest, and by example and strength of character had been largely instrumental in influencing public opinion in favour of the Forestry Commission.

Len, in reply, thanked all those who had contributed to his farewell present, and said it was something he had always wanted and which he would have great pleasure in tapping each morning when he came downstairs. He had a special word of thanks for all those who had given him loyal service in the forest. Miss E. Williams presented Mrs. Morgan with a bouquet of red roses, and the party then enjoyed a cold buffet supper arranged by local staff.

MR. W. CONNOR

WE REGRET to report the death of
Mr. W. Connor, Foreman Mechanic,

Clipstone Repair Bay, on 30th October last.

Bill Connor joined the Commission at Grizedale in 1952, having already completed 23 years' service as a Plant Manager with Leyland Construction Company, Lancs.

Whilst at Grizedale, and latterly at Clipstone, his quiet and efficient manner and his method of carrying out his duties with a minimum of fuss brought him many friends. A small man physically, he fought against failing health for some time, and although he officially retired on 5th October, 1970, it was to be only a few days before he died. The funeral took place at Mansfield where four of his colleagues acted as bearers.

We all extend our deepest sympathy to his widow and family.

North East England

A TREE TO REMEMBER

MR. G.H. SCOTT retired at the end of
November last, and the occasion was

suitably marked when he and his wife ceremonially planted a tree on Cropton beat.

After army service from 1926-1932 he joined the Dean School in 1937 and took up duty as a Ganger at Quantocks in 1939. In 1944 he was moved to Halwill and promoted Forester. From there he went to Haldan in 1946, and finally to Cropton in 1957.

A presentation on behalf of colleagues was made to George in Thornton Dale by Mr. J. Kellie, District Officer; it took the form of a cheque, with which he will purchase a radio.

Friends and colleagues throughout the Commission wish him a long and happy retirement in his native county of Devon.

MR. CHARLES KIRBY RETIRES

AFTER 36 years' service with the
Commission, Mr. "Charlie" Kirby, Clerk

of Works at Low Dalby, retired at the end of December. Mr. Kirby's service commenced in the early 1930s, and since 1939 he had supervised all the Commission's building work in Yorkshire.

At an assembly of colleagues and friends at a well-known hostelry on the edge of the Forest, he was presented by Mr. J.F. Wilson, Conservancy Land Agent, with a

French carriage clock and a cheque. After the presentations Charlie and his colleagues exchanged many tales of the "old days" and the happy years they had spent together at Low Dalby.

Charlie has not made any particular plans for his retirement, but he intends to continue to live at Thornton-le-Dale and has no doubt whatever but that he will find plenty to interest him in his leisure hours.

RETIREMENT OF HEAD FORESTER

BILL HARBIN

BILL HARBIN retired on the 31st December after a long and varied career. Some of the spectacular plantations round Bettws-y-Coed are his work, and he often speaks affectionately of his pre-war days in Snowdonia.

Following service with the Royal Engineers in India (where RSM Harbin must have quickened many a step), Bill returned to the Commission at Chopwell Wood. When land was leased from Lord Londonderry at Wynyard Park, Bill took charge of it and from there he has retired 17 years later: the combination of heavy clay, low rainfall, derelict scrub hardwoods and industrial pollution, would have daunted a lesser man, and although not as spectacular as his Snowdonia plantations, Wynyard is a token of his dogged determination to put this forest on the map.

Always a keen fisherman, Bill was presented with angling gear of his choice following a dinner with his friends on the 11th December. We heard amusing stories of early days in the forest, and also that Bill will continue to live at Wynyard Park, where he looks forward to seeing his many friends.

MR. JOHN CUMMING RETIRES

HEAD FORESTER JOHN ('JOCK') CUMMING, who has been in charge of Jervaulx Forest, in the Masham district of Yorkshire, since its inception, has now retired after some 33 years in the Commission's service.

Mr. Cumming - a Northern Scot - joined the Commission in 1937, and after training at Ben More Forestry School he went on to Chopwell and later to Ampleforth Forest before going to Jervaulx in 1952, where he remained.

A farewell party, a lively affair, for Mr. Cumming took place at the King's Head Hotel, Masham, on February 5th.

Mr. and Mrs. Cumming - who have two daughters and a son, all married - have decided to retire in Harrogate. While living in the Masham district Mrs. Cumming played an active part in the British Red Cross movement.

East England

A DOUBLE EVENT

IT was a 'double' event when Head Forester W.H. MARSTON of Santon Downham, Thetford, and Head Forester V.B. HALL, of King's Forest, Thetford, retired within a few days of each other; there was a gathering of colleagues at the Santon Downham District Office on the 18th December to mark the occasion. In Mr. Backhouse's unavoidable absence, Mr. A.J. Searle (A & FO) presided and outlined the careers of both men, which had much in common.

