

THE SLASHER

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EAGLE VERSUS DEER EVIDENCE FROM NORTH SCOTLAND

IN MARCH we referred to the "argument among naturalists as to whether an eagle will attack a deer," and mentioned the incident in North Scotland in which a golden eagle appeared to be trying to drive a stag over a cliff. A reader (Divisional Officer W. A. CADMAN) wrote to say that more evidence than we had given was required before any definite conclusions could be reached. Now District Officer K. CASSELS, who reported the incident, writes: "Mr. Cadman's remarks (The Slasher, April) prompt some amplification of the circumstances. Though the story was at second hand, I can vouch for the fact that there was no eyrie in the immediate neighbourhood and I am reasonably sure the eagle had no kill to protect. Playfulness is not entirely ruled out, but it should be remembered that the incident did not occur in the Spring.

"I rather take the view that the facts support those who contend that eagles do not attack deer (except, of course, cripples). To make a number of feints at a stag with, it seems, no intention of closing or striking hardly constitutes an attack, even though the eagle may have hoped the stag would fall over the cliff."

So far it seems that most readers interested in this particular subject have preferred to keep an open mind as to whether an eagle really will take offensive action. Now, however, we should consider the following note from MAJOR JOHN STIRLING of FAIRBURN, one of our Forestry Commissioners, who lives in North Scotland and has had abundant opportunity to observe the characteristics of the eagle.

"Some years ago," writes Major Stirling, "we were stalking hinds and were close to several which, highly suspicious, were standing on a flat with some very steep ground below them. An eagle came and circled above them several times, then swooped down upon them; some of the hinds lost their heads and broke away, galloping straight down the hill. The eagle followed, gliding just above their heads, but did not touch any of them. As soon as they got to the flat ground below, the eagle lost interest, rose, and went back to the herd. This time it singled out a hind and calf and managed to drive them to the slope; as soon as they were on the really steep ground the eagle alighted on the head of the calf (making it look like a mouse), and held on to its head all the way down, a distance of about 300 yards. As soon as the calf reached level ground the eagle rose. No doubt its intention had been to blind the calf in the hope that it would fall and so be an easy victim."

Major Stirling goes on:

"There is no doubt whatever that eagles do kill deer calves on occasions. I have more than once seen eagles rise from the body of a deer, still warm, which had obviously been killed by methods similar to that described above."

MOUNTAIN RESCUES

AND A FATAL FALL

Forest took a prominent part in the rescue of one victim and recovery of the body of the other.

THE CULLINS, on the Island of Skye, which so often have taken toll of human life, were recently the scene of two more accidents, one of them fatal. Forester C. MacDONALD and a squad from Glenbrittle Forest took a prominent part in the rescue of one victim and recovery of the body of the other.

The first accident occurred on a Sunday, when two men from Portree were climbing on Sgurr Alasdair. Both were hurt, but one, although suffering from broken ribs, managed to reach Glenbrittle House and enlist aid for his companion, who had a fractured leg. Volunteers for a rescue party were called for by the Inspector of Police at Portree and the party left at 9.15 p.m., making its way to Corrie Lochan, where the injured man lay. Conditions were treacherous owing to recent snow, so that ice axes had to be used over the last 500 feet or so. The return journey was completed at 8 a.m. the following day. Both men were taken to hospital, to make a good recovery.

The second accident also occurred in the Corrie Lochan area and involved an Oxford undergraduate, who fell some 400 feet. His companion descended and made him as comfortable as possible before setting off for Glenbrittle House. A rescue party was organised and set out at 10 p.m., to find the man dead; the body was conveyed to Glenbrittle House, which was reached at 4 a.m. the next day.

~~MR.~~ MR. TRIBE RECEIVES HIS
MEDAL

West England Conservancy, and was made by the Lord Lieutenant of Staffordshire, Mr. H. WALLACE COPLAND. As already reported in The Slasher, Mr. Tribe recently retired from his post as Head Forester at Cannock.

