

STATE AND LOCAL AUTHORITY JOIN HANDS

recently at LAKE VYRNWY (North Wales), for it was there that foundation stones for a new school-cum-social centre were laid by the Chairman of the Montgomery Education Committee and the Chairman of the Liverpool Water Committee. It is not widely known that at Vyrnwy the Forestry Commission is in partnership with the Liverpool Corporation in a joint scheme of afforestation; the scheme, in fact, is the only one of its kind in the country, and in its operation the Commission and the Corporation share not only the cost of forming the plantations, but the receipts from the sale of timber.

GRIST TO THE MILL

Reference to Lake Vyrnwy Estate (see this page) would be incomplete without mention of the forest's praiseworthy contribution to the country's timber requirements. During the war 770 acres were clear-felled and produced nearly $1\frac{3}{4}$ million cubic feet of timber, most of this going to the coalmines; 50,000 cubic feet of sawn timber was produced at the Estate mill.

About 200 acres of plantations are now being thinned annually, and in some Sitka areas more than 700 cubic feet per acre is being taken out in the first thinning.

There are a number of features worthy of comment about this outstanding example of successful co-operation between the State and local authority. In the first place it is a long-standing partnership, forces having been first joined as long ago as 1914, when the State's interests were represented by the Development Commissioners. The Forestry Commission took over in 1919, the year of its establishment. Prior to 1914 the Corporation had already planted nearly a 1,000 acres of forest and, under the original agreement with the Development Commissioners undertook to plant a further 4,000 acres by 1943. The first world war slowed down progress to some extent, but with the exception of 37 acres the target was reached by 1939. In 1946 a new partnership agreement, back-dated to 1941 and covering 999 years, was entered into between the

Commission and the Corporation, this providing for further planting of bare mountain land or felled woodland on payment by the Commission of a sum representing a half share in the land.

The Liverpool Corporation's Lake Vyrnwy Estate as a whole (23,290 acres) forms the South Western extremity of the Berwyn Range and, prior to acquisition between 1880 and 1887, consisted of a number of upland farms where hill sheep and store cattle were raised. In earlier days the small village of Llanwyddyn, now submerged in the Lake, provided limited facilities for the religious, cultural and social life of the community. In order to preserve amenities and secure a balance in land utilisation, certain areas have been retained for agricultural purposes, land being let off in 10 farms and 25 small-holdings. The bulk of the moorland (10,299 acres) has been kept in hand by the Corporation and is run as a farm unit from the Estate office.

The current newspaper vogue being to stun the reader with statistics, there is no reason why in this instance The Slasher should not attempt to follow suit. Here, then, are a few figures of general interest about Vyrnwy: A flock of 10,500 sheep (14,000 at lambing time) is carried on the Estate farm; during the war the meat ration for 1,000 persons was produced annually; some 2,000 store sheep, 18,000 lbs of wool, and 100 tons of certified seed potatoes are disposed of each year; the Lake is $4\frac{3}{4}$ miles long, 12 miles in circumference, and has a top water area of 1,121 acres; its total capacity is 13,125,000 gallons, and its greatest depth 84 feet; draw-off of water per day to Liverpool is approximately 40 million gallons; and the aqueduct is 68 miles long.

Incidentally, the new school will include a spacious assembly hall, complete with stage; a lecture room, library, reading and club room, and a handicraft centre equipped with lathes and benches for the teaching of rural crafts to Vyrnwy's youth. Surrounding the school, within two years or so, will, be some 20 new houses, to be erected for forestry workers and persons employed on the waterworks.

APPOINTMENT OF NEW COMMISSIONERS

Some of you may have read in the Press of the appointment of three new Forestry Commissioners, who succeed two Commissioners who have resigned and a third whose term of office has concluded. But for the benefit of those who missed the announcement it is repeated, in brief, herewith. The REV. J. E. HAMILTON, M.C., MR. W. H. VAUGHAN, O.B.E., and MAJOR JOHN STIRLING of Fairburn are the newcomers, filling vacancies created by the resignations of the Rt. Hon. THOMAS JOHNSTON

and LT. COL. WILLIAM JOSEPH STIRLING of Keir and the retirement of the Rt. Hon. LORD COURTHOPE. The REV. Mr. HAMILTON is Minister of St. John's Church, Leith; he has taken an active part in public work for many years and is keenly interested in forestry. ALDERMAN VAUGHAN has been a member of the Welsh National Committee since 1945, and is a railway worker who has taken an active interest in agriculture from the workers' side; for his services from 1924 to 1941 he received the Gold Medal of the National Union of Agricultural Workers. He has had long experience of public work and is an ex-Mayor of Port Talbot. MAJOR JOHN STIRLING of FAIRBURN has been Chairman since 1945 of the North of Scotland Regional Advisory Committee for Forestry. He owns the extensive Fairburn and Monar Estates in Ross-shire.