Mr. Marston commenced in the South East of England as a worker in 1926 and after a spell as Ganger and Foreman entered the Dean School in 1931. As ex-school Ganger on the Nagshead beat, he started at 38/-d. in 1933, rising later to 42/-d. as Foreman. In 1949 he was transferred to East England and, as a Forester, took charge of Yardley Forest. He was eventually transferred to Thetford in 1957, where he has been in charge of the old Santon and, finally, the Santon Downham beat. Presentations from colleagues and staff included a power drill and equipment.

Mr. Hall started his career in 1923 as a worker at Lynford, and after a spell as Ganger entered the Dean School in 1933. In 1935 he was appointed ex-school Ganger at Clipstone, but soon transferred to King's Forest, Thetford. In 1938 he moved as Foreman to Bardney Forest. The outbreak of war saw him serving with the Timber Production Department, which (as acting D O II) he left in 1946, having served in North Lincolnshire and Nottinghamshire. As Forester I, he subsequently was in charge of Willingham, Downham, Laughton and Wigsley, in turn, until he moved in 1961 to Rendlesham. Now Head Forester, he returned again to King's in 1969. Presentations from colleagues included a bookcase.

Both families propose to stay on in Thetford town, and their many friends and colleagues wish them a long and happy retirement.

GOING HOME TO WALES

HEAD FORESTER A.L. MITCHELL, who has been engaged on private woodlands duties for the Commission in Norfolk for the past four years, retired on New Year's Day, 1971, following some 40 years' service in E(E).

Friends and colleagues gathered at the White Lion Hotel, Holt, on December 17th for a farewell party where presentations were made to Mr. and Mrs. Mitchell, and when all those present joined in wishing the couple all the best of good fortune and many happy years of retirement.

Mr. Mitchell started his career on a private forest in South Wales, and following forestry school training he came to Thetford Forest in 1931. For the next 20 years he worked on the formation of Thetford Chase, and then moved to the western counties of the Conservancy on private woodlands duties, returning to Norfolk in 1966.

Although Mr. Mitchell has served these many years in East England, he and his wife have decided to spend their retirement years in the old family home in South Wales.

South East England

THE BIRDS

OUR Lyndhurst Correspondent writes:

"We expect damage to our forest roads from heavy or tracked vehicles, frost, motor rallies and other such normal agencies, but a new hazard has appeared at Maresfield Forest in the mid-Sussex district. A road there was recently re-surfaced with waste material from local gypsum mines, and is now being vigorously attacked by flocks of magpies and crows who are digging into the surface in a surprising manner, making quite large holes.

Possibly an ornithologist can offer some explanation. So far the only suggestion has come from District Officer J.D. Cameron: that these birds were used as extras by Alfred Hitchcock in his film "The Birds", and their contracts have not yet expired.

South West England

HONOUR FOR LOCAL ST. JOHN'S MAN

MR. B.W.J. CUTCLIFFE, of our Bristol office, has had the not undistinguished honour of being appointed as a Serving Brother of the Most Venerable Order of the Hospital of St. John of Jerusalem.

The investiture ceremony took place in the Grand Priory Church of the Order at Clerkenwell, and was performed on behalf of Her Majesty the Queen by the Grand Prior

of the Order, The Lord Caccia, GCMG, GCVO.

"Cutty" is well-known locally for his boundless enthusiasm for the St. John's cause. His two daughters are in the local Nursing Division, and he himself has a total of 29 years' service (including $6\frac{1}{2}$ years war service in the R.A.M.C.) with the Brigade. He became secretary to the local St. John Ambulance Brigade in 1959 and was also made a Sergeant in the same year.

It is rumoured that he only sold Christmas trees to those who supported the Brigade's flag day!

PRESENTATION AT FINAL MEETING

THE Staff of Wareham Forest, together with foresters and representatives of the staffs of Blandford, Charmouth and Poorstock Forests, met at Wareham on the 18th December for what would be the last meeting of the Dorchester district, now split between Somerset and Wiltshire.

Mr. M.J. Penistan, representing the Conservator, made parting gifts to MR. M.C. SHIRLEY - who had been District Officer at Dorchester since 1965 and was temporarily leaving the Commission - and to MR. MICHAEL McNULTY, Chief Forester at Wareham, on his retirement. A nice element of surprise was provided by each believing the other was to receive a presentation.

