

THE SLASHER

Forestry Commission News

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NEW CONSERVATOR FOR N.W. ENGLAND

MR. C. A. J. BARRINGTON TO SUCCEED
MR. A. H. H. ROSS

MR. C. A. J. BARRINGTON is to succeed MR. A. H. H. ROSS as Conservator for North West England and will take up his new duties early in July, when, as already announced, Mr. Ross becomes Director for Scotland.

Mr. Barrington is at present a Divisional Officer on Mr. Ross's staff. A native of Devon, he obtained his forestry degree at Cambridge and joined the Forestry Commission as a District Officer in 1936. He was stationed in south east England and in 1940 was seconded to H.G.T.P.D.; in 1942 he joined the Royal Air Force and was granted a Commission, and undertook flying duties. He returned to the Department in 1946 and was posted to the North West England Conservancy; in 1948 he was promoted to Divisional Officer and has been largely concerned with private woodlands work.

We extend to Mr. Barrington our best wishes and congratulations.

** DEATH OF MR. GEORGE CHILDS

HIS PASSING "A GREAT SHOCK"

IT IS VERY GREAT REGRET that we have to record the death of MR. GEORGE CHILDS, Chief Clerk at Aberystwyth, who passed away after an operation performed in Edinburgh. He was 56.

George Childs was truly one of the old "gang", for he had been with the Department for some 33 years, having started his career with us at Edinburgh in the office of the Assistant Commissioner for Scotland. Previously he was a Boy Clerk in the department of the Surveyor of Taxes and an Assistant Clerk in the Post Office Stores Department.

Two factors in particular accounted for George Childs' popularity in the Commission. He had an engaging and kindly personality with a great natural capacity for making friends, and he served in several offices in widely separated parts of the country - Edinburgh, York, Bedford, Santon Downham, and Edinburgh again in 1928, where he remained until moving to the headquarters of the Welsh Directorate. During the first world war he served in the Durham Light Infantry, being severely wounded and discharged from the Army in 1917.

"The death of Childs," writes a colleague, "came as a great shock. He entered the Civil Service in 1912 and transferred to the Forestry Commission in 1920. He had a vast experience of the Department's activities, having worked in Edinburgh for some 22 years without a break, in an English Divisional Office (now Conservancy) for eight years, and latterly in Aberystwyth for two years. His disposition was such that he was always willing to give a helping hand to others and there are many officers who will remember with gratitude the excellent training they received under him.

"He set himself, and expected from others, a high standard of service but he never allowed the 'arguments' and difficulties which arose out of official differences to detract from the friendliness that was such an outstanding feature of his nature. He was happily married for 30 years and blessed with a good wife, and two children of whose achievements he was justly proud. His passing will be deeply felt for a very long while to come."

** THE REAL LIFE BAMBI

REARED ON BOTTLE AT AMPLEFORTH

THERE HAS BEEN a procession of animal lovers, including numerous photographers, to the home of Ganger J. H. EDMONDSON, of Ampleforth, North East England. The

"pilgrimage" has been made for the purpose of viewing a fawn which was discovered by Mr. Edmondson when it was only a few hours old, having been caught in a fissure in a rock. He took home this real-life Bambi, whereupon it thrived on the bottle, and in due course its menu was extended to take in a variety of cattle foods. As it grew bigger and stronger it became the almost constant companion of a sheep dog, leaving it only for an occasional trip into the forest. It followed Mr. and Mrs. Edmondson like a dog and became the especial friend of a small girl visitor to their house.

What, we wonder, will be Bambi's future?

**THE GIANT REDWOODS OF LEIGHTON
HALL
AND THE POWIS CASTLE OAKS

THE LEIGHTON HALL WOODLANDS, near Welshpool, in Mid-Wales, have much to offer of interest to forester and layman alike. It is in these woods, which are owned by Major C. P. ACKERS, that the fine examples of redwoods, renowned in forestry circles, can be seen. These redwoods

were brought to Leighton Hall from America in pots nearly 100 years ago by an earlier owner of the estate and today they tower above the visitor at heights of well over 100 feet. There are 85 of these trees to the acre and the average height is $111\frac{1}{2}$ feet. The average quarter girth is 33 inches. The volume per acre under bark is 16,545 cubic feet and the volume per acre over bark is 24,000 cubic feet.

Some redwood "oddities" may be seen on the estate; for example, there is the tree that blew down and is now lustily reproducing itself along the trunk - in other words, some quite sizeable trees are growing from the horizontal stem. Then one can see the redwood which, having reached the age of 80, was blown; its base went back into place after cross-cutting and several "trees" of good size and form are now growing from the butt.

There is an acre and a half (planted in 1952-53) of *Metasequoia glyptostroboides*, the species which has been much in the news of late. The young trees at Leighton Hall were raised from seed from the *Metasequoias* discovered in recent years in China and thought to have been extinct since Tertiary times.

