

THE SLASHER
Forestry Commission News

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RESCUED BOY FROM QUARRY

FOREST WORKER "AVERTED
A TRAGEDY"

FOREST WORKER W. MOSS, of Plym Forest, Devon, has deservedly received a letter from the Chief Constable of the county "in appreciation of the speed and efficiency" with which he rescued a 15-years old boy from a quarry. By so doing he "undoubtedly averted a tragedy".

The story starts with the boy lowering himself on a wire rope over the edge of the 100ft. deep quarry, his object being to photograph a raven's nest. The lad lost his hold on the quarry face and swung in the air away from the over-hanging "lip", powerless to help himself and at times upside down.

A friend summoned the help of Mr. Moss and another Forestry Commission employee, Mr. D. TIBBLES, and of Mr. A. WHITELEGG, a timber merchant, and his brother. They found it was impossible to haul the boy up by his rope, for the end was entangled in a stunted tree some feet below the quarry edge. Mr. WHITELEGG then attempted a rescue on the end of the rope from a tractor winch, but owing to difficulty in controlling the rope and the fact that he was badly bruised, had to give up. Mr. Moss was then lowered by rope until he managed to find a precarious foothold on a ledge 20 feet down. He secured the boy's wire with the end of the tractor's wire, which he had brought down with him, thus preventing any further slipping. Then he untied his own rope and lowered it to the boy, who managed to grasp it and permit himself to be hauled slowly up to Mr. Moss, who held him on the ledge while he recovered from a short faint. Thereupon the lad was secured to the rope and pulled to safety. The same rope was again lowered in order that Mr. Moss could return to the top of the quarry.

Considering the ordeal he had been through the boy recovered quickly and, after thanking all concerned in the rescue, walked away with his friend.

We take this opportunity to proffer our congratulations to Mr. Moss and his companions.

* *NEW HONOUR FOR LORD ROBINSON ON THE OCCASION of the Installation of the Rt. Hon. TOM JOHNSTON as the new Chancellor of the University of Aberdeen, four hon. degrees of LL.D (Doctor of Laws) were conferred -- one on LORD ROBINSON, Chairman of the Forestry Commission. The ceremony took place early this month.

* *RETIREMENT OF MR. H.T.H.DRAKE AFTER SERVICE with the Office of Woods, the Interim Forest Authority and the Forestry Commission over a total of 34 years, Mr. H.T.H.DRAKE, of the Finance Branch Audit Section, Headquarters, has retired.

LORD ROBINSON presided at a recent gathering of members of the staff of Headquarters and the Office of Director, England, who were among those who subscribed to a cheque which the Chairman handed to Mr.DRAKE. In paying tribute to Mr.DRAKE'S many outstanding qualities and his long service, the Chairman said his efficient work in charge of the Audit Section had enabled appearances by his lordship before the Public Accounts Committee to be made with an easy conscience! Although the nature of his work may not always have been popular, he had won general esteem throughout the Forestry Commission, and this was evidenced by the fact that more than 170 people in all the offices had contributed to the testimonial.

The cheque, which was for 35 guineas, is being used by Mr.DRAKE towards the purchase of a television set and was accompanied by an autograph book complete with signatures.

"With Mr.DRAKE'S retirement", writes a colleague, "the Department has lost one of its best known and most liked personalities. He was held in very high regard not only by those for whom he worked but, more difficult to achieve, by those who worked with him. His kindness, consideration and willingness to help won the affection of all who came into contact with him. There are none who will not regret his leaving and we feel that we are not merely losing an official but a very human being".

* *
THE WONDER CAR
CARRIES 34 SWITCHES
AND PLUGS

A FORESTER IN SOUTH EAST ENGLAND, whose hobby is motoring owns a car which is fitted with 34 separate switches and plugs and "gadgets" of one kind or another. Some, obviously, were on the car when it was purchased, but most have been added by the Forester.

The car, an Austin, is now fitted with both a 12-volt and 6-volt circuit, thus permitting an extensive use of lights and plugs and other accessories, which include:-

Cubby-hole light; two interior lights; light under the radiator; light in luggage compartment; switch to turn off main petrol supply; switch to reserve petrol tank; two horns (described by the Forester as "mild" and "dog-scarer"); switch for radio; pump which sprays windscreen when dirty; two windscreen "de-frosters"; two windscreen wipers; switch to cut out all lights except offside parking lights; plug for inspection lamp; switch for lighting floor ("just in case you drop your gloves"); switch to supply engine with upper cylinder lubricant; switch for boosting batteries; switches for two fog lamps and for reversing light; and a cigarette lighter.

We feel it would be pointless to ask if any other employee of the Commission owns a car with a greater variety of knobs and sockets and so on, but we would be interested to hear of any vehicles which are equipped with unusual and labour-saving devices.

* *
DEATH OF FORMER FORESTER
PASSING OF MR.W.COTTENHAM

IT IS WITH THE GREATEST REGRET that we have to announce the death of Mr.W.COTTENHAM who, until his retirement last year, was stationed at Rockingham Forest, East England.

