FOREST BRANCH NEWS LETTER

BRITISH COLUMBIA LANDS DEPARTMENT — FOREST SERVICE

An entirely unofficial budget of news, nonsense, 'n'opinion compiled from time to time for the profit, amusement, and annoyance of the staff.

No. 27. Victoria, B. C., February 3, 1939. 08581

THE PRICE OF RESPONSIBILITY

"There is a single reason why 90 out of 100 average business men never become leaders. That is their unwillingness to pay the price of responsibility. By the price of responsibility I mean hard driving, continual work....the courage to make decision, to stand the gaff....the scourging honesty of never fooling yourself about yourself. You travel the road to leadership heavily laden. While the nine-to-five o'clock worker takes his ease, you are 'toiling upward through the night.' Laboriously you extend your mental frontiers. Any new effort, the psychologists say, wears a new groove in the brain. And the grooves that lead to the heights are not made between nine and five. They are burned in by midnight oil." -- Owen D. Young.

A gentleman sat in our office the other day and stated that he was working on the hardest job in the world--trying to find a job. We sympathize with him. There is only one worse we know and that is trying to write a News Letter without any news. However, he'll never get a job if he doesn't go looking for it and we'll never get a News Letter out if we don't make a start, news or no news.

We are launched once again into a New Year and the worn-out simile of the clean sheet can hardly be escaped. It will take a size-able one to hold the record of what we must attempt during the next twelve months. Perhaps what we actually accomplish will go into smaller space. In any event, we wish you a wet fire season, and may all your cruise strips run downhill.

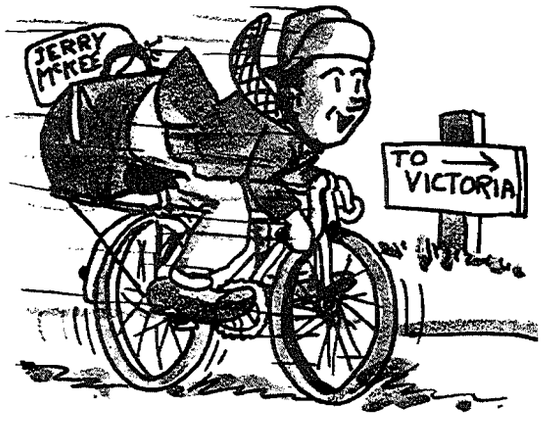
On the "attempt" side of the ledger such items as slash disposal, snags, closures, Christmas trees, various protection developments, and equipment immediately suggest themselves; and, speaking of equipment we saw the ultimate pup in tractors at Portland last month, about 12 H.P. built by the U.S. Forest Service. A decent trail will accommodate it, it will push and pull like the little giant it is, and with the two-wheel trailer built for it, will do the transportation work of a size-able pack string. We've had a real good time this past month with the kiddies' new electric train but really think we'd enjoy playing around a few fires or trail jobs with a couple of those vest-pocket tractors even more. What do you think?

Our calendars are out the usual few weeks late but Operation Office solemnly promises them for December 1st this year. It is true that a calendar passed out on the 15th of January has only lost 4.1096% of its juice, but in giving a calendar after the 1st we always feel most unnecessary--like turning up for dinner at the wrong house, or the night before we were invited. Some discussion arose here in Victoria this year regarding the design of our calendars. There is much to be said for maintaining a type which is good and has acquired the dignity of years. If you have any decided opinions in the matter, pass them along to Operation. Better do it soon though, as we expect they will be getting busy on the 1940 issue any day now for delivery

December 1st (we nearly said January 15th).

Forse and Oldham report everything running smoothly in the coast Forest Development Project camps under way since last fall. They have about 1,350 men on some 17 projects scattered over the Island and lower mainland. No proposals have yet been made with regard to the Boys' programme for the coming summer but we judge from newspaper reports that the Dominion Government is impressed with results during the past two years and is inclined to expand this work. We have no idea how this may affect the Branch. In the meantime, the Chief is in Ottawa (left Victoria on the 12th of January) attending a conference called by the Dominion relative to the Youth Training Projects. He may have some interesting items for us on his return to Victoria.

It is doubtless common knowledge by this time that F.D. Mulholland resigned December 1st. A more recent development has been the amalgamation of the Surveys and Research Divisions into a new division of Forest Economics with F.S. McKinnon, Forester-in-charge, and Hugh Hodgins, second in command. Further staff changes will bring Jerry McKee from Prince George. Lorne Swannell goes from Kamloops to be Assistant District Forester at Prince George, and in turn is relieved at Kamloops by Chris Armstrong from the Vancouver District. Pat (W.W.) Stevens returned to the fold the 1st of January after some years of absence. He is working at Victoria for the present on the Development Projects.



Amendments to the "Forest Act", 1938, should have been in the hands of every field officer, read, marked, learned, and inwardly digested, some weeks ago. If you haven't secured your copy you should do so at once. In this connection the following brief summaries may promote a clear understanding of their intent:

Section 2

Makes it possible for pulp mills to use their timber supplies to better advantage by exchanging or selling surplus of any species between mills. Previously such exchange or sale meant the loss of the advantage in rentals accorded to pulp timber, as timber so disposed of was no longer "appurtenant" to the mill in which it would be used. Note that this applies to pulp licences only.

