

EIGHT NEW FOREST VILLAGES DEVELOPMENTS AT KIELDER

A BOOKLET - ONE OF THE BRITAIN'S FORESTS SERIES - which describes Kielder Forest, in Northumberland, N.E. England, has now been published and is on sale at the modest sum of sixpence. Kielder, with Redesdale and Warke, its neighbouring forests in the North East Conservancy, is to be the setting for great social developments, for eight new self-contained forest villages are to be built in the area. Work has already begun on Kielder Village, which will eventually comprise some 220 houses. Its population, which will be of the order of 800, will use Kielder Castle - a 19th century shooting lodge formerly occupied by the Duke of Northumberland - as a community centre. The basis for this has already been established with the formation at the Castle of a Workman's Club open to both forest employees and local farmers and other residents.

O.B.E. FOR MR. F. W. HAMILTON

MR. F. W. HAMILTON, who is to retire at the end of the month from office as Secretary to the Commission, has received well-merited recognition of his long and outstanding services to the Department. In the Birthday Honours he was awarded an O.B.E., having for some time been a Member of the Order of the British Empire.

We offer our warmest congratulations to Mr. Hamilton on the occasion of this second tribute, which marks the close of more than 30 years' work for the good of the Forestry Commission.

Mr. H. A. TURNER, who succeeds Mr. Hamilton, went to the Ministry of Transport in 1935 as an Assistant Principal. He became an Assistant Secretary in 1944, and in 1946 was seconded to the Training and Education Division of the Treasury. From 1948-50 he was on the Central Economic Planning Staff at the Treasury.

The group of forests covers some 170 square miles and spreads from the Rede to well beyond the Tyne in the west, extending south from the Border almost to the Roman Wall. The whole area is being developed in co-operation with the Ministry of Agriculture, so as to ensure the maximum use of the

land in the national interest. Good agricultural land, of course, is being retained in agriculture and in the panorama which unfolds from the hillsides one sees just how the countryside can be used for both forms of husbandry. The young trees clothe the higher land and the farmsteads and holdings nestle below, receiving shelter from the wind and occupying the more fertile ground. The area planted to date in the group of forests is more than 44,000 acres, and last season the area planted amounted to almost 6,000 acres. The method (for benefit of those who are unable to see it) is one whereby the young trees are planted in the squares cut from the ground thrown up by huge ploughs, which not only provide the planting sites but at the same time leave drains which carry away surplus water. Raised thus above the level of the thick grass or heather, and provided with a moist yet well-drained medium in which to start its life in the forest, the young tree has the condition which it needs for satisfactory growth.

Employment in the three forests is of the order of 350 and it is estimated that in the years to come there will be employment for more than 2,000 men. Most of the men are engaged on new planting, but quite a number are employed on thinning in the Smales section. Before many years elapse these forests will be yielding timber of considerable size, and it is conservatively estimated that the total out-turn of thinnings during the next 20 years will amount to one million tons, or the equivalent of 100 large shiploads of imported timber costing 46 million dollars at present rates.

Indeed much is happening at Kielder and in the nearby forests. Employment is rising, new roads are being built, new houses are taking shape and older premises are being modernised. Not only the appearance but the very economy of this corner of England is being changed, and there is a fuller life in store for the inhabitants.

* * SHOCK FOR FOREST WORKERS

SKELETON FOUND AT MORTIMER

ONE OF THE LONELIER SECTIONS of Mortimer Forest, North West England, was recently the scene of a gruesome discovery. Forest Worker D. LEGGE, while brashing, noticed what appeared to be a pair of shoes lying half buried in the ground and, with the help of Forest Worker L. BURROWS, he subsequently unearthed the skeleton of a man. This lay in a carefully dug grave, in which the police later found a revolver, a trowel, a small box containing papers, and other personal possessions.

It was later established that the body was that of the son of a resident of the district, who had dug the grave and shot himself while lying therein. Commission staff were able to help the police in a number of ways and the event will long be remembered locally. Forester W. R. SHELLY points out it has often been regretted that Mortimer could not provide some out-of-the ordinary news for The Slasher, but feels there is now an unwelcome degree of atonement.

