



Staking claim to quality sites

ON January 30 Lord Sanderson of Bowden, Minister of State for Agriculture and Forestry at the Scottish Office, visited two Borders branch properties at the invitation of Tilhill.

The purpose of the visit was to show Tilhill operations, discuss land use matters, and comment on Government support packages. Bryson Middleton, Martin Wilkinson and Sandy Macpherson acted as hosts.

First stop was at Stonedge Estate, some six miles south of Hawick, which extends to 955 acres, all planted in 1972 mainly with Sitka spruce. Early first thinnings were being carried out there by contractor Jock McIntosh, and Lord Sanderson was duly impressed by the fact that thinning was being carried out at age 17 and showing a good net return to the owner. Thinnings were being converted to stakes, pulpwood and small sawlogs of good quality. Lord Sanderson, a Borderer himself from Melrose, only 16 miles away, chatted to the men on site. The method and thinking behind the execution of thinnings at such an early stage were explained to Lord Sanderson and figures were given for local rural employment generated by such work, estimated at 12 man days per hectare per thinning.

The whole party then went by minibus to Shankend Hill, an area which had been partially afforested (380 acres) in spring 1988. Features pointed out were the attention paid to landscaping considerations including species choice, layout and the shape or outline of the planted area. Site quality, especially that of soil, was emphasised and used to illustrate the long-standing Tilhill policy of searching out and planting sites capable of producing the most productive crop investments such as the example just visited at Stonedge.

Discussions led on to land use on ground of the quality of Shankend Hill and Stonedge. Sandy Macpherson voiced Tilhill's grave concern about lack of ready approval of such sites which were of the quality essential to ensure good economic returns, sufficient to attract investors and able to compete favourably with other forms of investment. Tilhill continued to experience unwillingness by the Department of Agriculture (DAFS) to release land of the required quality for planting.

Lord Sanderson was at pains to assure the party that DAFS would no longer be the major restricting factor to attractive forest investments but expressed the fear that environmental considerations would be the major obstacle and over this he had no direct control.

Lord Sanderson was told that the Tilhill experience to date has been that, while we have experienced delays and prolongation of the consultation process on landscaping grounds, we are within reason able to live with this.



● Lord Sanderson (centre) discusses thinning techniques with Jock McIntosh (centre right). Also in the picture are Martin Wilkinson (left), Arthur Barlow of the Forestry Commission (centre left) and Bryson Middleton.

Tilhill talks frankly to Minister over landuse fears for forestry

All our problems have been with DAFS and have been in the form of veto. This is because Tilhill always have targeted "down the hill" hill land, which is what Government now say they prefer to see planted. However, DAFS generally have interpreted their remit, to sustain a thriving hill sheep sector, as requiring that most such land is retained in pastoral farming.

Tilhill said that while heartened by Lord Sanderson's statements about DAFS, they nonetheless fear that the apparent ambivalence of Government's desires for land use on better hill ground could still be a serious constraint on forestry. With forestry having to "sell" a new support structure, the industry does not need problems of intransigence on behalf of what is after all simply a competing commercial use of the land. The point was made that properties such as Stonedge were readily approved for planting in the 60's and early 70's before DAFS was consulted on such matters. Since the introduction of consultation with DAFS before the FC can approve grant-aid for planting, obtaining approval on substantial areas of such ground has been extraordinarily difficult, albeit there have been some relaxations by DAFS in the last few years. Tilhill stressed that it was such productive plantations with their early and high yields that were able to support the massive new

investments in pulp, paper and particleboard plant.

The opportunity was taken to present a paper on an estimate of potential forestry land in Scotland. This paper showed that, after deducting land unsuitable for forestry (e.g. Macaulay classes 7 and 6.3, or islands) or land almost certainly unavailable (e.g. tenanted land, SSSI's and PSSSI's) or land too expensive (Macaulay classes 1, 2 and 3), there remained only enough for a further 19 years new planting were the Government target of 33,000 ha per annum to be attained in Scotland only. This, it should be noted, assumes the planting of all class 4, class 5 and class 6.1 and 6.2 land not eliminated above. No account was taken of landscaping designations which cover over one quarter of Scotland and can impose restrictions on afforestation, or the fact that the owners may not wish to plant, or to sell to someone who does. Lord Sanderson showed surprise at the conclusions of this paper and readily accepted extra copies for scrutiny and comment by members of his departments.

Discussions were frank, but amicable, and the visit ended with that most traditional of British habits — a nice cup of tea with sandwiches kindly prepared by the Borders branch office staff to their usual high standard.

UNDER OUR WING

BIRDS of prey and those that feed on fish have been heavily persecuted for "sport" and by gamekeepers trying to protect grouse shooting and salmon or trout fishing. Numbers of the rarer birds are still at risk from unscrupulous egg collectors who can have a significant effect on local populations.

None was more harassed than the osprey, which was, in fact, extinct in Britain at the beginning of this century, and the black-throated diver suffered from nest disturbance and egg-collecting which did little to help a bird which has a poor breeding success in Britain.

However, the establishment of large areas of forest in Scotland since the end of World War One has been a factor in the recovery of some of the harder-pressed bird populations. Afforestation has reduced the pressure on upland areas from gamekeepers trying to protect grouse stocks and, assisted by a more enlightened attitude by the sporting fraternity, has brought relief from illegal shooting and trapping.

Afforestation has also provided suitable habitat for the breeding and hunting requirements of some birds and created an undisturbed refuge for long periods which benefits many bird species.

On one estate in the Highlands, Tilhill is actively involved in protecting nesting ospreys and black-throated divers which, although present before afforestation began, had been experiencing infrequent breeding success. The osprey is a summer visitor, returning from Northern Africa each year to the same nest site. They are large birds and can be very conspicuous at the nesting area by calling loudly and using prominent perches.

