

RETIREMENT OF FORESTER
AND GANGER

FORESTER H. WELLS, one of the first men to plant trees in the Lakeland forest of Thornthwaite, has retired.

Mr. Wells commenced work with the Commission at Thornthwaite in March, 1920, and remained there throughout his service. He passed through all grades, becoming a Ganger in 1926, Foreman in 1939 and Forester, Grade II, in 1946. The early planting referred to above was on the Whinlatter section of the forest, and Forester Wells was able to see some of the fourth series of thinnings in the plantations he helped to form so many years ago. It is of interest that Thornthwaite produced 236,500 Hoppus feet in the way of thinnings in last year alone.

A presentation was made to Mr. Wells and was attended by Mr. C.A.J. BARRINGTON, Conservator for North West England, Mr. J. CHARD, State Forest Officer, and members of the forest staff. The Conservator paid tribute to Mr. Wells' long and faithful service and said the fact that Thornthwaite was now one of the finest forests in the country was due in no small measure to the Forester's work. Forester W. WALTON then presented Mr. Wells with a wallet containing notes, the gift of former colleagues and friends. We join in wishing him well and hope that he will spend many happy years in his place of retirement -- which is Thornthwaite.

Research Ganger HUGH CAMERON -- "Huack" to his many friends -- has also retired after 35 years service. He had been with the Commission at Inchnacardoch, Fort Augustus, since forestry work was commenced there in 1920 and had not been absent for a single day through illness. He was in charge of the Research Branch seed kiln from its installation round about 1928; we are told, however, that his greatest joy was in working on the peat research centre, the Lon Mor, and to him must go much of the credit for making it possible for trees to grow with some promise on this, until now, unproductive bog. "Huack", before draining machines were used in 1946, skilfully opened many miles of forest ditches or drains with a spade, and without the use of any other instrument. There was indeed no need to inspect a drain opened by him, unless it was to see what a perfect job had been made of the operation.

***COMMEMORATIVE PLANTING AT
ACONBURY

WHAT WAS probably the first of the special tree planting ceremonies, the inauguration of which we mentioned last month, took place at Aconbury, in the South West England

Conservancy. There, at the Commission's invitation, Mr. F.G. CHAMBERS, Chairman of the Herefordshire County Council, planted an American Redwood formally to mark the Commission's work in the area. Aconbury Forest, covering 615 acres, is part of the land owned by Guy's Hospital and is believed to have formed part of the hospital's original estate. As it is cleared it is being leased to the Commission for replanting and some 40 acres will have been planted this year. Douglas fir, European larch and Tsuga are being used.

After Mr. Chambers had declared the commemorative tree well and truly planted he said the Commission, by its replanting policy, was bringing back the beauty that had been lost through felling. He hoped the plantation that he had started would grow to gladden the eyes of man and become an inspiration to future generations. Mr. Chambers was thanked by Mr. A.H. POBERT, Conservator, SW England; among other Commission representatives present were Mr. A. PATERSON, SFO, District Officer P.L. WINCHESTER and Forester B.R.G. HAMMOND.

***FOX EATS FOX

COMMENT on last month's reference to cannibalism among foxes comes from Divisional Officer W.A. CADMAN,

PRE-WAR SHOOTS AT KERRY

Aberystwyth. "I well remember," he writes, "that in pre-war days at Kerry, in the North Wales Conservancy,

where we had to organise shoots, Forester WATKINS pointed out to me that the carcasses of foxes left lying in the forest were nearly always eaten shortly afterwards by other foxes. We were sending stomachs away in those days. The person at the receiving end was, like myself, a keen collector of alpine. I remember that I used to insist on his 'swapping' alpine plants for stomachs!

"Regarding your note about the possibility of eagles attacking deer, I do not want to appear critical, but the observation, as published, seems to be a dangerous one from which to draw inferences. The eagle could have been stooping at the deer because it was near its eyrie; or because it was too near its kill; or even, possibly, in fun. The whole point is that it did not drive the stag over the cliff.