* *MORE ABOUT "SILVER BILLY"

WRISTS TURNED ON "SPRINGS OF
FINEST STEEL"

LAST MONTH'S STORY of the cricket field near Alice Holt Lodge, and of the prowess of "SILVER BILLY" BELDHAM, appears to have created some interest among those of the staff who are cricket enthusiasts. A correspondent points out that according to Sir Pelham Warner's "Lords, 1787-1945", Silver Billy Beldham was a professional cricketer and a member of the famous Hambledon Club. He made 144 runs on Dorset Square in 1792 and, for Surrey, two other centuries on the first Lords ground. He only just missed the credit of the first century at Dorset Square in 1789, scoring 94 for Hambledon against a Thirteen of England. Last month we spoke of the praise accorded to Silver Billy by Richard Nyren; that wasn't all he had to say about this great sportsman, for he (Nyren) added that Beldham's "wrists seemed turned on springs of finest steel. He took the ball, as Burke did the House of Commons, between wind and water; not a moment too soon or too late."

* *LYNFORDIAN IS HERE AGAIN

ADVENTURES IN ENTOMOLOGY

ANOTHER ISSUE OF THE LYNFORDIAN, the magazine of the Lynford Hall Forester Training School, has made its welcome appearance, this time under editorship of W. DOBSON. "A law similar to that of evolution", writes Mr. Dobson, "governs the life or death of magazines. Improve or die." Neither The Lynfordian or the Editor has much to worry about; the previous issue was good and this is even better, and symptomatic of the annual rings of interest is that the U.S. Dept. of Agriculture Library, Washington, D.C., has placed a standing order for two copies of future issues, and requests for copies have been received from Malaya, India and Africa.

Thus praise and humble review in The Slasher pale before international salutations. Nevertheless, we intend to say our piece. That the Lynfordian will go from strength to strength seems certain, but the Editor would do well in future to make the headings of each article a little less prosaic; and he might consider, too, starting a new page for each contribution, even if this does involve a little more paper.

The latest issue tells us how E. R. SKINNER, R. KIRKLAND and S. J. LAW, aided and abetted by Dr. R. N. CRYSTAL, went adventuring in entomology with surprising results, establishing that the Alder Woodwasp has three parasites associated with it, one being unidentified at the time of publication of The Lynfordian.

RONALD BROWN reviews the work and progress of the Entomological Section, of which he is the Secretary, and in an appeal for tubes and tins hints at the affluence of former students - "it would be greatly appreciated if ex-students would send us all their empty cigar-boxes." The progress of the Botany Section is described by A.C. MOORE, and D. SHERRELL reveals his great enthusiasm for bird-watching; there is a contribution on Lynford Anglers by H. HARPER, and on the sports side "Ovalite" tells of cricketing performances - 20 games played last season, with 9 won and 11 lost.

MR. R. J. STREETS, who is in charge of Lynford Hall and spares nothing to see the students are encouraged in an exceptionally wide range of interests, writes of a personal visit to Scandinavia.

Unfortunately, space will not permit lengthy discourses on the various contributions, and the fact that they are dismissed in a few words does not imply any lack of merit or interest.

* * TRANSFERS - AND NEWCOMERS

THE FOLLOWING TRANSFERS were reported to Headquarters between 20th April and 31st May; District Officer . . . E. M. CONDER from Thornton-le-Dale, N.E.(E), to Pickering, N.E.(E); I. BRETT from Market Rasen, E(E), to Santon Downham, E(E); K. W. WILSON from Newton Stewart, S(S), to Dalvy, S(S); R. E. PALLETT, from Monmouth, S(W), to Aberystwyth; L. J. SLOW from Cardiff, S(W), to Monmouth; J. H. JAMES from Tintern S(W) to Cardiff; W. B. SUTHERLAND from Lockerbie, S(S), to Moffat, S(S); Head Forester J. Farquhar from Research, Newton, to Research, Tulliallan; Foresters P. BROWN from Greskine, S(S) to Craigieburn, S(S); W. J. GREEN from Wareham, S.W.(E) to Blandford, S.W.(E); J. E. D. FREEMAN from Purbeck, S.W.(E) to New . . . H. J. BUTCHERS from New to Purbeck; I.O. EVANS from Tintern to Pelena, S(W); S.E. CUMMING from Changue, S(S), to Carrick, S(S); C. J. LEWIS from New to Gardiner, S.W(E); Foremen J. D. CARRINGTON from Widehaugh, N.E(E), to Goodwood, S.E(E); J. A. TAYLOR from Goodwood to Widehaugh; J. THOMSON from Edgarhope, S(S) to Brownmoor, S(S); P.H. AINSWORTH from Chirdon, N.E(E), to Mounces, N.E(E); Assistant Engineer W.M. PHILLIPS from Benmore, W(S), to Glenfinart, W(S); Clerks of Works W. IVISON from Grizedale, N.W(E), to Hamsterley, NE(E)