Tilhill staff have, therefore, maintained close liaison with the local Forestry Commission wildlife officer and the RSPB to give protection to the ospreys and to maintain the appropriate habitat to ensure that the birds breed successfully.

The ospreys first attempted to breed on the estate in 1979 before it was managed by Tilhill;

In the Scottish Highlands, Tilhill is actively engaged in working with conservation specialists to protect and encourage two rare and magnificent birds. Here, we outline the measures adopted by Tilhill in ensuring the future of a small but valuable aspect of our national heritage.

their choice was a pine tree on an island of a loch also being used by the black-throated divers. While breeding was successful at first, the choice of nest site caused two problems; the nest was highly visible and it was robbed of eggs for the next two years and the presence of the ospreys disturbed the black-throated divers.

The divers failed to raise young for three successive years. In consultation with the RSPB and the Forestry Commission wildlife officer, the decision was taken to move the osprey nest into an old stand of pine quite close to the loch. The ospreys accepted it immediately and both they and the divers bred successfully the next year.

However, three years ago, the male osprey

returned with a new female who chose to build a new nest in a tree on the island again. Once again, the eggs were stolen, the divers failed to breed and Tilhill's assistance was required.

Black-throated divers conveniently spend the winter months on the coast and man was able to step in to assist, quite literally, by walking across the frozen loch and felling the ospreys' island tree!

Another nest was artificially constructed in a tree some distance from the loch and, immediately on its return the following year, the female osprey took up residence. To further help the divers, Tilhill has restricted fishing on the loch during the critical months of April to late June to minimise disturbance.

Since these steps were taken, both these pairs of birds have bred successfully.



● An adult osprey feeding its young; wildlife author and photographer Don MacCaskill took the picture.

ALL SYSTEMS GROW!

RECENT developments in growing techniques at Tilhill's Forest Tree Nursery at Greenhills have led to the production of one-year-old balanced stocks ideal for planting directly into the forest.

Seed of *Larix* species are being precision drilled, using a Matco Fahse Mini-air, in eight rows on to sterilised beds in late March for early germination and growth. Soon after emergence, they can be top dressed with a slow-release nitrogen fertiliser. By early August, the seedlings have been undercut with the Summit machine to encourage the formation of a good fibrous root system. Lateral root pruning and wrenching can be carried out later as required. By the end of the

season good sturdy well balanced 20-40cm plants are ready for forest planting.

This system is also applied to broadleaved species with the larger-sized seeds being accurately drill-sown using a modified Sisis Lospread.

More than two million hardwood and conifer $\frac{1}{2}$ u $\frac{1}{2}$ s are currently being contract-grown, using the above methods, for Northern European customers.

Additional supplies of water are required for the undercutting and wrenching regimes and this has been obtained from a newly-installed wellpointing system. Water is drawn from the aquifer and pumped to one of the reservoirs. There is now up to six times the amount previously available both for irrigation and frost protection.

The production of improved Sitka spruce, as reported in an earlier issue, is progressing well with the second sowing stock plants ready for cutting production this winter.

For the future, we are in the process of evaluating a complete bed tree harvester which is at present being adapted to our particular requirements and it is hoped trials will take place in late autumn. If successful, stocks of conifers will be lifted in quantity in the best possible condition for long term cold storage.

● With acknowledgements to Forestry and British Timber.



A VISIT to Tilhill's nurseries at Greenhills was on the schedule of two Americans during a tour of the UK.

Our picture shows Paul Forward (right), a nursery specialist with the US Forest Service at their Washington DC headquarters, Keith Pfeifer (centre rear), manager of the Washington State Corporation Improvement Association Inc., and Alan Fletcher (centre right) of the Forestry Commission's Tree Improvement Branch inspecting $\frac{1}{2}$ u $\frac{1}{2}$ larch seedlings. With the party is Nurseries Director John White.



From left, *Larix* $\frac{1}{2}$ u $\frac{1}{2}$ 20 cm, *Corylus avellana* $\frac{1}{2}$ u $\frac{1}{2}$ 60 cm and *Quercus robur* $\frac{1}{2}$ u $\frac{1}{2}$ 36 cm.

AIRPORT SCREENING — TILHILL STYLE

IN 1991, Stansted will achieve the transition from modest international airport, handling mainly short-hop flights and package tours, to one with the most up-to-date facilities and the ability to handle eight million passengers a year. London will, at last, have its much-needed third international airport.

In keeping with modern thinking, the developers of Stansted, the BAA plc, have aimed from the outset to combine innovative terminal and operations facilities with careful regard for the environment. An impressive ten per cent of the entire area under development has been set aside for skilful and sensitive landscaping, using around quarter-of-a-million shrubs and trees to screen the developments at the airport from the surrounding Essex countryside. The new terminal is being constructed below ground level, giving the appearance of a single-storey building, so that its overall height corresponds with that of existing mature trees in the area.

Tilhill has played a major role in this exercise to improve the environment with by far the largest single contract ever handled by its Anglia Landscaping branch, situated 50 miles to the north-east in Culford, near Bury St. Edmunds.

The original £377,000 contract, awarded in October 1986 and extended in August 1987 by a further £125,000, kept branch forester Stuart Black and subsequently contracts manager Clive Tanner very busy since the spring of 1987 when major civil works began on the £300 million expansion project.

Work on site has been handled by a direct labour force, under site foreman David Pitt; they were hired specifically for the contract, and numbered nine men at the peak of activity.

Delayed for a full season when an unusually wet summer and autumn left the heavy Essex clay waterlogged, efforts were concentrated initially on the erection of 1400 metres of high tensile perimeter deer fencing and 800 metres of rabbit fencing until the main planting programme could get under way

● Planting in the long-term car park.