"Many birds will stoop at other creatures, including men. When Terns stoop at humans, it does not mean that they are trying to drive them into the sea! It may well be that eagles do on occasion drive deer over cliffs; I have an open mind on the subject. But the story as published, though interesting, proves nothing."

FIRES IN SCOTLAND

SEED KILNS LOST

Two of our seed kilns have been lost through fire. One of these was at Durris, in the East Scotland Conservancy, and the other at South Laggan, in North Scotland. About 200 lbs. of seed and a valuable stock of cones were lost at Durris; extraction of seed is now being concentrated at Fochabers, where the plant is worked by Speymouth Forest.

The kiln at South Laggan consisted of an old, uninhabitable two-roomed cottage.

Another fire that occurred in North Scotland was in Queen's Forest, in the Glenmore National Forest Park, and involved the equipment which provided lighting for what are known as the Norwegian Huts, as well as for Glenmore Lodge, which is used by the Scottish Council of Physical Recreation, a forest hostel and two cottages. Incidentally, the Marine Commando Training School rents the aforementioned Norwegian Huts from January to March each year and uses them as a base from which high altitude operations are carried out in the nearby Cairngorm range of mountains, which early in the year are snow clad from 2,000 feet. The Commandos sleep in small tents on the mountains, or in snow-holes.

OFFICE STAFF AT FORESTERS' CONFERENCE

FOR THE FIRST TIME, representatives of the executive and clerical staff of the East England Conservancy office were invited to attend the annual conference of the Thetford and district Foresters.

The main subject was fire protection and at Heckham, on the site of one of the worst fires in several years, a discussion was led by Mr. G.F. BALLANCE, State Forest Officer. Following lunch there was a demonstration of the latest fire-fighting equipment, including Hathaway pumps and, perhaps most interesting of all, a radio-equipped Land Rover and portable wireless apparatus.

An enjoyable Foresters' dinner was held in the evening in the recently opened village hall at Santon Downham. Opinion was that apart from the instructional aspect, the day provided a useful opportunity for the Foresters and Conservancy staff to talk over some problems. The thanks of all attending went to Mr. BALLANCE and District Officer S.W. ROGERS, who organised the official side of the proceedings, and to District Officer I.W. KIRTON and Head Forester C.W. REDFORD, who so ably provided the social entertainment.

A COLLEAGUE'S 65th BIRTHDAY

PRESENTATIONS TO MISS R.K. BURNET

NEWS from Edinburgh includes mention of a party in honour of the 65th. birthday of a member of the staff - Miss R.K. BURNET, who is in charge of the mapping section in the Scottish Directorate. Miss Burnet enjoys the distinction of being one of our "founder members", having joined the Commission just a few weeks after it was established in 1919. She was formerly with the Timber Supply Department.

Mr. J.P. MACKIE WHYTE, Land Agent, presented Miss Burnet with a large bunch of flowers as a gift from the staff, and Mr. J.M. ROSS made a small presentation on behalf of Acquisition Officers. The office typists also presented Miss Burnet with flowers.

Several members of the Directorate staff paid an interesting and enlightening visit to the General Post Office in Edinburgh. One of the most intriguing facts to come to light, so far as the visitors were concerned, is that the posting box in the main Edinburgh office is never cleared -- letters posted in it are conveyed to the sorting office by an endless belt.

Staff and friends also paid a visit to the Sighthill Health Centre on the outskirts of Edinburgh. The Centre is the first of its kind in Scotland and was designed and built by the Department of Health, in consultation with the Edinburgh Corporation and other interested parties. It contains six consulting suites for general practitioners with patients in the area. In addition, it provides a headquarters for the Corporation's child welfare, school health and dental services. Included in the Centre are a pharmacy, laboratory, treatment room and physiotherapy department.

XX CRICKET NEWS

and Social Club at Headquarters
and it is hoped to play the Finance Branch v. The Rest game during the last week in June.

TWENTY-ONE fixtures have been arranged for the coming season by the Cricket Section of the Infcresta Sports They include a Sunday match (10th July) at Alice Holt, and it is hoped to play the Finance Branch v. The Rest game during the last week in June.

