

# Tree Scribe

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## DAFS eases corset

**T**HE Government has at last moved to respond to what the private forestry sector has been saying with increasing vociferousness since 1974, namely that the levels of private planting have been artificially contained by the reluctance of the Department of Agriculture and Fisheries for Scotland to see anything but the poorest, and often least accessible, land approved for forestry planting grant aid.

In a carefully worded written reply to a Parliamentary Question from Mr John Corrie MP, on 24 March, the Secretary of State for Scotland acknowledged that the Government's target set in 1980 for new planting of 30,000 hectares per annum by the state and private sectors combined was not being achieved, falling "significantly short" by an average of some 7000 hectares a year, and he recognised that Scotland has been the "focus of interest" for new planting.

Interestingly, Mr Rifkind appears to have been led to believe that "policy has long been to encourage forestry planting on the poorer land."

Certainly that is the course that DAFS has encouraged both the state and private sectors to follow, but it was not what the Secretary of State's predecessor Mr George Younger envisaged for the private sector in the Government's 1980 forestry policy statement.

He said then, "We see a greater place for participation by the private sector in new planting, but the Forestry Commission will also continue to have a programme of new planting, in particular where it will contribute to the rational management of its existing plantations, and also in the more remote and less fertile areas."

Government policy is however only as good as the manner in which its officials interpret it and the will with which they implement it. It is in this light that the new statement of DAFS' criteria will be judged.

Hill farmers especially will be paying heed to the Minister's commitment to "a prosperous agricultural industry and in particular to the maintenance of a thriving hill sheep sector."

Today many hill farmers know that while applying high standards of husbandry they can have "thriving hill sheep," but be anything but prosperous.

Selling land for forestry with the object of redeploying the capital raised more effectively in agriculture has however been frequently frustrated by the DAFS corset in



### *For work and play*

**THE peaceful waters of Trenchford Reservoir and the surrounding Tottiford woodlands are a haven both for anglers and walkers visiting this part of the Dartmoor National Park.**

**Tilhill's plans for the property, outlined on the centre pages, aim to improve the productivity of these outstandingly beautiful woodlands while further enhancing their enjoyment by other interests already fostered by the previous owners.**

the operation of their "clearance for forestry" procedures where they have been known to say that "economics were not taken into account in determining viability."

Mr Rifkind assures us that his Department "will continue to pay regard to factors such as the quality of land, the viability of the unit and the extent to which forestry proposals integrate with and benefit agriculture and that they will also continue to take into account the importance of the land in the agricultural structure of the area."

It is DAFS' interpretation of these principles, in the absence of defined criteria, that has caused so much obstruction of good forestry.

Now, however, DAFS will in future acknowledge a **presumption in favour of forestry** in the following cases:—

In the case of hill land:

- a. where the application is in respect of land not essential to the viability of a unit consisting of unimproved or unsuccessfully improved peats or peaty gleys which although of agricultural potential are

not being agriculturally exploited;

- OR b. where the application is in respect of land which, although of good quality, is not capable (by virtue of its size, slope or location) of making a significant agricultural contribution;

- OR c. where the application, although in respect of land which would not otherwise meet the criteria for clearance, forms part of a plan accepted by the Department which takes account of agriculture and forestry and specifies the continuation of the unit in agricultural use for at least 10 years.

In the case of upland and arable land other than prime land (class 4 or poorer in the Land Capability Classification for Agriculture):

- a. where the land forms part of a farm-forestry proposal promoted by the farmer and remains part of his business;
- OR b. where the land requires capital and/or main-

tenance inputs which are high in relation to the agricultural production achievable.

If these criteria are interpreted in something better than a grudging fashion there is enough conceded to begin to get forestry going again on somewhat better ground and in places "moving down the hill," as on the much admired "traditional estates" where forestry was established in the past on the judgement of the landowner.

A word of warning has, however, already been sounded by the head of DAFS that he would not expect "a great change overnight."

Once Mr Rifkind has had time to attune to all the many burdens of the Scottish Office he may be able to give a little more attention to one of his other responsibilities as the Minister for all forestry in Scotland and to give some consideration to the real needs of forestry, other than as playing second fiddle to agriculture.

Forestry prospers better and creates more jobs on better yield class and more accessible land, where there are enhanced opportunities for diversification of species and enriched wildlife. With readjustment of agricultural priorities an inevitable necessity, the time is overdue for greater harmony between DAFS and the Forestry Commission in the administration of the cumbersome forestry grant schemes.

The Scottish Office has proved adept at fostering Scottish interests and attracting investment. It would be out of character for it to spurn the opportunity that exists to attract investment in well located, productive and stable forestry as one major constituent of land use.

Perhaps one day it might even persuade its DAFS to cast off its well-worn corset altogether. After all, in England and Wales the MAFF suffer less from such inhibitions.

