

MY MEMORIES OF THE DEAN FORESTER TRAINING SCHOOL

Following a year's practical training in Saint Gwynno Forest in South Wales and the sitting of the School entrance exam, I was admitted to the Dean School.

I arrived at Lydney Junction Station with my kit, plus a violin, and on arrival found I had missed a 'bus into the town so I walked. It's a long way from Lydney Junction Station into the town when laden down with kit which became heavier with every step. I finally found myself in Forest Road and caught a 'bus to Parkend. My bike followed me and arrived by train at Parkend Goods Shed about a week later. (The Goods Shed which has been recently restored looks the same as it always did - a long wooden building with sliding doors.)

I was met at the School by a Senior Student and booked in and was allocated a cubicle in the top dorm with a window looking out of the front of the building. Each cubicle had a single bed, a long narrow cupboard and a chest of drawers. A curtain rail ran along the front of the cubicle with a curtain attached - an echo of Womens Timber Corp days. I met some of my fellow students, unpacked and chatted.

That evening the newly arrived students were told to see the notice board in the hall as instructions would be posted up on events to take place. I, together with many others, read the notices and found we were expected to assemble in the hall at 9.00 pm for an evening walk. About a dozen of us - the gullible ones, turned up and were met by two Senior Students who said we were to meet the Forester Instructor at 10.30 pm at Parkhill. So off we went. We tramped up through the Forest to Knockley and then on to Parkhill Lodge where Mr Tommy Morgan lived. Mr Morgan had an apple orchard and it was very dark by this time no sign of the Forester Instructor! It was only then we realised that it was all a great spoof. Some of the daring amongst us plus the two Seniors loaded up with apples until the dogs started to bark. We beat a hasty retreat and arrived back at the school about an hour later - vowing to get even with the Seniors at a later date. Mr Haldane was the Principal at this time with Mr Wyndham Arnott as the Forester Instructor. Later during the year Mr Haldane was sent north and was replaced by Mr Grant. The Deputy Surveyor at the time was Mr A.D. Hopkinson. It was the summer (August) of 1942.

The Senior class occupied the bottom and middle dormitories and the Junior class the top. The Common Room was at the back of the School and was used a great deal by the students. It had some easy chairs, a fireplace at each end and a library of sorts - mainly paperbacks. Around the walls were hung the School photographs. These went right back to the start of the School in 1904, and showed everyone who had attended the School over the

years. We were able to identify foresters we knew or had heard of from these photographs.

Also in the Common Room was a large refectory table made of oak which had been made by previous students. Today this table is in the library of the Crown Office at Coleford.

I remember well using the Common Room at night - lighting a fire with wood from the Log Boxes and toasting bread and cheese and sitting around yarning with fellow students.

The pattern of training was the same as it had always been - practical work in the forest for four days a week under the supervision of a Senior Student, with a day's lectures or sometimes more when the weather was bad. On a Friday afternoon we cycled to Cinderford to the Dean Mining and Technical College for instruction in surveying and levelling. The cycle ride to Cinderford was usually along the Cannop Valley to the cross roads and then up Speech House hill and on into Cinderford. Russells Inclosure was sealed off with American troops on guard to prevent entry. The inclosure was stacked with bombs along the internal roads under the trees and Quonset huts were set out at intervals. If we were lucky, at the bottom of the steep part of Speech House hill, an American lorry would be grinding up the hill and you could hang on with one hand to the tailboard - letting go when you reached the top of the hill. This saved much sweat in pushing your bike up the hill. Along the Speech House road were large water tanks and each entrance into the forest was sealed off and guarded. A large part of the forest was a huge arsenal. Many of the American troops were black and belonged to a logistic regiment.

On Saturday mornings we cycled to Lydney Grammar School for Botany classes under Mr Harold Jones. After our Botany lesson we universally retired to the Bathurst Cafe in the High Street for a hot chocolate drink before cycling back to School. The rest of Saturday was your own - as was Sunday. Saturday afternoon we played or watched football in Parkend or Bream or Whitecroft or Yorkley, and in the summer we played cricket. The School cricket ground was on the "rough grounds" adjoining Whitemead Park. There was a pavilion which had been built by students and a practise wicket which I helped to lay.

Our lectures took place in the library which was a room off the lower dorm and which held specimens in glass cases around the walls. The specimens were of insects, geology, timber, etc.

Our standard work of reference was "Forestry for Woodmen" by Mr C.O. Hanson and this was used throughout the Course. Lectures were given by the Principal and by Mr W. Arnott together with visits from the Deputy Surveyor who talked on a variety of subjects. Visiting lecturers appeared from time to time - one of whom was Dr R. Neil Chrystal. I have a signed copy of his book "Insects of the British Woodlands" to this day.

Mr J.M.B. Brown also appeared from time to time and we wandered the woods with him. Mr Wyndham Arnott also conducted long instructive walks through the Forest and I well remember such a walk through the Kidnalls which had not long been replanted with oak and was then about 3' - 4' high.

Exams took place at the end of each term and these were held in the lecture room for written work. Surveying and levelling exams were set by the staff at the Mining and Technical College, and Botany exams by Mr Harold Jones.

Our practical work was structured to give as wide a range of practise as possible. We spent time in planting in Churchill Inclosure - Fencing at Bromley and Nagshead, Seed Collection at various places and weeding anywhere and everywhere. Nursery work was at Nagshead under the watchful eye of Mr Bert Parry, and the wet weather shed had carved or written inside it the names of many past students. We sowed acorns and beech seed and many conifers, and "lined out" and weeded during the season.

We made trips to adjoining estates and Forestry Commission woods and went down Princess Royal Colliery to see how pit props and timber was used underground.

Nagshead bird box experiment had just been started and Dr Bruce Campbell visited the school and talked about the experiment. Interested students became involved in putting up boxes, repairing boxes and recording during the nesting season.

We cycled everywhere. There was a "school lorry" but most of the time we cycled. The lorry was always available for the fire fighting team and carried beaters, an occasional knapsack sprayer or two and a large tank full of water (with no top to it). Those of us detailed for fire duty had to stay in or near the school in case of fire and a 'phone call usually meant a fire call out. There was a siren in the hall and the orderly officer would sound this and gather the fire party together. We would then get on the lorry - kept near the school, and be driven to the fire. Often by the time we got there we were soaked by water from the tank but quickly dried out when we got to the fire. Two fires remain in my memory (from the countless ones we attended). One was a ground fire in an old oak felled area below Bream school and Council houses, and the other a big fire at Tintern North near Trelleck, in conifer 6' - 8' tall. This was a very fierce fire which burned for many hours before it was finally extinguished with the aid of forest staff, students and the Army Fire Service. It was quite dangerous at times and I remember having to retreat as trees nearby torched like Roman Candles. Rabbits and other small animals ran under our feet in panic - many of them on fire. We arrived back at school exhausted, blackened and filthy.

On a Saturday night there was often a dance on in the Memorial Hall at Parkend. This was quite popular with some students who, after a pint or two at the New Inn or the Fountain, would go along to sniff out the

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local talent. The policeman in the village at the time was P.C. Carter who would stand at the Hall door and make sure there was no nonsense inside. Anyone he found causing a disturbance he would haul outside to cool off before letting them back in again. If there was a fight he would get the contestants outside and tell them to fight it out and when they had finished he would let them in again.

The pubs open in the village at this time were the Fountain, the New Inn, the Railway Inn and, I believe, the British Lion. The Rising Sun at Moseley Green was very popular, especially on a hot day if we were weeding anywhere near by.