Mr. Shirley is going to Nepal on secondment for two years, and he received praise from everyone for the efficient and kindly way he had discharged his duties. He promised to use his gift to buy tape on which to record the many interesting sounds he would encounter during his stay, and on his return to entertain us with them.

Mr. McNulty has had a long and distinguished career, first in private forestry, then in the New Forest and South Wales, before returning to the Isle of Wight. There were kind messages from Head Foresters who had worked under him as labourers, and his fame as a nurseryman had followed him from South Wales. He was presented with a pair of binoculars, and Mrs. McNulty received a bouquet. Tea, provided by the Wareham staff, was enjoyed by all present.

TRANSFER

A DINNER was held at the Ailesbury Arms, Marlborough, on December 2nd, at which friends and colleagues gathered to say 'cheerio' to MR. CYRIL LEWIS on his departure from Savernake Forest to Cannock Chase on promotion to Chief Forester.

Mr. Rouse (Conservator) paid tribute to Cyril's work at Savernake and presented him with a cheque. Admiral Sir Reginald Portal spoke on behalf of the 'locals' and Fred Purser told some very funny stories, which we hope were not all true.

All in the South West wish Cyril success in his new job, and hope that he will be as happy at Cannock Chase as he was at Savernake.

"DONSIDER" PREFERS DEVON

HEAD FORESTER PETER BOWMAN was another one of our staff who retired on New Year's Day. He first joined the Commission in 1946 as Foreman at Wyre Forest.

Although a native of Donside (Aberdeenshire), Peter has been stationed for many years in the South West England Conservancy, finally concentrating on private woodlands duties in South Devon. Mr. Bowman and his wife are settled in Tiverton, so they must prefer the milder climate of the West Country.

A Foresters' gathering was held in December to wish the Bowmans a happy retirement,

and during the proceedings Mr. E.E. Dixon, Assistant Conservator, ably assisted by Mr. J.E.A. Keen, District Officer, presented Mr. Bowman with a wristwatch and other gifts. Mention was especially made of Mr. Bowman's quiet and thorough efficiency as being ".... a credit to the Commission".

East Scotland

FORESTER GEORGE INNES RETIRES

CAWDOR-BORN Mr. George Innes, Craighannoch, Midmar, retired from the Commission on the 8th December. A gathering in his honour was held in the Banchory District Office attended, amongst others, by the Conservator E(S), Mr. E.G. Richards, Mr. R.J.G. Horne (Assistant Conservator), and Mr. T.W.G. Coulson (District Officer), at which Mr. Innes received the good wishes of his friends and colleagues.

Mr. Horne marked the appreciation of senior staff by the presentation of a cheque, and Mr. William Duffus presented a tea service on behalf of the forest workers. Mr. Innes - who has been 22 years at Midmar - began work on Lord Cawdor's estate in 1927 and was at BenMore Forestry School from 1930-32.

He first worked as a Ganger at Clashindarroch in 1932 and from there he moved to Altonside, Bin Clashindarroch, Teindland, Auchernach (Strathdon-Tornashean), and finally to Midmar.

Mr. Innes is a keen bee-keeper, gardener and Church Elder, and has a son and daughter, both of whom are doctors. He will spend his retirement at New Elgin.

EIGHTY YEARS OF SERVICE

A short and simple ceremony was held in the District Office at Banchory (Aberdeenshire) on the 18th December when a substantial number of East Scotland Foresters assembled to say farewell to two Head Foresters, who between them have given more than 80 years' service to the Forestry Commission, and whose activities have contributed to the fine forests now in East Scotland. - MR. GEORGE GILBERT, Head Forester in charge of Durris Forest for the past 18 years, and MR. DANIEL MARNOCH, Head Forester at Alltcailleach Forest. Presentations in the form of cheques were made by Mr. Rae Horne, Assistant Conservator.

Mr. Gilbert, a Church Elder, is also Chairman of the local Rabbit Clearance Society to which he devotes a great proportion of his time and has raised it to a very high level of efficiency. He is married, with one daughter.

Mr. Marnoch has been in charge of Alltcailleach since 1953. A native of Perthshire, he is a member of the Deer Society of Great Britain and intends buying a pair of binoculars for deer watching with his cheque. He is married, with a son and daughter.

They both want to thank all those who contributed to their presentations, and we wish them both a long and happy retirement.

MR. J.M. KENNEDY

WE report with regret the death on the 20th October last, at his home in Aboyne, of Mr. J.M. Kennedy, one of the wisest of the older brand of foresters.