## INDUSTRIAL

## Riddochs reborn

THE disappointing news on 29th July, 1985 that Riddoch of Rothiemay Ltd. had gone into receivership caused some uncertainty in the industry and presented considerable marketing problems for those in the northern half of Scotland.

However, it was not long before the Receiver announced that he was well satisfied with the level of enquiries from individuals and businesses interested in acquiring the sawmills, which are among the largest in the UK.

Within four months came the even more heartening news that Thomas Smith & Sons of Kirkoswald had purchased the Kilmallie sawmill at Corpach, Fort William and that Generation Securities (an industrial holding company of Sir Robert McAlpine & Sons Ltd.) had purchased the remaining sawmills at Mostodloch near Fochabers and Kinnoir near Huntly.

## New pulpmill no certainty for Scotland

IT was announced earlier in the year that a proposed £200 million pulp and paper mill for Scotland is still under active consideration by the Finnish pulp and paper company Kaukas.

However, the Fort William area, where Wiggins Teape's pulpmill ceased operation in 1980, has now been ruled out as a possible location, mainly due to high transportation costs for the finished products.

Sites at Irvine in Ayrshire and Linwood in Renfrewshire remain under active consideration.

A Scottish location is however by no means certain, since it is understood that other sites in Europe are also being considered.



## LOOKING SPRUCE

A 4.0 ha. P53 plantation of Norway spruce at Crowborough Warren was first in its class for 26-55 year old conifers in the South of England Agricultural Society woodland competition.

It also won for its owners, the Rt. Hon. Earl Castle Stewart and the Hon. Simon Stuart, the Evelyn Challenge Trophy for the most outstanding entry in the whole competition.

Commenting on this success Roger

● Left: The prize-winning stand of Norway Spruce at Crowborough Warren basks in the glow of winter sunshine.

Lewis, branch manager, says that the judges, Dr T. W. Wright, National Trust Adviser on conservation and woodlands, and Mr G. V. Darrah, a forestry consultant, when reporting on the plantation, had said, "An excellent stand of Norway spruce of good stem form with almost no fluting. Possibly planted at Christmas tree spacing; the 1 in 3 line thinning at age 18 was a heroic decision which can now be seen to have paid off in terms of girth increment and beautiful deep crowns. A touch of Fomes suggests that this may be the deciding factor in rotation length."

Tilhill has managed the property since 1952 and the owners will be presented with the trophy at the South of England Show at Ardingly in June.

# Making tracks

A TILHILL landscape technician is the moving spirit behind a plan to give a new lease of life to one of Scotland's abandoned railway lines.

The railway route, once the pride of British Rail as the Callander to Oban line, passes through some of Scotland's finest scenery, but was closed for economic reasons during the Fifties.

Now, people like Steve Deas are working hard to restore it as a scenic cycleway for the benefit of those who want to enjoy the scenery by getting up their own head of steam.

Steve is a fanatical cyclist — the kind for whom 150 miles in a day is a bit of gentle exercise — but, like fellow enthusiasts all over the country, finds himself being squeezed off the already congested roads by ever-increasing traffic.

The idea of converting disused railway lines into special cycleways has already taken off in England, but the project Steve and his colleagues are working on is the first of its type north of the border.

It's an immensely attractive idea, requiring relatively little in financial outlay to provide Britain's growing number of cyclists with a safe environment as well as having considerable implications for the tourist trade.

"The potential is vast — there are disused railway lines, forest roads and canal towpaths all over the countryside just waiting to be revitalised into a network of cycleways," said Steve, who joined Tilhill's central landscape branch two years ago.

It was Steve who was responsible for getting things under way in the Stirling district after spotting the line of the disused railway running up the side of Glen Ogle on his way to a site in Killin. On the return trip, his eye picked out the line of the old railway all the way back to Dunblane — just perfect for a cycleway avoiding the A84 trunk road, he thought.

Steve lost no time in forming a pressure group with fellow members of the local branch of the Cyclists' Touring Club, which he himself had formed when he first moved to the Stirling area, and approaches were made to various authorities to gain support for the idea in principle and in search of crucial funding.

Steve's idea for a Stirling to Killin route echoed similar thoughts in higher places for, over the past two

years, a number of studies had already been carried out in Scotland with a view to encouraging cycling as a healthy, outdoor sport which makes minimum demands on the environment and causes least disturbance to the countryside.

The Scottish Development Department and the Forestry Commission were among those influential bodies which were already investigating the possibilities.

Meanwhile, at a local level, things began to move quickly. Meetings were held between the departments of roads, planning, leisure and recreation, and development at both district and regional level to plan the cycle path and Steve was appointed, first to



● Steve Deas on part of the proposed Callander-Strathgryne cycleway at Kilmahog in Perthshire.

a now defunct group called Cycleways and then as an executive board member of a charitable organisation called Sustrans (short for sustainable transport), which has taken on the task of turning a dream into reality.

