

THE BIRTHDAY HONOURS

C.B.E. FOR DIRECTOR, WALES

WE ARE PROUD to record that Her Majesty the Queen has honoured two members of the staff of the Department, and two others who have recently left us after meritorious service.

Mr. A. P. LONG, Director of Forestry for Wales, has been made a Commander of the Order of the British Empire. Mr. Long has been with the Forestry Commission since its inception, serving as Divisional Officer in various parts of the country and as Deputy Surveyor, Dean; during the last war he was Acting Assistant Commissioner for England and Wales. He has been Director for Wales for the past six years and is in charge of well over 200,000 acres of Commission land, of which about 125,000 acres are under plantations.

Mr. F. C. HANDFORD, Chief Clerk in the Office of Director, Scotland, for some ten years, and Mr. VICTOR BATES, until recently Controller of Finance, have each been awarded an O.B.E. Mr. Handford has been in the public service for a very long time, being 32 years with the Commission; his long experience and wide knowledge of the Commission's operations have been invaluable to the Department.

Mr. Bates joined us six years ago as Controller of Finance, and has since done much outstanding work. It is most regrettable, therefore, that at the time of congratulating him we have to record that owing to continued ill-health he will be unable to resume his duties with the Commission. His many friends and colleagues have heard this news with much concern and a deep sense of personal loss.

Mr. FREDERICK JOHN NELMES, formerly Head Forester at Bedgebury, South East England, who retired in January last, has received the B.E.M. Mr. Nelmes commenced employment with the Office of Woods in 1901 and was transferred to the Commission at Bedgebury in 1924.

** THE ANNUAL REPORT

YEAR'S PLANTING A RECORD

THE FORESTRY COMMISSIONERS' latest Annual Report, published last month, records a great deal of progress in the Forest Year ending 30th. September, 1951. For example, the area planted was the largest to date, in any year, namely 57,164 acres (England 17,491 acres; Scotland 26,960; Wales 12,713). This compares with 53,737 acres planted in the previous year, and in forming the new woodlands more than 95 million young trees were used!

The number of new forests formed in the year was 32 (15 in England, 13 in Scotland and four in Wales), bringing the total number of State forests in the whole country to 413.

A point of considerable note, having regard to criticism that the Commission is "disinterested" in securing the replanting of felled or derelict woodlands and is concerned only with taking over non-forest land, is that of all the plantable land acquired in the year (56,000 acres) 54 per cent had formerly carried a tree crop. The year's acquisitions brought the total area of land acquired through the Forestry Fund and under the Transfer of Woods Act to 1,781,500 acres, including 1,074,200 acres classed as forest land. Of the latter, 737,000 acres were, at the close of the Forest Year, under plantations of varying ages.

The Report contains food for some misgiving, as well as a recital of achievement. In the first quinquennium, that is to say the first five years of the post war forest programme, which closed on 30th. September last, the Commission planted 217,600 acres and private owners 62,900 acres, the combined planting efforts being 280,500 acres, or only 77 per cent of the full five year programme. Where our planting was concerned there were two main reasons for the gap between programme and achievement - inability to obtain sufficient plantable land in the right places and, in the more remote areas, lack of labour. The Report says "The current reserves (of plantable land) have reached a disquietingly low level".

The delay, "now happily overcome", as the Report puts it, in securing the general acceptance of the Dedication Scheme was one of the factors which restricted the amount of private planting during the five years; but other causes, including rising costs, shortage of plants and labour and, in 1951, the bad weather of the planting season, also contributed.

But back to the credit side. During the five years a total area of 138,000 acres of our plantations was thinned and it is estimated that over the same period 38 million cubic feet of poles and timber (roughly a million tons) were extracted from the woodlands. In order to extract this large volume of produce it was necessary to construct many new roads capable of carrying wheeled transport, and the total length of roads built for this purpose was 1,105 miles.

