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Tree Scribe

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Case for expansion - director general



... a Tilhill exclusive interview

The Wood Production Outlook in Britain - a Review was published by the Forestry Commission in the spring of this year as a document for discussion and the general response within the forest industry is that a move in the right direction has been made.

Tree Scribe has been able to put some questions to Forestry Commission director general George Holmes, who kindly agreed to be interviewed at his headquarters in Edinburgh.

The introduction points out that the Forestry Commissioners recognise that forestry is but one of the activities using land - the basic rural resource - and that consideration of forest strategy cannot proceed in isolation, or be divorced from other decisions about the countryside, and that the review is exploratory and was being made available as a consultation document in the hope that it would encourage wider debate.

Comments have been invited from a wide range of bodies and interests and those received in the intervening months represent a divergence of views between those who suggest that further afforestation should not be embarked upon at all and those who suggest that the case for increased self-sufficiency in wood and wood products can be put more strongly.

Land use questions

TS "At whose instigation was the review undertaken and did the Commission feel it was being left

behind by the Centre for Agricultural Strategy with its continuing research into land use questions?"

GH "The Forestry Commission initiated the study in January 1977 because of increasing concern throughout the world about the future availability and cost of fossil fuels and other finite resources which emphasised the need to appraise the likely supply and demand for wood in Britain on a longer time-scale than had been tackled before, ie to the middle of the next century. We needed better long-term estimates of the future productivity of our forests, our likely degree of self-sufficiency in wood products, and an informed judgement of the likely worth of our wood resources in future."

"This required assessing the influence of many factors on a time scale that inevitably involved a large crystal ball and reliance on subjective judgements against a background of calculations. Accordingly, we instructed a group of five experienced officials from within and outside the Forestry Commission to assess the outlook to the year 2050, including the effect of new planting, and they

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Still expanding



Increasing demand is still stretching the forest tree nursery trade even though production has increased dramatically since the drought of '76.

Nursery director John White told Tree Scribe this was the first year he has been able to produce substantial numbers of transplants since that time, but even so: "The planting rates are on the upturn and the nursery is still expanding to keep up with the demand".

In our April issue we announced that 19 million seedlings had been produced this year, with 12 million being transplanted - twice as many transplants as the year before. Around a million hardwood seedlings were bought in, mostly beech, plus sycamore, maple and ash, to bridge the gap in production which resulted from the severe droughts of 1976.

John White also reports that seed supplies of Pacific Coast conifers, once purchased in bulk from North America, are now available from UK sources as British stocks begin to bear seed. All forest tree seed purchased is certificated under EEC quality regulations.

CONTRACTS

Borders branch, Scottish division: awarded £75,000 contract by Derek Lovejoy & Partners, landscape architects for the Scottish Development Agency involving site clearance, soiling, tree and shrub planting, grass seeding, fencing, and river and bridge works along the riverside, Jedburgh.

East Yorkshire branch, Scottish division: contract for £20,000 from ICI for tree planting and fencing of industrial perimeter.

Highland branch, Scottish division: £12,000 contract for Automobile Association's chalet development at Carrbridge - involving tree and shrub planting and grass seeding.

Highland branch has been awarded a £25,000 contract for tree and shrub planting, seeding and turfing at Taylor Woodrow Homes' development of 87 private houses at Holm Mains, Inverness, the work to be carried out over 24 months.

Central branch, Scottish division: contracts totalling £6,000 from Central Regional Council and Stirling District Council involving drainage work on school playing fields and grass seeding.

Solway branch, Scottish division: £4,000 contract from British Gas for tree and shrub planting at block valve installations, Frigg III pipeline.

South East branch, Southern division: contract to landscape 60 dwellings at Broderick Road, Eastbourne. Architects: McDonald Hamilton & Montefiore. Client: North British Housing Association. Landscape architect: P. Jakobsen. Contract value: £12,466.

Contract to landscape coastal defence works at Bexhill. Main contractor: Reed & Mallik. Contract value: £8,500.

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Royal Show forestry steward Lord Clinton at the Tilhill timber treatment stand: H & M area manager Richard Craven reports good business, and considerable interest by a continuous stream of callers throughout the week.

Highlanders!



Tilhill's two year old branch – Highland, based at Inverness, run by Peter Fitch with assistant branch manager Finlay Mitchell and forester Bill Dickson – has moved quickly into gear with new landscaping contracts (see Contracts) and a swift build-up of work for forestry management squads.

