

THE SLASHER

Forestry Commission News

No. 66

June, 1953

CORONATION HONOURS

AND A ROYAL VISIT TO SOUTH WALES

WE ARE PLEASED to record that certain of our colleagues received well deserved recognition in the Birthday and Coronation Honours List.

Mr. A. H. H. ROSS, Conservator, North West England, who is soon to become Director, Scotland, has received an O.B.E. As we stated when announcing his forthcoming move to Edinburgh, Mr. Ross has served the Department for 28 years.

Miss ANN BROOKS, a Higher Executive Officer at Edinburgh, has been awarded an M.B.E. for her long and meritorious service. She joined the Forestry Commission as a shorthand typist in 1926 and is the most senior woman officer in the Department.

Two Head Foresters have also been honoured, each receiving a British Empire Medal. They are Head Forester C. W. REDFORD, of Thetford, East England, who led a large volunteer party of Commission employees on sea defence work after the disastrous floods early in the year; and Head Forester A. N. SIMPSON, who has been with the Department for 32 years, during which time he has been continuously in charge of Tulliallan Nursery, in West Scotland.

Friends in the Department will be pleased to hear that Mr. TOM BROWN, who was in charge of Eggesford, South West England, when the Commission's first-ever planting took place there in 1919, has received an M.B.E. Mr. Brown subsequently became a Head Forester but resigned in 1929 to take up a supervisory post at Dartington Hall. Erstwhile colleagues were glad to hear that Flight-Lieutenant A. F. CARVOSSO, formerly an Executive Officer in the Office of Director, England, received the Queen's Commendation for services in the air.

The Department is officially commemorating the Coronation in several interesting ways. For example, H.R.H. the Princess Royal has been invited to visit South Wales this month, where she will give the name of Cedd Morgannwg (The Forest of Glamorgan) to a group of our forests which lie in a great arc to the rear of Port Talbot. They include Margam, Michaelston, Dunraven, Cwmogwr and Rheola forests, which together cover some 34,000 acres, or more than 50 square miles. The ceremony, in which Her Royal Highness will unveil a commemorative stone, will take place at a high vantage point which affords some impressive views of the units involved.

Before undertaking this ceremony Her Royal Highness will name a forest road, which is to be known as Ffordd y Frenhines (The Queen's Way).

There will be news at a later date of events of comparable importance in England and Scotland. Meanwhile we can place on record some brief details of other ceremonies which have taken place in connection with the Coronation; while smaller in character compared with the aforementioned functions the purpose behind them is equally sincere.

Tree Planting in West Scotland

On a site in Tulliallan Nursery, in the West Scotland Conservancy, trees were planted by children of Forestry Commission employees. Each local household was represented by a child of school age who planted an ornamental species. A similar ceremony was held at Devilla Forest, in the same Conservancy, where an avenue of flowering trees was planted by youngsters representing families from the local Holdings. District Officer W. P. THOMSON spoke at both events of the historical significance of the ceremonies, and each child was presented with a small gift; at Tulliallan, Forester A. N. SIMPSON also spoke and Forester W. FAIRBAIRN addressed the assembled children and parents at Devilla.

A lead label, bearing the name of the child undertaking the planting, and that of the species, was affixed to each tree.

Local children also planted ornamental trees at Strathlachlan Forest, West Scotland, in this case around Leanach Hostel and the new Finnish houses. District Officers S. M. PETRIE and J. F. MacGARVA were present and the former spoke of developments in planting in rural areas and expressed the hope

that the newly-planted trees would flourish in the new reign.

****TO THE BRAVE - THE FARE!**

OR ONE MAN'S MEAT

A RECENT THURSDAY was a day to be recorded in the history of the canteen at the Forest Research Station at Alice Holt Lodge. For on that day grey squirrel was on the menu for the first time. It was, of course, quite optional; there was another dish for those who did not fancy eating the "charming" little pests. Anyway, 26 people, including representatives of the local Press, chose squirrel.

The creatures were supplied by FRED COURTIER, the Commission's "Squirrel Officer", and to him fell the lot of skinning 20 of them, which provided approximately 10 lbs. of meat. Only the rear half of the carcass, less the tail, was used, and it was surprising to find how much meat there is on the hind legs of a squirrel.

Mrs. CLANCY, the cook, was at first a little apprehensive about the whole business. However, she took two recipes, one for rabbit and one for hare, combined the best of both, including a Spanish sauce made of sherry and mushrooms, and produced a most delicious meal. The meat proved quite as tender as chicken and had a delightful, distinctive flavour. The general opinion was that squirrel is to be preferred to rabbit and, provided somebody can be persuaded to undertake the not-too-easy job of skinning, there is no reason why squirrel should not be a fairly regular canteen meal.

****DISTRICT OFFICER AND FORESTER RETIRE**

The Dean.