Lord COURTHOPE, whose term of office has expired, has been referred to as the "father" of forestry. He had been a Forestry Commissioner since 1927, and from 1928-45 was the Commission's spokesman in the House of Commons. Lord COURTHOPE'S estates in Sussex have produced some of the finest oaks in the country. Some, sent by an ancestor, made the roof of Westminster Hall; others, provided by his Lordship, have come from the same estate to repair war damage.

SUMMER OUTING

The N.W. (England) Conservancy's summer outing took place recently. Having long ago indented for good weather, states our correspondent, it was only reasonable to expect that the Clerk thereof would be kind. In brilliant sunshine, therefore, the party -- 35 or so strong -- set out by luxury coach for Trentham Gardens, the beauty spot of the Midlands. Lunch was partaken, and then those who were so inclined set out to "do" the sights and attractions -- the lake, swimming pool, miniature railway, putting greens, tennis courts, Italian and rose gardens and so on. Others were content to laze on the grassy banks of the lake, or on the lawns. Later the more hardy folk gathered in the sumptuous ballroom. Followed tea, and then the two hour journey back to Upton Grange, near Chester. The party had scarcely alighted before there were demands for a "repeat" in the future. But whether this will materialise remains to be seen.

HE'S LIKELY TO BE POPULAR. JOSEF KAMINSKI, a Polish worker at Braydon Forest, in the Spring planted tobacco seed on waste ground. Some fine leaf has already been produced; some has been dried and prepared, and now Mr. Kaminski is daily seen smoking his home-grown, home-made cigarettes.

Mr. Kaminski, who before the war was a forester in Poland, holds the view that growing tobacco is not a lazy man's job. He arrives in the forest soon after six o'clock every morning and spends an hour or so on his "plantations" before starting work in the woods. His extraneous task involves killing slugs, weeding and cutting the flowers from his plants (three flowers, it seems, must be taken from each plant before the leaves are ready for cutting). After the leaves have been cut there is much to be done before the mixture is smokable; but considering the price of tobacco, to say nothing of the shortage, Mr. Kaminski assures us that his efforts are well worthwhile.

Footnote for would-be tobacco growers: It is understood that the plots of ground in question are sites of old fires, the woodash on same probably having a great deal to do with the success of Mr. Kaminski's efforts.

GLENTROOL CAMPING GROUNDS OPENED

Camping grounds in Scotland's third National Forest Park -- Glentrool -- have now been opened. Like those at Glenmore, to which reference was made in a recent issue of The Slasher, they are equipped with first-class facilities, including drinking water laid on to well distributed stand pipes, good washing amenities and so on. The main camping area is pleasantly situated with a view of the Loch, and has ample accommodation for campers of all types, whether with a tent or car or caravan. Charges are, of course, small. Nearby is an area reserved exclusively for girls' organisations, while two delightful woodland glades are given over to boys' organisations; both boys' and girls' reserved areas may be used free of charge. Following the pattern of camps in other Scottish National Forest Parks, there will in due course be a wet weather shelter where campers may gather to write letters, play games or just talk; work on this shelter is already in hand.

TRANSFERS

To 19th of last month the following transfers had been notified to Headquarters:-

Head Forester J. KENNEDY from Inverliver to Asknish and Minard, W. (S); Forester R. CROZIER from Loch Ard (Ackray) to Inverliver; Forester J. E. SMITH from Threathwaite to Grizedale, N.W. (E); Forester D. H. JONES from Asknish and Minard to Loch Ard (Ackray), W. (S); Forester W. WALTON from Kershope to Threathwaite, N.W. (E); Forester K. L. BEAUCHAMPEL from Kershope to Threathwaite, N.W. (E).

from Fearnock to Glenduror, W. (S); Forester J. MACKAY from Ardross to South Strome, N. (S); Foreman D. McDOWELL from New Forest to Dalby N.E. (E); Foreman D. ROSS from Pindon to Kessock, N. (S); Foreman D. MURRAY from Millbuie to Craighadrig, N. (S); F.O. BEAUTEMENT (S.T.A.) from Inverness to Office of Director, England; Miss J.M.D. THOMSON (E.O.) from Dumfries to Inverness; Miss J.C.S. McNEIL (E.O.) from Office of Director, Wales, to Cardiff.