Sustrans has its own design and consultant engineers and has already spent more than £2 million on cycleways in England. Steve rapidly became heavily involved in the first phase of the new cycleway, a ten-mile stretch from Callander to Strathgryne. Sustran's job is to establish the route, find sources of materials for the conversion work, agree access with landowners, organise funding and persuade the local Manpower

Services Commission agency to accept it as a project.

Funding was slow to begin with but as interest has grown, the money has come pouring in from public and private sources and from cyclists themselves — so much so that the project has now exceeded its financial target.

Cash has come from, among others, The Gannochy Trust, Callander Community Council, Stirling District, Central Region and from the Countryside Commission who are giving a 75 per cent grant. Furthermore, after a lot of hard talking on Steve's part, Stirling District has agreed to be responsible for maintaining the path after the first five years of Sustrans custodianship.

It normally takes between three and four years from the early planning stages to bring the concept of a cycle path to full fruition. In the case of the Callander-Strathgryne section, the same goal has been achieved in only 12 months, thanks to Steve's contacts in the cycling world and the enthusiasm with which he has thrown himself into the whole idea.

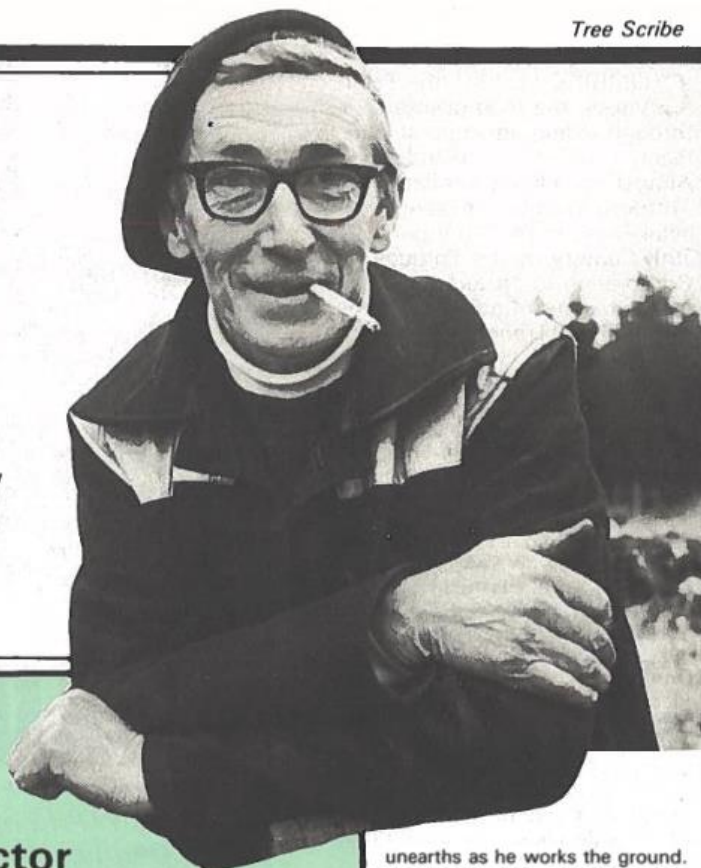
Construction work begins in earnest during National Bike Week, the last week in May, and will keep a 22-man MSC team busy five days a week for the next 1½ years and, incidentally, provide unemployed youngsters with an opportunity of learning some useful skills such as fencing, dyking, ditching and tree-planting in the process.

Steve's role in the first phase is now over, other than putting in a regular appearance, as representative of the funding body, to ensure that everything is going as planned. The project has grown considerably from its humble beginnings. Steve is now busy on phase two, from Stirling to Callander, and the entire route is planned to extend as far north as Crianlarich.

It's been demanding but rewarding work for Steve who has found himself regularly closeted indoors at meetings of district and regional planning meetings and all, because of Sustrans' charitable status, unpaid.

But there have been many happy hours on two wheels, too, going over and over the route in fine detail, with the promise of many more to come, not just for local cyclists, but for thousands more who are sure to flock to the area lured by magnificent scenery and a safe environment in which to enjoy it.

# WILLIE'S PRIDE AND JOY



"YOU can't miss him," everyone said, "just look for a white three-wheeler parked by the roadside and Willie won't be far away."

The three-wheeler, to which Willie graduated only recently as a replacement for a battered motorbike and sidecar, has become something of a trademark.

It takes him, and his equipment, the length and breadth of central Scotland, from Balloch in the west, St Andrews in the east and Biggar in the south on small estate maintenance for Tilhill's Central Branch.

Humble the three-wheeler may be, but it can be driven with a motorbike licence (a distinct advantage for Willie who has never sat a conventional driving test) and it made short work of hauling Tree Scribe's much heavier vehicle out of a ditch when I went to interview him in Muir Woods, near Dunning in Perthshire.