Left: Peter Fitch briefs spreader operator Paul Mackay on the plan of compartments at Drumm Ba for the 1978 programme of 120 ha of upland afforestation. Paul is spreading unground rock phosphate to ameliorate the basic nutrient deficiency of the site.



Above: Paul Mackay at 'full chat' in his 70hp Fiat crawler applying phosphate at 500kg per ha with a specially designed spreader. The spreader is a three tonne capacity rubber tyred hopper operating a moving belt and a pair of spinners under its own power so it can maintain a constant rate of spread.

CONTRACTS (from page 1)

South East branch, continued

Design and construction of landscape works at Crook Log Flats, Bexley. Architects: Hargreaves & Partners. Contract value: £5,500.

Landscape contract for George Wimpey, Seaford. Contract value: £4,800.

South West branch: fencing and planting contract for William Adams Quarry at Risea, South Wales. Architects: Derek Lovejoy & Partners. Contract value: £5,938.

HARDWOOD SALE: Southern division established a new record for a single standing sale when a parcel of hardwoods presented to the market by the Marches branch, realised £33,333. This was equivalent to a standing value of £57.61 per m³.

PLAN FOR RUGBY: For the past seven years, Southern division has been planting tree screens for Rugby Portland Cement Company at their works in the Midlands, East Anglia and in Kent. With the completion of this year's programme over 150,000 trees have now been planted using a variety of species but with the emphasis on hardwoods.

The planting layouts include narrow belts, large regular blocks and small clumps, moulded in with existing woods and hedgerows, to give maximum screening and at the same time enrich the local landscape.

New post



Graham Russell has been promoted to the newly created position of landscape contracts manager at Central branch in Stirling, where he has been based for the past five years as assistant branch manager.

Graham's new duties include taking responsibility for all aspects of the rapidly expanding landscaping contracts section of the branch activities.

He has been with Tilhill since graduating with an honours degree in ecological science from Edinburgh University in 1971.

New branch in West Scotland

The Scottish division has opened a new branch in West Scotland.

The Cowal and Bute branch covers the Cowal Peninsula and the island of Bute, formerly parts of the territory of the Argyll branch. Based on Dunoon it will further improve service to the many existing clients in the area.

The new branch comes into being following recent acquisitions in Cowal by clients of both planting land and some 1,200 acres of productive forest, the latter previously part of Ballochyle Estate adjoining the Holy Loch.

The new branch manager is Derek Paul, an Edinburgh forestry graduate, who recently was assistant branch manager in the Lothians branch, following a career abroad, first with the Forestry Department in Fiji and then with FAO in Malaysia and South America.

His assistant is Colin Blyth on transfer from Oban, and a key person on the branch staff is



Derek Paul

Mrs. Ailsa Bone, who up until two years ago was the Tilhill office manageress in Jedburgh but who has now sought a move to her 'home country' in Cowal.



THE TELFERS

Tom and Willie Telfer – and their wives Cathy and Jean – have been involved with Tilhill for the best part of twenty years as workers and as loyal friends. As a family group they have become intertwined with the company at the Scottish division headquarters at Old Sauchie: by the fact that their homes are there, and also by marriage – Tom and Cathy's daughter Janette is married to Central branch landscape contracts manager Graham Russell and works as secretary to office manager Bob McDougall.

For the benefit of new readers it should be explained that Old Sauchie is a former estate office hard by an old castle in well-wooded country near Bannockburn. It contains the Scottish division headquarters and, in the same complex, housing for the two Telfer families. Managing director David Brier-ton and family built their own house nearby.

The brothers

But back to the brothers Telfer, who were launched on their forestry contracting career, not by Tilhill, but by 'the young

Laird' of Boturich Estate, in Dumbartonshire, where they had followed their father as estate foresters – 36 years of service in two generations.

Willie Telfer told the story of how opportunities opened out when the estate passed from father to son. The new owner set up a forestry contracting service in the early 50s for his neighbours with estates in a 40-50 miles radius, with Willie and Tom forming the backbone of the labour force.

But enter Tilhill managing director David Brier-ton who was to change their lives. In the late 50s he had worked for SWOA, and had built up a good working relationship with Tom and Willie. When he took over as Tilhill's Scottish director in the early 60s he learned that Boturich was discontinuing contract work, and the Telfers were available to carry out work for Tilhill in Argyll and Central Scotland where Tilhill were at that time expanding rapidly.

Willie recounts hair-raising stories of planting on ground so steep that he would often have to grab for his bag of plants rolling back down hill.

And fencing on terrain so severe that the task became a mountaineering exercise, without Sherpas to carry straining posts, stobs and wire.

