

SUPPORT FOR THE DEDICATION SCHEME

It is still somewhat early to forecast the measure of support which will be given to the Dedication Scheme, but quite a number of landowners have now gone so far as to enter into final negotiations. In Scotland the scheme has a staunch supporter in Lord Cawdor, who recently ventured an opinion which was widely reported in the Press. Without this form of aid from the State, he said, it would not be possible for him to replant those of his woodlands which were felled in the war.

Lord Cawdor's woodlands certainly provide an example of private estate forestry at its best, and a visit to the estate is as enlightening to the layman as it is instructive and interesting to the forester. The total area of woodlands which Lord Cawdor is dedicating amounts to 5,647 acres, which means that only Cawdor Wood, in which is "policy" timber, remains outside the scheme. One section of the Cawdor policy area is Colhill, where some exceptional specimens of Scots Pine can be seen. These are in the region of 160 years old, some of the trees running to 200 cubic feet. "In the last war," says Lord Cawdor, "they were much sought after by the Canadians, who said the sight of such large timber made them feel quite at home." Needless to say, the foresters from overseas were not privileged to fell any of these giants.

THE FOOTBALLERS

Last month, when the Commissioners were en route by train for Taunton, prior to inspecting some forests in the South West (England) Conservancy, there was observed the following little cameo.

Scene: the Dining Car. Enter the Commissioners in a body, accompanied by Commission officials, among whom is the Secretary Mr. F.W. HAMILTON. The meal commences, and The Charming and Querulous Lady strikes up conversation with the Secretary.

Comes the fade-out. The meal over, the Commissioners file from the car.

"Do tell me", whispers the Charming and Querulous Lady to the Secretary.

"Just who are all these gentlemen? Are they a football team?"

Cawdor Estate has made a great contribution to the timber requirements of the two world wars, during which fellings amount to 4,700 acres and the yield to 12 million cubic feet. Much, if not all, of the area felled in the first war has been replanted, and operations under the Dedication Scheme provide for the replanting of the remaining felled areas within approximately 12 years.

Latest figures of owners who have intimated their willingness to consider dedication are: England 649 (involving 278,243 acres); Scotland 211 (216,224 acres); Wales 61 (14,087 acres). Total - 921 owners, 508,554 acres.

DATE FOR THE DIARY

The Social Club Committee are going "all out" to make the winter dance of the Scottish Directorate the best ever, and, in the hope The Slasher will be circulated in Scotland before the event, our aid has been invoked to call attention to the date and to some of the attractions. In the past quite a number of people have said they would have attended this annual dance had they known more about it in advance. The all-important factor regarding this year's dance is the date -- THURSDAY, 18TH NOVEMBER, which has been chosen in order that there shall be no clashing with other important functions. It also coincides with the advent to Scotland of the Forestry Commissioners, who are holding their November meeting north of the Border; there is therefore reason to hope, state the Committee, that some of the "heid yins" will find it possible to attend.

Dancing will be from 8 p.m. to 1 a.m. in the Balmoral Rooms, situated in the centre of Princes Street, Edinburgh. (Negotiations, we are told, are proceeding with the authorities with a view to the Castle being floodlit on the evening in question). Dress will be optional and there will be the usual first-class facilities and amenities -- bar, band and buffet. There is to be a liberal allotment of prizes. Tickets are 8s.6d. and are likely to be in great demand, so don't delay with your application. This should be made to the Secretary, Social Club, Forestry Commission, 25 Drumshough Gardens, Edinburgh 3. "Let us have a really good turn-out," say the Committee, "and make the dance an outstanding social occasion in the history of the Commission."

PLOUGHING DEMONSTRATION

An excursion for District Officers and Foresters, who had not before had an opportunity of seeing all the various makes of plough at work, was arranged early in October by J.T.L. FITZGERBERT, State Forest Officer, Scotland (N). The demonstration was held on Kilcoy Forest, Black Isle, where some 560 acres had already been ploughed for P.49 planting, and was certainly impressive. The types of plough on view

were the R.L.R., Double Furrow Cuthbertson, Haddington, Begg, and the Disc Plough, otherwise known as Blane's Disc. The party was conducted by District Officer J.A. DICKSON and Forester A.S. MACKENZIE, and in addition to seeing the demonstration, the visitors inspected the new wasteland nursery which is being laid down at Finton (Hounteagle) and the Kilcoy (Bellton) wasteland nursery which was laid down last autumn and sown out in the spring.

