

FOREST BRANCH
NEWS LETTER

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Some years ago we used to get a few of the newspaper advertisers to insert forest protection material in their daily advertising for the duration of "Save the Forest Week." This year we began to wonder why the plan should not be revived for the duration of the fire season and you are already familiar with the rest of the story, or at any rate, with some of the results.

We went personally to the big newspapers and advertisers where we got such a sympathetic hearing that we had visions of whole pages of ads with forest protection the keynote. The results have fallen short of our dreams but quite a number, perhaps as many as we could reasonably expect, have used our material and the results have justified the little effort expended. In addition there have been some side-line developments that have been worth while.

Supervisor Smith (Vancouver) called on W. D. McFarland & Company, Insurance, North Vancouver. This firm got in touch with two companies for which they are agents--the St. Paul Fire and Marine and the Fidelity Fire of New York. As a result they have stationery and blotters carrying B. C. forest protection messages. Envelopes are printed with a large-type forest protection item occupying the whole back.

Mr. Gregg at Prince George approached the Imperial Oil Company there. Imperial Oil advertising is of a national character and for that reason was passed by here at Victoria. The local manager at Prince George wrote to his headquarters and is advised that forest protection items will be included in all their advertising, which should cover the Province.

The C.P.R. includes protection in all their newspaper publicity and, in addition, have added these items to posters covering excursions, time tables, etc.

Shell and Home Oil Companies are including protection in their broadcasts.

Vancouver Island Coach Lines were unable to help us in the newspapers but requested signs for their coaches, which were supplied.

Results have been satisfactory for a first attempt and these few side issues indicate what might be done if the matter were followed up a little more energetically. We look forward to more widespread co-operation next year.

A month ago it was suggested that we should attempt to get a forest protection arm on every directional road sign in the Province. These signs are erected and maintained by the Automobile Clubs of Vancouver, and the Manager, Mr. J. H. Boothe, offered no objection to the plan.

The Clubs maintain a crew on sign work each summer and it takes between two and three years to cover the Province. They will make, paint, place, and maintain our protection arms for us at moderate cost. They are proceeding with this work now and a few will be placed this year. We are not yet advised in what part of the Province they are working. With a few signs in place we will be in a good position to judge their value and decide whether we want complete coverage. This decision will rest largely on reactions of field officers.

This appears to be an excellent plan for roadside publicity and education, and we are a little bit ashamed that the idea did not originate in the Operation Office. Credit goes to A. E. Collins of the Surveys Division.

"I'd like to have a Ranger's job,
So I wouldn't have to use my 'knob',
I could ride around from place to place,
Or walk a little at easy pace.
They haven't much to do they say,
Just stick around and draw their pay.

I land a job as apprentice there,
Thought I'd get as fat as any bear
That eats and sleeps the whole day thru,
Just doing what other Rangers do.
With neat-pressed pants, a very white shirt,
And with soft white gloves, I came to work.

This isn't the best time of year,
And we haven't very much work I fear,
There's motors to fix and axes to grind,
Shovels to sharpen, material to find,
A ladder to make, and don't forget
We clean that pump and dry that hose that's wet.

The grounds around are a terrible sight
And when we get that hose rolled tight,
All those weeds will have to be cut,
And fix the doors that won't go shut,
We'll have to build a boat some day,
And erect a hose tower right away.

There's all that painting to be done,
And that tramway where the speeders run,--
It wouldn't hold a man that's fat.
It needs repairs, and, finished with that,
We have those pre-emptions to inspect,
And those timber cuttings we'll have to check.

We'll have to visit the people 'round,
To issue permits to cover the ground
That's safe to burn. Every now and then
We inform the lookout where and when,
So when he sees a sign of flames
He'll know the attention that it claims.

Right now there isn't much to do,
Just these jobs they are but few,
But when the fire season's once begun,
It'll keep us all on the jump and run."

Ranger Assistant
Bert R. LeBoe

Favourable reports are received from all districts regarding the Young Men's Forestry Training Plan. In more than a few instances field officers are enthusiastic about their trail-building efforts. Ranger Assistants have pretty well covered the field of Ranger work and LeBoe's contribution would indicate that some have developed a new viewpoint with regard to the Ranger's "cushy" job. Three camps of 50 men each are working at the Aleza Lake, Green Timbers, and Cowichan Lake Experiment Stations, where they are making good progress on a long list of improvements including trails, fire lines, roads, land-clearing, water supply, etc.

A timber sale licensee in the Prince George District, having a sale over a 40-acre block, was recently discovered cutting over an area of about 160 acres. Asked why he had extended his operation beyond the timber sale boundaries, he pointed out that his contract read, "40 acres more or less." He reckoned he was entitled to take advantage of the "more" and that his contract therefore entitled him to clean off the entire $\frac{1}{4}$ -section.

Ranger offices are more often closed than open and, visitors, finding no one at home, must frequently be annoyed and inconvenienced. Pedley (Revelstoke) hangs a pad with pencil tethered to it outside his office door during his absence. Many visitors state their business on this pad, saving themselves a second call, or the writing of a letter which, for many a stump rancher, assumes the proportions of a major undertaking. We suggest a few sheets of paper mounted on heavy cardboard or piece of three-ply with a heading similar to the following:- "When office is closed visitors may state their business below. Notes left here will receive prompt attention."