Tilhill's Scottish headquarters moved to Old Sauchie in 1966 and with houses available there the permanent subcontractor concept could become a reality.

In the forest

Both Willie and Tom were working in the forest in those days with a squad which would expand as necessary to complete contracts on time: a van, power saws and scrub cutters were all the equipment necessary to carry out the work.

Landscaping presented the next major landmark in the brothers' commercial development. Tilhill's increasingly bold steps into this field necessitated a squad of skilled men to carry out a number of demanding tasks: Willie stayed on in forestry work in sole command of an enlarged squad; Tom moved out to deploy his skills in landscaping work and build up a new labour force. Today Tilhill's landscaping in Central Scotland dictates two squads –

Willie's 19 year old son Peter is newly responsible for grass cutting – and the stock of Tilhill equipment is greatly enlarged to cover the new activity's needs – three agricultural tractors to tow harrows, chisel tine cultivators, ploughs, hopper seeders, trailers, rotovators, a backhoe digger, and self-powered grass cutters together with a specially-made transporter lorry to convey it all about.

Liberality

The two Telfer families over the years at Old Sauchie have built up a reputation for unfailing hospitality: extended liberality I may say even to the Tree Scribe reporter within their gates. If my sketched-in story fails to bring them to life then their liberality – ironically – may have had something to do with it.

David Reade

Top, left: Tom Telfer. Top, right: Willie Telfer. Bottom, left: The 'Telfermobile'. Below: You need to eat up your parritch for this kind of thing.



Productive woodlands



Ian Stephen, Southern division area manager.

Competition for rural land use in an increasingly overcrowded island affects foresters, farmers, nature lovers, — and sportsmen. Where land use patterns are intricate as in the south of England the different interests are brought into close contact, often to share amicably and profitably in the resources available.

Tilhill Southern division's area manager Ian Stephen has worked with estate owners in the south for many years and sees shooting as an ally of forestry — as long as the estate owner can be persuaded to look at his trees from the forester's long term point of view.

David Reade asks the questions:

Q: How important is shooting in your area?

'Over 70 per cent of the woodland estates we manage are administered with shooting very much in mind' says Ian Stephen. 'And two thirds of these are kept for shoots.'

'Of course we are talking principally about pheasants as gamebirds, but partridge and to a minor extent pigeons, duck and woodcock also play a part.'

Jigsaw puzzle

Q: How has pheasant-shooting evolved in relation to the development of the pattern of woodlands?

'You have to see the English countryside as a complex jigsaw

puzzle, a product of events and economic trends developing over hundreds of years.

'In the 18th and early 19th centuries the foundations were laid for the English woodland landscape as we now know it.

'The woods and copses, which today are viewed as totally natural constituents of the countryside, were mostly planted in the heyday of Britain's wealth and power by private landowners, concerned primarily with landscaping and demarcation of their estates. The planting took place with an eye to landscape design but using tree species of sound commercial value.

Understorey

'The principal woodland tree was oak, often grown in conjunction with hazel as an understorey. The hazel was coppiced and utilised for scores of rural purposes. Oak was the main timber for ship-building and continued to be planted with this in mind well into the 19th century.

'Up to the mid 19th century the shortcomings of the muzzle loading gun limited shooting to 'walking up' game using setters or pointers. The advent of the breech-loader introduced the concept of driven game, which came to involve driving game towards guns standing at fixed points. Large numbers of gamebirds were required to support this form of shooting. Oak standards over hazel coppice were entirely compatible, quite accidentally, with the sporting interest and they proved to be an ideal habitat for the artificially high population of game required. A grid system of rides was often introduced to meet the need to get the maximum number of birds over the guns.

'However two world wars, the break up of many large estates, the devastation of woodland by wartime felling, the decline of the hazel coppice industry, and modern

farming methods have changed the shooting pattern.

'The sheer number of birds killed has probably never been less important than at present, and the production of birds flying high and fast to provide testing shooting for the guns is highly valued.'

Q: Does not the urgent need to maximise agricultural production, particularly in the fertile south, tend to push forestry and shooting into the background?

'No. People are beginning to realise that the fashion for bigger field units was responsible for removing too many hedges and copses. Game is a valuable asset, bringing with its need for cover, a gain, certainly in visual terms, to the landscape. Owners are very interested, we find, in the appearance of their woods, not just for sport, but from a general amenity point of view. And of course in the process they are growing timber as a valuable raw material.'

Q: What has happened to the average estate over the past 100 years? Are faster growing species acceptable as a replacement for broadleaved trees when worked into a satisfactory woodland plan?