Mr.COTTENHAM joined the Forestry Commission soon after its inception in 1919 and spent the whole of his service in the one forest. He took over at Rockingham when it was a small area of devastated woodland and saw the forest develop and extend to nearly 6,000 acres. His knowledge of hardwoods was extensive and highly valued, while his help and guidance to young Foreman and Foresters will always be remembered by the recipients. Even after his retirement Mr.COTTENHAM was ready to assist those who sought his help, and could not bring himself to return to his home in Sussex, and so leave the forest he had formed with the care and attention of one whose heart and soul were in his calling.

"The passing of Mr.COTTENHAM," writes our correspondent, "will leave a much to be regretted gap in forestry circles".

* *
"DOWN GLENTRESS WAY"
EDUCATION OFFICER "ON THE
AIR"

A RECENT PROGRAMME in the "Down Your Way" series featured the Border town of Peebles. As the work of the Forestry Commission is evidenced by the pine-clad surroundings of the town, it was not surprising that Mr.T.A.ROBBIE, who is in charge of the Glentress Forester Training School, Peebles, was asked to take part. Mr.ROBBIE was invited to meet Richard Dimbleby, the interviewer, and John Shuter, the producer, with the result that the work of the Commission and of the Forester Training School in particular was discussed in a palatial suite of the Peebles "Hydro". Questions asked of Mr.ROBBIE were spontaneous, and a most enjoyable radio programme was forthcoming. It is of interest that one recording had to be scrapped and re-taken, due to the fact that while the initial operation was in progress the Galashiels-Edinburgh "express" went shrieking through the town.

Mr.ROBBIE is to be complimented on the amount of information on forestry matters he was able to get across, and on his good "radio voice".

* *
DO YOU NEED A NEW TIE?

WE ARE INFORMED by the "stockists" that there has been a marked falling off in demand for Forestry Commission ties. Just in case you, reader, need a new tie (and have the "wherewithal" to pay for it!) you may be interested to know that the firm in question holds substantial supplies of the following; Reppe ties at 6s.6d.; non-crease weave at 9s.6d.; and all silk at 13s.6d.

Orders, with cheques or postal orders, including 3d. to cover postage, should be sent to: Messrs.C.H.MUNDAY, 7 Irving Street, London, W.C.2.

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CLOSE-UP VIEW OF A BUZZARD

FORESTER J.F.EVANS, of BDDGTLERT, North Wales, writes to say that he was especially interested in the story in The Slasher (February) about the fight between the hawk and the magpie. "I recently had a thrill", he writes. "Noticing a buzzard hovering above

some traps baited with a dead sheep, I decided to return to the spot later to see if the bird had been caught. Surely enough, it was caught but appeared none the worse for the experience. Holding both wings as near the back as possible I retrieved the bird and took it home so that my family might inspect it. It was later released and flew to a tree about 100 yards away, where it proceeded to put its feathers right. It measured 4 ft. from wing-tip to wing-tip".

* *RETIREMENT OF FORESTER T.PENNY
PRESENTATION BY COLLEAGUES

AFTER 30 YEARS SERVICE Forester T.PENNY, of Lennox Forest, West Scotland, has retired. Mr.T.PENNY joined the Forestry Commission in 1920 as a Forest Worker at Inverliever. He was promoted to ganger in 1925, to Foreman in 1931 and Forester in 1928, and the whole of his service was in the West Scotland Conservancy. To mark the occasion of Mr.PENNY'S retirement he has received a gift from the office and field staffs, who joined to wish him a long and happy retirement.

THE RETIREMENT has also taken place of FOREMAN W.O.MOORMAN, who joined the Department in 1922 and spent the whole of his service at Parkhurst Forest, Isle of Wight. He became a Foreman in 1940.

* *NEW FOREST FELONY

"ELEMENTARY, MY DEAR WATSON" might have been the comment of Sherlock Holmes, had he visited the scene of a recent felony in the New Forest. For the thieves had made certain of acquiring the contents of the Forester's safe by removing the safe itself!

* *TRANSFERS

THE FOLLOWING TRANSFERS WERE REPORTED to Headquarters in March:-

District Officer K.A.H.CASSELLS from Edinburgh to Inverness. Foresters J.B.FELL from Craig Nan Eun to Urray, N(S); W.A.FRASER from Strathnairn to Inchnacardoch, N(S). Foreman G.M.B.ROGERS from Loch Ard to Lennox, W(S). Assistant Engineer R.F.HUGHES from Bristol to Halwill, S.W.(E). Clerk of Works A.A.WARD from Glengarry to South Strone,N(S).

S.F.O. B.KINNAIRD from Edinburgh to Glasgow, on promotion; H.F.O. T.FARMER from Glasgow to H.Q.; C.O. Miss M.H.LIDDLE from H.Q. to Edinburgh.