THE PRESENTATION of the British Empire Medal awarded to Mr. WILLIAM TRIBE took place at Lady Hill Nursery, Cannock Chase Forest, in the North

Mr. O. J. SANGAR, the Director for England, in introducing the Lord Lieutenant, paid tribute to Mr. Tribe's work for the Commission and said the fire danger at Cannock Chase had involved heavy responsibilities - nearly one third of the planted area had been lost at one time or another by fire. The Lord Lieutenant read a letter to Mr. Tribe from Her Majesty the Queen, in which she regretted she was unable personally to make the presentation.

Mr. C. J. VENABLES, who is a member of the Conservancy's Regional Advisory Committee, thanked the Lord Lieutenant and later there was a short tour of the forest, followed by tea in the Coronation Hall at Slitting Mill. Among the bodies represented at the ceremony were the County Fire Service - who were thanked by Mr. Sangar for their help to the Commission in the past - Lichfield Urban District Council, British Railways and the timber trade.

~~MR.~~ HELPED TO START KERRY FOREST

FORESTER E. E. PRYCE, who helped to start Kerry Forest, in the North Wales Conservancy, has retired after 32 years service with the Commission. He commenced work at Kerry in 1923, moved to Dovey Forest in 1929 and went to Clocaenog in 1938, where he remained until his retirement.

A cheque was handed over to Mr. Pryce by the Conservator for North Wales, Mr. F. C. BEST, the informal ceremony being attended by District Officer J. A. SPENCER and a number of the forest staff and workers at the nursery. Mr. Best referred to Mr. Pryce's long and faithful service. After early disappointments, said Mr. Best, due to frost, exposure and the early methods used for planting, Kerry had turned out to be one of the best of our high altitude forests and was now paying its way.

~~MR.~~ FUN FINDING OUT

SOME BRISTOL VISITS

visits to various undertakings.

THE STAFF of the Bristol office, Headquarters of the South West England Conservancy, appear, like our Edinburgh colleagues, to be covering a wide range of subjects through the medium of personal

The latest report from Bristol tells of a visit to the factory of Messrs. W.D. and H.O. Wills, Ltd., where the party witnessed the manufacture of tobacco and cigarettes; one of the facts emphasised was the amount of duty paid on each tierce of tobacco and, needless to say, there were rapid mental calculations as to how much this meant on a "packet of twenty". Another visit was to the sorting office of the General Post Office in Bristol. The party arrived just as the "outward" mail began to come in; the office seemed to present a scene of chaos but in actual fact the "order and method" was so carefully worked out that the mail was almost entirely cleared by the time the visitors left, after two hours. The sorting office is adjacent to Temple Meads Station, so that mail for despatch by rail is taken direct to the main line platform by conveyor.

~~MR.~~ "COME WORK WITH ME AND
BE MY CLERK"

LET US MAKE IT abundantly clear that the following is nothing more than a good-humoured leg-pull for the instigators of the new accounting system.

It is, of course, a parody on Christopher Marlowe's poem "Come live with me and be my love!"

1. Come work with me and be my clerk
And we will all the ledgers mark
With noughts and crosses, red and black
No debits, Credits shall we lack.
2. And we will sit up all the night,
And see the totals come just right,
By National adders to whose clack
Some odious man calls figures back.
3. I will give thee groups of assets
With a thousand diff'rent facets:
Five ton lorries, crawler tractors,
No depreciation factors.
4. Sheaves of A.M.'s and amendments
From H.Q. sent by leisured gents:
And if these faithfully you mark
Come work with me and be my clerk.
5. The Audit teams shall look and look
For my mistakes in sheet and book:
But if thou know and keep it dark
Then work with me and be my clerk.

CRICKET HONOUR

MR. K. ROSCOE, Executive Officer in the office of Director, Wales, was selected to play for the Aberystwyth eleven against Glamorgan, in the benefit match for Willie Watkins, the England and Glamorgan player.