We cut sandwiches every morning before we went out to work ... first come first served. Often bread with a lump of cheese which we toasted on a forked stick when we had our lunch break. We ate at night in the dining room, during which we exchanged news of the day. Whenever anyone had a birthday we all sang "Why was he born so beautiful; why was he born at all?" etc, etc.

We had a momentous battle one night about 11.00 pm when the top dorm was being raided by Seniors from below. We turned on the fire hoses and a running battle ensued up and down the stairs with everyone soaked through to the skin. Water ran everywhere - down the stairs to the dining room. It only stopped when Mr Grant turned up and threatened all sorts of dire penalties unless we stopped. The next day we had to clear up and were given a terrific telling-off. We were all penalised (at least those who could be recognised) through I can't remember what the penalty was now. It was one hell of a battle.

There was much friendly rivalry between Seniors and Juniors and many a joke played on each other a sheep in one's cubicle or hens from somewhere! - pitprops, lumps of coal and so on. Outside the School, however, the bonds were strong and whether Senior or Junior you stuck up for each other. The "School" was the cry which we all rallied to.

We had a School tie, a School badge, a blazer (for those who wanted one) and a School Motto - "Sic Vos Non Vobis" - ("For others not for ourselves"). We were proud of our predecessors and of the School. Many of them worked overseas and they took the name of the Dean School with them. It was considered a privilege to have attended the Dean School and the name of the School became known far and wide.

We had a Sports Committee, an Editorial Committee, a School Matron (left over from when the Women's Timber Corps occupied the School at the start of the war). We had an orderly officer, a School foreman and a great sense of comradeship, all of which was broken up yet again in 1943 when the School closed at the end of the course in July.

Many of our Seniors were called up and went into the various Services. Some were unfit for military service and were posted out to F.C. Forests.

One or two went on to take a degree in forestry at University. Some were killed, and several never resumed their career in forestry after the war.

As to us Juniors - a number of us were posted to Benmore School for our second year and the remainder went out to various forests or into the Services. When we left Benmore we were posted to Forestry Commission forests, but only for a short time before entering the Services.

.....*G.E. Waygood*
G.E. Waygood

DEAN SCHOOL of FORESTRY 1943



Back Row: Flynn, A. G., Bartlett, G., Rayner, J. R., Gowings, J. C., James, A. I., Evans, I. O., Bond, C. G., Sherrell, D. A., White, G. H., Nicholson, J.
Middle Row: Straughan, J. G., Featherstone, C. R., Waygood, G. E., Freeth, A. J., Packwood, P., Goodwin, J. F., Simmonds, V., Martindale, J. M., Bird, J.
Cummins, D. L., Everitt, E. C., Macdonald, R.
Front Row: Keens, D. W., Pemberton, F., Pierce, G. J., Mr. A. Grant, Mr. A. D. Hopkinson, Mr. W. Arnott, Cinderley, D. J., Awbury, P.

FORESTER TRAINING SCHOOL PARKEND, GLOS.

FIRST IMPRESSIONS

I attended the first full course after the war ; 1946 - 1948. We were quite unlike the pre-war students, being streetwise, mainly demobbed ex-servicemen--average age about 30. There was very little real forestry background amongst us. Pre war students were much younger and from Forestry locations.

We had sat a compulsory entrance exam which puzzled us a little as it consisted of a general knowledge test with, as far as we could see, little bearing on growing trees. We had to identify a mackintosh from a brand name(wet weather protection perhaps?), say how long a tank of water would take to fill if it had a leak at the rate of a quarter the speed and capacity of the filling tap (fire protection perhaps with F.C. second-hand equipment?), and to work out the odds if five coins tossed in the air of all or some of them landing the same way up(wet weather pastimes?) Even the Daily Telegraph writer wondered what value all this could be to budding Foresters. However we must have all passed for we were instructed to report to Lydney Junction Station with personal, working and wet weather kit, plus bikes.

We assembled on the platform and were met by our future Principal and a driver ; we loaded out kit into the ex-army lorry and climbed aboard. The only seating was wooden benches unfixed and loosely arranged. Our bikes were to follow later. The driver, to impress us, gave his impression of Stirling Moss and quite a lot of the journey was spent getting back up off the floor and righting the tipped-up benches ; the road to Parkend has many tight bends.

We arrived in front of a gaunt stone three-storey building ; this was a 40foot ex-iron works with bare windows, bilious-green painted , as were the doors, relieved only by a superb cover of virginia creeper in its full autumn colours. We unloaded and were allocated our dormitories. I was allocated the top dorm, which was located up a stone staircase ; the room ran the whole length of the building, and was furnished with about 10 iron beds and a locker of sorts by each one. There were 5 washbasins in a row, five fire-buckets, an alarm triangle and a beater. There was no ceiling as such, just the tiled roof with wooden beams as part of the construction. Although there was a massive hot water pipe the length of the room, it needed a good stoker to get hot water up that high. Forestry at time was for the brave and hardy, at least we had three army blankets apiece.

Our dampened spirits were revived by the dinner gong and we trooped down to the dining room to a very good and filling evening meal. We spent the rest of the evening trying out the "local" and prepared for sleep. Each floor had a toilet on the staircase and with 10 to a Dorm and The Fountain's bitter etc, they were overworked. As we settled down it soon became evident who the snorers were (and the fartars) After some weeks one became accustomed to them,, but not the cold water tank located in the rafters. This re-filled at a rate of knots, and due to the nights ablutions and continuous toilet use by three dorms and 28 men it would continue for some time and finally sprayed

the lads beneath it when going full blast. Two or three nights of this and we arranged a rota to climb into the roof, tie up the ball cock and untie it in the morning. There were occasions when, due to the early morning rush to get a wash basin it was forgotten until the cold water taps started to dry up. (Maybe the person who set the "pointless" exam question about the tank refilling wasn't so daft after all)

Breakfast was at 7.30 and one soon got wise to the importance of getting there early before the tea and bread had all been whipped up. We were required to make our own sandwiches for the day and you were lucky if you salvaged three or four slices of bread. The fillings usually consisted of brawn and liver sausage (otherwise known as donkey plonk). After protests the brawn was taken off the menu and replaced by cheese (American style) which was marginally better. However, the breakfast was great; eggs, bacon and sausages, bread (if any left) and we were impressed by this, and the evening meal, especially as rationing of food was still going on at this time.

I must mention the cook at this point. He was a really lazy so-and-so who had to be woken up before breakfast could be started, he did, however, produce a good evening meal. Alas, all this was to change. After a week he had used up the month's rations and we were in crisis. One of the instructors was detailed to go to the Food Office to ask for supplementary rations. He was a wily old bird and had the School re-scheduled as a catering establishment and was given extra coupons. Gone were the slap-up breakfasts and dinners, gone too was the cook, to be replaced by a local woman whose speciality was stew and dumplings. Gone too was the donkey plonk, as this was on the rationed list, from then on it was slabs of rubber disguised as cheese, and occasionally, Spam. But we survived.