**** KIELDER'S BIG DAY**

FOREST VILLAGE OPENED

WHAT THE RESIDENTS of Kielder Forest Village lacked in numbers they made up in enthusiasm when, the other day, they turned out to a man, woman and child to witness our Chairman, LORD ROBINSON, formally declare this new village open. Today Kielder Forest Village, one of five villages planned for erection to house the growing labour force of Kielder Forest, in Northumberland, consists of a handful of houses erected some years ago, and some 20 new houses, of which four are occupied and the remainder nearing completion. A start has been made in the vicinity on the foundations of a further 40 houses and, when building is eventually completed, the village will, it is hoped, comprise some 250 houses with a population of 800-1,000.

It was certainly a great day for Kielder, and especially for the central characters who were making a piece of rural history. For Lord Robinson the event symbolised the final phases of a dream come true, for 42 years ago, long before the Forestry Commission came into being, he looked at this remote part of Northumberland which is now the site of Kielder and its neighbouring forests, and considered the possibilities of planting the vast area of uncultivated land along the Borders. Then, in 1926, he saw the first planting at Smales Farm, Kielder, and 22 years later he himself felled the first tree in this same unit. And so to 27th May, 1952, when Lord Robinson opened, with a golden key, one of the new houses.

For GEORGE ROME, too, it was a memorable occasion, for as he shook hands with Lord Robinson he recalled that he was the last remaining workman of the original gang which started operations at Smales a quarter of a century or so ago.

Lord Robinson, who was accompanied by other Commissioners, was introduced by VISCOUNT ALLENDALE, Lord Lieutenant of Northumberland. LORD RADNOR, who is Chairman of the Forestry Commission's National Committee for England, presided and among others supporting him were Mr. R. M. SPIER, M.P. for Hexham, and Alderman N. GARROW, Chairman of the Northumberland County Council. Tributes were paid during the speeches to SIR WILLIAM TAYLOR, Director General of the Forestry Commission until 1948, who acquired for the Commissioners the land on which Kielder Forest, the biggest State forest unit in Britain, has been formed; to Mr. A. D. HOPKINSON, formerly Conservator, East England, who for many years had general supervision of the work; to Head Forester J. T. ANDERSON, who went to Kielder when the forest was started and was transferred to East Anglia in 1950; and to Dr. THOMAS SHARP, the eminent planner, who has acted as consultant in the lay-out of Kielder Forest Village and the other villages-to-be in the district.

A large party of guests was welcomed by Mr. O. J. SANGAR, Director of Forestry for England, and conducted on a coach tour of the forest by Mr. C. A. CONNELL, Conservator, North East England.

So much for the formalities, which were tinged with understanding and human interest. It remains for us to reproduce an extract from SIR WALTER SCOTT'S Journal, quoted during the ceremony by Lord Robinson, to the amusement of his audience. The date is 7th October, 1827, when Scott was staying with the Duke of Northumberland at Alnwick:

"The Duke tells me his people in Keeldar were all quite wild the first time his father went up to shoot there. The women had no other dress than a bedgown and petticoat. The men were savage and could hardly be brought to rise from the heath, either from sullenness or fear. They sung a wild tune, the burden of which was Ourina, ourina, ourina. The females sung, the men danced round, and at a certain part of the tune they drew their dirks, which they always wore."

Time marches on.

**** TREES IN A CRATER**

AND A PLEA FOR METAL TELEGRAPH POLES

FOLLOWING OUR REFERENCE last month to Llantrisant Forest, South Wales, Mr. F. COWNIE, Conservator in the Office of Director, Wales, writes: "You are correct in your assumption that the *Abies grandis* you mention is growing on a crater caused by a landmine. We took advantage of the deep cultivation, with good results. Another sizeable explosive fell elsewhere in Llantrisant and disrupted the water pipeline to two Forest Workers Holdings, and the cottages received a bad shaking."