Looking back over the success of the first year's planting, with a successful "take" of approximately 95 per cent, Anglia Landscaping branch manager Phil Hymers expressed satisfaction with the way the contract progressed.

"It was not the easiest of contracts," he said. "The landscape architect, working for a prestigious client, set high specifications which required a high standard of workmanship and supervised the work very closely. Close co-operation was required with Lisney's architect David Karman and landscape engineer Brian Salmon of BAA plc to ensure that their high standards were achieved.

"Congratulations are due to Stuart Black, who has now transferred to Anglia Forestry branch, Clive Tanner and to David Pitt for a job well handled," he added.

in November 1987. Only the drier areas around the huge long-stay car park were planted on schedule.

Between the summer of 1987 and the end of the 88/89 planting season, the branch planted

some 60,000 bareroot trees, whips and transplants over an area of approximately 18 hectares in phases one and two of the contract.

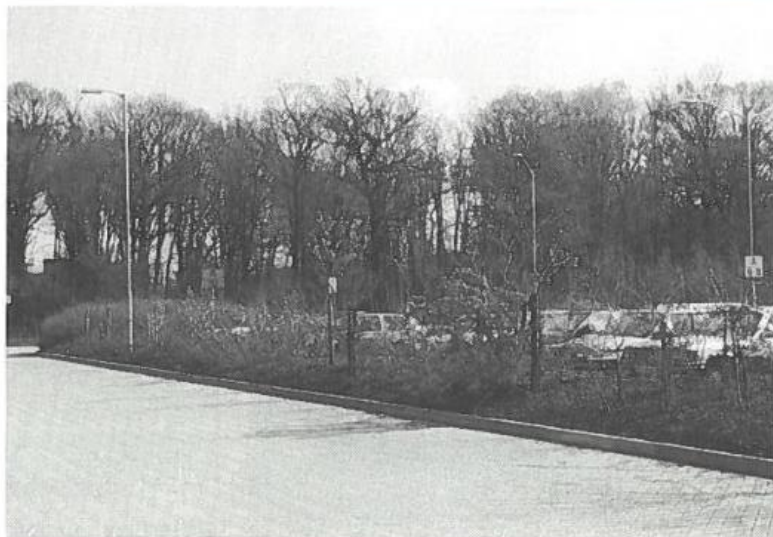
Working to a design by landscape architect Adrian Lisney

and Partners, the Tilhill boundary planting scheme resembles as closely as possible the indigenous local woodland plant association. In all, 27 different species have been used in 15 different tree / shrub mixes and within the mixes, the same tree species was specified as either 1500-2400mm feathered tree, 600-900mm whip or 450-600mm shrub. Within the planted plots, plant spacing is random, the planting plans having specified the numbers and sizes of each species to be used within each plot.

The planting plots within any one site are separated by rides of between two and six metres which have been seeded with a mixture of two shade-bearing woodland grasses. Larger open glades and site perimeters, totalling some 6.7 hectares, have been seeded with 20 species of grass / wild flower seed mixture.

Considerable preparation of the ground was necessary before planting work could begin. All sites were subsoiled to a depth of 600mm at 500mm centres. They were then contour ploughed to a depth of 300mm and power harrowed to 250mm — rotovating was not acceptable because of the risk of smearing the heavy Essex clays.

All planting work is now complete and the branch's chief responsibility is now the two-year maintenance contract — phase one is now in its second year of maintenance and phase two the first year, and David Pitt's reduced labour force of five men is now busy preparing for the first of three annual applications of herbicide and six grass cuts over the two year period.



Tree Aid: Misektab update

TREE Scribe 23 announced Tilhill's support of a woodland project at Misektab in the Sudan.

Last year's disastrous floods, as would be expected, delayed development. However, recent reports give an encouraging picture.

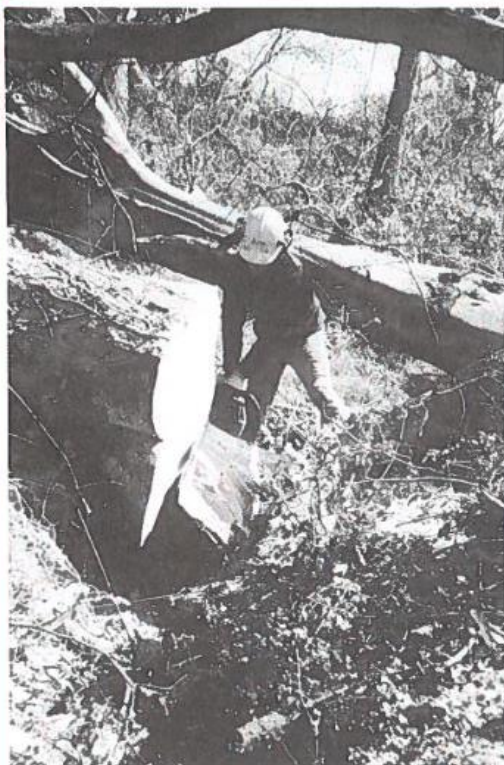
"The site at Misektab includes a nursery, woodland and a shelterbelt," said project manager, Ahmed Ali Dirdiri. "We found some difficulties obtaining bricks as most of the land was covered by floodwater. The people prepared the land for a shelterbelt which will be

extended from the edge of the woodlot. They also built the main canal and tested its level with water from the nursery well."

The latest news is that the nursery building is finished, the fencing is nearly complete and planting of the shelterbelt will start soon. The nursery should be in full production by the spring. The people are enthusiastic about the project and are committing a great deal of time and voluntary effort to ensure its success.

● Above: Villagers at the nursery well.





● Getting started on a big windblown beech at a Ministry of Defence site near Dover.