The course members were divided into two groups for practical purposes and initially one group did practical work whilst the others had lectures or tours etc. On a rota basis one man was designated as Orderly Officer for the week. His duties were to be general dogsbody, stoke the boiler, a high iron monster whose main ^{FUNCTION} ~~function~~ seemed to be to go out regularly. It ran on coke only and needed very careful attention. To keep it in overnight was a very fine art and many mornings saw a lack of hot water, which meant, except for the unwashed, rising early to get any hot water that was available. His duties also included drawing up the practical work roster and seeing that the students going out were up to time and had collected and signed for the necessary tools for the day; this also produced a scramble to get the best ones from the store. Later on a separate storeman was to be introduced whose job was to check the tools back in after work. The O.O. had to liaise with the kitchen staff about sufficient sandwich material, but unlike his previous counterpart had no say over the money available or the menu. After the departure of the cook a series of matrons was introduced; usually very attractive mid-twenties women, with some of whom liaisons were enjoyed of a pleasant kind, usually known as "stoking the boiler" in the boilerhouse or "inspecting the sickbay". All good fun with nothing serious; we were, after all "mature adults"

Work was carried out under instruction on various beats in the forest, at a supposed piecework price charged to the forest in question. The prices were usually so low as to be impossible for normal

forest workers but nobody really worried or took much notice. The students were not paid for the work done and the local forester had the work done for nothing. There were a few exceptions when the charge was really levied to the beat. One such job was acorn collection for a certain Forester known as "The Lion Tamer" because of his hard, shiny leggings, fierce moustache and F.C. uniform he always wore. It was school practice to have a 10 o'clock break and on one occasion we were all sitting comfortably around the inevitable lunchtime fire, cheered off with the monotony of scratching round in wet leaves for acorns. The "Lion Tamer" came and told us we were sitting down on the job and we could all clear off back to school and he wouldn't pay us, oblivious of the fact that we weren't paid his miserable rates ourselves. We quickly upsticks and went back to a free afternoon in the common room, to be discovered much later by the principal playing cards and showing naughty pictures on the epidiascope. We were handed out paper and told to copy out a chapter of HANSON's book.

Churchill Enclosure was allocated to the school for practical work and field exercises.

Our first effort was to fell and clear a compartment of about ten acres, burn the lop top, fence it and finally plant it with a variety of species. The standing crop was 1840 oak about average 35 cubic feet of timber. We were armed with 7lb axes, crosscut saws wedges etc and, after a very brief description of how to prepare the stool before felling, told to begin--- with about twelve pairs of fellers and not really much idea. There were a few of us who had some experience of felling and took the leading roles. But soon trees were falling in all directions, some splitting before they left the stump, and calls of "TIMBER" saved many a pair working in too close proximity. The only casualties were a group of the inevitable sheep who were chewing the bark of branches on the ground and some student's lunch bags. There were two sheep fatalities which one of our number, an ex-gamekeeper, offered to skin, etc and hand the carcass over to the kitchen staff. This seemed a good way to supplement our rations but the instructor wouldn't allow it. So the foxes got a good meal. In turning one log a lad slipped under it and broke or cracked a couple of ribs. The doctor's treatment was to strap the ribs up tightly. This had the effect of pushing his breasts up to a couple of b-cups. For days he was teased by people "wanting to have a feel". We undertook various jobs in Churchill--many not very productive but it exercised a few muscles and helped familiarise us with various tools. We high-pruned some 70ft. sitka spruce with a short ladder to get into the tree and a pruning saw. No real instruction was offered and we just happily cut away the dead branches. A couple of the lads set about cutting away from the bottom branches, leaving only a short stump to stand on as they progressed up the tree. Coming down was a different matter and I clearly remember having to rescue one student who not only had cut off most of his escape route but became terrified of heights. Safety belts or leg irons were unheard of in those days and it really is a miracle we had no one really hurt.

The Dean School of Forestry 1904-54

By John F. Goodwin.

"Do they still call you Fagin?" He was an ex-student and of some years ago, but he had some of my own students working for him and I relaxed only when he added, "your job, I mean".

Anyone connected with "The Dean" for a time soon learns some of the many and varied anecdotes. He will hear of one Instructor who never said "Stop", but invariably shouted "Halt", and another, from a harder country, would say with some emphasis "If ye daunt't like it ye can paack y'baags an' awa' doon the road."

Of the students, of course the stories will never be all told, but one thing seems fairly sure, and that is that the first students worked. We hear of the men who walked great distances and in all weathers for the instruction, and of course barkstripping was always done standing in those days and fourteen trees a day, mind!

Gossip still ranges over the boxers, the fast bowlers and the footballers that have arisen and the cups that might have been won. Nowadays, you may say, things are not what they were, particularly since the school has won the Dilke Memorial Football Cup. This in itself might be sufficient reason to trace out some of the stories of the past years.

In previous issues of the Deansday Book Mr C.O. Hanson has written about the years before the first Great War and Mr Hopkinson of the years immediately following that War.

The former tells how the classes were held first in the Deputy Gaveler's Office at Coleford, and then in a hut on the edge of the present Parkend Sports Ground, before coming to the present building in 1910. We also gather how difficult life was for Mr Hanson and his students. Press reports of the time spent in the hut on the green mention graphically the mice which scampered about the lecture room among the men's "tommy bags", many others pay vivid tribute to the museum specimens brought together by Mr Hanson.

It was necessary in those early days for the instructor to purchase coal to heat his classroom, since no one else thought it essential. It was also necessary for him to teach the marking of thinnings in the most surreptitious manner since the then Deputy Surveyor viewed any instruction in forestry of his subordinates with a very jaundiced eye. In fact the School had a very uncertain future and many thought it would only last for a few years. It is therefore a tribute to Mr Hanson and his pioneer work in those early days that we are now able to mark the fifty years anniversary. Without his perseverance, there appears every likelihood that the school would have faded out after a very brief period.

During the war period the buildings were used to train Women Timber Measurers, a use which was to be repeated during the Second World War. Once re-opened the school ran without interruption under a number of Instructors until November 1939.

The original iron foundry had been made more presentable by the addition of the present dining room and the dormitory over it, together with the provision of an internal staircase in 1914. All this time there was a primitive dormitory behind the School but it was not until much later (1930) that the present kitchen, offices and classrooms were added. The latter were to be altered again later, so that they now comprise a dormitory, billiard room and quiet room. Not long before the last war (1937) the Common room was built and at the outbreak of the Second World War the school was well established with thirtynine students under an officer and one forester instructor.

Not only had the school grown in size but it's ex-students had built reputations throughout the world which now all others seek to maintain. The majority sought forestry employment in the British Isles but there have been a number from the earliest days, who found their careers in the colonies and these mainly in East and South Africa. Of those who did not continue in forestry very few admit regret of their time spent in the school.

For a period of nineteen months during the second world war the school re-opened. Those men inherited the curtains around the cubicles and the matron of the W.L.A. as well as the traditions as well as the traditions of their predecessors. When it was decided to close down once again in 1943 some of the junior course were sent to Benmore. To Dean men for many years this has been 'the other place' and of much later but nevertheless honourable foundation. The school was then transformed, if such a thing were ever possible, by our American friends into a Local Army headquarters, for the added joy of the local ladies and the care of much ammunition.

The opening course in 1946 was made up of a number of Benmore students together with some Dean men whose courses had been interrupted by the war.

In recent years the pre-war numbers of 39 have risen to 57 and to accommodate them an old classroom and the billiard room have been converted into dormitories. At the same time huts used during the war by Colonial Forestry units in Scotland have been made into lecture rooms and Tool Stores (1948). These are on the site of the "tump" associated with the old iron foundry. With the increased numbers the previous instructional staff has been doubled and the domestic staff now numbers nine.

Steps back into history have been taken; the old heating system again proved inadequate and that has now been made good. The fire escape has again provided an outside staircase- not for prowling students, who now are all abed at an early hour, to dream of the forays of their student ancestors in Yorkley, Sling and Whitecroft. (It will be appreciated that as with all historians it is extremely difficult to dissociate oneself from the current events).

While all these building alterations have been taking place the Sports Field has been developed. A number of trees were felled and the cricket square was laid in 1935. During the war a Pavilion was built and a grass practice wicket laid. In 1950 a concrete wicket was laid down, while for the last two years improvements have been continued in order to get the football and cricket pitches together in the same field.