Two of Willie's many qualities, a sense of humour and complete imperturbability even when faced with the most difficult of tasks, came immediately to the fore.

Willie's relaxed attitude to life has taken him happily through three decades of forestry work, much of it in a self-imposed solitude broken only by occasional help from his elder son William, now working for the Forestry Commission, or the odd five-minute chat with someone out walking the dog.

Tall, wiry and fit, Willie is seldom seen without his familiar blue beret pushed to the back of his head and a cigarette dangling from his lips.

Fencing, draining and planting all the year round is hard work and

**Val Pettit  
meets  
forestry  
sub-contractor  
Willie Anderson who,  
by general consent, is  
one of the most colourful  
characters on the Tilhill  
scene in central Scotland.**

Willie tackles all three with a long-practised economy of effort which belies its efficiency and is the envy of men many years his junior.

His inventiveness, too, is legendary; many are the simple but effective gadgets Willie has devised to make his own day easier.

Willie's involvement with Tilhill began 18 years ago when, after ten years with the Forestry Commission, he decided to go it alone. Tilhill's embryonic central Scottish operation was, at that time, based in the boathouse on the loch at Tulliallan estate, not far from Willie's home base in Kincardine-on-Forth and he approached the then central assistant branch manager Bill Morgan about the prospect of some contract work for himself and his two brothers.

Willie was well placed to cover a wide area and although the brothers moved on after a couple

of years, Willie's one-man contracting business thrived along with Tilhill's own expansion.

Willie takes an enormous personal pride in the estates he looks after, relinquishing them to another's care only with great reluctance. He likes being left to work on his own initiative and frequently draws the branch's attention to work which needs to be done rather than merely awaiting instructions.

Very much a countryman, he likes to reminisce about the old days and looks back with affection to the era when horses were widely used in forestry work.

His passion for the land around him extends to wanting to glean as much information as possible about its history — something which is often obvious, to a knowing eye, just from the variety of species which are present or from bits and pieces which Willie

unearths as he works the ground. To fill in the gaps, he spends many hours in local libraries, rooting out facts which will add to his already considerable store of knowledge.

He has seen many branch managers and assistants come and go in his time with Tilhill.

"Some of them are quite high flyers in the company now," he said, with the quiet satisfaction of a man content to carry out his own responsibilities to the best of his abilities and to have passed on, over the years, the benefit of his own vast experience to those on their way up.

There isn't much Willie doesn't know about small estate woodlands and his strongly-held opinions tend to be expressed rather bluntly when he's holding forth on something about which he feels passionately — like forestry. No-one is left in any doubt about his feelings nor, for that matter, about the unquestionable authority which backs them up.

In his spare time, Willie dabbles in history and is building up an enviable collection of antique bottles, many of which have come to light during his forestry work. He doesn't drink, but is a self-confessed addict of tea and nicotine.

"If I turn up for work without either my flask or my fags, I might just as well pack up and go home," said Willie with a grin.



## ONE FOR THE ALBUM

AS a post script to our page one story in Tree Scribe 18 about the winning of the Duke of Cornwall's Award for Forestry and Conservation by a Tilhill-managed estate, we now publish a photograph of former Central Forestry branch manager David Russell, meeting the Prince at the award ceremony.

David has now left Tilhill to become the National Trust's forestry adviser and a framed copy of the picture was presented to him as a memento of his time with the company. David is pictured on the right with, in the centre, Bill Jack, the estate forester at Sir Michael Colman's Malshanger Estate.

**C** LIMBING up from the Teign Valley, the road passes through rolling agricultural land to reach Tottiford Woodlands. Almost completely coniferous, Tottiford Woodlands were established in the latter part of the 19th Century by the Torquay Corporation to protect the catchment area surrounding the three reservoirs of Trenchford, Tottiford and Kennick.

The happy mix of woodlands and water has combined to produce an area of outstanding beauty within the embrace of the Dartmoor National Park.

The rare appearance on the market of such magnificent woodlands created considerable interest when they were offered for sale. A Pension Fund client of Tilhill was successful in acquiring the property in March 1985.

The Water Authority were good custodians, treating the area with sympathy and intensive care. Plantations were maintained to an exceptionally high standard, producing a landscape both pleasing to the eye and productive.

The forest stands on land formerly used for agriculture — grazing and limited cultivation — and even today, the property contains some 88 hectares of farmland. This land is leased to neighbouring farmers for grazing and some production of corn and fodder beet.

## VISITORS

Access throughout the property is good with council-owned roadways serving practically all areas. Within the woodlands, one surfaced track permits access to the north eastern block and elsewhere adequate green rides touch all compartments.

Being located within a National Park, the area attracts numerous visitors, particularly in summer. The former owners actively encouraged tourists by providing car parks and waymarked footpaths.