● Dick Hoare (left) and forestry assistant Noel Kennedy inspect stake material destined for the Longlyf plant. The background shows how a formerly impenetrable unthinned plantation suffering from windblow has been transformed by careful clearance. At first, Dick feared that clearfelling would be the only remedy. Noel is primarily concerned with harvesting and marketing operations after the windblow and in the supervision of planting and re-stocking broadleaved woodlands. A graduate of University College Dublin he came to Tilhill just over a year ago after a spell of consultancy work in Eire.



● Typical damage to conifer woodland taken just after the gale. The area has no

BRANCH'S

EIGHTEEN months after the great storm of October 1987, when media interest in the devastation of woodlands in the south east of England has died down, a great deal of work is still quietly going on to clear up and repair the damage.

A case in point is in Kent, location of Tilhill's newest forestry branch, where manager Dick Hoare and his assistant Noel Kennedy have been heavily involved in the harvesting and marketing of large quantities of windblown timber.

Full branch status was conferred on what had been a sub-station in July last year in response to the growing number of clients in that part of the country and an increased volume of work generally, but there is little doubt that the aftermath of the hurricane hastened the process of the branch's establishment.

Choice

On the face of it, the quiet coastal resort of Whitstable seems a slightly outlandish choice for such a base, but Dick was keen to find a base away from the congested city of Canterbury where an outpost of South East branch had been set up six years previously. With easy access to the motorway network, Whitstable is proving a wholly satisfactory centre of operations for an area which, although better known for its fruit production, is surprisingly well-endowed with woodlands.

Kent is a patchwork of towns, picturesque villages, well-laid out orchards and farmlands where, even only a few minutes' drive from a busy motorway, it is still possible to escape into the peace of a woodland such as Blean, nearly 500 hectares of conifer and mixed broadleaves growing on London clay between Whitstable and Canterbury.

Although Tilhill have been

involved in Kent for many years, it was the acquisition of Blean, along with two smaller tracts of woodland, by a major institutional client in 1981 which prompted the setting up of a permanent outpost.

A haven for wildlife and a peaceful retreat for local rambblers and horseriders, Blean lost 20 hectares of conifer in the storm. Some 3000 cubic metres of timber have been cleared and marketed and work has now started on clearing the lop and top in preparation for planting next season.

Rare

Blean's conifer age ranges from 2-55 years and the broadleaved coppice of mostly chestnut is managed on a 15-20 year rotation. Though quite common in Kent and Sussex, chestnut is rare north of the Thames, but finds a ready market for use as pale fencing.

As Tree Scribe toured the highways and by-ways of Kent, there was evidence all around of the devastation left by the storm but, happily, yet more evidence of the hard work which has obviously been going into clearing-up operations.

"In the immediate aftermath of the storm," said Dick, "there was no problem in finding outlets for the timber, as local mills wanted large-diameter pine saw logs but, as time went on, local sources just couldn't cope with the sheer volume of windblow and we had to look further and further afield. We have been marketing as far away as Wales and the North of England, although we have been lucky in having a ready-made outlet for a lot of smaller diameter material at Tilhill's own Longlyf plant at Greenhills."

The storm changed the whole pattern of marketing for Kent branch. Beforehand, most timber was sold to local merchants on a standing sale basis following submission of competitive tenders. Because of the scale of the

Tree Scribe Kent to I forestry in "the g England."

windblow, harvest brought into Kent branch areas in 1 and the timber h and marketed on

Blean's windblown conifer. Elsewhere hardwood posed marketing problems over-mature beech, oak and retained at the authorities for allowed to grow felling age. In material unsuitable for fencing and mini contributed to a on the market higher and higher buyers.

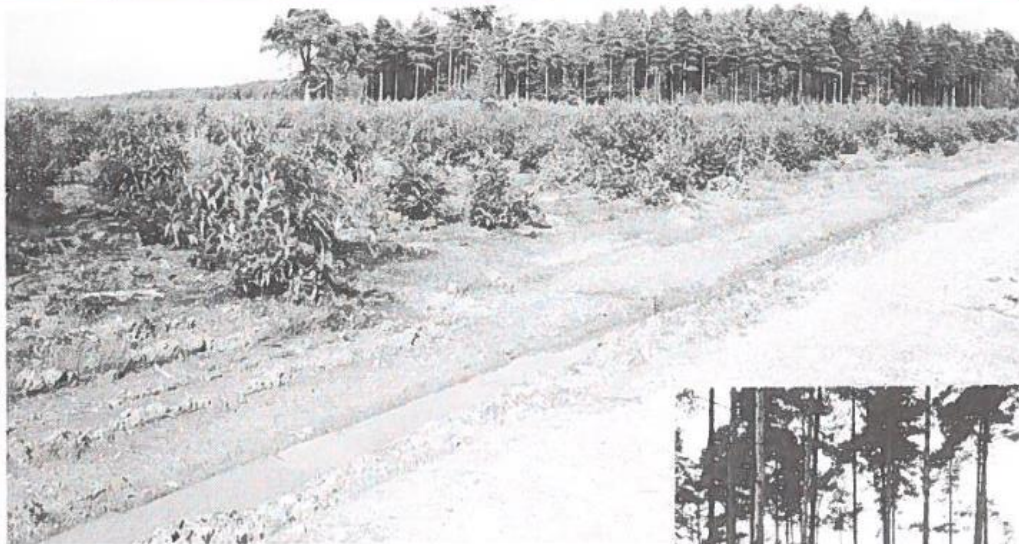
"As a result," it was only suitable which has also fluctuations in specifications. H managed to disp windblown hardy (predetermined sales basis."

The emphasis work is now in stockpiling at Blean managed estates storm, and to re from other non-carry out restocking.

Very few of the estates escaped Blean's sister estates and Joan Beech



le. The area has now been cleared.



One-year-old sweet chestnut coppice with 50-year-old pine behind — a typical sight at Blean.