'Because of the pressure on land use I don't think you can really say there is such a thing as the 'average estate' at this stage in the 20th century. All woodland is functional — if within the definition of functional you include the conservation of wildlife.

Profitable species

'On a relatively well wooded estate we are able to introduce more profitable species without losing other advantages, but in the south of England broadleaved woodland does produce the best environment for game and wildlife generally.

'However heavy-limbed oaks found in the old coppice-with-standards

woodlands are no longer at a premium for ship's timbers and we have to look at how best to create an environment for pheasants and build towards a multilayer woodland containing additional species, widening the range of broadleaved trees and introducing conifers.'

Q: But as you rarely, if ever, start from scratch, how is this achieved?

'You build on what you've got. In a typical stand of oak standards with hazel coppice we will open out rides, and remove a number of defective standards to let in more light and air. Then begin to restock still with an emphasis on oak to maintain the long term character of the wood. For the earlier introduction of cover we may use wild cherry, *Nothofagus*, alder, lime, grey poplar, and a range of conifers obviously depending on the particular site factors.'

Q: Do sportsmen realise what a lot of planning goes in to give them good shooting?

Pheasant habits

'I suspect that many people who shoot understand the needs and habits of pheasants, but not how foresters influence the woodland environment in order to make the sport enjoyable in the light of present day requirements — those fast, high birds presenting the slimmest of targets.

'Because the pheasant spends most of his life on the ground, only going to trees to roost, certain conditions must be created. It is a bird of the woodland edge which likes exploring out to adjoining hedges.

'Large expanses of woodland are inferior to small blocks with good wide rides where the birds find natural feed plants in a well sheltered and sunny position.

'So if one were starting a woodland from scratch with shooting interests in mind a good thick hedge enclosing the area is the first priority. It provides good ground shelter, is stock-proof and discourages trespass.

'Now go to the centre of the block to a wide ride — a feeding and sunning area lined with berry bearing trees and shrubs — and look out towards the thorn hedge. If all the planting had just been done you would see a belt of broadleaf sapplings to provide the long term high cover, then a few rows of conifers to provide shelter, either Norway spruce, red cedar or Lawson cypress.

The broadleaf belt would incorporate flushing areas usually formed with *Lonicera Nitida* from which the birds are flushed over 'rising areas' of coppice or shrubs.

In profile

'If you can imagine this in profile you would see that when flushed out the birds have little choice but to fly out on a high and rising trajectory as they leave the rising areas.

'We try to take advantage of every aspect of local topography to improve the shooting, seeking to make the best of valleys where guns can be sited, matched with copses on top of adjacent rising land.'



A well planned shooting ride

... and the sportsman



... we are able to restore or to create ponds which have a high value for fishing or as flight ponds for duck shooting, in addition to being of inestimable value as another varied wildlife habitat.'

Q: How do you bridge the growth gap when building up woodlands from scratch, or planting an extension where you want to hold birds?

'Game crops provide the answer. Kale, oil seed rape, mustard, canary grass – currently very much in vogue – artichokes or maize all have quick growth rates and to an extent fit the bill until the tree cover has overtaken them.

'These crops are also used to test out sites, to see if birds will accept a certain area as holding cover.

'One big disadvantage in the use of game crops without permanent tree cover is that if the autumn weather is particularly bad the game crop could be hopelessly inhospitable to game by Christmas, and the game birds would be gone.

'As part of the rehabilitation of woodland, we are able to restore or to create ponds which have a high value for fishing or as flight ponds for duck shooting, in addition to being of inestimable value as another varied wildlife habitat.'

Good forestry practice

Q: How do you persuade a sporting estate owner to act to bring his woodland into line with good forestry practice when shooting is going particularly well?

'This is a point of frequent debate. When you have got an established shoot there is a natural tendency to want to leave the woods alone.

'One accepts that shooting is a high-cost exercise with each bird bagged costing around £7 net. Thirty per cent of the birds are lost

through disease, natural predators and poachers.

'But the woods are not static. They are in a state of not-so-imperceptible change. Not far from Tilhill's head office in Surrey you can find established shooting coverts where conifers are sited, apparently satisfactorily, on chalk downlands, but lime-induced chlorosis and drought can conspire to make the end a very sudden one. And in this situation the wood structure disintegrates rapidly. Mature beech coverts have suffered a similar fate in recent years, due to drought and disease.

'If a wood is not thinned the lack of light suppresses the undergrowth, and the tight canopy overhead hinders birds from getting up. If hedges are not maintained they get thinner and create a draughty wood at ground level.'