The policy of the Water Authority was to plant 50 per cent of the area to Japanese Larch. Although this choice of species does not produce the optimum return, the overall appearance of the woodland is enhanced by the contrast of foliage. Naturally, the initial demand was for a new five-year plan and South West Branch Manager, Bill Dorrington (with sundry helpers) was faced with an interesting and challenging task.

Field work was something of an exploration at times — records did not always match with the crop on the ground. The fact that a recorded plantation of P.79 Japanese Larch proved to be P.42 Norway Spruce kept everyone on their toes. The emergence of 44-year-old Scots Pine / Japanese Larch through the misty dusk of a February day when young Douglas Fir was expected added to the interest.

The broad policy of the new plan is to convert areas of poor productivity into economic crops by felling and replacement planting.

The high proportion of stocking with



● Bill Dorrington appraises P25 Japanese larch, scheduled for felling this year.

# MIXING BUSINESS

● South West branch manager Bill Dorrington describes the harm of the properties managed by his branch between commercial, scenic



● Bill Dorrington among the naturally regenerated Sitka Spruce at Clappitt.



● The Quaker Graveyard — one of Tottiford for

Japanese Larch acts against optimum productivity and there are proposals to replace this species with Douglas Fir or Sitka Spruce.

Scots Pine had been planted on certain elevated areas with very poor results and the clearance and replacement of such crops with a more productive alternative species will be undertaken as soon as is practicable.

Douglas Fir and Sitka Spruce produce excellent growth rates and are highly productive on suitable sites. The average 45 inches rainfall encourages optimum tree growth.

The whole forest is fully stocked, with

the majority of the crops standing within the twenty-one to sixty year age classes.

Approximately 4 per cent of the area holds broadleaved trees, mainly Beech and Oak. Such crops are generally strategically placed for visual amenity and complement the combination of water and conifers. The present policy is to retain all hardwood areas as landscape features.

Planting stock was formerly produced on a very small nursery situated within the woodlands. In future, plants will be supplied from Tilhill's nursery at Farnham.



● The sluice above Trenchford Reservoir.

the two major valleys running through the woodlands and are controlled by artificial dams.

Local streams empty into the reservoirs and a gravity-feed pipeline leads from Fernworthy, some fifteen miles distant, to provide further "topping-up" if required. The water is popular with fishermen and is restocked with trout by the Water Authority. Angling provides great interest in the area and a water bailiff is employed by the Water Authority to control the activity. There is no intrusion by pylons or other recent installations and the views over the water to the woodlands beyond are magnificent indeed. During the first year of management, emphasis has been placed upon clear-felling crops of limited potential and restocking with more productive species. Some 17.7 hectares will have been felled during the first year and approximately 12 hectares restocked.

## EMPLOYMENT

All timber was sold standing to local merchants. Employment has been generated by the purchasers of the timber, employing locally-based timber contractors to fell and extract the material.

The clear felling programme, combined with extensive thinnings, is scheduled to be a continuous process, providing continuity of employment for local labour.

There was no resident staff at the time of acquisition and one local man has been recruited. Mike Carter is engaged as a craftsman forest worker covering all aspects of work on the property. Mike was previously employed by the Forestry Commission for nineteen years as a Grade 1 Forest worker based on Exeter and Farnworthy Forests.

Local teams have been employed by Tiltill to carry out additional work on the woodlands, particularly at peak times such as weeding or planting. Bill Dorrington and South West Branch Forester Richard Carrick visit the property at least every other week for management purposes.

## CO-OPERATION

Close liaison is maintained between the Frome office and local people such as the Water Authority supervisor (formerly in charge of the woodlands), neighbouring farmers and residents. The maintenance of good relations with local bodies is seen as an important ingredient in the efficient management of the property.

A good working relationship has been formed with the Dartmoor National Park Department based at Bovey Tracey. The Tottiford Woodlands have a history of productive management and the National Parks Department have proved to be co-operative in all respects.

Tottiford Woodlands amply demonstrate that it is possible to manage commercial woodlands containing a high proportion of conifers in an area of outstanding scenic beauty without conflict or serious limitation to public access.

# S WITH PLEASURE

*Harmony which exists in one scenic and public interests.*



● of the many points of interest for tourists.



● Contractor's forwarder collects material from the felling site in Laplojd plantation.

A number of ancient features still exist.

At Clampitt, a Quaker graveyard is located within a Larch plantation bordering an ancient homestead. It is understood that records of occupation of the site date back to the 11th century. The remaining buildings contain interesting architectural features. One small house is supplied with arrow slit windows and other buildings contain cruck trusses. An unusual type of long cruck has been used where timbers have been shaped to run from ground level to the apex of the roof. Evidence of early farming remains with numerous small fields or

yards guarded by stone gateposts and bounded by stone walls.

In Beacon Plantation, an old limekiln is evidence of earlier activity and the skill of the "old men" is demonstrated in the stonework which remains.