H'S WINDFALL

Tree Scribe visits Kent to look at forestry operations in "the garden of England."

windblow, harvesting teams were brought into Kent from other Tilhill branch areas in Wales and Scotland and the timber harvested, extracted and marketed on a contract basis.

Blean's windblow was mostly conifer. Elsewhere, low grade hardwood posed some major marketing problems. Much of it was over-mature beech and, to a lesser extent, oak and other species, often retained at the request of the local authorities for amenity purposes and allowed to grow beyond its optimum felling age. In marketing terms, it produced large-diameter low grade material unsuitable for the traditional uses of furniture making, fencing and mining timber and contributed to a glut of hardwood on the market which, in turn, led to higher and higher expectations from buyers.

"As a result," said Dick, "some of it was only suitable for pulpwood which has also been subject to fluctuations in demand and specifications. However, we have managed to dispose of most of our windblown hardwood on an outturn (predetermined price per category) sales basis."

The emphasis on the branch's work is now increasingly on restocking at Blean and other managed estates affected by the storm, and to respond to requests from other non-client estates to carry out restocking.

Very few of the branch's managed estates escaped unscathed, but Blean's sister estates at Court Wood and Joan Beech Wood, together

amounting to a further 100 or so hectares of mixed hard and softwood plantations, were unaffected, as was Ellenden Wood, 80 hectares of mixed broadleaved woodland near Whitstable.

However, Godmersham Park with its 136 hectares of woodland, Leeds Castle, a well-known historic conference centre near Maidstone, South Bishopsden, Covert Wood near Canterbury, Packing and Soapers Wood near Ashford and Limekiln and Oakenpole Woods near Sittingbourne were all affected to a greater or lesser extent.

At Covert Wood, there are 600 cubic metres of beech and oak still to clear and at Lees Court, where Tilhill have been called in to carry out the restocking, the Game Conservancy has been advising on the best planting design for an estate whose primary concern, like Godmersham Park, is the shooting interest.

Plan

In one case, at Doddington Place Estate near Sittingbourne, the storm is likely to generate some management work for the branch. Called in initially to carry out replanting, Dick has now been asked to produce a management plan — and, he feels sure, there are other such invitations in the offing.

Looking back over one of the busiest periods of his working life — when before the arrival of an assistant he was struggling to keep pace with day-to-day estate management work as well as assessing the extent of the storm damage — Dick now sees an end in sight to the monumental task of clearing-up.

While regretting the devastation that resulted from the passage of such a damaging storm, he acknowledges the ironic fact that it

has given him access to new clients who might otherwise never had had occasion to use the branch's services.

With a gradual return to normality, Dick looks forward to involvement with the Farm Woodland Scheme, where some interest is already being shown by existing clients, and a similar pattern in the Woodland Grant Scheme, attributable to conventional interest in forestry and not as a consequence of the storm.

Flow

Moving away from the traditional woodland estates, there is a steady flow of work from one of the branch's major clients, the Woodland Trust, for whom the branch has recently been involved in amenity planting on golf courses, and the possibility of further work for Kent County Council, for whom the branch has already carried out rehabilitation of former waste disposal sites and roadside planting along trunk routes.

The completion of the M20 link between Ashford and Maidstone, scheduled for 1992, may yield further work and the advent of the Channel Tunnel is leading already to a trickle of enquiries from private householders about tree screening along proposed new road and high-speed rail links. Construction of the tunnel entrance at Folkestone and the railhead at Ashford will almost certainly call for woodland screening and with the branch's growing reputation in Kent it is well placed to undertake this type of work.

"All in all," said Dick, "it looks like having been a sound decision to set up a separate branch in Kent, especially in the light of what has happened, and I am optimistic about the branch's ability to exploit future potential in this part of the country."



● Born and brought up in Kent, branch manager Dick Hoare knows Kent like the back of his hand. He qualified with an OND in Forestry at Newton Rigg in 1974 and began his forestry career in Scotland with Moray Estates. He joined Tilhill in 1981 as a forester with Anglia branch after a spell with the Tasmanian Forestry Commission and a year later moved back to Kent to set up the Southeast branch outlier. In 1985, he gained his NDF and in 1986, became a Chartered Forester.



● Part-time branch secretary Diana Brown (above) joined Tilhill in July last year. She lives literally just around the corner from the branch's offices in Kingsdown Chambers and the formation of the new Kent branch co-incided neatly with her decision to return to work when the youngest of her five children started school.



Angela Douglas



John Burrow



Alan Hampson



Ben Schofield

Scottish Division

ANGELA Douglas joined Yorkshire branch in December to replace Stephen Adlard who has joined VSO to work in Nepal. Before joining Tilhill, Angela gained varied practical experience after graduating from Aberdeen in 1988, working on Deeside, in Sweden, and, most recently, peering at elm trees in Edinburgh.

ALAN Hampson has joined Argyll branch as a forestry assistant. Alan graduated from Aberdeen University with a BSc (Hons) in forestry in 1988 and spent a brief spell working with Edinburgh District Council before joining Tilhill. He has spent vacations working in Norwegian and Swedish forestry to broaden his experience.

BEN Schofield joined Borders branch in October as a forestry assistant. He graduated from Aberdeen University in 1984 with an honours degree and has spent the intervening period working as a



● Landscaping branch manager Ben Hurst (right) and supervisor Nigel Taylor in the new offices.

technical officer for Rentokil's Timber Preserving Division.

JOHN Burrow joined Central branch as a forester in January and brings to Tilhill six years' experience in private forestry in Perthshire. John hails from Tyne-side and completed his OND in 1981.

FOLLOWING his return from three months in the Bahamas with Operation Raleigh, forestry assistant **Alastair Anton** has been transferred from Borders Forestry branch to Solway Forestry branch.