Q: Can neglect make remedial measures impossible?

First-aid measures

'Not generally impossible. But in an advanced case first-aid measures are no good. Of course, hedges must be repaired and overmature trees harvested. Game crops may have to be used to tide the wood over until a longer term solution – the rebuilding of the wood by staged re-planting and ground cover management – is put into effect.

'But where new small shoot coverts are concerned in an arable farming area they can be designed in such a way as to provide the features needed mainly from broadleaves. Often the Small Woods Planting Grant Scheme is helpful in defraying planting costs. Where plant-

ing land is limited to individual areas less than 0.25 ha, a planting scheme with a bias towards visual amenity could attract a Countryside Commission Grant.'

Q: We have talked almost exclusively about top-flight sporting interests on the larger estates and farms. Is there a place for the smaller man and does forestry take him into account?

'Shooting can be a DIY activity. Many groups in the south are working hard and constructively, digging pools in wet areas to encourage wild fowl, acting as their own gamekeeper, and with a relatively

low rental getting very good value for their money and efforts.

Supply and demand

'Demand for this kind of sport already far exceeds supply, and, from my own experience, is growing fast. It's a matter of economics and population spread. More people have more money and demand for countryside activities is increasing.

'I think it's no bad thing that more people are able to come together and make more extensive use of the less favoured shooting sites. The sport and the countryside can only benefit.'



In the rearing field – the very best of treatment

Director general

(from page 1)



were asked to draw conclusions which would then be used as a basis for consultation with forestry and land-use interests as a whole. These consultations are now almost complete.

"The prime aim of this project was to throw more light on resource questions affecting future forestry strategy and the scope of the review was deliberately restricted to assessing implications for wood resources in order to ensure some real progress on that aspect. We felt that the outlook for food and other resources should be dealt with by groups expert in those fields. The project was in no way prompted by any reaction to CAS studies."

Zero planting

TS "The review suggests that the future for forestry and the British timber processing industry can be considered in relation to three possible planting options — no more planting, the planting of a further one million hectares, and the planting of a further 1.8 million hectares. Does this not omit a fourth option, at the other end of the spectrum from zero planting, ie planting all the technically plantable land? If an ambitious objective were posed as option four, option three could be seen as the modest target it really is."

GH "Before I comment on the question of new planting options, I should point out that the greater part of the review is devoted to the task of analysing the wood supply and demand prospects for the future. I attach great importance to this part of the study and to the fact that the analysis is on record for reference in future debates on forestry strategy."

"Based on this analysis the group concludes that there are sound reasons for maintaining or increasing the rate of new planting as industry will find it increasingly difficult and costly to buy wood overseas after 2025. Afforestation

now is likely to produce additional wood at a time when it is needed. Furthermore, it is concluded that planting can utilise land of low productive potential for food as well as offering benefits in terms of rural employment."

Realistic target

"The group goes on to suggest that planting of a further 1.8 million hectares of our poorest land by 2025 is both prudent and technically feasible. I do not agree that this can reasonably be described as a modest aim. It would involve more than doubling the existing productive forest area in less than 50 years, which would be no mean achievement. To reach such a figure, planting would need to rise to 45,000 hectares per annum until the year 2000, and continue at 32,000 hectares per annum thereafter. Such programmes would represent a marked increase over the past planting levels. The estimated average rate of new planting by the Commission and the private sector since 1919 has been 15,000 hectares per annum while the peaks achieved over a 3 year period in the early 1970s averaged about 40,000 hectares per annum."

Expansion rate

"This is not to deny the good case that exists for expansion in terms of our wood resource needs. There is a very good case. Forecasts suggest that with our present area of productive forest we shall be 11% self-sufficient in timber by the year 2025. Planting to double that area could increase our self-sufficiency to 18% by the same date."

TS "The overall average achieved in planting rates is not too much help in relating to what might or might not happen in the future. It is only comparatively recently that the private sector was able to show that it could plant on the same sort of scale as the Forestry Commission."

"The short term target for the Commission is 18,000 hectares per annum, and we in the private sector have been led to believe it would be acceptable to the Government to match that figure. If we look broadly 25 years ahead then that is the target set for option three — just another way of saying that in the eyes of the forest industry option three is not unduly ambitious."

GH "I have no doubts about the ability of the private sector and the Forestry Commission to handle very much larger planting programmes if they are given the opportunity. I also think that study of past trends in planting are an important source of information on what might be achievable in

future, — at any rate in the short term future. I need to advise ministers not only on what rates can be justified, but also what is likely to be realisable."