The following comprised the party: District Officers D.S. SPRAGGAN, A.M. FRASER, R.A. INNES and R.O. DRUMMOND (District Officer J.D. MacLEAN had had a preview of the demonstration); Foresters K. MACKAY (Ardross), J. MACKENZIE (Strathconon), J. GUNN (Dornoch), W.H. MACKAY (Borgie), A. MACKAY (Morangie), R.A. SUTHERLAND (Balblair), R. MURRAY (South Laggan), A. MacLeman (Inchnacardoch), A. MACKENZIE (Achnashellach), C. McDONALD (Glenbrittle), D. MACRAE (Lael), J. MACKAY (South Strone), R. BROWN (Longart), J. FRASER (Queens), D.M. MacLEOD (Assich), J. FRATER (Strathnairn), F.D. STOBBLIE (Terness), A. THOM (Inshriach), D.R. SUTHERLAND (Strathdearn), J. GORDON (Finton). Also present were Messrs. J. BLANE (Machinery Officer, Scotland) and R. SKINNER (North Conservancy Engineer).

FIRE, FLOOD, AND

For many months work has been proceeding in order that the Headquarters building in Savile Row might present a more pleasing facade. It will be recalled that the front of the building was badly damaged by bombs during the war. At long last restoration seems near completion, and it has been possible for a re-allocation of accommodation to take place. From their temporary home at Bryanston Square, W.1., have come the staff of the Education Section, under Chief Education Officer J.Q. WILLIAMSON, to be housed on the third floor of the building, while Publications Officer H.L. EDLIN has made a similar move.

These last weeks, during which the workmen have been giving the building its "final touches," have not been without their minor trials; at the time of writing the heating apparatus is yet to be connected in several of the restored rooms, and during cold spells at least one officer has been seen wearing his overcoat while working. As a counter measure to the cold a battery of oil stoves (with attendant smells) has been imported and the other day one of these caught fire at almost the same time that a miniature flood occurred. The latter, it is understood, was the result of the water having been turned on at a time when a radiator was disconnected. Water poured along the corridor and swept into several rooms. Cold and disconsolate, the gentleman who is wont to work in his overcoat was heard to murmur: "First fire, now flood. And after this, no doubt, eternal damnation."

LANDOWNERS AND TIMBER MERCHANTS AT NORTHERWOOD

The scope of the courses at Northerwood House was recently widened, to allow for instruction in forestry to be given to parties of landowners and timber merchants, and many are the bouquets for the Commission which have been forthcoming as the result.

The timber merchants, who spent a week in the New Forest, were members of the Forestry Section of the Federated Home Timber Associations. They received instruction from Conservators A.H.H. POBERT and G.B. RYLE which was designed to help them in a praiseworthy new enterprise, namely the replanting, by agreement with the landowner, of woodlands from which timber is purchased and felled. It is an interesting fact that during the planting season 1946-47 more than 800 acres were replanted on behalf of owners; we are told that final figures for the season 1947-48 will show that an even greater area was dealt with.

While on the subject of Northerwood Courses we are reminded that the series of Forest Cameos has not so far included the New Forest. Herewith, then, a contribution by District Officer EDLIN, who was formerly stationed in the district. Before your next visit to Northerwood you may care to turn up this account and prime yourself as to the forest's attractions.

Established

"Control of the New Forest was transferred to the Forestry Commission in 1924. / under Norman forest law, this forest has in part been converted to modern silviculture, but remains the greatest centre of natural woodland, and the largest stretch of unenclosed land, in England.

"Lying between the rivers Test and Avon, the forest occupies undulating land rising from sea-level to 400 feet, with a subsoil of sands, clays and gravels. The surface soils are of low fertility and are covered, over vast areas, with heather. These heaths occupy some 40,000 acres, most of which has never been enclosed or cultivated, and over them wander herds of half-wild ponies and heifers owned by Commoners and farmers. The enclosed woodlands cover some 16,000 acres, the area being limited and defined by Act of Parliament. They occupy the better soil and record in miniature the whole story of silviculture in England. There are remnants of hazel coppices, and also coppice-with-standards, introduced by the Tudors, while later enclosures, some ordained by Charles II, were planned to grow oak for naval ship-building. In mid-Victorian times there was a move towards conifers, and a large acreage of Scots Pine was established. At the same time imposing avenues of Douglas Fir were laid out, and an interesting "Pinetum", or collection of exotic conifers, was planted at Bolderwood. The Douglas fir achieves remarkable growth here, reaching

heights over 100 feet, and volumes exceeding 200 cubic feet per stem in only 80 years. The volume of one such species felled during the war was more than 500 cubic feet.