G. COOPER from Walcott, N.W.(E), to Clun, N.W.(E); B.H.G.MEDHURST from Margan, S(W) to Llanover, S(W); H. J. DUMMETT from Llanover to Rheola, S(W); H.E.O. E. GOWER from Cambridge to Chester (on promotion); G.O. Miss F.N. GAFFNEY from Chester to Edinburgh.

It is proposed in future to give the names of newcomers to the Department. This should serve the two-fold purpose of making them known to new colleagues within Conservancies and so on, and, we hope, make them feel more at home.

Here, then, is the list for May. Assistant Engineers R. B. ROSS and G. H. BEATTIE, both serving in North Scotland; Assistant Engineer J. C. MONTGRIEFF, East Scotland; H.E.O. C. A. MARCH, Director, England; Clerical Officers T. G. HUNT and T. A. ROGERSON, Director, Wales; G. B. McALLISTER, West Scotland; M.J. REASON, Headquarters; L. H. J. WITTS, South Wales; K. J. RAMSAY and J. Mc RITCHIE, Director, Scotland.

Clerical Officers A. C. MANSFIELD and P. C. CRABTREE have returned from the Forces, the former to Shrewsbury and the latter to Cardiff.

* * AWARDS FOR SUGGESTIONS A RECENT SURVEY revealed that the Suggestions Committee had received a total of about 40 proposals. Of these 11 had been accepted, 5 partially accepted and 19 rejected; 5 others had been referred back for further consideration.

FIRE SLOGAN PROPOSAL

Latest awards have been made as follows: Head Forester N. SMITH, South Wales, has received two guineas for his suggestion that the Forest Workers' pay period should end on a Saturday, with the pay day on the following Thursday or Friday, thus coinciding with the National Insurance Week.

A guinea has gone to Forester A. MITCHELL, East England, who suggested that pay envelopes should carry a fire danger slogan. Divisional Officer J. T. L. FITZHERBERT, South Wales, was awarded two separate guineas for suggesting an interchange of information showing how one Conservator is overcoming a shortage of equipment or materials, or is able to supply an article cheaper than at the standard price; and for proposals in respect of a fire notice.

* * INVITATION TO A DINNER AND DANCE THE FIRST RE-UNION DINNER for ex-students of Benmore Forester Training School is likely to be held in October. J. R. MAXTONE says he would like to hear right away from anyone who will be able to get along, so that he may proceed with the preliminary arrangements. The suggested rendezvous is McColl's Hotel, Dunoon, an alternative venue being the Salutation Hotel, Perth. The proposed date is Friday, 28th October, and the cost for the dinner and dance will be about 11s. per head. It remains for us to urge all ex-students to get in touch with Mr. Maxtone at "Klondyke", Garth, Fortingal, Aberfeldy, Perthshire.

RE-UNION FOR EX-BENMORE STUDENTS

* * MOBILE MECHANIST'S DEATH IT IS WITH GREAT REGRET that we record the sudden death last month of MR. J. H. JONES, a Mobile Mechanist who had been employed in the South West England Conservancy since August, 1948. Mr. Jones was at work at Savernake Forest on the day of his death; he felt unwell during the afternoon and, after being persuaded to return home, died in the evening as the result of a heart attack. He was only 39 and leaves a widow and a young family, to whom we extend our deepest sympathy.

PASSING OF MR. J. H. JONES

Mr. Jones will be missed by the many friends he had made in the South West.