TS "It would however come as no surprise if the ministers expected the forestry advisers to be fairly positive about the case for forestry."

GH "Of course I can be positive about the case for forestry and I do not need to be doctrinaire about it because as the review has shown there is a very strong case for increasing our wood resources. One of the key questions is the availability of land at a price that forestry can justifiably pay and this of course is affected by policies and economic circumstances across a very wide sector of activities."

Hill farmers

TS "What do you think of the hypothesis that hill farmers — if encouraged to do so — would farm their land more efficiently if they were able to increase the inputs as a result of selling the less improvable part of their land for forestry?"

GH "I think that it is a very important point. But this is happening already; this is where the bulk of land for afforestation now comes from. As far as the Commission is concerned it is rarely ever possible nowadays to buy whole farms. The majority of acquisitions are parts of farms, the reason being that these farmers need money, the majority to buy machinery, improve stock, improve their land and so on. Of course, we hope that more farmers will release more land for forestry, either by selling it or by planting it up themselves, by taking advantage of the reintroduced Small Woods Scheme."

"As we both know, forestry offers some important benefits to agriculture in terms of fencing, roading, and shelter for stock as well as providing a source of capital for farm improvement. Properly planned, the two land uses are complementary and I believe that there is considerable scope for more forestry with benefit to agriculture."

TS "Have North Sea oil revenues blurred the forestry issue in any way by taking pressures off the need to make the best of our other natural resources?"

GH "Not at all. One effect is to raise expectations about money available for investment in long term projects like forestry. This is encouraging; the arguments deployed about the importance of the wood resources are now by and large accepted, even by many of our critics."

"The main questions before us now really relate to broad land use matters which will need to be discussed with other land use interests, notably agriculture. As I said in my address to the TGO symposium at Stoneleigh last year the case for increasing Britain's forest estate is clear. However, the question of what level of increase is justifiable and achievable in the long term depends on how our land use policy develops and on public attitudes to landscape, to rural employment and life-style and their view on the value of food production in the uplands compared with wood production."

Public attitudes

"Public attitudes and therefore Government policies on land use can be influenced by rational argument. Nevertheless, I think we need to recognise that a substantial increase in new planting over the rates achieved in recent years is unlikely to occur unless there is a shift in the policies and economics of hill farming and some relaxation of environmental constraints on changes in land use in some parts of the country. However, I believe that the group's review has contributed a weighty argument on the side of increasing our future wood resources by increasing new planting."

TS "What do you consider the private forestry sector can do better?"

GH "British forestry is in a unique position as far as other wood producing countries are concerned. First of all we have an unusually close working partnership between the Commission and the private sector. Secondly, we face the difficult task of afforesting bare moorland and introducing a much more dramatic change in the environment than our European colleagues who are able to harvest and restock traditional and long established forests."

Public relations

"It is perhaps difficult to accept the many differing viewpoints raised against afforestation when we believe so strongly in the case for expansion. I would hope however that the private sector and the Forestry Commission will always be ready to heed public opinion, to recognise that these pressures and constraints exist and to try and ensure that both our public relations and our decision making processes lead to a wider appreciation of the value of increased wood production in this country."

FINE SCOTTISH TIMBER

The Harvesting and Marketing division recently undertook an interesting timber operation for a Tihill Scottish division client involving the clear-felling of two areas and work in the policy woods of Meiklewood, Gargunnoch, Stirling.

Some oaks were very large and of high quality in one of the woods and in the policies in front of the mansion — skilled felling was necessary to avoid damage

to the valuable butts.

Also felled was a group of large western hemlock and Douglas fir 80–100 feet tall, standing within 45 feet of an estate cottage.

This precise felling task was carried out by timber contractors Messrs. Donald & McMartin of Stirling.

The prime oak — 120m³ in all — was sold to Henry Venables, of Stafford, who offered by far the best price of the sawmillers

invited to tender for the felled timber. The logs were delivered to their mill in the middle of England, loading with a Matador crane — some of the biggest butts weighed over 6 tons.

H & M director Noel Gore comments that Henry Venables are well known in Great Britain for their high quality sawn oak timber, species they have air and kiln-dried and finished in their joinery shops and which has found its way to many major restoration jobs up and down the country.



Hugh Wheeldon and prime oak butt.



CHILDREN HELP WITH ELM DISEASE

School children at Lazenby Village, Middlesbrough have been replacing trees affected by Dutch Elm disease with the help of ICI and will maintain them with supervision by Tilhill.