A native of Doune, Perthshire, Mr. Kennedy's service with the Commission was all in East Scotland. He started at Seaton Nursery, Aberdeen, in 1925 as a Foreman and was the same year transferred to Kirkhill. He was, over the years, in charge of Kirkhill, Glenmore, Blackcraig, Durris, Clashindarroch and Drummond Hill. During the war Mr. Kennedy was transferred to the HTPD, returning as Head Forester to Clashindarroch in 1946, there to direct the big post-war planting programmes.

Mr. Kennedy retired because of ill-health in 1959 and returned to live in Aberdeenshire. He chose Deeside and was well enough to enjoy, from time to time, his favourite recreation of salmon fishing, at which he was an acknowledged expert.

It was at Clashindarroch that Jim Kennedy will be remembered best. He loved a joke and a leg-pull and occasionally to cross swords with authority in the most good-natured way. Differences of opinion usually dissolved under his good humour and a day at forest or office with him was always a happy one. He had the knack of getting the best out of those under his charge and he was a popular colleague.

We extend our deepest sympathy to his family and to his widow, Mrs. Kennedy, who was always so generous in her hospitality to forest visitors.

South Scotland

AE - FOND FAREWELLS

MR. JACK SLATER, who has been a Forester at Ae for the last 6 years, retired on January 1st, and to mark the occasion a cheery gathering of his colleagues and their wives met at the Annandale Hotel, Moffat, where he was presented with a power tool kit, given by his many friends in the Forestry Commission.

The presentation was made by Mr. J.E. James (Senior Officer for Scotland), and Mrs. James presented a handbag to Mrs. Slater. The meeting was also graced by the presence of Mr. Andrew Watt, recently a Forestry Commissioner and erstwhile Director (Scotland), and by Bob Donald, lately Assistant Conservator, Dumfries, who was Jack's first mentor at the Forester Training School at Beaulieu, and then Ben More.

During the evening, the District Officer (Mr. S.U. Robertson) illustrated on a map Jack's career from the red letter day when he was born near Dunoon, through the training period and the gold star day when he was appointed a Forester at Kilstur, until his final retirement from the Commission at Ae to his new home in Lochaberbriggs.

Mr. Bryan Cooper (Head Forester, Greskine) spoke of Jack's unfailing courtesy and kindness, and his successful work in laying out and maintaining the two scenic forest walks at Ae. Mr. Jack Hunter, who retired last year from his Head Forester charge at Greskine Forest, and who was a (junior!) fellow-student of Mr. Slater's, recounted some amusing anecdotes of their early days, and of their friends and colleagues in the Commission during the early thirties. Thereafter, the whole company rose to the toast of 'Mr. and Mrs. Slater', and wished them a long and happy retirement.

RETIREMENT OF MR. W.H. MACKAY

A FAREWELL party was held on the 8th January at the Murray Arms Hotel, Gatehouse of Fleet, for Mr. W.H. Mackay, Chief Forester at Fleet Forest, who retired at the end of December after more than 45 years' service with the Commission.

He started in 1923 at Borgie Forest in North Scotland and continued serving in the North until he went to the Forestry School at Ben More. In 1931, after passing his courses, he went to South Scotland, where he was involved with the early plantings in Kirtcubbin Forest, near Newton Stewart.

After being promoted Forester, he was sent to Dundee where he created a new forest, and later opened up new ground again by starting the planting of Laurieston Forest. He then spent some time in charge of Glentworth Forest, near Peebles, and for the last 16 years he has been in charge of the rapidly growing Fleet Forest. There, his skill in nursery management has made his name known, not only throughout the Commission but to many other foresters in the country, and his retirement will be widely regretted as a loss to the profession.

At the party attended by some close friends and colleagues, presentations were made

to Mr. and Mrs. Mackay by Mr. J.E. James, Senior Officer for Scotland. They will continue to live in Gatehouse of Fleet.

SIXTY MEMORABLE YEARS

THE MID GALLOWAY (Dalry) District of the Forestry Commission has been very sorry to witness the retirement within the last four months of two of its foresters-in-charge, who between them have spent over 60 years in the Forests of Galloway. But both are retiring locally; MR. C.W. PARLEY in New Galloway and MR. D.M. CAMERON in Carsphairn.

Mr. Parley, a native of Fife, came to the Bennan Forest in 1947 after service at the Forest of Ae and Castle O'er, and saw the planted area grow from 1,800 acres to 11,000 acres, and the annual output of thinnings rise tenfold.

A real enthusiast, Mr. Parley has made trees prosper and flourish on some of the best as well as some of the most inhospitable forest ground in Galloway. Virtually imperturbable, he has the happy knack of imparting his enthusiasm, and all his colleagues look back with pleasure to the times they have been shown the Bennan Forest under Mr. Parley's guidance.