SEQUEL TO CHRISTMAS CUSTOM

A PLEASANT SEQUEL to a Christmas custom occurred in Edinburgh. Every year the staff of the Scottish Directorate office makes a Christmas gift to the Edinburgh Children's Shelter and last Christmas Press photographs of the children's party showed the gigantic cracker provided by our colleagues. There followed an invitation to visit the home and this was done on a Saturday afternoon. "The Shelter," writes our correspondent, "is pleasantly situated in a residential part of the city, is well equipped and every care and comfort is provided for the children." The visitors spent a "hectic and exhausting hour" playing with the youngsters.

It is understood that several of the Edinburgh staff may arrange an outing for some of the older children.

F.C. TIE NOW IN FOUR QUALITIES

THERE are now four qualities of the Forestry Commission tie which, as many readers will know, is supplied by C. H. Munday, Ltd., 7, Irving Street, Leicester Square, London, W.C.2. The materials used and prices are: rayon reppe (smooth weave rayon) at 6s. 6d. each; rayon matte weave, 9s. 6d.; silk weft (60 per cent silk), 11s. 6d.; and all silk reppe, 15s. Postage on all ties is 3d.

FLASHBACK TO CHRISTMAS

FROM Forester H. W. JONES, of Delamere Forest, in the North West England Conservancy, comes the following comment on Christmas tree sales.

"You just cannot hold the Scots down," he writes. "Give them a good licking at Soccer and up they come with Cash Sales. In the March issue of The Slasher I saw a paragraph concerning Cash Sales of Christmas trees, etc., at Blairadam Forest, East Scotland, where 10 books of A.35's, plus part of another, were used in December last, representing more than 500 individual sales, which were higher than the Chopwell Forest (England) score published in a previous issue.

"While not wishing to subdue the 'Hampton Roar', it must be placed on record that at Delamere Forest last December 15 books of A.35's, plus parts of two others, were used in respect of 784 individual sales. England must therefore lay claim to the record."

Incidentally, while on the subject of the festive season, we would mention that Forester L. G. MORGAN, of Cannock Chase, has just received an unusual order for the time of the year - i.e., "One Christmas tree to be ready for collection on 24th June."

"ALL FOOLS" DAY PARTY

THE FIRST of last month saw a gathering of staff of the East England Conservancy office and their friends at an "All Fools" party. The company, more than 100 strong, enjoyed a programme of games and dancing, with Mr. H. S. FROST as M.C.; the event was in the nature of a "return" affair, for in the previous month Conservancy staff were entertained at a social evening held in the recently opened village hall at Santon Downham. Thus the staff from Thetford Chase forest were well represented, and "outstation" colleagues were also present from Ipswich and Northampton.

DUN OR DUM ?

CAN ANYONE clear up the point? Is it Dunbartonshire, or Dumbartonshire? Last month, commenting on a letter from a reader, we suggested the former was correct and we based our view on the Ordnance Survey Map. Now Divisional Officer G. F. BILLANCE, East England Conservancy, sends us what he regards as conclusive evidence that it is Dumbartonshire - an envelope postmarked "Helensburgh, Dumbartonshire".

This prompted us to consult a well known road map and gazetteer, in which we found the county in question referred to as Dumbartonshire.

TRANSFERS

THE FOLLOWING TRANSFERS have been notified to Headquarters:
District Officer A. R. CRAM from Cardiff, S(W), to Chepstow, S(W). Head Forester D. J. DAVIES from Dean to Hemsted, SE(E). Foresters R. S. ANGUS from Ardfin, W(S), to Glenfinart, W(S); T.W.B. BOLAM from Langdale, NE(E), to Rievaulx, NE(E); J.A. GRUBB from Bareagle, W(S), to Newton Nursery, E(S); W.E. DYE from Strathyre, W(S), to Ardfin.

Foreman J. S. ALLAN from Glenbreanter, W(S), to Strathyre. Assistant Engineers G.O. COOK from Santon Downham, E(E), to Cambridge, E(E); A. GOWLAND from Chester, NW(E), to Carlisle, NW(E). Clerk of Works J. A. COWIE from Ardross, N(S), to Slattadale, N(S).

Clerical Officers A.R. BURGESS from Aberystwyth to Cardiff; Mrs. C.A. BALDWIN from Cardiff to Aberystwyth.