Clampitt House, a comparatively recent single-story building set on the north eastern boundary, has an interesting history. Originally located on land now covered by the Tottiford Reservoir, the building was dismantled and re-erected in identical form on the present site.

The three reservoirs (retained by the South West Water Authority) occupy

# places...

## Division

Alastair Willison has recently joined Anglia North as an abm. Since graduating at Bangor University in 1984, he has worked in both the agricultural industry and the Forestry Commission.

Fred Crozier has transferred from Anglia North, where he was branch manager, as the new manager of Central Forestry branch. He takes over from David Russell who has left the company to join the National Trust as forestry adviser (see picture on page 2).

Mike Whitfield has been promoted to Harvesting and Marketing manager in the Marches branch, a new post in recognition of his experience and aptitude in this field.

Liz Palethorpe has joined Longlyf as branch secretary and Patti Lawrence has become a part-time clerical assistant.

## Exam passes

Neil Aitchison of Borders branch and Simon Jacyna of Northern Landscape branch have both successfully sat part two of the Institute of Chartered Foresters examinations. Both are now Chartered Foresters.

## Congratulations to...

Alan Christison of Borders branch on his marriage on May 10 to Linda Black of Aberdeen...

Robert Bruce of South East forestry branch on his marriage to Sarah Johnston, Deaconess at the West Kirk Presbyterian Church, Belfast...

Chris Piper of Borders branch on the announcement of his engagement to Jenny Ross of Edinburgh...

Yorkshire Landscape branch manager Peter Middleton and his wife Shelagh on the birth of their second daughter Siobhan on March 27...

Marches branch manager Richard Sochacki and his wife Nicola on the birth of their first child Thomas on December 14...

Longlyf branch manager Oliver Barnsley and his wife Susan on the birth of a son Duncan on November 16.



Bill Dorrington rises to speak.



Ron Manser with Bob Gray.

**B**ILL DORRINGTON, Tilhill's branch manager at Frome in Somerset has just completed 25 years' service, mostly in the South West where he is well known in forestry circles. Bill and his wife Audrey attended a small dinner party in Farnham together with Tilhill colleagues when he was presented with a wristwatch and a cheque to mark a very happy occasion.

**R**ON MANSER completed 25 years' service with the Company on 24th October 1985. To mark the occasion, he was presented with an inscribed pewter tankard and a cheque by Bob Gray during luncheon at a local tavern. Throughout his 25 years, Ron has worked on the South East branch managed estates and has an unrivalled knowledge of their past history.

## Scottish



Harry Wilson. Donna Stillie.

Philip Townsend has been transferred from Central Landscape branch in Stirling to Yorkshire Landscape branch. The move took Philip closer to his home town of Wakefield where he was born and brought up.

Harry Wilson has joined Solway branch as a forestry abm. He is a graduate of Aberdeen University.

Donna Stillie has joined head office as office junior following completion of her YTS year.

## Harvesting and Marketing

**D**ouglas Lamont transferred from Southern Division Anglia Branch North to take up the position of Yorkshire Regional Manager in February.

He joined Tilhill in 1983 after gaining his Scotec Diploma in Forestry (with six distinctions) at the Scottish School of Forestry, Inverness and his experience prior to that of being a self-employed timber contractor will undoubtedly stand him in good stead in his new position.



## Contracts

### Success in West Cumbria

**A**S detailed in "Contracts," Solway branch has secured major and important contracts at two locations on the West Cumbrian coast.

Two contracts for British Nuclear Fuels plc at their Sellafield plant ensures that there will be a Tilhill presence on this major construction site until 1990.

On another major project, only some 20 miles up the coast from Sellafield, two contracts totalling £124,142 for landscaping the old Workington Ironworks were secured in late February for completion by end of March.

**A**NGLIA NORTH branch has won a £62,323 contract from British Industrial Sands Ltd. for work at its King's Lynn site, a £35,872 contract from the Forestry Commission for work on the Attleborough by-pass, a £30,020 contract from the Plessey Pension Fund at Wormegay and a £13,784 contract from the British Gas Corporation for work at the Huntingdon compressor station. A private client has awarded a £10,698 contract for planting shooting coverts at a farm in Framlington, Suffolk.

**C**ENTRAL LANDSCAPE branch is working on contracts totalling just under £500,000. The largest, worth £150,000, is for Bracknell District Council for work at Farningham Ride Linear Park. Thames Water awarded a £119,358 contract for landscaping the River Mole flood alleviation scheme and the University of Surrey awarded a £77,343 landscape contract. The branch has also won contracts for work at the Centaurs Business Park at Osterley, Middlesex for Balfour

## Southern

Beatty (£21,529), at Romsey for the Southern Water Authority (£20,165), at Westhorpe House in Marlow for James Longley & Co. Ltd. (£19,223), at Wicor and Cam Bay, along the A32 and at Swanmore Road, Havant for Hampshire County Council (£19,069, £15,181 and £6,516), at the A317 Woburn Hill improvement from Surrey County Council (£13,101), the continuation of a large scheme at RHM Windsor (£12,947), at a new headquarters for Esso Petroleum at Leatherhead for Higgs & Hill Ltd. (£10,595) and at the AA's Fanum and Norfolk Houses (£9,965).