* * GOLDEN EAGLE IN NORTH EAST ENGLAND PRESS REPORTS that a Golden Eagle had been seen in the North Tyne area are confirmed by State Forests Officer W FORSYTH. I have received the following interesting report (he writes) from Head-keeper EARSMAN, of Whickhope:

LAMBS AND GROUSE KILLED

"I first saw the Golden Eagle in mid-April, near the Yett Burn, beyond High Long House. It was about a mile away, and was hunting only 20-30 feet above the ground. Soon afterwards I was joined by Mr. GRAHAM, Keeper at Mounces, who had also seen the bird. We walked to Christianbury Crag, where we saw it rise from the rocks; it seemed nearly black in colour and had a light patch below each wing, and the wing span was about 7ft.

"Later in the month, again in the Yett Burn, it was seen making for Christianbury Crag. I found many grouse in the locality, some with their heads off and some with great tears down their breasts, and there is no doubt the damage was done by the eagle. At the time it was seen lambs were disappearing from High Craneclough, and although a search was made for foxes, which might have been the culprits, we had no success. On two successive days two pairs of twin lambs disappeared from a field near the house. Then, a few days later,

when the shepherd was on the hill in the evening and came into the slack (a hollow in the ground) the great bird flew out. The Shepherd followed up the burn and then came "almost on top" of the eagle, which was eating a newly killed lamb. The shepherd told me that the bird seemed very slow in getting into the air, and that it was chocolate in colour. It has not been seen since, although we have come across numerous traces of where, in the Yett Burn, it must have sat on the big stones, preening itself."

(Editor's note for the uninitiated. The Golden Eagle is rarely seen south of the Highland Line and is, in any case, very far from common in the Highlands).

* * FORESTER WEDS FOREST CLERK CONGRATULATIONS TO FORESTER J. G. STRAUGHAN, of Kielder, North East England, and Miss E. PARKER, a clerk employed in the same forest, who were recently married. The bride's brother is a Forester in a neighbouring area.

A DEPARTMENTAL MARRIAGE

OUR BEST WISHES go also to Miss C. M. WALLIS, of Headquarters, who was married at Weymouth to Mr. W. E. ROBINS. (the bride joined the Commission in July, 1947) and to E.O. KENNETH PRUCE, of Headquarters, and his bride Miss SHEILA HENDRY, who was formerly on the typing staff at Savile Row.

FINALLY, we send our felicitations to District Officer and Mrs. J. L. F. FERGUSON, East Scotland, on the birth of a daughter.

* * ODD SPOTS EXTRACTS FROM OFFICIAL CORRESPONDENCE or papers, starting with a quotation from South Scotland: "I have been informed that some of the widows in the house were in a bad state.. I asked for an estimate for their repair, which I enclose..... I do not wish to press for the work to be done unless you think that leaving it undone would cause deterioration." From a North Wales memo. concerning a felling licence:".....Moreover, many of the trees are hardly of 6-inch garter girth." From a letter to Conservator, N.E.England: "Could you please supply one pound of eating chestnuts from your area and send them to this address? Apropos the introduction of Chestnut Blight we want to know what sort of germination one gets from eating chestnuts.

Another oddity (and if you know of more, please send them along): Directly flanking the entrance to the office of Conservator, North Wales, at Shrewsbury, is a large advertisement covering almost a whole wall. It proclaims the virtues of the Ancient Order of Foresters.

Mrs. SPEED, domestic orderly at one of the Forester Training Schools, has resigned. The Chief Education Officer has been asked to authorise the appointment of Mrs. SWIFT as successor.

* * LORD ROBINSON - FALL IN FOREST WHILE ON A RECENT VISIT to Glentress Forest,, South Scotland, LORD ROBINSON had an unfortunate accident. He tripped and fell, sustaining injuries which resulted in an illness. We are very glad to state that at the time of writing he is making progress, and hope he will soon be restored to his normal health.

THERE IS A SLASHER CORRESPONDENT IN EACH
DIRECTORATE AND CONSERVANCY OFFICE. PLEASE
KEEP HIM WELL SUPPLIED WITH CONTRIBUTIONS -
DON'T LET YOUR TERRITORY BE OUT OF THE NEWS