~~RE~~REPORTS OF DONALD

COUNTLESS stories have been told in the past of the "worthy" of the squad who is quite irrepressible. Such a man is one whom we will merely call Donald, of the North Scotland Conservancy. Donald was often given the serious and exacting duty of fire patrol, as he had the very "diplomatic" way of telling people where they should not go and was equally capable of telling people where they should go, according to circumstances.

There was the occasion when he was on patrol and met one of our friends from across the sea, and it did not take Donald long to realise that the man who asked so many questions and spoke of things in such a big way was an American. "Why," related the talker, "in our country from the tops of some of our hills, with a good glass, we can see things 70 miles away." Donald was not greatly impressed, but listened. "Say," went on the American, pointing to a nearby hill, "if I were to go up there with a good glass could I see Glasgow?" Donald pondered for a moment and replied: "I believe if you took half a bottle you would see New York."

~~RE~~PERSONAL

THE FOLLOWING MARRIAGES have taken place: Mr. KEN BALDWIN, EO, Aberystwyth, to Miss CHRISTINE CHAPMAN, CO, Cardiff; Mr. J. W. TARRANT, EO, Cardiff, to Miss P. J. DUNN, CO, Shrewsbury; of District Officer JOHN ALDHOUS, Mrs. P. M. LEWIS (now Mrs. TROSS), Miss MARIE TEBBUTT, Ex-School Ganger I.J.M. DAWSON, and Miss JOAN McLAREN, all of the Forest Research Station. Miss M.J. MATTHEWS, Supervisor Typist, Shrewsbury, to Mr. JOSEPH BOYLE; Miss MARY TUCKER, CO, Cardiff, to Mr. NOEL PICKETT; Miss E. M. JEFFERIES, CO, Bristol, to Mr. R. S. LLOYD.

Births - A son to Mr. C. RIDLEY, EO, Forest Research Station, and Mrs. Ridley; son to Mr. G. W. FOULDS, CO, Cambridge, and Mrs. Foulds; son to Mr. L. W. FENN, CO, Cambridge, and Mrs. Fenn; daughter to Mr. P. F. HERMON, EO, HQ., and Mrs. Hermon, formerly CO, Cambridge; daughter to District Officer J. H. JAMES, South Wales Conservancy, and Mrs. James; son to Asst. Engineer D.O. BAYLISS, Aberystwyth, and Mrs. Bayliss.

~~RE~~DEATH OF CLERK OF WORKS

WE DEEPLY REGRET to have to record the death of Mr. H. L. MILLER, Clerk of Works in the South Wales Conservancy, who passed away in hospital. Mr. Miller joined the Commission last year and had been working in the Chepstow area.

~~RE~~WHAT IS WOOD ?

ANYONE uncertain as to the nature and composition of the important raw material we are all, in one way or another, helping to produce in ever-increasing quantities might refer to an article reproduced in pamphlet form by the Australian Scientific and Industrial Research Organisation! While written from an Australian angle, wood is wood the world over, though its structure may vary.

"Wood as we know it, i.e., the bark-denuded boles and main branches of mature Gymnospermae (nonpored woods) and dicotyledonous Angiospermae (pored woods), consists of what has been termed wood substance together with highly variable quantities of extraneous materials (i.e. materials extraneous to the mature cell walls). The extraneous materials include a wide range of substances such as oils, fats, waxes, acids, aldehydes, alcohols, phytosterols, resenes, pigments, tannins, phlobaphenes, kinos, saponins, gums, mucilages, sugars, cyclohexanols, mineral constituents, proteins, etc.

"Payen, early in the nineteenth century, assumed that wood substance was a heterogeneous mechanical mixture in which the cellulose (or skeletal) was embedded in encrusting materials. Payen's encrustation hypothesis has had its adherents up to recent times. Most wood technologists now believe that the encrusting materials consist of lignin and hemicellulose and that lignin, in part at least, is chemically combined with the polysaccharide constituents of wood - more particularly, with the hemicellulosic constituents."

This is as far as we propose to go.