From the Nelson District:

The trisodium phosphate question may have developed into a war in some places, but there wasn't much chance of Old Man Mars getting a boost in this district, for the opinion is so overwhelmingly in favour of it that the warlike spirits found themselves outnumbered about fifty to one. We are showing our opinion of it by just having sent in a requisition for 500 pounds. Here is a wrinkle originating from Ranger Young at Nakusp, which we are putting in general practise throughout the district and which, incidentally, helps us to use up some of the old iron ration tin cans. A raisin can is filled with trisodium and put into every large mess kit, and a sugar tin in the smaller ones. Directions for use are typed on a strip of paper and pasted on the tin. This will ensure a supply always being available in the fire camp, and while it is not very large, once the cooking equipment has been thoroughly cleaned, it should not take much to keep it clean.

Our Ranger Assistants have proved a pronounced success. We were very fortunate, generally speaking, in having been able to secure boys of an excellent type for these jobs. In nearly all cases they have shown themselves willing, keen, and gluttons for work, and there is little doubt that, if all the other districts have lads of similar type, there should be no lack of suitable material for F.B. jobs in the future. Let us put up a small prayer that the jobs will be there!

In regard to the boys on the trail crews, we must admit that after seeing them and the way they perform their work, we have been permeated with a profound respect, not to say downright admiration, of the perceptive powers of Mr. McCannel and his satellites (if any) who have done the selecting. The way those lads tackle their work is a caution, and you don't have to show them much either. All the foremen in charge and everybody else who has seen them and their work are being satisfied, and our unanimous opinion is that the experiment has been highly successful, and that it deserves to be repeated on a larger scale next year. True, we had a couple of poor specimens in the first crew, but if there were no excep-

tions to prove the rule, what would become of the rule? These gentry were most highly indignant at the very idea that ultra-refined examples of humanity like themselves should be expected to perform such lowly tasks as manual labour. They were of course cordially invited to hit the breeze, which they did with alacrity.

One of our Rangers, being asked his opinion about the hazard sticks, said that, after reading the instructions accompanying them, he had come to the conclusion that they are the most efficient instruments invented to date to keep down fire-fighting expenses. We agreed that this might be so, but asked him to elucidate further. "Well," he said, "when the stick-reading is so and so, the fires can't burn, so what's the use of going after them? Then, when the stick-reading is the other way, you can't do anything with the fires anyway, so again, what's the use of fighting them?" Maybe pigs have wings after all. We should add that the Ranger in question is not one of those having charge of the sticks.

There was a very severe lightning storm which went over the district, starting Tuesday about noon and continuing spasmodically until about 1 P.M. Thursday morning. So far our men have reported 49 fires starting from this storm, 28 fires in the Cranbrook Supervisor District and 21 fires in Nelson Supervisor District. Strict vigilance and the favourable weather conditions saved what might have been disastrous results.

The Forest was blazing with fury amazing, the smoke wreaths were drifting like clouds overhead, the ashes were flying and heroes were trying to conquer the fiend, the monster in red. Great trees that were standing when Noah was landing his ark-load of flivvers on Ararat gray, were falling with crashes mid cinders and ashes--long centuries growing and slain in a day. And farms that were smiling and landscapes beguiling were ruined and wrecked in the space of a breath, and homes that were lowly and kirks that were holy were lost in the ashes and grayness of death.

Oh! how was it started? I asked, heavy-hearted of William, the Warden who watched the woods. Some campers were reckless, bone-headed and fackless, they scattered their stogies and similar goods. They slung 'round their matches in dangerous batches, they broke up their camps without quenching their fires. The wardens and rangers admonish such strangers, who laugh while the forest burns up and expires.

The trees that were waving when Aesop was slaving, the trees that were ancient when Caesar was young, must fall in disaster since campers won't master the lessons we wardens have ceaselessly sprung!

The trees that were splendid, their glory is ended. They'll whisper no more in the rush of the breeze; still campers will chatter and shout while they scatter their smouldering snipes in the woodlands and leas.

Inscription on the corner-post of an old Timber Sale on Petersen Creek near Barriere:-

"Cruised on Xmas Day. Dec. 25th 1918. - P. Sharkey." As the modern song-writer puts it--"Some call it madness, but I call it love."

We are not very proud of our name. It seems there should be enough imagination in the Forest Branch to hit on something better than "Forest Branch News Letter." We offer a reward of a dozen of the best scratch pads in the Property Room and a three-ring binder of any standard size for personal use, or any substitute we can scrounge from stock, to the person who suggests another name that meets with our approval.

REMINISCENCES:

During the season 1925 Jack Price (Ranger, Ymir, retired) had a crew of Doukhobors working on a fire amongst whom he discovered the price appetite of the world. Biggest and best are mild descriptive terms. This boy was so good that Jack considered him a menace to the Forest Protection Fund and had him put on rations. To forestall any criticism, or perhaps to share his amazement, he reported the incident to the District Forester. The breakfast consumed by this man, well attested by witnesses, with a similar repeat on the evening meal, was:

16 Eggs
1 can Tomatoes
2 pounds Jam
1½ loaves Bread
½ pound Butter
7 cups Coffee
6 Potatoes
¼ pound Cheese

Mr. Caverhill left Victoria on July 20th en route to South Africa to attend the Empire Forestry Conference there. He does not expect to be back until some time in November. Mr. Manning is Acting Chief during his absence.