"More recently natural regeneration of oak and Scots pine have proved successful, newer conifers, Sitka spruce, Japanese larch and Corsican pine have been planted over considerable areas. But the really unique feature of the New Forest is its natural and unenclosed woodland. Unplanted, and unprotected from grazing animals, this has persisted from prehistoric times. Sturdy oaks and massive beeches, fringed with birch and alder, form groves on the more fertile soils, regenerating themselves to some degree by natural seeding. They cover an irregular area estimated at 8,000 acres.

"The three types of vegetation, open heath, natural woods, and plantations of various types, spreading over an area of 100 square miles mingle together and, with occasional tracts of agricultural land, form an attractive country scene. Although the Commission's lands are open to the public, animals and rare plants survive under protection. The flora includes the marsh gentian with its trumpet shaped flower of intensest blue, the sandwax, yellow log asphodel, pink bog pimpernel, and the green Daphne laureola of the woodland shades. Buzzards and herons are to be seen, and the crossbill feeds on the pine cones."

WHAT'S IN A NAME? In the Records Section at Headquarters there is a filing system popularly known as the "strip tease". In this are recorded the names of Commission staff from Conservators to Foremen, as well as of those who work in the various offices. The name and location of each individual is recorded on a strip of card, which is fitted into a frame not unlike a picture postcard stand. An inspection of the stand (out of office hours, of course!) is an interesting pastime. There are, for instance, 121 "Macs" to be seen, among them being 16 MACDONALDS (showing that Glencoe was not entirely effective), 15 MACKAYS, 14 MACKENZIES and eight MACRAES. There is one MACBETH and (shades of William Shakespeare) one LEAR.

There is a PEACE and a PARLEY; a MANN and a CHILD; an OLD and a MILD; an ACE and a KING; a HYDE and a PARK; and a DAY and a KNIGHT.

There is a sporting flavour about BOWER, WOODCOCK, MILLS, THOMSON, WALCOTT, FAR, LEWIS, SHARKEY; AMES, SUTCLIFFE, HENDRY; MATHEWS and BROWN. There are namesakes of famous admirals, to wit NELSON, BEATTY, DRAKE, FRASER, HOWE and NAHIER and, to support them, a BOSUN, ORR, LEE and a WEATHER.

The file includes 28 employees by the name of JONES, and 21 who answer to WILLIAMS. There are 16 SMITHS. And how about this for a colour scheme: REDD, GREEN, WHITE, GREY, BROWN and PINK? There is a FEATHER, a PAYNE and a NURSE (but no doctor); and a HOLMES and a WATSON, a DRUMMOND and a BLAKE to remind us of literary escapism. The countryside comes to mind when one reads such names as LAMB and SHEPHERD, WARREN and BUCK; MARSH, HART, HIND, WOOD, FOREST, FORESTER; BIRCH, ALDER, BOX and BROADWOOD. ROSE and THORN; LING, MARTIN, RAVEN, PIGEON, CRANE and GOSLING; WEIR, WATERS, BROOK and BRIDGES.

We have on the staff a CARTER and a PATTERSON; one (or more) BUTCHER, MILLER, BAKER, CARPENTER, MASON, COOK, BREWER and TAYLOR; there is a JUDGE and a LAW; PARSON, VICAR, CHURCH and a BELL, DEACON, BEEDLE, ABBOT, ABBEY, POPE and CROZIER and a PRIEST.

Employee with the longest name (so far as we can trace) is Miss FAULCONER (North Wales Conservancy Office, Shrewsbury).

That's all for the present. If you know of some better combinations of names than are included in the foregoing, let us hear from you.

----- TRANSFERS

The following moves had been reported to Headquarters to 19th October;

District Officer L. J. SLOW, from Tintern, W. (S) to Cardiff; Foresters W. H. JONES, Dovey Corris, W (N) to Connors Cosh, W (N); E. BROWN from Penllergaer, W (S) to Cwmogwr, W (S); T. A. JANE, Halwill, E (SW) to Lydford, E (SW); G. H. RICHARDS from Cwmogwr to Penllergaer; O. JONES from Coed-y-Brenin, W (N) to Aberhiraant, W (N); G. E. WATWOOD from Caio, W (S) to Chepstow-Itton, W (S); R. S. ANGUS from Bennore School to field work in S (W); W. SCOTT from Northerwood House to Bennore School; R. S. WHALE from Lydford to Flyn, E (SW); E. C. W. EVERETT from Kielder, E (NE) to Charnmouth (New); A. S. NORMAN from Chepstow-Itton to Cwmogwr; Foreman R. MAIN-ELLEN from Newton Nursery to Allean, S (E). J. HARPER, H. E. O., from Education, H. Q., to Engineering, H. Q.; Miss O. A. MATHCOM, T. C., from Alice Holt to Woking, E (SE).