THE DEPARTMENT has said farewell to two stalwarts in the persons of District Officer R. BUTTER, of North Wales, and Forester GEORGE LEES, of

Mr. Butter joined the Forestry Commission in 1923 and was Forester in charge of Haldon, South West England, and Head Forester at Ceredigion, North Wales, before being promoted to District Officer in 1940, since when he has been stationed at Corris and been in charge of the south west district of the North Wales Conservancy. He enters retirement with the good wishes of numerous friends.

Forester Lees leaves us after 52 years with the Office of Woods and the Forestry Commission. He started work in the Staple-edge enclosure of the Forest of Dean when he was 13, and later attended the Forestry School at Parkend. He became a Forester in 1927. Although he has retired, Mr. Lees will still be frequently seen in the district, for he has changed his occupation from caring for young trees to shepherding young children, having taken over the job of school-children's warden at Cinderford.

****IMPORTANT FIND IN S. WALES**

HEADSTONE OF 700 A.D.

A MONUMENTAL STONE with an incised cross, believed to be related to the early Celtic church of Wales, was recently found in Polena Forest, South Wales. It was turned up on the mountain

by the plough, and its historical significance was at once recognised by Forester I. O. EVANS who, in reporting the find, provided details for transmission to the National Museum of Wales at Cardiff. Dr. Nash-Williams, Keeper of the Department of Archaeology, replied that the find was "clearly of great interest" and that he thought the stone, which may have been the headstone of a grave, to be of a date about 700 A.D.

The stone is approximately three feet high, 15 inches wide at the base and about a foot wide at the waist, and is between three and three and a half inches thick; its future home will be in the National Museum of Wales.

****SARTORIAL ELEGANCE :**

A NOTE FOR DEAN EX-STUDENTS

in touch with Mr. C. A. WEBBER, Messrs. Horne Bros., 90-92, Oxford Street, London, W.1.

WE HAVE BEEN ASKED to draw attention to the fact that supplies are available of the Dean School blazer, scarf and tie. Ex-students requiring any of these items are asked to get

Former students would no doubt like to have an idea of the prices. The blazers are in two qualities and the price includes the badge: No. 1 quality, single breasted, is 34s. 5d., 35-inch chest; 89s. 11d., 36-37 inch; 96s. 11d. over 37 inch. Double breasted, in the same order of chest measurement, 90s. 5d.; 95s. 11d.; 102s. 11d. No. 2 quality, single breasted,

94s. 5d.; 101s. 11d.; 109s. 11d.; double breasted, 100s. 5d.; 107s. 11d.; 115s. 11d. The colour is fairly dark green.

The badge by itself costs £1; it is the 1937 design, reduced in size because of the high cost of embroidery and gold wire. The scarf costs £1 5s. 3d. It is flannel and the design consists of two vertical gold stripes on a green background; it is 5' 6" long and nine inches wide. The tie costs 8s. 6d. and the design takes in the school crest in gold, black and light green on a dark green background; there is a thin gold diagonal stripe between the crests. A silk square, made up from the tie material, is available at £1 5s. 6d. It is about 2ft. 6 inches square and contains some 360 small crests and 19 stripes.

As a matter of additional interest, the Dean School is 50 years old in January next. A reunion and other celebrations are planned.

****VALUING TIMBER IN ANCIENT WALES** WHO were the first people to fix timber prices in Britain? One of our correspondents has come across the translation of an ancient Welsh law, which he believes was passed by King Hywel Dda (Howell the Good) during the tenth century A.D. It runs as follows:

A consecrated yew, its value is a pound.
A mistletoe branch, three score pence.
An oak, six score pence.
Principal branch of an oak, thirty pence.
A yew tree, not consecrated, fifteen pence.
A sweet apple, thirty score pence.
A sour apple, thirty pence.
A thorn tree, seven-pence halfpenny.
Every tree after that, four pence.

We don't pretend to know what the pound was worth in those far off days (in fact, we're a bit puzzled to know what it is worth today) but it seems that timber was regarded as a valuable commodity. But why charge five shillings for a branch of mistletoe? The Druids used it, of course, but by the time this law was passed the Welsh had been Christians for hundreds of years. Can it be that they needed it for their Christmas festivities? If so, it looks as though the "spivs" were already in the business!

****TRANSFERS**

THE FOLLOWING TRANSFERS have been notified to Headquarters:

District Officer P. W. MORGAN from Oswestry to Dovey Corris, N(W). Forester W.B. HARBIN from Chopwell, NE(E), to Wynyard, NE(E); A. THOMSON from Dalbeattie, S(S), to Glengap, S(S); M. F. CARRUTHERS from Glengap to Newcastleton, S(S); D. L. SHAW from Gwydyr, N(W), to Brechfa, S(W); G. W. PARKER from Kielder to Chopwell, NE(E). Foremen J. O. WEBSTER from Tentsmuir, E(S), to Hallyburton E(S); T. JOHNSTONE from Allerston, NE(E), to Hambleton, NE(E); L. R. Kerfoot from Llanover, S(W), to Hay, S(W).

Clerk of Works J. A. COMIE from Morangie, N(S), to Glen Affric, N(S). Clerical Officers T. H. STANDEN from Chester to Headquarters; L. M. CHILTON from H.Q. to Chester.