**M**ARCHES branch has won a £36,490 contract from the Forestry Commission for roadside planting on the A41 Newport by-pass.

**S**OUTH EAST FORESTRY branch has won the following contracts: from Blue Circle Industries plc at the Northfleet quarry (£19,351), from ARC for

work at their Addington Quarry near Maidstone (£11,972), from Kent County Council at the Wrotham M20/A20 interchange (£9,795), from British Industrial Sands Ltd. at a quarry in Godstone (£7,322) and from Mid Kent Water Company at a pumping station near Canterbury (£5,488).

**S**OUTH WEST branch has won a £23,259 contract from J. T. Design Build Ltd. for a prestigious office development at Swindon and another worth £10,000 from the PSA at Yeovilton. Other smaller contracts, totalling £40,365, came from Melhuish & Saunders Ltd. for landscaping new council offices (£8,462), Wiltshire County Council (£5,875 and £5,658), Avon County Council (£4,596), Sleeman Construction at Taunton (£4,250), ARC Ltd. at Wareham and Ibsley (£3,655 and £1,169), McCarthy & Stone at Burham-On-Sea (£2,738), Wessex Water Authority on the River Cam (£1,883), Somerset County Council at Taunton (£1,136) and Horfall & Norris (£953).

## in Solway thinnings

thin up to two years before the recognised Management Table time, adopting a staggered chevron pattern.

This policy ensures that the branch keeps well on top of the growing programme and it also has a stability benefit in that the major disruption to the canopy comprising extraction racks every seventh row is incurred when the trees are still relatively small

(approx. 11 metres high).

In addition — and of major importance to the client — this policy can be achieved to produce a net return of around £100 per hectare, some 18 years after planting.

**Right:** Pulpwood being loaded from first thinnings of Sitka Spruce at Billholm planted only in 1969.



# Achievements, confidence, strength

THE company's achievements in the period 1st October 1984 to 31st December 1985 exceeded all expectations.

Of particular note has been the strength of the market for timber in association with a general resurgence of the British forestry products industry. 1985 saw the opening of the major new pulp and newsprint mill at Shotton, brought on-stream ahead of schedule and quickly establishing a reputation for a good quality product.

Later in the year, the formal opening took place of Highland Forest Products' new structural board plant at Inverness, and the end of the year was marked with the commissioning of Messrs. Eggers' large new particleboard line at Hexham. Caberboard have announced plans to upgrade their medium density fibreboard line at Stirling and interest has been expressed by Kaukas of Finland in the possibility of setting up a new pulp and paper mill in west central Scotland to make lightweight coated paper.

On the sawmilling front Messrs. Brownlie brought into production a modernised sawmill on Speyside, and Jones of Larbert started production in a similar new sawmill at Dumfries. The receivership of Riddochs was quickly resolved with Smith of Kirkoswald purchasing the large Kilmallie sawmill at Fort William and the Moray Firth sawmills being taken over by the McAlpines of Sir Robert McAlpine & Sons Ltd.

The strength of the market has created a strong demand for Tilhill clients' timber resulting in an upsurge in the quantity of timber marketed by the company.

Similar confidence has been reflected in the increase in investment in stocked woodlands and planting land, involving both

**Chairman H. E. Trevan-Hawke looks back on the fifteen months' trading period and surveys the scene for "Tree Scribe" readers.**

private individuals and pension fund clients. All of our major pension fund clients made significant additions to their holdings.

Particularly worthy of note was the purchase of the exceptionally fine Tottiford woodlands in Devon from the Southwest Water Authority for a price in excess of £2 million.

There was also an upturn in the total area afforested, with the Scottish Division recording its highest figure for the area of new planting since 1982. However, this was still well short of its potential. The constraints imposed by the Department of Agriculture for Scotland in respect of the quality of land approved for Forestry Commission planting grant remained undiminished.

The pressure and frustration built up by this totally artificial control resulted in cases of planting being undertaken by investors without grant aid, which attracted considerable coverage in the Scottish press.

Despite this and in the face of renewed representations by Timber Growers UK, in a climate of increasing hardship for farmers, many of whom would be willing sellers of hill land more favourable for trees, yet another year passed without any alleviation.

This artificial restriction on good quality, accessible planting land suitable for purchase by our clients meant that only 41% of our Nurseries Division's total output was taken up in planting undertaken by Tilhill. Nevertheless the Nurseries Division itself enjoyed a highly successful year.