"Generally, the South Wales forests suffered very little bomb damage, the exception being the Penllergaer beat of Rheola Forest, where damage by fire was severe, following the dropping of incendiary bombs. A little damage was done at Ilanover."

Education Officer T. A. ROBBIE, Glentress Forester Training School, calls us to order and says he was surprised to read our complaint about metal telegraph poles in Rheola Forest. "I only wish," he says, "we had the good fortune to have some cheap type of metal poles in all forests. Experience of the fire at Glenhurich Forest, in North Scotland, in May, 1942, illustrates the point. The G.P.O. lines passed through the forest from Strontian to a kiosk beside the Forester's house. During the fire the telegraph poles were burnt and fell. This meant a very strenuous hike of six miles each way for a member of the women's forestry service in order to contact Divisional and District Officers by telephone. The track was impassable to cars, and a motorcyclist despatch rider had to be sent to the forest to maintain contact."

While on the subject of Rheola, some readers might like to consider the following suggestions which have been made as to the origin of the name:

In 1295 it appeared as "HYROLLE" and, apparently, this word survived in books as "HIR-OLE" until about 100 years ago. "Hir" would mean "long" and "ole" would mean "light", thus suggesting a place in the sun with a long duration of light. Still delving into the past we find one HOWEL BEVAN referring, in 1717, to Rheola as "Rhiw olau". "Rhiw" would mean "hill" or "slope", therefore "A slope or hill in the light".

Another, and probably more likely explanation, is that the name is derived, naturally, from "Yr-heol-olau" - "The light way".

(But we who are unfamiliar with the forest are not clear as to why "light" should enter into the matter. Can any reader explain? - Ed.)

** THOSE NESTING BOXES

DISTRICT OFFICER STANLEY FORRESTER, North East England, has a word or two to say about nesting boxes, the successful use of which at Ampthill

Forest, East England, was mentioned in last month's issue. "The boxes at Arkengarthdale, in the North East Conservancy", he tells us, "have been more orthodox in construction but have housed some species which Forester INGRAM does not mention as occurring at Ampthill; we record many redstarts in our boxes and there have been occasional pied flycatchers. On one occasion a family of longeared bats took up residence in a nesting box."

** TRANSFERS

THE FOLLOWING TRANSFERS have been notified to Headquarters:

District Officers T. D. COTTER-CRAIG from Beaulieu, N.(S), to Dingwall, N.(S); A. W. L. GUILLE from Bristol, S.W.(E), to Princes Risborough, E.(E); G. G. STEWART from Langholm, S.(S), to Galashiels, S.(S); R. d'O. P. JACKSON from Perth, E.(S), to Dunseld, E.(S); P. A. INNES from Kilmun, Argyll, W.(S), to Benmore, W.(S); E. J. B. HARDCASTLE from Hawick, S.(S), to Ancrum, S.(S). Foresters E. W. MARSH from Langdale, N.E.(E), to Selby, N.E.(E); G. STOKOE from Kielder, N.E.(E), to Allerston, N.E.(E); J. R. HENDERSON from New Forest to Abinger, S.E.(E); F. A. WOODCOCK from Pundershaw, N.E.(E), to Coquetdale, N.E.(E).

Foremen C. HOCKADAY from Glynn, S.W.(E), to St. Clement, S.W.(E); D. W. AXTELL from Kinver, N.W.(E), to Walcot, N.W.(E); A. MCCLEARY from Ae, S.(S), to Bennan, S.(S); C. T. STUART from Speymouth, E.(S), to Aberdeen, E.(S); E. McLEOD from Methwold, E.(E), to Gaywood, E.(E); J. B. STIRRAT from Wauchope, S.(S), to New Forest; R. D. WISHART from Research, Newton, to Research, Kielder. Assistant Engineers H. G. BEATTIE from Fort William, N.(S), to Dumfries, S.(S); J. D. BOWIE from Dumfries to Fort William. Clerical Officer W. E. REYNOLDS from D.(E) to H.Q.