There are many things which make up the traditions and name of the Dean School of Forestry. Firstly its reputation now rests firmly on the achievements of past students. Not only those who have risen to the heights but also the numerous foresters who have rendered faithful service to the cause of forestry throughout the world. Many are the student stories of escapades of work and of the eating facilities, in spite of which there are many men who speak of their two years as "the happiest of their lives". This of course may well be associated with the high percentage of students that have married Dean girls.

In addition to the full time instructors there have been long associations with local Schools. The Mining and Technical College at Cinderford was helping the elementary maths in 1926 and it was about that time too that Harold Jones first taught Botany. Many students have warm memories of Mr Jones and the older ones will be glad to know that he still teaches at the school and still adds twists of his own to what could be a staid syllabus. It is good to know that Harold's attachment to the school is stronger than ever and that many more students will gain from his tuition, his friendly advice and help.

Having used the students as guinea pigs in the preparation of "Insects of the British Woodlands" and beginning an association with the school in the early thirties- largely due to his friend R.G.Broadwood- Dr. R.N.Chrystal has long been associated with instruction in entomology. Many have carried an interest in insects and, more important, in good forestry together with sharpened powers of observation from this renowned instructor. Many too can tell of "Balustrus" and the boy from Nagshead nursery and, by this and other stories, feel that they have been in contact, through Dr Chrystal, with a host of personalities who once occupied the forestry stage. What is the direction of M. minor mother-galleries?

It is now some ten years since F.R.Peace first lectured at the School and he with many others have continued in recent years to give the students expert tuition in specialised fields beyond the normal syllabus.

Centered as it is in a district containing many fine examples of private forestry, the School has built up a number of valuable associations. Tours have been made to a few estates ever since the School first opened and to them and many others of more recent acquaintance, we owe a great debt.

To successive Deputy Surveyors, District Officers and foresters of the Dean and Tintern forests and more recently those in charge of State forests in South Wales and South West England also we owe our gratitude. It is a great help to find such ready co-operation and such interest in the training of men, often coming from students of former years.

The Deputy Surveyors of the Forest were, to a large extent, in charge of the School until the formation of the Education Branch after the last war. They have encouraged it with enthusiasm even though they appear from time to time as the fount of discipline, except on that occasion when Lord Lovat came in 1926.

Whatever influence has been exerted over the School by a succession of Deputy Surveyors, they have by their differing practices, produced an area difficult to better for basic forestry training.

The results may be seen of Hill's Working plan prescriptions under Baylis and of the involved felling systems of Osmaston. The latter too, introduced conifers on a large scale; among the most interesting of which are now the *Thuja plicata* mixtures. These and many others (Conifer hardwood mixtures of Young, the oak mixtures of Guillbaud and Sessile oak with larch groups of Wylie) are here to be compared by the students.

The course of instruction has, in much the same way as the work of successive Deputy Surveyors, varied with the current fashions around the basic theme of Silviculture, Protection, Mensuration and Records. It will look back with envy to the times when a paylist and cash account were the only records, it is probably because we are now in a phase when everything must be measured, assessed and analysed, given a code number and entered on several forms. Perhaps the Oak P.48 Cockshoot will rival the Oak P.06 Knockalls, but other students and other instructors will discuss those things as they stand briefly aside from a world of even more records and even larger office staffs. I wonder if they will be like the students of 1912 of whom the Stroud Journal said, "Their faces are intelligent and their bodies well knit" Mine are.....mostly.



"Angus, Peter, Ben, Andrew, Henry, RON Mr Leeffe."

A MIXTURE OF MR LEEFFE RON BIGNELL AND AN ASSORTMENT
OF EXCHANGE STUDENTS

Dean School Jan-March 1953

We continued instruction as at Lynford but we had more outings to estates and processing factories. Again we had a mixed bag of students from the other schools plus the resident juniors. The school is described elsewhere.

As a former draughtsman I was given the job of tracing each contour of a large scale map of the Forest of Dean. These contours were glued to plywood (made in a local factory) and cut up by the estate carpenter to make a three dimensional model of the Forest. The Forest is in the shape of a saucer. I never saw the finished result and don't know what happened to it. I also used my drawing ability to survey an area adjoining the school which was being leased by the FC to the local scouts.

Being a fire danger period we had to man a mobile fire pump. I was on duty once just as we were sitting down to the evening meal and we were called out to a fire at Tintern, some miles away. We rushed out there and found the fire was a stake along the railway had caught fire and burnt a square yard of grass. When we returned our evening meal was still on the table waiting for us, stone cold. It was still better than the food we had at Lynford.

Another call came when I was in the bath, I protested and a good soul stood in for me.

As part of the end of term exam we were taken to some bare land with an outline map. The morning we did this there was a dense fog and visibility was about 10yds. As the area was about 10 acres it made the job a bit difficult. At 12o'clock when we finished, the fog suddenly cleared and we saw our project for the first time. I did well at this being told it was a good working plan.

We also did a tree analysis which I found very interesting.

At the end of term, just before the end of term exam we were released from fire duty and went to the local pub. I was fed with the local cider (scrumpy) and was in a poor state. I was conducting the choir on the dormitory stairs. The exam was on Monday and we should have been revising on Sunday but my head and body ached so I did none. I did well at the exams and was near the top of the class.

Two events I remember at the Dean. We were visiting a private estate and stopped to look at a pile of oak logs. The owner asked how much it was worth. Having had some dealing with small oak logs I said half a crown a hoppus foot which was correct- to the surprise of my fellow students.

On another visit we were walking through a private estate. I was talking to my friend Pete Pritchard and we gradually lagged behind. The party ahead of us stopped and waited for us. I was told later that the instructor, Mr Leece, said, "we'll catch these Lynford boys". There was a long slim, smooth barked log on the edge of the ride. The question was, what species is this log? We didn't know! It was a cherry log. We kept up well with the party for the rest of the day.

Another little triumph I remember at Lynford. I acted as forest clerk at Hemsted Forest in Kent before going to Lynford school. One of the instructors asked us how much fire protection cost and I told him 3/-d an acre which was correct at the time. We then returned to Lynford for the last term. At the last exam I was in the top three.

I was posted to Arundel Forest in West Sussex as an ex-school ganger where I stayed for 7years.

HENRY SMITH

Dean Forester Training School, 1954 – 1956

In September 1954 I left my employment at Kennington and set off for Parkend by rail complete with bicycle, which was stipulated as a required piece of equipment. My first encounter with a fellow student was when I met by chance with Don Heber on the train. I was slightly disturbed to find that he already had a degree in Economics, or was it Mathematics? In either case it raised some disquiet in my mind as to the company I might be in for the next two years. At Lydney I met my second fellow student, Malcolm Sherwood, an ex-Welsh Guardsman, dressed in a ginger coloured Harris Tweed suit with all manner of photographic equipment draped about his person.

We were collected I think by lorry for the journey up through the forest via Whitecroft to Parkend. The School, a tall, rather gaunt, creeper-clad building seemed to dominate the centre of Parkend adjacent to a level crossing. We were shown to our dormitories via dark stone stairways with iron bannister rails. Malcolm Sherwood and I were to be in the same dormitory next to the snooker room. The dormitory was quite a large and lofty room partitioned off to make a number of bedspaces totalling six or eight as far as I can recall. Steve Vine, the third fellow student I met, shared the same dorm. and was already installed on our arrival. I well remember, as I unpacked and organised my new bedspace, feeling further disquiet as Steve related that he owned a full set of Forestry Commission Publications and that he had read them all!