People

IN October last year, Tilhill's Solway office began a new chapter in its history. After 23 years in Carlisle city centre locations, the office moved to an appropriately rural setting in the ground of Corby Castle in the village of Great Corby, some five miles east of Carlisle.

The move was precipitated primarily by the need for more space since the separate Solway Landscaping branch was created in July 1987.

The new offices were formerly part of the old stable block and hayloft until they were very tastefully refurbished four years ago by the previous occupants. The immense character of the building, with its sandstone walls, exposed oak roofing timbers and massive cross-beams, has been complemented by the extensive but sympathetic use of the pine cladding and restored pine doors throughout the interior.

Corby Castle is primarily a late-Georgian mansion, but contains at its core a peel tower dating from the 14th Century. The staff, who form Solway Forestry branch, Solway Landscaping branch and Solway Harvesting and Marketing Region, are all delighted with their new surroundings and the novelty of fresh air, tranquillity and birdsong.

Landscaping Division

ALASTAIR Binnie joined Landscaping Division in the New Year as Area Manager, based in Stirling. Alastair takes on responsibility for the two Scottish branches, as well as his general remit to develop and refine the division's contract systems. He brings with him a wealth of experience in the construction industry, latterly as regional director of Briggs Amasco, part of the Tarmac Group.

He is looking forward to being joined by his wife, Margaret, and their two sons moving from their Bristol home, after the school term is finished.

WILL Morley joined Anglia Landscaping branch as supervisor in October, having previously run his own landscape contracting business. Will has had a varied career, including a spell as a foreman in a landscape contracting company.

JAMES Thomson joined the branch in February as supervisor, after spending the previous three years with Cambridge Direct Tree Seeding, latterly as contracts manager. James gained an NCH in Arboriculture at Merrist Wood in 1982 and spent 1984-85 undertaking tree surgery in Australia.

MARK Savory has been promoted from contracts manager to branch manager of Southeast Landscaping branch. This follows Phil Hewitson's departure to join his brother's landscape company in Milton Keynes.

VINCENT Marley has joined the branch as contracts manager. He has had nine years' experience in the landscape industry as a designer and landscape manager, both in the private and public sectors. **Aidan Lane** is the branch's new landscaping assistant. He gained an NCH in Landscape Construction at Merrist Wood and rejoined ACH Landscapes for a year before attending the Welsh College of Horticulture where he gained an ANCH in Landscape Construction and an NEBSS. Before joining Tilhill in February, Aidan was working as an assistant landscape manager for Frosts in Milton Keynes. Graham Scott and Mike Price have both been promoted to landscaping assistant, and Mike has also been transferred to Yorkshire branch.

KEN Evans has joined Wilts and West branch as landscaping supervisor. Ken trained at Wisley and Merrist Wood and spent three years in commercial horticulture before going abroad on construction work. Before joining Tilhill, he spent two years working on internal and external landscapes in the London area.



Alastair Binnie



Will Morley



James Thomson



Vincent Marley



Aidan Lane

CONTRACTS

THE Division has moved into 1989 with a very sound order book, having collected almost £2.5 million worth of orders since the last Tree Scribe.

● **SOUTHERN CENTRAL** has continued its association with the award-winning Farnborough College of Technology with a further £19,000 contract for additional works to complete the landscaping. Among other contracts awarded are two further phases of planting at Watchmoor Park for Balfour Beatty Ltd., and Geoffrey Osborne Ltd., plus the maintenance for a further year of the initial planting and seeding, in total worth almost £150,000; also a £34,000 contract from Surrey County Council for Shepperton bypass planting works.

● **North of the border, SCOTTISH CENTRAL** has collected a number of contracts, including a £66,000 contract for the Scottish Development Agency for soiling and planting at Glasgow Zoo, £19,000 from the Property Services Agency for planting at Cumbernauld and £15,000 from McDonalds Hamburgers Ltd. for a new restaurant in Glasgow.

● **Further north, NORTHERN** branch has been successful in securing work for Hall and Tawse at Elgin Retail Park, Tulloch Construction for work at Fort William, Toby Restaurant for a new development in Aberdeen and Ross and Cromarty District Council for housing development.

Landscaping

● **SOUTH EAST** branch has been busy adding a number of contracts worth over £200,000, including planting and fencing at London's Docklands for the Development Corporation at St John's House (£26,000), contracts for Wimpey Construction, Croudace, ARC, Rugby, Portland, Mowlem and Countryside Properties.

● **Meanwhile, YORKSHIRE** branch has not been resting on its laurels and has collected a further dozen or so contracts to ensure a very full programme for the year. Largest is a £89,000 contract from the Property Services Agency for

GOING GOING...

YORKSHIRE branch recently broke new ground by offering a parcel of standing timber for sale by auction. The parcel of thinnings on Brandsby Estate totalled 1345m of Scots Pine, planted in 1944 and averaging 0.25m per tree. Bidding at the Forestry Commission joint auction at Scotch Corner was very brisk and when the hammer finally fell, the parcel was knocked down to Shotton Forestry at £23,500 (£25.65m) a price with which both the owner and Tilhill were very pleased.

... and places

Southern Division



● A happy Fred Dolby (left) with Peter Sloan at the celebration dinner.

FRED Dolby, Southern Division's Central branch deputy branch manager, who is much respected by clients and colleagues alike, celebrated 25 years' sterling service to Tilhill and Tilhill clients on March 1.

He was feted by his colleagues at a dinner in the Red Lion, Oakhanger when Southern Division Director Peter Sloan presented him with a commemorative engraved tankard and a cheque to mark the occasion.

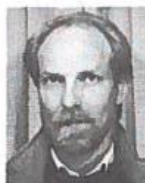
JONATHAN Terry has taken over from Richard Sochacki as manager of Marches branch following Richard's departure to join the Woodland Trust.