Newcomers to the Department are: District Officer J.F.LESLIE to Dean; G.F.D'a SAVAGE to North Scotland; Assistant Engineer E.G.A.HUMPHREYS to North West England; E.O. Miss J.F.TERRY to H.Q. Clerical Officers E.G.WILCOX to Research; J.ANGUS to North Scotland.

* *ITS THE LITTLE THINGS THAT COUNT

HERE IS A TIP given by Forester F.J.D.WILKINSON, of Marden Forest, South East England. It may be new to some.

It happens that gates are left padlocked for long periods. Then, when they are to be opened, the key won't move in the rusted lock. On the other hand, if the lock is packed with grease prior to the period of disuse it will respond without the slightest difficulty when, eventually, the key is inserted.

* *THE TONGUE-TWISTER

EXCHANGE OF PUBLICATIONS

OUR READERS may be interested to hear that we have recently made a publications exchange agreement with the

SUOMEN
PUUNJALOSTUSTOLLISUUDEN
KESKUSLIITON
MTSÄTYÖNTUTKIMUSTOIMISTO

and that all the literature it issues should, in due course (if it is not already) be available at the Alice Holt Library.

Many will, of course, have realised (!) that this is nothing other than the Forest Work Studies Section of the Central Association of Finnish Woodworking Industries; but even the Finns have a word for it, and call it MTSÄTÄHO, for short. Its special field is the study of efficiency in work in the woods, particularly in the felling and extraction of timber, a matter of great importance to us as our own thinning operations expand. And, for the benefit of those whose Finnish is a trifle rusty, the Association kindly appends English summaries to most of the articles.

* *SOME MORE ABOUT BIG TREES
OAK WITH A GIRTH OF 44 FT. 8 INS.

SOME TIME AGO we gave some facts about the largest and oldest trees in the world. We give below a few more details, but first let us heed a few words from Mr. F. C. BALDWIN, of the office of

Director, England. "The layman who is not very good at estimating heights," writes Mr. Baldwin, "may not register the proper degree of astonishment at your earlier statement that the tallest tree in the world is believed to be a Redwood in California, the height of which was recorded in 1947 as being 364 feet. There can, however, be comparatively few people who have not seen St. Paul's Cathedral, if only in a photograph, and it might, therefore, be helpful if you were to say that the height of this giant tree is only one foot less than that of the top of the gilt ball on St. Paul's measured from the pavement".

Mr. G. D. KITCHINGMAN, Librarian at Alice Holt, is responsible for some interesting new data. An impressive tree, he writes, is the common Oak at Newlands, in Gloucestershire; this has a girth, at five feet from the ground, of 44 ft. 8 ins. The "fattest" conifer is probably the Yew at Ulcombe, in Kent, with a girth of 44 ft. 7 ins.

The tallest tree in Scotland is the Silver Fir at Inverary, which measures 168 ft. (1949). For an "all round" tree it would be difficult to beat the Douglas Fir at Dawyck, South Scotland. Its girth is 16 ft., its height 101 ft., and its volume 674 cubic ft.

Mr. H. L. EDLIN, in an article on hardwoods, has referred to John Hunter's description, in 1776, of the Cowthorpe Oak, near Weatherby, in Yorkshire. "Its dimensions," commented John Hunter, "are almost incredible. Within three feet of the surface it measures sixteen yards.... its height, in its present and ruinous state, is about eighty-five feet. When compared to this, all other trees are but Children of the Forest".

* *WE ASKED FOR IT

FOR FORTY MONTHS we have produced The Slasher, including a leg-pull here, and a leg-pull there, and sometimes recording "howlers" which have come our way. And then, last month, we ourselves

WE'VE GOT IT

produced the howler of howlers. Remember? Page 1, under "Mountain Rescue" -- "The crossing of the Cuillins by dark is a feat which experienced climbers would find difficult in daylight".

To those readers who have written to pull our legs, for a change, we apologise. We are but human.

* *PERSONAL

WEDDINGS. Our congratulations to Mr. J. AULD, Clerk of Works, Glenbranter, West Scotland, and Miss Buntly Aitken, on their marriage; and to Mr. T. J. GORDON, of the Glasgow Office, and Miss Sheila MacKay, who have also wed. Felicitations, too, to Mr. T. G. OWEN, Clerical Officer, Aberystwyth, and to Miss EIRWEN EVANS, of the same office, who were recently married; the Director for Wales (Mr. A. P. LONG) presented the couple with a cheque on behalf of their colleagues.

BLUE FOR A BOY. Congratulations to Mr. J. GRIFFIN, Engineering Clerk, West Scotland, and Mrs. Griffin, on the birth of a son.

PINK FOR A GIRL. Congratulations, also, to Senior Photographer TONY ANDERSON, Alice Holt, and Mrs. Anderson, on the birth of a daughter.

BLUE AND PINK. Best wishes to Forester T. W. B. BOLAM, Allerston, East England and Mrs. Bolam, on the birth of twins -- a boy and a girl.

Mr. DENIS CRABB, Executive Officer in the Cost Research Section, Finance, Headquarters, has recently passed the final examination of the Institute of Cost and Works Accountants. Well done.

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