We very quickly settled into the routine of the place and got to know other members of our year, twenty-four in all, and the members of our senior year. The two years were very different in that many of our senior year had served with the armed forces for some years including war years and as a consequence the average age and range was considerably greater than our 1954 year. One group of three senior students celebrated their combined 100th birthday which to me, at not long gone twenty, seemed almost well into middle age. Apart from Noel Davenport, a Senior Student who had presumably not done National Service, I was the youngest in the School and the oldest student must have been approaching forty or even older. Practical experience had been in all sections of the forest industry including Forestry Commission, Private Estates, Contractors and Sawmills, almost entirely in the southern half of England and Wales from Yorkshire south. This very wide base of experience was invaluable when shared during lectures, discussions and when working in the forest, to the greater benefit of all.

Buildings.

The main building, which had previously been part of an old iron foundry, was four story and contained living accommodation for about fifty students on the top three floors. I believe the snooker room and my first dorm. were on the second floor. The ground floor was devoted to offices, a kitchen and dining room, built on at the rear. Other buildings at the rear were the boiler room (solid fuel) and the students' common room with an office at one end where the duty student admin. officer worked. Further back on higher ground adjacent to the railway stood a large barn used for gate making. All these buildings except the barn are still much as they were in 1954 externally. The barn has been removed and the site incorporated into the garden of what was the School House on the corner by the level crossing.

Two wooden lecture huts were situated within easy walking distance on the right hand side of the road to Whitecroft just beyond the quite large garage which housed the School vehicles. All three buildings still exist looking exactly as they did almost 50 years ago except perhaps the hedges along the front are rather taller.

Course work

The course was very much geared to practice and technique rather than academic study. Four days a week were devoted to practical work with lectures all day Wednesday and Saturday morning. Evening classes were arranged in woodwork and First Aid but I believe this may have been confined to the first year.

Practical work

The Forest of Dean being an historic forest of great age and managed for timber production over centuries, with its commoners' rights and free mining, all combined to provide a unique working experience with great variety.

Normally three gangs went out by lorry each day to work all over the forest by arrangement with Beat Foresters. Where the work site was close by, bicycles would be used. All the operations normal to the Dean were included. There were three nurseries: Nags Head, Viney Hill and Yew Tree Brake (YTB) and I believe The Purples, but that might have been purely Research.

In our first year I remember spending many days on steep ground at Bishops Wood clearing, fencing and planting a very intricate mixture of Western Red Cedar and oak in squares with I think intervening rows of pure Western Red Cedar. All operations were covered including weeding, cleaning, brashing, thinning and felling. Tariffing was in the process of being introduced and we were to be among the first 'experienced' students with knowledge of the system to leave the school.

I remember brashing in snow not far from the school near 'The Barracks' in Lawson Cypress. Our gang had a difference of opinion with Stan Betterton over what constituted wet time. The consensus student view was that it was too wet to work. Not surprising as one of our number, Cliff Edwards, had come from Thetford where he claimed wet time was defined as "two spots of rain on a fag paper in two minutes"! As I remember it Stan was not convinced, suggesting snow could be brushed off and we continued working. Thinning and felling was still done using bowsaws and crosscut saws for larger conifers and oak. Hardpoint bowsaw blades were yet to come so saw sharpening both for bowsaw blades and crosscuts figured in tool maintenance instruction.

I remember with mixed feelings a sizeable area of quite large diameter chestnut coppice on a steep bank that we were sent to fell using 7lb felling axes only. The view then was that felling by axe was essential for the future wellbeing and long life of the remaining stool. We did have a very early JOBU chainsaw on trial but I remember many problems, not least stripped teeth on the drive sprocket which did not encourage its continued use. It may well have been intended only to be used for cross cutting in place of bushman saws.

One operation which was probably unique to the Dean by the early fifties was bark stripping mature oak for use in leather tan yards. Mature oak stands due for felling were selected for stripping in the spring. The season was very short; a tree would strip today but not tomorrow or the reverse so timing was crucial. The bole was stripped first in large sheets using a felling axe to cut-mark sheet edges, a peeling spoon and a peeling spade. Once the bole was stripped the tree was felled and the remainder stripped out to about three inches diameter. This continued for as long as the season lasted, which would normally be no more than a few weeks. A straight pole would be mounted in two forked supports, one each end about eighteen inches from the ground and the bark stacked against the pole on either side. The stack would

then be copped using the larger sheets from the bole and larger branches. Once complete the stacks were left to dry where they would be collected by the tan yard.

This was a task that most students enjoyed, not least because of the memory of the good days when a tree ran well and the bark peeled off in three or four sheets, some five to six feet long. Foresters who had been felling all their lives would strip the tops standing to save time in the very short season, thus maximising bark production and earnings. It fell to my lot to be felling some large oak eighteen months after being stripped standing with a crosscut saw, which I clearly remember as being very hard going.

In much of the forest the Enclosures were often surrounded or bordered by common grazing consisting of open scrub with large areas of gorse and bracken. Fire at times of dry weather was a constant hazard and the School provided regular cover as a centre with Duty Officer and teams on standby. In the event of a fire, duty students were summoned from all corners of the village by a hand wound World War II siren and transported to the fire in the back of a lorry complete with beaters and a portable Hathaway Water Pump.

There was a Dean Research Section based at Whitemead Park with Frank Thompson the forester in charge. They drew on students for assistance with work on field experiments throughout the Dean and further afield. Dennis Watkins, a jovial and very large, good-natured native of the Dean, was the Ganger and must have been well known to large numbers of students over the years. Gordon was also on the staff but his surname escapes me. Trips out to work with the research team made a welcome change from normal work routine providing added variety and experience.

The School had a vegetable garden complete with greenhouse situated adjacent to the house in Whitemead Park. Students did the work, providing fresh vegetables for the School kitchen with "Buck" Hollis supervising. Not all students had the same degree of interest or aptitude for gardening and there were those who suggested a degree of disparity in the allocation of gardening duty. One student when detailed to harvest some rhubarb, clear cut it with a reap hook, much to the dismay of Mr. Hollis. Needless to say this student was not at the top of the list for future garden duties. There was one distinct advantage to working in the garden. It was adjacent to the Research office and Shirley James the clerk would provide coffee at intervals through the day, a bonus not provided elsewhere. Shirley married John Everard, a student 1955-57 who eventually returned to succeed another student, Tony Joslin as Deputy Surveyor in the Dean, both ending their service in that position.

Opportunities for work during wet time were limited almost entirely to the manufacture of gates in the barn or 'Chippy Shop' as it was known. Again those students with a known ability for carpentry found themselves making gates more often than others. Birch fire beaters were another product made at the start of the fire season but belting beaters were already superseding the birch model.

Lectures

These were given by John Goodwin who was the Principal. His subjects were Silviculture, Choice of Species, Geology and Soils. John Leefe (Jack or Twiggy) covered Mensuration and maybe Utilisation and Forest Botany and Stan Betterton Nursery Management and Records. "Buck" Hollis as Head Forester covered Protection and any other of the more practical aspects. On Saturday mornings at Lydney Grammar School a Mr. Pitt covered Meteorology and Surveying while Harold Jones took Botany and Timber Technology.

Harold Jones had taught generation upon generation of students including John Goodwin the Principal and is I am sure remembered with affection by all. He saw the best in everyone and

his obvious enthusiasm for his subjects combined with his total confidence that all his pupils would pass with flying colours dared anyone to fail, which very few did.

No doubt we all remember amusing interludes during lectures; Jack Leefe's demonstration of the "Tween Legs" method for measuring the height of a tree comes readily to mind! The lecturers were given a pretty hard time on occasions, particularly by older members of our Senior course, but I am content in the belief that between them they gave us a very sound grounding for our careers in forestry.