Jonathan joined Tilhill in 1983 after a short period with Woosnam and Tyler; he was first posted to South East branch but, in 1985, was transferred to Marches where he has had a range of management, harvesting and contracting responsibilities. He is a Chartered Forester.

DAVID Taylor has joined the branch as assistant manager. He returned to England following some 13 years of forestry practice in Sweden where he graduated as an engineer.

The branch also welcomes **JEAN** Allsop as the new secretary.

PETER Middleton has taken over as branch manager of South East forestry branch following the departure of Ray



David Taylor



Peter Middleton



Paul Eveleigh



Jean Allsop

Hawes to the National Trust.

Peter joined Tilhill South East in 1985 after a brief spell with Ligna Timber, and, since the October '87 storm, his principal responsibility has been organising the harvesting and marketing of windblown timber on clients' estates. The emphasis has now changed to restocking the damaged areas. Peter is a Chartered Forester.

PAUL Eveleigh has joined South East Forestry branch as a temporary forest supervisor. He is an OND sandwich year student at Newton Rigg and will be with Tilhill until September. He has already spent two years with the Forestry Commission in South West Scotland and worked for a brief period with English Woodlands in South East England.

CONGRATULATIONS to ...

... **Mark Savory**, of South East Landscaping, and his wife, Jacquie, on the birth of their second child, Nathan James, on October 27.

... **Ian Lear**, Anglia Landscaping contracts manager, and his wife, Lorna, on the safe arrival of their second daughter, Catherine.

... **John McGlade**, of Northern branch, and his wife, Lorna on the birth of a son, Fergus John, on December 29.

... (belatedly) Longlyt manager **Robert Bruce** and his wife, Sarah, on the birth of their first child, Anna Louise, on June 13, 1988.

... (also belatedly) **Steven Farnworth**, of Yorkshire Landscaping branch, on his engagement last July to Margaret Downs.

... and **Phil Townsend**, of the same branch, on his engagement to Diane Presto.

... **Dick Hoare**, of Kent Forestry, on his engagement to Miranda Crossley.

... **Dai Lewis**, Wilts and West (currently based at BP's Wytch Farm), on his engagement to Jenni Clarke.

... **Catrina Noble**, of Southern Division's Central Landscaping branch, on her engagement to James Ebdon-Robinson.

... **Stuart Gray**, Wilts and West Landscaping branch, on his marriage on January 27 to Kim Spicer.

... and **Clive Steward**, of South East branch, on his marriage on April 8 to Sheelagh Pluckrose.

... also to **John Little**, of Argyll branch, **Norman Starks** of Yorkshire branch and **Rob McDougall**, of Southern Division Central branch, on their success in the ICF Part II examination and qualification as Chartered Foresters.

CONTRACTS

Division

fencing and planting at Menwith Hill, closely followed by an £88,000 contract for Bovis Construction for landscaping at a new American Adventure Park in North Derbyshire. Not on the same scale, but requiring very tight programming, was a £12,000 contract for Yorkshire Water, through landscape Architects Cloustons, for work at a new flood prevention scheme on the River Foss.

● **WILTS AND WEST** contracts include £89,000 worth of planting and irrigation for J. T. Design and Build at Bristol Business Park, £62,000 from the Department of Transport on the A303 for roadside planting and fencing, £24,000 from Wiltshire County Council for planting on the Chippenham Relief Road and

£17,000 for landscaping to another new McDonalds Hamburgers restaurant, this time in Bristol.

● **SOLWAY** branch has picked up contracts worth just under £½ million in just three contracts. The largest is for Wigan Metropolitan Borough Council for reclamation work at Bickershaws Junction, which is worth £350,000 and will include large scale reseeding, planting and fencing to rehabilitate the area. The branch has also secured a contract from Cumbria County Council for £109,000 for more reclamation work in Barrow in Furness.

● **ANGLIA** are not far behind Solway in the value of tenders awarded, but this time on rather more contracts. These include a further phase of planting, seeding and footpath construction for Peterborough City Council, worth £71,000, at St John's Public Open Space and a roadside planting contract for the Department of Transport on the Martlesham bypass on the A12, worth £52,000.

Finally, **MARCHES** branch has secured several orders, the largest being for a planting contract on the Black Country Route, worth £68,000. Other contracts secured include two for Sandwell Metropolitan Borough Council, valued at £25,000, a £16,000 contract from the Black Country Development Corporation, £21,000 from the Mid Wales Development Corporation at Newton and £17,000 from Walsall MBC at Pleck.

Scottish



● Scrub being chipped at 4 am.

DURING last winter and spring, **BORDERS** branch executed a £40,821 contract for ScotRail for cutting and chipping scrub beside the main London-Edinburgh railway line to allow electrification work to proceed. The work had to be carried out during periods of least track usage, ie. at the dead of night, and demonstrated that foresters do know how to work in the dark.

The branch also won a £40,596 contract from Borders Regional Council for fencing, screening and planting over eight sites along the route of the A7 between Hawick and Selkirk.

● **LOTHIANS** branch has been awarded two contracts valued at £27,000 and £30,600 by the SSEB for tree-planting and grass-seeding work at Musselburgh ash lagoons and the site of the former Torness power station construction village.

Southern

● **CENTRAL BRANCH** has won contracts totalling more than £58,000, the largest of which, worth £21,660, was for replanting of storm-damaged woodland at Cowdray Estate, with subsequent maintenance. Valar Establishment awarded a £14,900 planting contract at Pulborough, West Sussex, and Defence Land Agent a £14,189 contract for fencing and tree and shrub planting at Chertsey, Surrey.

● **SOUTH** West branch has won a £61,866 contract from the Forestry Commission for roadside planting, fencing and maintenance on the Warminster by-pass.