This is not the place to write in detail of the forestry practice employed on this estate, but we should mention that the woods, which cover about 750 acres, have been awarded six silver and five bronze medals in the past 14 years. Through the co-operation of Major Ackers the Forestry Commission has established six sample plots on the estate, and one can also see a splendid Douglas fir from which we obtain material for grafts - this, in the words of the owner, being "the finest Douglas ever".

The estate is well-known for more than its trees. A former owner undertook an ambitious project for the pumping of liquid manure to the highest point, as a preliminary to general distribution through a system of irrigating "pipelines". The story is, however, that some of the mechanism was made of gun metal and this suffered a fate similar to that which not long ago befell our iron railings and fences - it was confiscated to feed the war machine of 1914-18. A special road was built, involving the construction of a handsome viaduct which could be the envy of British Railways, to enable a carriage to be driven round the vantage points of the estate, and, we are told, there was once a scenic railway at Leighton Hall.

It is a short journey from the Hall to the 1,200-acre woodlands of Powis Castle, wherein may be seen some more sylvicultural wonders, including the Gwen Morgan Douglas fir, the biggest of its species in Britain. This is now some 170 feet tall and contains more than 600 cubic feet of timber. There are great oaks in the Park and the visitor will inevitably hear of the inglorious end of a former giant. That oak was said to be the biggest in all Europe and its volume was 2,000 cubic feet; yet, we are told, although seemingly healthy it fell to the ground on a quiet, still day in May, 1938.

A sight not to be missed at Powis Castle is the South Side Oak Wood. This comprises three age classes, about 140, 170 and 200 years, and the finest of the trees, Lady Harriet's Oak, is more than 90 feet tall; it has a 50 ft. bole and its volume is more than 300 cubic feet. The volume per acre of this wood, which in 1939 was awarded the Royal Agricultural Society's Gold Cup, is 3,200 cubic feet.

Powis Castle and 57 acres around it are now under the management of the National Trust, but the bulk of the woods on the estate are in process of being dedicated.

** THE WHITE FOX CUB

IN THE LAST MONTH OR TWO we have heard of white stoats and white squirrels; now comes news of the white fox cub.

While out hunting at Balloch Forest, South Scotland Conservancy, Keeper ALEX TAIT, who was accompanied by keepers from neighbouring areas, unearthed a vixen with five cubs, one of which was pure white.

Keeper Tait and his friends have each had a lifetime's experience of foxes, but this was the first white one they had ever encountered; has such a rarity been known elsewhere?

Incidentally, Keeper Tait and the afore-mentioned keepers between them killed one dog fox, nine vixens and 57 cubs in three days.

**WELCOME HOME

THE SOCIAL CLUB at Alice Holt recently held a party to welcome Mr. and Mrs. R. F. WOOD home from Canada. It will be recalled that Mr. Wood, who is Silviculturist, South, was awarded a Nuffield Scholarship which enabled him to go to Western Canada to study tree species already, or likely to be, planted over here.

**A BOTANICAL NOTE

BEARSFOOT AT KIELDER

RECENTLY, writes Research Forester G. S. FORBES, I was invited to see two excellent specimens of Green Hellebore or Bearsfoot (*Helleborus viridis*) which were found by Miss MAUREEN CURRY near Kielder Castle. Identification had been confirmed by Dr. C. E. Fisher, of the Hancock Museum, Newcastle, who stated that this plant is rare in Northumberland and there is no former record of it for the North Tyne valley. Some specimens have, of course, been found in southern and eastern England.

I believe, goes on Forester Forbes, the plant has usually been considered a relic of cultivation, for it was at one time grown for medicinal purposes. In Yorkshire, I understand, farmers used to cultivate it for use in the treatment of mastitis in cattle. Perhaps some of our colleagues in Yorkshire could confirm this. The specimens referred to above are about 12 to 15 inches tall and are growing at the bottom of a steep bank in a sandy clay soil. Forester YOUNG, very sensibly, has erected a sheep fence around them.

Miss Curry and her mother, a shorthand typist at the Castle, are enthusiastic botanists and have in their possession many wild flowers collected in and around Kielder.

**THE RETURN OF ROB ROY

FILM-MAKING AT LOCH ARD

THE PEACEFUL locality of Corriegrennan, Loch Ard, in the West Scotland Conservancy, has again been visited by ROB ROY MacGREGOR; on this occasion his exploits have been under the direction of Mr. Walt Disney, for a film company has commenced production at Corriegrennan of "Rob Roy", with Richard ("Heart-throb") Todd in the name part and Glynis ("Miranda") Johns as Helen. The scene has been one of great activity, writes our correspondent, with lorries, vans and cars hurrying along the Trossachs road. A fort of "ye olden times" has been erected and cottages made to resemble the style of the period. Actors and film extras have been around in great numbers and 500 men of the Argyll and Sutherland Highlanders, many recently back from Korea, have taken part in the filming.

On the first "take" the soldiers dashed into the fray on a battlefield high on the rugged Corriegrennan hill and casualties, it is understood, were numerous, among them being Richard Todd himself. Some of the men were dressed as Redcoats and others as the tattered Highland clansmen of the MacGregor, and the battle scene must have been among the most spectacular ever staged in Britain. Muskets were fired and cannon belched smoke, and below the "conflict" stood the ambulances, ready to give aid impartially to Redcoats and Clansmen alike.