Tours

These were regular features of our curriculum, with visits organised to areas within the Dean, Forestry Commission forests outside the Dean, various Private Estates and utilisation tours. Our tour to Dunraven Forest, now Coed Morganwg, is well remembered. It was November 5th and poured with rain all day. We travelled down to South Wales through the rain and peered at an area of ploughed mollinia bog with minute sitka spruce sticking out at intervals. The only sign of life we saw was a planting gang sheltering in an open-ended corrugated iron elephant hut with bits of hessian partially covering each end. A smouldering fire produced copious volumes of pungent smoke. On our way home we called in at Tair Onen Nursery, the largest in the Forestry Commission at that time, at something in excess of one hundred acres. As we travelled back in the rain watching the odd dampened bonfire and occasional firework I am certain we swore to a man we would refuse any posting to South Wales!

I found the utilisation tours to be particularly enjoyable with visits to Huntley Manor Estate owned by major C.P. Ackers, the author of 'Practical British Forestry'. Others included Vowells of Ashleworth, where we saw chipboard coffins for cremations, veneered with quartered Plane (lacewood) which seemed an odd choice of use for such an attractive timber, Burt Boulton Telegraph Pole Depot, Morelands Englands Glory Match Factory and the Permal Factory, both in Gloucester. Permal was a beech veneer based homogeneous substance bonded by resin and heat used for silent running gears and many other specialist uses. Locally of course was Parkend Sawmill, at that time partly owned by the Forestry Commission which gave an insight into typical estate sawmilling. Bill Dorrington, a local student from Cinderford, had worked there prior to entry to the school with our year. My impression was that our tours were more comprehensive than any of the other schools due to the geographical position surrounded by a wide range of forestry, species and wood-using enterprises.

Domestic Arrangements

The matron, Mrs. Stratford, a formidable but kindly lady, managed all these matters with a staff of local ladies of wide ranging age from teenagers to some ladies who seemed to me to be well past retirement age. We were reasonably well fed, with plain but adequate fare supplemented by fresh vegetables from the School garden. A substantial breakfast started the day with provision for making sandwiches when working out. I recall that choice of sandwich filling was frequently limited to beetroot, which I liked, and peanut butter, which I disliked. Wagon Wheels, a largish chocolate covered biscuit, featured frequently too. The main meal was at about 5 o'clock in the evening. Weekends I believe were different in that the main meal for those in residence was at midday. Healthy appetites led to the occasional late evening raid on the kitchen and larder by some, particularly after a night out!

The building was clean and tidy generally, not a mean achievement, but Mrs. Stratford was quick to take issue with owners of untidy bed spaces. I remember one of our junior course, Dickie Vine, who kept an arsenal of tools and tool boxes under and around his bed, a matter

of considerable and ongoing annoyance for the matron and her staff. Dick Beech the boilerman had a liking for the odd pint, the effect of which was sometimes evident at work, a situation not totally to the liking of Mrs. Stratford.

All students were expected to live in including the relatively few who were married. This was a major contentious issue regularly taken up by the student body with the Forestry Commission. It was not resolved in our time but some married students did have their wives living locally while still maintaining their accommodation at the school, albeit seldom used.

Stan Betterton lived in the School House on the corner and Jack Leeffe lived up the hill but both were seldom seen out of hours unless a problem arose. Very occasionally high spirits would get a little out of hand particularly at term end. Perhaps the worst to occur was the use of fire hoses strategically placed about the building, mainly near staircases. These were stone and the bannister cast iron so little permanent damage could result. Unfortunately there was a nine inch well in the entrance hall at the base of the stairs. I well remember Jack Leeffe standing ankle deep in water at Alan Kissock's elbow as he jetted a hose up the stairwell, making the comment, "I think that's just about enough, Kissock".

Social activities

Generally students became involved both in Parkend and the surrounding villages. Footballers, cricketers and rugby players joined local teams and in some years the School fielded its own teams playing in local leagues.

Local pubs including The Fountain, known as 'The Drums' for some unknown reason, and the New Inn at Parkend together with the Miners Arms at Whitecroft were favourite watering holes. Scottish dancing with the Sanzen Bakers at Whitecroft Park most Saturday evenings was popular with a number of students over quite a few years.

In 1955 our year continued with past practice in organising a Grand Fete Day on the playing field to raise funds for student amenities. As a member of the fete committee I remember the day and the lead up to it as being very busy and quite costly resulting in rather less contribution to the funds than hoped for! Nevertheless the Fete appeared to be enjoyed by quite a number of people who attended. We also organised an Annual Students' Ball, held in the Town Hall in Lydney. The hall was decorated with foliage including the School Badge set out in sitka spruce seedlings - a novel but not particularly attractive device in retrospect. These associations with the wider community not surprisingly resulted in quite a few students meeting and marrying local girls.

We were paid a weekly allowance of just over £2, not a great deal but tuition and lodging was provided free. As the vast majority had no independent means we were generally all in the same boat, permanently hard up. I don't remember this being a significant problem although for married students with families it must have been extremely difficult. Some of my year supplemented their income by odd jobbing in the village and surrounding district. A group of four or five undertook to hand weed an agricultural crop. They ended up with fingers so badly swollen that they were unable to work for a number of days, a situation severely frowned upon and deemed to be 'self inflicted injury'!

Local Scrumpy Cider was 8 old pence a pint and fairly strong stuff too, so one way and another most seemed able to achieve a reasonable existence. Perhaps the lack of funds was most evident in the general standard of dress which was for most very basic working gear for most of the time. However, there were exceptions. Geoffrey St. John Bland Flagg, one of our seniors, was always very well turned out, complete with immaculate Veldschoen boots. He also had a sparkling brand new and very large felling axe which during the first few days of our year he buried in his foot, ruining the boot into the bargain, a most unfortunate experience for one who later became a Work Study Practitioner.

Barry Griggs RETURN FROM EXCHANGE COURSE AT BENHORE

Finally it was time to return to the Dean for our final year, after a memorable six weeks in Argyle which was remarkable for the weather, its interest and our enjoyment. Our final year passed much as the first, with just a few differences. Our junior year was markedly younger than we were overall. Also during the year three white Rhodesians joined the junior course. This I believe may have been the start of ongoing practice for students, both white and more commonly as years passed, black student foresters from African countries particularly, to spend some time at the Dean School. While the white Rhodesians were in residence we were told that some black Nigerians were to spend six weeks at the School. This was not well received by the Rhodesians who threatened to refuse to mix but it was made very clear that it would be they who would have to move out. In the event all was well.

Final exams came and went with a final interview with the Chief Education Officer, G.D.Rouse. Most but not all of our original number passed out successfully. A lad named Jackson left early due to back problems. I remember he was wearing a corset on arrival which seemed a major disadvantage and difficulty. Don Heber left I think before the end of the first year. He seemed to be a square peg from the outset and had various 'disagreements' with staff. As far as I can recall, Owen Bradley may have opted out after the first year and Chris Ogilvie I believe failed to pass out. The remaining twenty successfully completed the course and obtained their Forester's Certificate. Some went abroad to New Zealand as had a number of our senior course. Others went to work for the newly formed companies such as E.F.G., Fountain Forestry and Tillhill. Some worked on private estates and of the total of twenty who qualified, twelve chose to work for the Forestry Commission. Regrettably Dave Ayers contracted leukaemia and died early on while working at Savernake in his home county. As to the rest, like me they worked for the Forestry Commission for the rest of their working lives in various jobs throughout the country and hopefully like me are happily enjoying their retirement.