SOCIAL LIFE AT MABIE HOSTEL

The beautifully sited hostel at Mabie Forest, in the South Conservancy, Scotland, now houses about 40 Trainees and Forest Workers. To provide recreational facilities a club has been formed on lines suggested by Forester A. GRAHAM and, with the co-operation of the Conservancy staff and the Warden, MR. MATTHEWS, successful whist drives and dances have already been held. Incidentally, the hostel is a large country house, suitably converted, and therefore has excellent accommodation for such social events. In point of fact the club is open to all Mabie workers and residents, and dart-boards, table tennis and other equipment, purchased from the proceeds of dances and so on, are in considerable use. A hard tennis court has been restored to a playable condition and this is much frequented. A good library has been arranged through the County Librarian, who loans books, both fiction and non-fiction, in batches of 300 at a time.

It should be added that a committee, with DONALD STEWART as hon. secretary, now runs the club. May continued success attend the Committee's efforts, for truly Mabie is a pleasant place in which to live and work.

DEATH OF MR. FRASER STORY

It is with great regret that we have to record the death in August of Mr. FRASER STORY, O.B.E., who was for many years the Commission's Education and Publications Officer.

Mr. Fraser Story, who was 72, was at one time Professor of Forestry at the University College of North Wales, Bangor, and in 1919 he acted as Education Officer to the Interim Forest Authority. He joined the newly established Forestry Commission in the same year, remaining with the Department until his retirement in 1941. He was for several years honorary editor of the Empire Forestry Journal. It was for his outstanding work on behalf of the Commission and forestry in general that he received the O.B.E.

FOREST GEMES (contd.) The Editor of The Slasher, writes State Forest Officer G.F. BALLANCE, S.W. (E) has called for records under the heading "Can You Beat It?" "But", he adds, "Forester E.C. KIBBLE at Eggesford may rest content that his forest holds one unassailable record -- that of being the oldest Forestry Commission unit. For it was here, in November, 1919, that the very first trees were planted by the then brand new State Forest Service; the historic site is marked with a bronze plaque, now mounted on a granite monolith in order that the spot may be commemorated for all time.

"As if inspired by this Holy of Holies, the remaining 1,000 acres of Eggesford, scattered in thirteen blocks on the hillocks of the valley of the River Taw, have developed far beyond earlier expectations and the stands of Douglas, Sitka and Norway, leavened with

a little Larch and mixed hardwoods, present a pleasing picture. Planting at Eggesford is an almost forgotten art, for the emphasis is now on utilisation, and despatches have averaged over ten trucks per week for the whole of the current forest year.

"Not only does Eggesford gladden the heart of the forester, but it is the happy hunting ground of our friend the G.P.O. Pole Inspector; and who can wonder, when there are in places over 5,000 cube per acre in 25 years, and quite often one cuts two telegraph poles from one 'stick'.

"Clerk of Works ASLETT has recently arrived to make the roads, ready for the really big stuff to come out in the next year or so."

More about Grizedale

In an earlier issue a correspondent discoursed on social life at Grizedale. Now here is District Officer E.E. DIXON to turn the spotlight on the forest proper. "The monks of old", he writes, "were noted for their choice of ideal country and it is not surprising that they should have settled in the Furness district, stretching from Barrow to the Valley of Grizedale. In possessing Grizedale, the Forestry Commission has an almost unique forest, for its 4,000 acres embrace the valley and almost everything in it, except the church and the "pub"; should the monks return they might well renounce their vows of celibacy, particularly after looking in at the Forester's office.

"In Grizedale's name we have a reminder of the days when the grize or wild boar was a common object of the chase. Its descendants, of which there are many in the area, are of course tame, but Forester ARTHUR KING (known locally as King Arthur) carries on the

arduous task of hunting in pursuit of all and sundry.

"Grizedale was the scene of No. 1 Officer P.O.W. Camp, and at one time the Commission had 17 German generals preparing produce. Had they escaped they might well have confounded themselves, for the forest abounds in place names designed to confuse -- New South Wales, China, Black Apple Tree, Potato Peg, Heel Toe Hill, Ciceley's Brow and Bogle Crag being some of them.