There is one thing of which you may be sure when viewing the film from the plush comfort of the local cinema - you will see some of the finest scenery in the United Kingdom.

**TRANSFERS

THE FOLLOWING TRANSFERS have been notified to Headquarters:

District Officers J. E. MASSEY from Fort William, N(S), to Glenurquhart, N(S); F. M. MACRAE from Inverness to Fort William; R. A. GOLDING from Palmure, S(S), to Kilgrammie, S(S); O. N. BLATCHFORD from Cardiff to Llandovery, S(W); M.E.S. DICKENSON from Uffculme, SW(E), to Ringwood, New; A. W. L. GUILLE from Witley, SW(E), to Shrewsbury.

Foresters J. H. DAVY from Widehaugh, NE(E), to Abinger, SE(E); F. W. EVERITT from Glynn, SW(E), to Puddletown, SW(E); A. G. FULFORD from Puddletown to Glynn; F. W. J. YEOMANS from Allerston, NE(E), to Brandon Depot, E(E); W. E. DYE from Glenduror, W(S), to Strathyre, W(S); P. P. AWBERY from Maresfield, SE(E), to Southwater, SE(E).

Foremen J. CARRUTHERS from Craik, S(S), to Changue, S(S); J. FRANCE from Kielder, NE(E), to Widehaugh; D. HOLDER from Walsham, E(E), to Rendlesham, E(E); R.J.A. McDUFF from Strathyre to Kilmichael, W(S); J. COOPER from Southwater to Maresfield. Assistant Engineer J.D. NISBET from Inverness to Fort William.

Newcomers are: Clerk of Works W. HOLMES to N(W). Clerical Officers R.W. SOARS to Research; Miss A. CRABTREE to NE(E).

***WE ARE FOR THE WAGON

THE CUP KILLS MORE THAN THE CANNON!!

way of a warning against strong drink. Now we are not so sure; but just read the following, which appears on a stone in the Sussex village of Kirkford, about two miles south of Chiddingfold Forest.

NOT LONG AGO we reproduced the inscription on a roadside monument near Llandovery, in Carmarthenshire; this, we thought, provided the last word in the

DEGRADATION OF DRUNKENNESS

"There is no sin which doth more deface God's image than drunkenness; it disguiseth a person and doth even unman him. Drunkenness makes him have the throat of a fish, the belly of a swine, and the head of an ass. Drunkenness is the shame of Nature, the extinguisher of reason, the shipwreck of chastity, and the murderer of conscience. Drunkenness is hurtful to the body; the cup kills more than the cannon; it causes dropsies, catarrhs, apoplexies; it fills the eye with fire, and the legs with water, and turns the body into an hospital".

The stone is let into the outer wall of the Vicarage garden, facing down the village street towards the Parish Church and the "Half Moon".

Now all this calls for some reflection, and we are forcibly reminded of the fact that beer was very much stronger in the good old days than it is now.

** FAREWELL TO MISS E.K. RICH

AFTER 36 YEARS as a Civil Servant, Miss E.K. RICH, C.O. at Headquarters, has retired.

Miss Rich commenced her career in the Service with the Ministry of Pensions and also served in the Post Office and Air Ministry, joining the Forestry Commission in 1946. She immediately proceeded to establish herself in the affections of the Headquarters' staff and for a long while she undertook the not always enviable task of obtaining signatures for the attendance book. She became, in fact, to quote the Secretary, Mr. H.A. TURNER, when recently making a presentation to Miss Rich on behalf of the staff, "a Recording Angel who will be greatly missed".

The Secretary referred to Miss Rich's "long and faithful service" and presented her with a radio set and clock, and a book containing the signatures of numerous well-wishers.

***PERSONAL

BEST WISHES to the following couples, who have wed: District Officer JOHN JOBLING

and Miss ELSPETH DONALDSON (typist) of the Forest Research Station; Clerical Officer KEN BICKNELL, also of Alice Holt, and Miss ROWENA DORKING; and Leading Surveyor MOLLY COLEMAN (Alice Holt) and Mr. HARRIS. Congratulations, also, to Divisional Officer W.N. GIBSON, South Scotland, and Mrs. Gibson, on the birth of a daughter (Frances Jane); to Mr. J.H. McGEORGE, Chief Clerk, Dumfries, and Mrs. McGeorge, also on the arrival of a daughter (Anna Elizabeth); and to Research Foreman R.D. WISHART, of Kielder, and Mrs. Wishart, on the birth of a son.

***TABLE TENNIS CHAMPION

MISS BETTY LANDIMORE, shorthand typist at Headquarters, has won the Civil Service Ladies' Junior table tennis championship, having defeated Miss J. COX, of the Ministry of Transport, in the final by two straight games. Betty Landimore is now the proud holder, for a year, of a handsome rose bowl; she has received a replica, which she will retain.