Over its existence from 1904 to 1970 the Dean trained successive generations of foresters who together must have made a massive contribution in creating and managing our national Forest Estate, both Private and Forestry Commission. A friend who lives nearby retired here from Africa where he managed coffee estates. He told me that many of the best foresters he met had trained at the Dean and all were first class snooker players.

On a visit to Parkend to attend the 2000 reunion, I found that the old cycle shed remains much as it was in 1956 when I left, with one notable exception. At that time, painted on the roof in huge letters, was the phrase, "It's more than a job, it's a way of life", which remains as true today as it was in 1950 when I first heard it from Bill Gray at Kennington.

*Barry Griggs, Dean Forester Training School, 1954-1956.
Mundford, Norfolk, 2000.*

DEAN SCHOOL OF FORESTRY 1962 -1964

John Hunt, David Hendrie, Ian Keen, Bruce Uglow, Roy Baldwin, Bill Barton, Dave Watts, Mick Richards, Paul Reynolds, Tim Laker, Dave Yearsley, Pat Welton.

Bill Barton left the course half way through.

Roy Baldwin broke his arm (wrist) and left for that year and returned with our juniors.

The remaining 9 passed the course plus the Wood Science exam. Gold Rivet Tim Laker.

During our time the school was populated by about 60 students in total. The previous courses had been larger, but the reducing numbers were made up by training forestry students from Africa.

The instructors in my time were John Goodwin, Geoff Waygood, John Dickinson, John Niles, Tony Joslin. Botanist Harold Jones (green hair fame) from local school. Cook Cath Bluett.

Driver Ted.

We were at the Dean when the first chainsaws were being introduced in this country so our training included the sharpening of all hand tools including cross cut saws. By the time we finished our course cross cuts were hanging on pub walls and chainsaws were in full use. Four pound axes were considered to be light weight but lighter axes for snedding soon gave way to chainsaw snedding as the saws got lighter and easier to handle.

Most of the memories of DFTS days are the antics students got up to outside the general curriculum.

There were several regular activities that students competed with each other to extremes. A student was required to collect the cook from Lydney each morning to cook breakfast, the challenge was, to drive so fast that the cook refused to be a passenger with you thus saving the early start. Cath Bluett refused to go with Pat Welton, he achieved his goal.

After a night on the beer it was traditional to have a water fight on the landing stairs and hall eventually getting to a pitch where the fire hose was unleashed on any unsuspecting student returning from a night out.

One night the local constable was passing on his bike and stopped outside because of the noise of warfare. He shouted up at the building for us all to be quiet as we were disturbing the village. A bucket of water was immediately emptied out of the window. "You missed", he replied and cycled on his way. As long as the mess was cleared up before the morning the staff turned a blind eye to these antics. The picture of Dave Yearsley with the large squeegee mop shooting a wave of water out of the front door at 2 in the morning without a stitch on remains in my memory.

Each week a nominated student had certain duties to carry out around the building, locking up, etc. The main duty was to keep the boiler going, which heated the school and water. This duty was taken very seriously and the challenge was to see if we could get the temperature gauge off the clock. The story goes that a person called Noot once got the boiler vibrating on its stands and we were contemplating evacuating the building.

As each group of students returned from the pub, usually starving, the first duty was to break into the kitchen which was locked securely, then into the food store which was also secure. All available food was fair game, midnight fry ups, etc. A few slices

of meat off the bottom of the cooked ham for the next day. By the time all the students had returned the joint looked quite a lot smaller than it had been when it came out of the oven.

Life in the dormitories was a bit spartan, each student had a pit which housed his bed, wardrobe and small bedside unit. Each pit was separated by a wooden partition with the foot of the bed at the alleyway down the centre of the dorm. Some muscle bound seniors, Dave Lyons, Bill Williams maybe, on their return from a night out had a 'bait the juniors session' and running down the dorm would throw the foot of the occupied bed up in the air so the bed ended up vertically against the wall with the occupant trapped.

There was always a shortage of cash, transport and clean clothes. I remember the question from someone getting ready for a date, "has anyone got any clean underpants". No response, pause, has anyone got any underpants they've only worn once?

Certain cooks had a reputation for spoiling good food and Cath Bluett's solid fried eggs were like shoe leather, on the countdown to the last 100 days an egg was pinned to a chart each day on the wall at the end of the dormitory.

End of term/year pranks were infamous. The flagpole was removed and hidden behind the common room, then some pit props in descending sizes were peeled, painted white and laid out on the front lawn with little heaps of sawdust between them. When John Goodwin arrived in the morning, being short sighted, he easily came to the conclusion that the flagpole had been sawn up on the lawn.

The end of year photos one of our seniors, Mickey Pratt, was wearing a cap. John Goodwin said to him, "I hope you will remove that cap for the photograph Pratt". Mickey replied and when we were all facing the camera he took off his cap to reveal his shaven head, very daring in those days, not uncommon today.

Stories of late years come to mind;

The year they re-assembled a McConnel circular saw and left it running in the building.

The year they turned the lorry round in the shed so it faced across the building and could not be driven out.

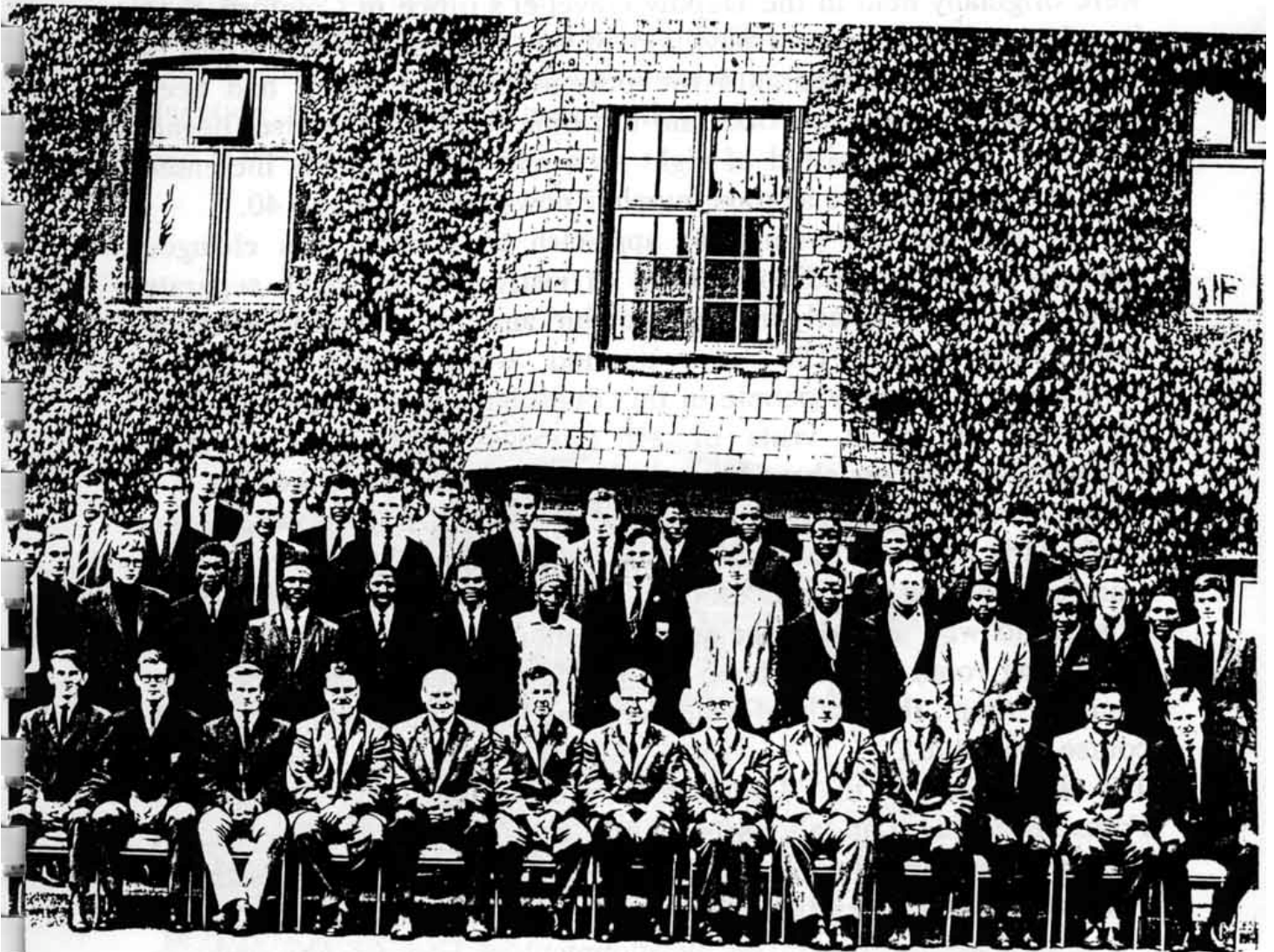
The year they put strips of toilet paper across the level crossing which gave the appearance that the gates were closed.