"During the war practically all the standing coniferous timber, mainly good quality European Larch amounting to nearly 1½ million cubic feet, was felled by T.P.D. The amenities were not entirely spoilt, due to the presence of large areas of hardwood timber and coppice adjoining the roadside. These are to be preserved, or renewed, in perpetuity, and it is hoped that one day this forest will be a good example of planned amenity."

RETIREMENT OF HEAD FORESTER TOM LEWIS

Fifty years' service with the Office of Woods and the Forestry Commission. Such is the proud record of Head Forester TOM LEWIS, of Tintern, who recently retired. Tom commenced work in the Dean in the summer of 1898, when he was 15 years old; in 1903 he became one of the students at the first School of Forestry, at Parkend, which Mr. PHILIP BAYLISS (then Deputy Surveyor) was instrumental in starting. His instructor was C.O. HANSON, and he was awarded his certificate in 1905. A year later Tom was appointed Woodman Forester in charge of the Churchill district of the Dean.

Tom tells us that conditions then were far different than today. His wage was 18 shillings a week plus house, and he was granted the privilege of grazing a couple of heads of cattle in the enclosure. Pay day was on a Monday, once a month. Woodmen, as the Foresters were then called, had to present themselves twice a week at the Crown Office for instructions, fully dressed in Norfolk jacket, breeches and leggings, all the products of local tradesmen. No-one would think of leaving his slasher behind on such occasions, for the Deputy Surveyor looked upon it as a badge of office.

In those days "Shank's pony" was the only accepted means of transport, and Tom well remembers being "dressed down" for using a bicycle on his beat. In 1911 Tom was transferred to the Russell Beat at the Dean, and in 1924 he was promoted to Head Woodman; in 1926-7, when the Commission grading scheme first applied to the Dean officers, he was placed in Grade II on maximum salary, and in 1929, on promotion to Head Forester, was transferred to Tintern.

Tom served under the following officers: Deputy Surveyors BAYLISS, LEASE, OSMASTON, YOUNG, TAYLOR, LONG and POPERT; Conservators BROADWOOD, MUIR and RYLE. To all he pays a big compliment.

The South Wales Conservancy staff will shortly be making a presentation to this Commission stalwart, and it is everyone's hope that he will long be spared to enjoy his well earned retirement.

FIUNARY AND THE RAILWAY

When we suggested Forester DRYSDALE was at Fiunary farthest from the railway, The Slasher started a party. The Forester, we said, "has only 45 miles to go to see a train at Fort William." Came a challenge from Education Officer T.A. ROBBIE, Glentress; Forester Drysdale, he claimed, could go by road to Corran Ferry, cross, and then get the train at Ballachulish, with a considerable saving in mileage. Forester J. MOWAT, of Corriedoo (South Conservancy, Scotland) states both previous contentions are wrong, for by not crossing the ferry but taking the mailboat, presumably from Lochaline, to Oban the journey is shorter than either estimate. From The Slasher correspondent, North Conservancy, Scotland (Mr. D. KENNEDY) comes endorsement of Forester Mowatt's claim, for it is pointed out that by using the boat from Lochaline to Oban the distance is reduced to a mere 22 miles. Mr. Kennedy quotes as follows from a letter he has received from Forester Drysdale: "You are correct in saying that the shortest route is by boat to Oban." He adds: "Since 1931, when planting commenced, eight boats have been wrecked within sight of Fiunary, but in calm weather the Sound of Mull can be very beautiful and some very good sea fishing can be had -- then one forgets all about the storms."

AROUND AND ABOUT

South Conservancy, Scotland, welcomes District Officer W.S. FERGUSSON, recently returned to work after a serious illness. Mrs. NANKEVILLE, a member of the South East (England) Conservancy staff, is the wife of "Bill" Nankeville. "Bill" represented Britain at the Olympic Games. Forester J.E. EVANS and Forest Worker R.R. PIERCE, of Beddgelert, recently took part in a feature in WASH on the B.B.C.'s Welsh Home Service, the subject being "Working in the Woods".

SLIP UP Pass it off as a typist's error, or put it down to the Information Officer's myopia having taken a turn for the worse. Whatever the cause the fact remains that the August issue of The Slasher was numbered 9 instead of 8. Will readers who file their copies kindly note?