Mr. Cameron, another import - this time from Argyll - has been at Dundough Forest for 16 years, following inspectorate work on private estates in Ayrshire, and service at Kirroughtree and Laurieston Forests broken by work on Timber Supply in Wigtownshire during the war.

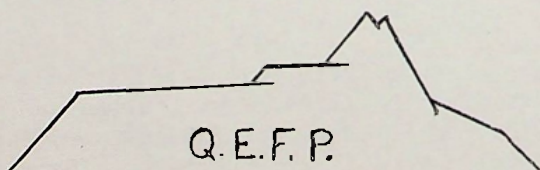
Mr. Cameron has taken the Dundough plantations up into the Rhinns of Kells and seen the output from the older plantations increase from 6,000 H.ft. to over 100,000 H.ft. A true countryman, as conversant with all aspects of hill land as he is with forestry, Mr. Cameron has been held in especial esteem by the junior foresters who were placed under him to receive their final grooming before moving on to charges of their own.

Mr. Parley retired in September and Mr. Cameron in December. On the 28th of October last at a dinner in their joint honour in the Buccleuch and Queensberry Arms Hotel, Thornhill, the Senior Officer for Scotland, Mr. J.E. James, made a presentation to Mr. Parley of a cheque from all his colleagues in South Scotland, and he paid tribute to the outstanding work which both men had done during their years with the Forestry Commission; in particular, to their contribution to forestry in Galloway.

The presentation to Mr. Cameron took place at the Dalry District Office on the 8th of January when, at a meeting of the Foresters in the District, Mr. J.E. James marked the occasion by handing Mr. Cameron a cheque from his colleagues in South Scotland and wishing him a long and happy retirement.

West Scotland

SEARCH FOR A SYMBOL



WHILST the staff of the Queen Elizabeth Forest Park, Aberfoyle, are very proud of their Park's name, it does create a problem in trying to keep road signs brief enough to be read by the passing motorist; so a symbol seemed the answer. This would also provide a good continuity link between recreational facilities, signs, booklets, guides, etc., as it could be repeated on each.

Many lunch breaks were spent by Ian Ashworth, DEO, and Roger Hurst, DFO, trying to find a simple symbol which could be easily recognised by the public and would instantly be associated with the QEFP and the Forestry Commission if pushed hard enough.

Ducks, trees, foxes, badgers, deer, crowns everything seemed to be used by someone else. One crystal clear morning Roger Hurst was driving to Aberfoyle when he saw it, there it was, all 3192 feet of it Ben Lomond. "Damn it, we own it" was Ian Ashworth's comment, "no one else can use that!" A quick sketch by Roger Hurst, knocked into shape by Bob Watson, Surveyor Aberfoyle Roads Branch, accompanied by the words "Forestry Commission Queen Elizabeth Forest Park", and Ian Ashworth had 12 large threshold signs made and erected at the main public entrances.

North Wales

A FIGHT IN THE FOREST

RECENTLY, Foresters D. Goodbody, J.L. Read and R.J. Rogers, of Field Surveys Branch, Dolgellau, witnessed an uncommon sight whilst returning home late one afternoon from Aberhirnant Forest.

Suddenly, an unidentified object tumbled down the steep bank beside the forest road and proceeded to splash about furiously in the drain. It soon became apparent that a stoat and a red squirrel were locked in combat.

John Read walked towards them and the stoat leapt away, disappearing into the forest, leaving the dazed squirrel behind. It was easily captured, having been attacked at the back of the neck in the normal manner of stoats; no bleeding was apparent and it seemed that it might recover. The squirrel, held in gloved hands, was transported to Rhydymain and placed in a warm box but, unfortunately, died during the night.

The Foresters had previously believed that red squirrels and stoats were not natural enemies and were thus surprised to witness a fight between these two creatures; they would be interested to hear from anyone who has seen a similar conflict.

JUST LIKE DAD

OUR CONGRATULATIONS to DAVID WHITNEY, Clerical Officer at Aberystwyth, on his selection to play for Wales in the Amateur Football International against England. The match was played at Hendon on the 5th December.

England won 3-0, but despite this setback we are pleased to report that David figured prominently in the game. David is also a regular member of the Aberystwyth Town team, where he is following the tradition started by his father.

OTHER HATS

MR. R.M. RUTHERFORD, Land Agent N(W) has been appointed Commanding Officer (designate) of the Cardiganshire Cadet Force, with the rank of Major.

Conservancy Land Agent, Mr. R.P. Illingworth, holds the rank of Captain in the Territorial Army Reserve of Officers. This raises the question as to who calls who "Sir" and when!

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