When Peter Noot, Bruce Uglow and Ian Keen felled a large Douglas Fir directly on to the power lines putting 10 poles out of alignment and cutting power to the village for some hours and ruining Mr Goodwin's dinner in the oven.

Of the 13 students on our course, 11 completed and passed in 1964, 6 worked for the FC and now in 2000 I am the only FC employee remaining.

Peter Noot Woodlands Officer, East England.

DEAN SCHOOL OF FORESTRY 1965-66.



Back Row JRMckinley, MR Mason, R Newborough, K Pestana, H Milner, SMJMungloo, JS Latter, ICCox, SY Roussety,
 D Gregory, SKashweka, EJ Sadyalunda, TBOpio, BMMBwalya, MZZ Msuya, R Venkatasamy, Z A Adebayo
 Middle Row STuruva, DG White, DS Whitaker, BManda, ANyakojo, BL Sianga, JM Mangeni, UDauda, MA Stone,
 WH Gregory, DA Oyebade, M Blud, FC Komba, KD Sebamala-Sempa, MTaylor, NMMmbaga, D Case
 Front Row JFD Arch Smith, SEMalone, RAG Coxwell, Mr RDD Davies, Mr GE Waygood, Mr A Joslin, Mr JF Goodwin,
 Mr HR Jones, Mr RW Twallin, Mr JRA Niles, ID Ledgard, K Vunisasari, MJ Steward.

The Forestry Training School Parkend by Jan Waygood
Lydney Observer Friday March 25th 1966

Well known to most residents of the Forest of Dean in the tall creeper clad building in the village of Parkend which houses the oldest Forester Training school in Britain. Founded in 1904, classes were originally held in the Deputy Gaveller's office in Coleford, then in a hut near the present pavillion of the Parkend Cricket Club. In 1912 the school moved into the present building which had been converted from an iron works and full time residential courses began. The first course consisted of eight men and this gradually increased over the years and the average number nowadays is around 40.

During the last ten years the approach to training has changed radically from the traditional form of instruction in which separate subjects appear regularly in the timetable and are studied in isolation from each other. The new method which could be called revolutionary to many people in this field, have arisen from research at home and from visits of Mr Goodwin and other Forestry Commission Officers abroad- particularly in Holland and Sweden.

Living conditions too, have improved tremendously over the years- particularly since 1964 when the stable-like dormitories were transformed into study bedrooms to the astonishment of visiting ex-students who attended the school in more rugged times. The most interesting room in the school and the focal point for visitors is the common room, the walls of which are lined with photographs of each course since 1907.

The time spent at the "Dean" is looked back on with affection by Foresters working in all parts of the country and overseas- many indeed have married local girls and thus have additional ties with the Forest of Dean. Over the years the Dean Forester Training School has played a vital part in the development of Forestry and with it's modern approach to training it is obvious that it will continue to do so now and in the future. Sadly the school closed in 1971.

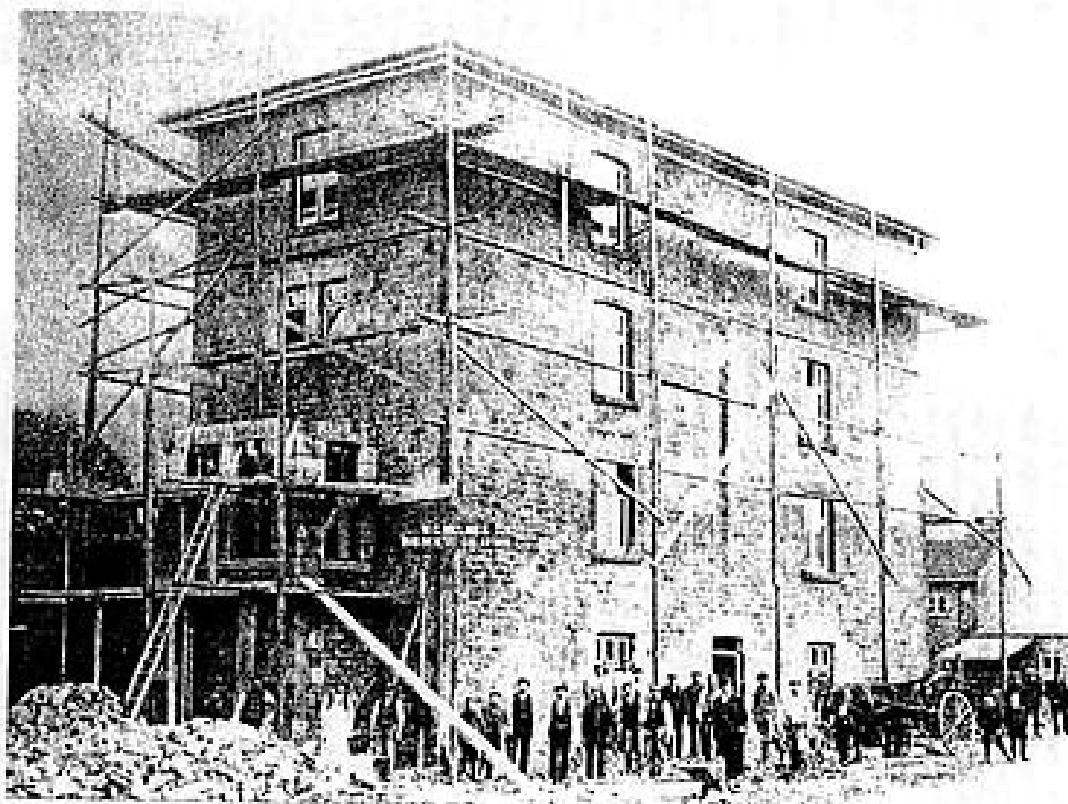
29th June 1971

The Forestry Training School closes today and a programme of events was organised to run from Tuesday evening until Friday morning to which Foresters from all parts of the country are returning for a last nostalgic re-union at the school where they

received their training.

As the years went by, particularly after the last war when the need to train foresters was very great, several more schools were opened which have all been closed during the last ten years, it seems right that the one which has outlived them all should have been the Dean—the first to be opened.

But the decision that the Ministry of Education, rather than the Forestry Commission, should now assume responsibility for the basic education of all foresters means that after 67 years of invaluable work it too must close.



PREPARING FOR THE SCHOOL 1912