----- DEAD BUT IT WON'T LIE DOWN

Controversy as to the capacity of Lake Vyrnwy continues, despite our pious hope that the last word had been said, or written, on the subject. The following letter, headed The Brewers Arms, Anywhere (Phone 14 The Road) has reached the Editor from a reader who signs himself Colonel Chinstrap. (How nice it is to have the ITIA cast among our registered readers!).

Dear Sir,

I was horrified to note that Edition No. 9 of The Slasher had devoted no less than 25 per cent of its space to a subject I abhor -- Water! -- and, positively wallowing in the topic, discussed the disgusting stuff in terms of millions of gallons. This editor fellow, I said to a fellow bottle-opener, should be horsewhipped from the brewery to the distillery and back.

My wrath, however, was abated when, reading further down the page, I found you had slashed the capacity of the container of this shameful fluid by 99.5 per cent by the nearest stroke of the pen.

You are, my dear sir, a benefactor, and I can only hope you will be suitably rewarded by a grateful community.

Your obedient servant, sir,

(Signed) CHINSTRAP (Colonel).

P.S. If you could show me how to extract the volume of three bottles of whisky from one single bottle, I should be indebted to you for life.

NEWS FROM WEST SCOTLAND

The Office staff of the West Conservancy (Scotland), believing in the old adage "All work and no play", etc., have formed a social club. The committee is now busy arranging various functions.

The Executive Officer of the Establishment Section is to be congratulated on adding to his own establishment; Mrs. LIDDELL and son are doing well. The Registry and Mapping Section is in the matrimonial news, and we congratulate Miss HEATH (who has become Mrs. McKECHNIE) and Miss Murray (now Mrs. CULLUM). Both ladies are continuing in their respective office posts.

MORE WEDDING BELLS IN SCOTLAND

District Officer W.S. FERGUSSON, South Conservancy, Scotland, was recently married to Miss Mary Graham, Lochgilphead.

A STEP UP THE LADDER

Our correspondent in the North West (England) Conservancy Office at Chester has sent us a list of recent promotions and postings. The following are congratulated on promotion from Foreman to Forester, Grade II; O.R. SARSDY (Hope); J. DAY (Bawtry); C.A. HODGSON (Emmerdale); C.J. LLOYD (Mortimer); W. GARDNER (Clipstone); J. MCILLEN (Grizedale); R.D. ANDERSON (Kershope); C.H. DACKHOUSE (Grizedale); M. MURRAY (Grizedale).

INTRODUCTION TO FORESTRY

We are indebted to H.A. STOODLEY, a forest worker at Stanway, for sending us a contribution which tells of his impressions on being introduced to forestry and of his gratification at helping to create new forests. This is the sort of contribution which we would gladly use at length if The Slasher were more ambitiously produced. An appeal is earnestly made to contributors whose "special articles" are cut to bear with us; until such time as The Slasher may be produced in another form it is necessary generally speaking, to devote our space to the more personal news items.

S.O.S. ANSWERED

Think no more of E.C. HARNER'S plea for a table tennis table. (The Slasher, last month). This has been met by friends at Headquarters.

THE EVERGREEN

JEAN HORSHAM, of the Welsh Directorate, has sent along a copy of the magazine of the Forestry Commission (Wales) Social Club. We are quick to say that we regard this publication as a very pleasing effort, for although its contents are "roneoed", the various features are well displayed and there is even a very creditable effort in the way of illustration. When we saw the first edition of this magazine it was nameless, but as the result of a competition this second issue bears the title "The Evergreen," which was submitted by M.C. THOMAS. Other titles in the short list were "The Conqueror" (Miss LEWIS and Miss BEATTIE), and "Lop and Top" (P. EDWARDS) -- the latter title, incidentally and by coincidence, being one which was considered for The Slasher.

Miss HORSHAM and Miss E.K. AKISTER are Assistant Editors of "The Evergreen", and V.H. WILLIAMS is Editor. There are numerous contributions, the accent being on humour and the gentle "leg-pull" which plays such a big part in creating esprit de corps in an office. We can foresee a great future for Wat Price, the Prince of Welsh forest workers, whose adventures are pictorially described.

MORE NEWS WANTED

For the first time for some months there has been an easing off in the number of contributions reaching The Slasher. We hope this is merely a seasonal trend, but the opportunity is taken to remind readers of the need for sustained support. In each office-Directorate and Conservancy there is now a correspondent of The Slasher, to whom, incidentally, our warmest thanks are due. If you have any personal news (the more names mentioned therein the better) please send it along to The Slasher Correspondent c/o the office to which you are responsible