Bad weather curtailed last season's ambitious fixture list, no fewer than seven matches being "rained off". Despite the loss through staff transfers of several good players (including Mr. ERIC TINSON, the previous year's Captain) seven matches were won, the team being ably led by Mr. J.G.S. GILLINGHAM. Thirteen matches were lost.

At a meeting of the Welsh Directorate office Cricket Club the retiring Secretary, Mr. K. ROSCOE, said that in spite of the wet summer almost as many games as usual had been played. The financial position was sound and it was intended this year again to enter the local league and cup competitions; several friendly games had already been arranged. The following officers were elected for the 1955 season -- Chairman, Mr. F. EDWARDS; Secretary, Mr. E.J.H. DAVIES; treasurer, Mr. D.C. FISHER captain, Mr. ROSCOE; vice-captain, Mr. J. TREADGILL.

XX BELL-RINGING BY SCHOOL STUDENTS

QUARTER PEAL AT MUNDFORD

6. E. BUDGEN.

STUDENTS of Lynford Hall Forester Training School rang their first quarter peal at Mundford Church in 46 minutes, involving 1,260 changes of Grandshire Doubles. The ringers were: Treble, J. WIBLIN; 2. C. BOOTH; 3. B. CROOK; 4. A. HORN; 5. J. HARRIS (conductor);

The out-of-school activities of our future Foresters are, we know, varied; but this is the first report we have had of students forming a bell-ringing team. Have any of the other schools yet gone in for campanology?

XX IN PRAISE OF THE MANCHESTER

ESTATES OFFICER'S SUCCESSES AT CRUFT'S

Kennel Club Challenge Certificate. This certificate is, of course, greatly valued, for if it is gained on three occasions the dog concerned may be styled a Champion. It was the first time since before the war that the certificate has gone to a Manchester Terrier.

Mr. Cassels is very interested in the revival of this old breed which, as the name implies, originated in Lancashire. Once upon a time a rather heavy, black and tan terrier was in great demand for keeping down the rats in warehouses in Liverpool and Manchester, and from the prowess of individual dogs the sport of the rat pit was evolved. In the contests an agreed number of rats would be placed in a pit or other small enclosure, and terriers would be heavily backed to kill them all within a given time, or more quickly than some other contestant. Another occupation of the time was rabbit coursing and one John Holmes had the idea of producing an ideal dog suitable for the rat pit or coursing. For this purpose he crossed a black whippet with the prevailing type of black and tan terrier; the result was the Manchester Terrier as we know it today.

For the benefit of readers who know little about the breed we would mention that the Manchester is a smart, racily built terrier of 17-18 lbs. (a little smaller than a fox terrier) with a very smooth coat of jet black and rich mahogany red (pale tan is a bad fault) and a long tail which is never docked. For various reasons, the breed became scarce and almost died out during the second world war -- only eleven pure bred specimens were known to exist at that time. The breed has, however, been revived with the aid of imports from America, and Manchesters are now in considerable demand. "Anyone wanting an excellent companion, a first class house dog, and a really expert ratter should consider this breed," writes Mr. Cassels. "I should be happy to help anyone interested in breeding and showing dogs, if they would take to Manchesters."

XX A USEFUL NEW BOOK

WE HAVE recently received a copy of an interesting and attractive new book, quite simply entitled "Trees", by E.F. Stephenson, M.Sc., and Charles Stewart. It is in no sense a text book, but is full of miscellaneous information on such topics as: The Oak in Legend and History; The Strange Story of Galls; and the Ecology of Woodlands. There are no fewer than 76 line drawings in the text, besides 37 photographs (including some beautiful tree studies by Harold Bastin) spread over 168 pages and bound in a stiff cover. It is published by Messrs. Wheaton's of Exeter and if ordered as "Trees, Book Four of the Life Everywhere Series", can be obtained from Messrs. Foyles, Booksellers, Charing Cross Road, London. W.C.2. for only 4s. --

postage, we imagine, would be about 1s. extra. There is a de luxe edition at 6s.6d., for those who prefer to pay more.