About 30 pupils at Wilton Primary School were willing helpers as men from Tilhill (Scottish Division), consultant foresters on ICI's Wilton Estate, planted 12 ten-year-old trees in two fields in the village to replace trees cut down after they were hit by the disease. The trees have been paid for by ICI.

Each pupil in the school received a booklet, and wall charts were also handed out by Tilhill's Andrew Binmore to show what the sycamore, lime and ash trees

will look like when they have grown. At the same time, a short talk on trees and tree planting was given to the children before they began planting.

ICI's Petrochemicals division secretary Peter Davis, told the children: "Cleveland does not have many trees, so those we have planted are particularly valuable. They will outlast several generations if they are properly looked after and will improve the surroundings of all those people who will live close by."

He presented a flowering cherry tree on behalf of ICI to headmaster Bill Carr. "This tree is for the school to plant and care for as its own. I hope when you see it in the school grounds it will remind you of this happy occasion," he said.

ICI Petrochemicals division secretary (centre) and Tilhill's Andrew Binmore with pupils at Lazenby Village.

Culford - Anglian nursery



The Countryside Commission's amenity tree planting grant scheme and the new Forestry Commission hardwood planting grant are proving valuable aids to Tilhill's Anglia branch (Southern division) serving East Anglia and the East Midlands.

Culford Nursery is an integral part of the Anglia branch operation and with good soil conditions for the growth of hardwoods, is well placed to benefit from the new grant schemes.

Tilhill took over the nursery in 1970 from the Whitmore Timber Company together with a forestry contract business, the whole set-up trading as Culford Forestry Services. Staff remaining from the days of Whitmores are forester David Pitt, Mrs. Kath Davies and Arthur Smith, once foreman and now part-time maintenance man.

Two new staff members to assist branch manager Martin Wilkinson are Steele Haughton transferred from South-west branch in March 1978 and Alison Sayers, a new graduate from Bangor University who joined in August 1978. Secretary to all is Mrs. Edith Mouncey.

The nursery is long-established, being originally a general estate nursery for the Cadogan estate. Six acres of land at the Anglia branch office is used for growing forest transplants and hedging plants and there is a mist propagation unit for the production of Leyland cypress. Two acres of land in Culford village are rented for production of 3-5ft whips and a further one acre is owned on fenland at nearby Icklingham and is used to grow poplars from the nurseries' own stool beds.

The nursery policy is to concentrate on this range of plants aiming at an annual saleable production of 750,000 forest transplants and hedging, 10,000 poplars, 10,000 Leyland cypress and 5,000 whips.

The production of transplants in the main nursery is planned as 400,000 hardwoods - oak, ash, beech - 200,000 hedging plants, mainly thorn, and 150,000 conifers - Norway spruce, larch and western red cedar. The high pH of the soil is not suited to production of pines.

Nursery stock is produced from one year seedlings brought in from Holland and Tilhill's Farnham nurseries. Only oak is grown from seed.

The main nursery has its own irrigation system served from a borehole 150 feet into the underlying chalk.

Production of container-grown hardwoods and conifers has been greatly increased this year to meet demand for plants suitable for some of the dry difficult sites encountered in East Anglia.

The current strong demand for forestry and landscaping services encourages the increased stocking policy for the nursery. Outside customers for nursery stock include many private estates and councils in East Anglia and it is hoped that increased pro-



duction will allow greater sales to other Tilhill branches, augmenting the production from the main Tilhill nursery at Farnham.

This wet season has produced excellent growth especially of hardwoods, and stocks for sale this year include oak, ash, beech and thorn hedging. The Culford nursery welcomes the opportunity to quote other branches of Tilhill for the supply of this stock, business which will help to secure the future supply of quality plants from this small nursery.

Left: Anglia branch manager Martin Wilkinson. Top, right: Kathie Davies and Doreen Nice weeding poplar cuttings in Icklingham nursery.

Below: Alison Sayers, assistant branch manager at Anglia.



THE 'WELCOME' SECTION

Finance head



Tilhill's new financial director is Robin Collet, MA, FCA, who comes to the company from international commodity house J H Rayner.

Robin Collet began commercial life as an engineer and has an engineering and mechanical

science degree from Cambridge, part of an engineering apprenticeship with AEI, now part of GEC.

After his apprenticeship and degree studies were over he joined accountants Thomson McLintock as an articled clerk and soon found himself with the shared responsibility of running the audits of a 100 companies.

Merchant bankers Wm Brand presented a logical career step in 1967. He had particular responsibility for industrial operations involving venture capital projects and providing them with management and other professional skills.