Newcomers are: E.O. B. A. HAMILTON and Clerical Officer L. W. THOMAS to Chester. Clerical Officers G. E. PADDOCK to Shrewsbury; K. HUGHES to Cardiff; K. MAYES to Cambridge; M. DONNELLY to Aberdeen. Asst. Engineer C. J. JAMES to Cardiff.

****A POST OFFICE FOR DALAVICH**

THE NEW FOREST VILLAGE of Dalavich, West Scotland, which houses supervisory staff and workers from Inverliever Forest, has now got a post office, which means that this little

AN ASSET FOR A FOREST VILLAGE

community has become less remote.

The post office, which was built by the Commission, was opened recently by the Assistant Postmaster of Oban and it is understood that it can meet all requirements except a money order! It is at present serving some 31 houses, but in due course this number will be greatly increased.

A post office, of course, requires someone to run it, and Miss C. A. GILLIES, who for nearly 30 years has been a postwoman in the area, has become the first Postmistress. She will doubtless find the job to her liking, and far less arduous than her former occupation, which required her, during her long service, to walk and cycle something like 18,000 miles.

****CUTS BY THE SCORE"**

ALLEGED EXTRACT FROM A REPORT

Headed "Cuts by the Score", it is alleged to be an extract from an O. and M. report, written after a visit to the Royal Festival Hall.

THE FOLLOWING has nothing to do with forestry and little enough to do with us as individuals. It may, however, encourage us to watch our step (or rather hand) when writing reports.

"For considerable periods the four oboe players had nothing to do. The numbers should be reduced, and the work spread more evenly over the whole of the concert, thus eliminating peaks of activity. All the twelve first violins were playing identical notes. This seems unnecessary duplication. The staff of this section should be drastically cut; if a large volume of sound is required, it could be obtained by means of electronic amplifier apparatus.

"Much effort was absorbed in the playing of demi-semi-quavers. This seems an excessive refinement. It is recommended that all notes should be rounded up to the nearest semi-quaver. If this were done, it would be possible to use trainees and lower grade operatives more extensively. There seems to be too much repetition of some musical passages. Scores should be drastically pruned. No useful purpose is served by repeating on the horns a passage which has already been handled by the strings. It is estimated that if all redundant passages were eliminated, the whole concert time of two hours could be reduced to twenty minutes, and there would be no need for an interval.

"The conductor agrees generally with these recommendations, but expresses the opinion that there might be some falling off in the box-office receipts. In that unlikely event it should be possible to close sections of the auditorium entirely, with a consequential saving of overhead expense - lighting, attendance, etc. If the worst came to the worst, the whole thing could be abandoned, and the public could go to the Albert Hall instead."

****GOLF CHAMPIONSHIP**

DIVISIONAL OFFICER C. FAIRCHILD, of North Wales, has distinguished himself by winning the Shropshire Golf Championship. He is, of course, a golfer of long experience and no mean ability, for he won his first county championship (Caernarvonshire and District) in 1912. Since then he has twice won the Welsh Amateur Championship - in 1921 and 1925. We believe Mr. Fairchild is the only player from Wales to take the Fotheringham Cup out of Scotland.

Mr. Fairchild is not the only county champion in the Shrewsbury Office, however. One of the younger Clerical Officers, Mr. M. JONES, is the Shropshire County Table Tennis champion.

****IF OAK BE OUT BEFORE THE ASH**

THERE IS ONE SUBJECT that is always topical - the weather. The other day we heard a colleague speculating as to the chances of a fine holiday for himself at the seaside, and he recited the old adage:

"If the Oak be out before the Ash, then Summer will be a splash. If Ash be out before the Oak, then Summer will be a soak."

Who subscribes to this, and why, and what other weather prophecies are there in rhyme, song or dialect which involve trees? We shall be glad to hear from readers on this subject.

****QUAINT NAMEPLACES**

IN ENGLAND, on Forestry Commission land, there are the following quaintly named places: "High Paradise"; "Peep-O-Day"; "Light Pipe". And in Wales, in the Tintern area, there is "Botany Bay". We would like to hear of others.

****PERSONAL**

HELLO, TWINS! Congratulations to Forester D. J. COX, of Charmouth Forest, South West England, and Mrs. Cox, on the birth of twin daughters; to District Officer W. A. JOHNSON, of West Scotland, and Mrs. Johnson, on the arrival of a baby girl; and to District Officer B. W. HOLTAM, North Wales, and Mrs. Holtam, also on the birth of a daughter.

Best wishes, also, to Miss BETTY TAYLOR, of the Shrewsbury Office, who has married P.C. TONY WOODLEY, of the Shropshire Police.

IF YOU DO SOMETHING, SEE SOMETHING, OR HEAR SOMETHING OUT OF THE ORDINARY, TELL YOUR SLASHER CORRESPONDENT. THERE IS A CORRESPONDENT IN EACH DIRECTORATE AND CONSERVANCY OFFICE