TRANSFERS

THE FOLLOWING TRANSFERS have been notified to Headquarters:
District Officer B.W. HOLTAM from Shrewsbury, N(W), to Ruthin, N(W). Foresters M.R. MADDOCKS from Rheola, S(W), to Crychan, S(W); O.D. HOLLINGTON from Crychan to Rheola; M.H. HINDLEY from Parkhill, New, to Brighstone, New; J.E.D. Freeman from Brighstone to Deini. Forester E.B. THOMSON from Fetteresso, E(S), to Montreathwont, E(S); E.R. ROBSON from Research, Glentworth, to Research, Rashfield; E.S. YERBURY from Holmsley, New, to Parkhurst, New.

Executive Officer E. BROWN from Headquarters to D(E).
Clerical Officers L.T. IRVING from Edinburgh to Glasgow; E. RICHARDS from Aberystwyth to Shrewsbury.

SHAME ON US!

OH, THE SHAME OF IT! Last month, in the paragraph "An Order for Logs", we included the statement that "there did not appear to be a Jamestown in the British Isles, let alone in Scotland." It is not for us to make excuses, except to say that we used the passage in all good faith. Now for the backlash from readers:

"I am ashamed of the fellow Scot -- if Scot it was -- who told you there was no Jamestown in Scotland. There are three -- one in Dumbartonshire, one in Fife and one in Ross and Cromarty. The first, which I know well, is in Dumbartonshire about one mile SE of Balloch on the bonnie banks of Loch Lomond, and is a small town. The other two, which I do not know personally, are villages. You'll have to sack your correspondent!"

(This is where the said correspondent may (possibly) smile (if a Sassenach). Surely it is Dumbartonshire, not Dumbaronshire? - Editor).

"Can it be that the Scots are pulling the editorial leg? Jamestown is a thriving industrial area in Dumbartonshire on the main road from Dumbarton to the North. It is a district of a town called Alexandria, no doubt so titled in recognition of Nelson's victory, and in a locality which was so intent on perpetuating the memory of those times it is not beyond the bounds of possibility that a neighbouring village was called St. Helena. This has probably been absorbed by the growth of Jamestown, but maybe the name lingers on.

"In the future we shall probably be supplying pitprops to Washington and to nearby New York and Philadelphia. These, however, will not be export orders, but merely supplies to collieries -- the places named are all colliery villages in Durham. Incidentally, to return to Scotland, there is a place called New York on Loch Awe. It has a pier and at one time some of our workers used to be picked up there by our motor launch and taken to their work in Inverliever Forest, which is on the loch side."

PERSONAL

ONE OF THE LATEST Forestry Commission romances to lead to wedding bells is that of Executive Officer MAURICE GUBBY, one time auditor, late of Headquarters and now at Aberystwyth, and Miss ROSEMARY JONES, PA to Director, Wales. The couple first met when Mr. Gubby was sent to Aberystwyth to audit the Welsh Directorate office account.

The wedding took place at the Church of St. Michael and All Angels, Aberystwyth, with Mr. PAUL BROOK of Headquarters as best man. The Directorate staff turned out in force to wish the couple well; a reception was held at the Marine Hotel. Later the bride and groom were given a rousing send-off as they departed for their honeymoon on the Isle of Man. They have received a handsome dinner service from their colleagues at the Directorate office, the gift being handed over by Mr. ERIC LEWIS, Chief Clerk.

Another "all-Commission" marriage was that of Mr. D. PLANT, Assistant Education Officer at Lynford Hall Forester Training School, and Miss CHRISTINE JOHNSON, typist at the school.

Miss V.A.D. ARCHIBALD, Shorthand-typist at Headquarters, has married Mr. S.M. HOSIE, of Aberdeen. The wedding took place at St. Columba's (Church of Scotland).

Births include a son to District Officer and Mrs. J.F. McGARVA, West Scotland; a son to Forester and Mrs. J.R. HARNNESS (Craig Forest, South Scotland); a daughter to Forester Instructor and Mrs. D. SHERRELL (Lynford Hall); a second son to Mr. and Mrs. J. THREADGILL, Aberystwyth.