Subsequently he moved to international trading/commodity house J H Rayner and had responsibility for the complete financial and accounting section.

Central branch manager



Following Ian Stephen as manager of Tilhill Southern division's Central branch, comes Arnold Beaton, an Aberdeen graduate (1952 vintage).

He laid the foundation of his forestry career in Uganda with the Colonial Service as a district forest officer. During his twelve year spell he was posted to three districts, all in the Western Province and as far from head office and civilisation as could reasonably be expected. His

charges during this time included various softwood afforestation schemes in the short-grass uplands of Uganda; management of tropical high forest including the Budongo, certainly the finest mahogany forest area in Uganda, and the maintenance and improvement of various spectacular hill forest protection areas including the Ruwenzori and the volcanic mountains in south west Uganda.

Close proximity of forest areas with game parks was a mixed blessing, very rewarding in terms of easily visited areas of superb scenery and wildlife but with good forestry practice somewhat handicapped by the depredations of elephant into areas of naturally regenerating mahogany.

Back in England Arnold joined Bryant & May as an assistant silviculturalist, specialising in the diseases which affect poplars, and carrying out trials with new varieties. He moved as manager to their Western Estates before joining Tilhill.



John Cantrill has joined Scottish division Solway branch as a forester. He has a new OND from Newton Rigg but considerable previous experience with Tilhill.

He spent part of his 'sandwich year' at Old Sauchie under the auspices of Bill Morgan and put in three years on estate work at Greenhills before entering college.



Mrs Linda Baigent is the Nursery division's new office manager, a stock control clerk by trade who completed a six month training course with her previous employers.

Mrs Baigent lives at Tongham. Her main hobby is unusual. It is the study of ancient religions which leads her to spend many happy hours pouring over encyclopedias.



Charles (Charlie) Fulton who has joined Lothians branch as forester comes to Tilhill from Newton Rigg College, where he gained his OND.

Earlier, he worked in the north of Scotland obtaining experience in all types of forestry operations.

He is a keen rock-climber and has also made a number of parachute jumps.



Rob Donaldson has taken over as treatment plant manager from Mike White — who has 'gone home' to join Ballycassidy Sawmills, Northern Ireland. His responsibilities cover Longlyf fencing at Greenhills and West Midland Timber Treatment in Shropshire.

Rob joins Tilhill from Peak Timbers of Swaziland. Born in England, Rob emigrated to South Africa with his parents and went to school in Cape Town. After joining Peak Timbers he returned to the UK to Bangor University where his degree included an honours project on the cost effectiveness of European winch systems for use in Swaziland.

After completing his contract in Swaziland as field manager he returned here very recently to marry a former fellow student, (Biddy, who has a BSc in agriculture) and take up the post with Tilhill.

He will be based at Greenhills and Marjorie Pride will act as his full time sales and administrative assistant.



Keith Jeddere-Fisher began life in Fiji, was educated at Harrow and Bangor where he gained an honours degree in forestry. He has travelled in Australasia and North America. He joins South-east branch, Southern division, as assistant branch manager.



Fenning Welstead who graduated from Edinburgh University in July, has joined Tilhill Scottish division Central branch as assistant branch manager in the Landscaping department.

His degree at Edinburgh involved not only forestry, but ecology, wildlife, fisheries and resource management.

While at Edinburgh Fenning played rugby for Watsonians and was twice selected for the Scottish Under 21 rugby squad. He also flew with the East Lowlands Universities' Air Squadron.



Alan Hubbuck, who joined H & M division in mid-summer as Mike Self's assistant in the Southern region has been transferred to Old Sauchie to assist Hugh Wheelon in Central Scotland.

Alan, who trained at Newton Rigg, hails from Newcastle, and welcomes the move back north.



Alaric J Stanton has joined the Harvesting and Marketing division at Church Stretton, for an initial period of training under regional manager Howard Taylor.

A late entrant to forestry, Alaric already has qualifications in hotel management and business studies under his belt, as well as three years in stockbroking in Edinburgh and London.

He changed his career to forestry and studied at the Culloden Forestry Centre, Inverness, where he has taken City and Guilds parts I and II. He intends to complete part III and then looks ahead to the obligatory further three years experience before sitting for his NDF.

Alaric spent this summer working with a harvesting squad on Tilhill projects in East Scotland.

Roger Austin has been promoted to be the Harvesting and Marketing division's regional manager in Southwest England based at Frome. At the time of going to press he is about to attend a week's intensive TRADA course on softwood product knowledge.