Newcomers are Executive Officer K. W. CARTER to S.E.(E); Clerical Officers Miss E. M. TEBBITT to H.Q., and Miss J. M. WARHURST to N.W.(E). Last month we inadvertently included the names of Miss V. E. Williams and Mrs. I. Clelland among those of C.O.s joining the Department. Miss Williams and Mrs. Clelland are, of course, E.O.s.

** LONG SERVICE

RETIREMENT OF HEAD KEEPER
TOM CUTLER

other friends. The event marked the retirement of Tom Cutler with a record of service

AN INTERESTING LITTLE CEREMONY took place recently at the Queen's House, New Forest, when Head Keeper TOM CUTLER was presented with a handsome chiming clock by the Deputy Surveyor (Mr. E. WYNNE JONES), on behalf of brother keepers, Commission staff and

of which anyone would be proud - 46 years with practically no absences for illness.

It is interesting to recall that Tom Cutler's father and grandfather were both keepers in the New Forest, and his son has recently been appointed Under-Keeper. "Tom" takes with him into retirement the good wishes of all in "the New".

**** IT PAYS TO ADVERTISE**

"A LARGE NOTICE in the street level office window offering employment has been of considerable benefit in the recruitment of labour in this Conservancy.

It was very marked that when the notice was removed, the number of enquirers dropped from at least six per day to nil. There is no doubt it pays to advertise - does the Forest Service do enough?"

Well now, you'd almost think the above was a note from a Conservator to the Editor of The Slasher, instead of which it is an extract from the monthly newsletter of the New Zealand Forest Service. But it has a moral. Do the street level windows of our offices contain posters declaiming opportunities for young men to go to a Forester Training School? Better the window, it seems, than the notice board; or, better still, why not both?

**** STAFF SUGGESTIONS SCHEME**

THIS YEAR, and in subsequent years, a special additional award will be made for the year's best suggestion submitted under the official scheme.

AWARD FOR YEAR'S BEST IDEA

The procedure will be for the Suggestions Committee

to have re-submitted to them, each December, all suggestions which have earned an award in the year; these will then be judged by the Committee on the basis of the extent to which they save time, money or materials, or contribute to the general efficiency of the Department.

**** "TREE BASHING" AT TINTERN**

WHEN, NOT LONG AGO, we were in the vicinity of Tintern Forest, South Wales, we heard tell of the

quaint old "sport" known as tree bashing a sport which no doubt truly diverted those who took part, but has left its mark in more ways than one. However, we made enquiries, and Head Forester C. V. SQUIRES has sent the following note.

"I first heard about tree bashing during thinning operations in Bargain's and Creigiau woods, when I was asked if I knew what caused the curious blemishes we saw on some of the poles. It seems it was the custom, perhaps in the late 1800's, for lads to give chase whenever they saw a squirrel. When the squirrel was driven to the top of one of the trees it was the practice to find a large rock and then, from a distance, throw it at the stem to cause a shudder and so dislodge the squirrel."

We can only express the hope that, for the well-being of our trees, this "sport" will not be revived!

**** DEATH OF FORESTER H. W. PAULLEY**

WE LEARN with great regret of the death, at the early age of 46, of Forester H. W. PAULLEY, of Dunwich Forest, East England Conservancy.

"HIS HEART WAS IN THE FOREST"

"Few who knew Forester Paulley had any doubts as to where his heart lay", writes a correspondent. "Coming from a well wooded part of the South West, his whole life and thoughts were in the woods and forests which he tended for the Department. For 23 years he served the Forestry Commission with an exemplary faithfulness and, during the war, was one of the small band of stalwarts who kept forestry going at Thetford. Despite his serious illness of the last year or so he maintained a close interest in all that was going on at Dunwich, and his passing is a great loss to us, as well as to his wife and daughter."

We are asked by Mrs. Paulley, to whom we extend our deepest sympathy, to express her gratitude to the many friends and colleagues who have paid tribute to her late husband.

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.