The demand for seedlings and transplants has in fact pushed the nursery to its limit in terms of physical resources and a detailed appraisal undertaken in the year identified the need for additional facilities in land under cultivation, cold-storage, and water for irrigation and frost protection.

Landscaping in our Southern Division again grew in volume and several prestige contracts were won, including our entry into the London Docks where intensive development offers great potential for additional new business. In Scottish Division the market remained very competitive but sales were maintained in line with the high level of the preceding twelve months.

The company is the longest established of its kind and the quality of its continuous expert woodland management is gaining increasing recognition not only by the increase in area under management but also by the award of two significant prizes in 1985.

The first ever winner of the Duke of Cornwall's Award for Forestry and Conservation was Sir Michael Colman's Malshanger estate in Hampshire, where the woodlands have been managed by Tilhill since 1968.

In the South of England Agricultural Society's competition, a stand of submature Norway Spruce at Crowborough Warren in Sussex won the Evelyn Challenge Trophy for the most outstanding entry in the whole competition. The woodland is the property of Earl Castle Stewart and the Hon. Simon Stuart and has been managed by us since 1952.

We are pleased that our first trading period in the ownership of the Booker McConnell group has been so successful and I gratefully acknowledge the help and support given by Booker Agribusiness Ltd. and in particular the contribution made to our board by Mr E. C. Robinson and Mr C. P. Johnson.

We look forward with confidence to building further on our solid achievements to date. Our particular strength lies in the quality, commitment and application of our staff who have again shown a great appetite for increased business which has been implemented without dilution of high professional standards.

I pay tribute to Mr R. T. Gray, Director of our Southern Division, who has been with the company since 1965 and has built up the Southern Division into a strong and uniformly effective force.

It is fitting that, as Mr Gray retires, he should leave us with an exceptionally fine set of results in his Division for the fifteen months trading period and that his career should be crowned with his election as President of the Institute of Chartered Foresters.

## Caberboard looks to the future

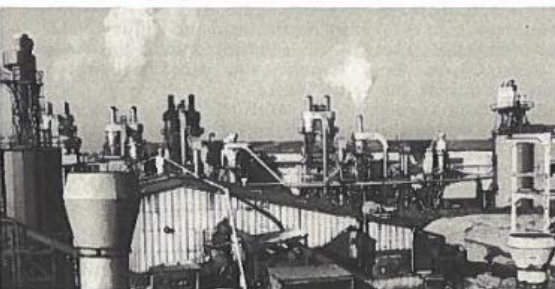
IN 1985 the Glunz Group of West Germany purchased the majority share holding of Caberboard Limited from Bison-Werke Bahre and Greten.

Glunz AG is the largest European producer of wood based panels and with the acquisition of Caberboard's two particleboard mills at Irvine in Ayrshire and Cowie near Stirling, along with their MDF plant also sited at Cowie, had an output in that year of almost 1.4 million m<sup>3</sup>.

The programme by Glunz of planned expansion was soon felt when, only months after its acquisition, Caberboard announced plans to increase MDF (Medium Density Fibreboard) production capacity at Cowie from 55,000 m<sup>3</sup> to 80,000 m<sup>3</sup> per annum by the spring of 1986.

This announcement came as welcome news for the grower, for although MDF can be manufactured solely from residues, supplies were more or less fully committed

## Industrial report



**Part of Caberboard's industrial complex at Cowie, near Stirling.**

and therefore the expansion required an intake of an additional 50,000 green tonnes of roundwood per annum.

Since 1980 MDF's popularity in the UK has grown rapidly, following similar trends to those experienced in the USA. From a modest 10,000 m<sup>3</sup> in 1980, consumption rose to an estimated 110,000 m<sup>3</sup> in 1985 with a further rise to 125,000 m<sup>3</sup> expected in 1987.

In order to meet this growing market demand, Caberboard are currently evaluating

the building of an additional MDF plant at Cowie which is hoped will commence production during 1988.

The new plant will have a planned output of between 50,000 m<sup>3</sup> to 55,000 m<sup>3</sup> per annum and in order to maintain these production levels will require an additional wood intake of 100,000 to 110,000 tonnes per annum, which is likely to result in an increased requirement for 70,000 to 80,000 tonnes per annum of small roundwood.

By 1988, therefore, the combined roundwood intake by the Cowie factories is expected to reach c. 300,000 green tonnes per annum and it is Caberboard's intention to draw significant quantities of this material from the north and north east of Scotland by complementing the current road haulage system by increased use of rail freight.

In addition, feasibility studies are presently underway at Irvine where Caberboard hope to increase their current particleboard production capacity from 100,000 m<sup>3</sup> per annum to 160,000 m<sup>3</sup> per annum.

However with residues within the factory's catchment area now fully committed, the expansion would require an additional intake of c. 70,000 tonnes of roundwood per annum and Caberboard stress that the "green light" will only be given when their studies confirm that growers within the area are prepared to make this additional volume available to them.