6 IN 1988, the company achieved the second highest profit in its history despite the changes and many uncertainties arising from the budget. This reflects both the underlying strength of the various components of the business and the substantial efforts of staff everywhere. My colleagues on the board join me in thanking you all for a splendid performance.

Looking ahead, it is clear that forestry faces a difficult two or three years, at least. It is already apparent that the new grant system is an imperfect substitute for the former tax incentives as far as traditional investors are concerned. I suspect that this may already be recognised by government but it will inevitably be some time before changes, if any, are introduced. Sadly, there is also little evidence of improvement in either the quantity or speed of release of good quality land for planting or of any significant take up in the farm woodland scheme although here it is early days, as yet.

CHAIRMAN'S REVIEW

In contrast to this apparently depressing scene, long-term confidence in forestry in Britain has been demonstrated by the major investment in recent years — mainly from overseas — in new processing plant. It is safe to assume that the companies concerned are acutely aware of the implications of any major 'blip' in the level of new plantings.

In Tilhill, David Gittins' appointment as marketing director demonstrates the company's determination to devise new investment packages and to attract new investors both in this country and from overseas. A good deal of groundwork has

already been laid and I have every confidence that these efforts will start to bear fruit in the months ahead. David's role also embraces support for the sales effort of individual branches where local success is vital if targets, overall, are to be achieved. We also continue to play our full part in the work of FICGB which is co-ordinating the industry's political lobbying and related initiatives.

The prospects for the expanding Landscaping Division continue to look encouraging and further significant growth in sales is expected in 1989. The key task for those concerned will be to ensure that contracts are executed successfully and budgeted margins achieved. If this is done landscaping's contribution will be substantial.

1989 will, inevitably, be a difficult year. I am confident that we shall come through it successfully and that prospects for forestry, in particular, will look significantly brighter twelve months hence.

FORTH ESTATE

As well as handling large-scale forestry projects covering thousands of hectares, Tilhill's expertise is equally well suited to the management of small-scale mixed woodlands such as Scottish Amicable's Craigforth Estate near Stirling.



• Picnic table by woodland walk at Craigforth.

CRAIGFORTH takes its name from the rock which dominates the surrounding landscape, and from the River Forth whose upper reaches wind past its northern and western edges.

This craig is a wooded hill occupying some 39 acres of The Scottish Amicable Life Assurance Society's estate at Craigforth and is a prominent and unmistakable feature in the flat farming lands lying to the west of Stirling Castle. Its height of some 65 metres is hardly remarkable but due to its relatively small area its elevation is marked and, indeed, actually precipitous on its western flank.

The woodlands have been managed by Tilhill's Scottish Central branch since 1971, with much of the initial work involving clearing and tidying up following the great storm of 1968 which did considerable

damage. Re-stocking with new planting takes place more or less continuously with the object of achieving a balanced structure to the woodlands, both as regards age and variety of species. The plantings carried out immediately after the gale are now well established and, of course, all trees which came through the gale are 20 years older.

Generally, the older trees on the craig are sycamore, beech, oak, elm, ash, larch, Scots pine, Norway spruce and Douglas fir while the younger plantations include larch and grand fir as well as Norway spruce and beech, oak and sycamore.

Tilhill's duties extend beyond planting trees, and regular inspections are made to ensure, among other things, that boundaries remain in a stockproof condition and that outbreaks of infestation or disease are detected at an early stage and effective control measures initiated.

While there is some commercial reward from any managed woodlands, the more important aspect so far as Craigforth is concerned is the preservation and enhancement of an exceptionally interesting and beautiful environment. To walk through these woodlands is to be reassured that this objective is being achieved.

The soil varies from good fertile loam of varying depth on the lower slopes to more shallow soil of lower fertility on the upper reaches, and both trees and plant life reflect this difference. The woodlands host a rich and varied selection of ground flora notably ferns, brambles, bluebells, fox glove, wild mint, rhododendron, broom and elder as well as areas of natural birch.

During the summer months the craig is home to some half dozen roe deer, the number of which probably doubles in winter. The numerous rabbits and hares give rise to problems with their nocturnal raids on newly planted trees and shrubs, but there are also resident foxes which help to control the population. There is also a large number of grey squirrels which can often be watched from the coffee lounge of Scottish Amicable's headquarters.

Craigforth also affords shelter to a large number and great variety of birds and the larger species no doubt make a good living from the adjoining farmlands. A number of nesting boxes have been provided for the smaller species. The sole access to the craig for those outside Craigforth is through the main entrance so while there is a limited

number of annual visiting parties, the owners retain complete control. The result is that the craig remains a place of peace and solitude and its wildlife flourishes accordingly.

A hard metalled track runs round the perimeter and, in addition to providing access for vehicles engaged in forestry work, it is a splendid walk, on the eastern side through woodland, and on the west either on the top of the craig with a fine view over the carse of Stirling, or below a cliff through banks of rhododendrons.

A number of paths and picnic sites with rustic tables and benches have been provided for members of staff, together with a leaflet illustrating the various walks and points of interest.

Central branch manager, Tom McLellan considers the management of small woodlands such as Craigforth very important; it is too easy for this type of woodland to be neglected; yet, when well-managed, they add greatly to environmental quality.

Tilhill's depth of management expertise is readily applicable to the management and development of such multi-purpose woodland — and is further enhanced by such involvement.

PROFESSOR'S PLAUDITS



TILLHILL'S York dinner dance was another resounding success. Before the evening's jollity got under way, Aberdeen's Forestry Professor, Hugh Miller (left), replying on behalf of the guests, congratulated the industry as a whole and Tilhill in particular for the very real effort being made to combat the new difficulties being encountered by forestry.

Produced by Val Pettit for Tilhill, Greenhills, Tilford, Farnham, Surrey, and printed by the Dunfermline Press, Pitreavie Business Park, Dunfermline.