Section 3 Extends the period of "grace" during which a timber licence, lapsed for non-payment of annual dues, may be reinstated, from one year to two years. Note the penalty charged, which is sharply increased in the second year.

Sections 4 and 7 - Self-explanatory and of limited application. Of no general interest.

Sections 5 and 6 - Pulp licences are carried at one-half timber licence rentals. If pulp-licence timber is used for lumber production it is provided that full rental shall be paid. Heretofore full rental has been collected in arrears at the time such saw timber was cut which, in addition to the half rentals already paid, totalled 1½ times timber licence rentals. This amendment fixes the extra rental collections at one-half timber licence rates which, in addition to the one-half rate already collected, equals the timber licence rentals, which was evidently the original intent of the Act.

Sections 8 and 9 - Postpones statutory increases in royalty rates for one year.

Section 10 - Sub-section 5 of Section 57 was intended in part to permit the fixing of royalty on "other products not ennumerated" (Section (f) sub-section 4) at any time. As previously worded it was doubtful whether any such addition could be made except at the fixed intervals of 5 years. The amendment permits additions to be made at any time.

Section 11 - During the extremely hazardous weather of last year we wanted to cancel camp fire permits but it appeared we were not in a position to do so. The difficulty could doubtless be overcome by rewording the permit form but in order to make assurance doubly sure the present amendment was secured. It provides for the cancellation of permits whenever conditions warrant such action.

Sections 12, 13, 14 15 - In briefest summary Section 117 sets forth what one must do in case of fire; Section 118 sets forth the penalty for non-compliance. These amendments bring the two sections into closer conformity and clarify various ambiguous points. They merit close study. Note that it is now clear that once responsibility for fighting a fire rests on an operator or occupant his obligation to follow it as far as it goes (within the limits of reasonable physical possibility) is clear, and that the forest officer is in a position to direct suppression efforts.

Section 16 - Withdraws the exemption previously extended to prospectors in the case of closed areas.

Section 17 - Increases the F.P. tax from 4 to 6 cents per acre and the Government contribution from $440,000 to $500,000.

JAKE - ON NATURAL HISTORY

Jake, an unidentified Ranger, while on the trip to Vimy, visited a married sister in London. The sister has a boy who is just at that certain age at which he eats up the Cowboy-Timber Beast type of story. During Jake's visit the boy regarded him with the eyes of a hero-worshipper and lost no opportunity to ask questions.

"What's a Bushwhacker, Uncle Jake?"
"Oh! A Bushwachker is a man who whacks the bush."
"What does he whack the bush for?"
"To bring home the bacon."
"How does he bring home the bacon?"
Jake pretends to fill his pipe, but really stalls a minute to see that his sister is out of the way. He hears her busily working in the kitchen, clears his voice and starts:

"In all forested countries they have wild animals, and among those most prized as animals of the chase is the wild pig. We are no exception in British Columbia, where we have a Ground Pig, or Dirt Hog, as the Bushwhacker calls him. The Dirt hog is not quite so big as the Wild hogs of India, nor do I think it is quite so ferocious."

"In the Fall of the year all regular Bushwhackers hunt for their winter's meat and the prize delicacy is the Dirt Hog. It is a very wily animal, however, and to help him hunt this elusive beast the Bushwhacker has developed a special breed of dogs known the world over as Leglifters."

"When the Dirt Hog hears the Leglifter on his trail it strikes terror to his heart. He knows he has no chance of escape on the ground and so makes for the nearest alder bush, and climbs to the topmost branch of it, hoping to escape. This he very rarely does for the Leglifter is very strong on the scent and usually tracks him down with ease.

"When the Leglifter discovers the tree in which he Dirt Hog is roosting, he barks loudly for his master and when the Bushwhacker arrives the dog lifts his leg to point out the Dirt hog. (Hence the descriptive name "leglifter").

"The Bushwhacker then collects leaves and small twigs with which to start a fire. Green leaves and branches are thrown on so that the whole bush is enveloped in smoke. He keeps the smudge going for an hour and twenty-five minutes, and then puts it out. Then he picks up his famous whacker and gives the alder bush a most terrific whack, and down comes the dirt hog, not only dead, but properly smoked for the winter.

"The Bushwahacker is a big, strong man and has no difficulty in throwing the carcass over his shoulder and carrying it to his cabin. That is how the expression arose, 'Bringing home the bacon.'

"Arriving at the cabin the Bushwhacker cleans the Dirt Hog and hangs it up for his winter's meat. Nor is the faithful Leglifter forgotten. As soon as the Dirt hog is cleaned the Bushwhacker gives his dog the Gazeesh."

"What's the Gazeesh, Uncle?"

"Well, owing to its newly-formed habit of climbing trees the Dirt Hog has started to form a gizzard, like most birds. As he has not been climbing long enough to form one yet this half-gizzard is called the er- er- (Jake's forgotten what he called it) er-Gazoosh!"

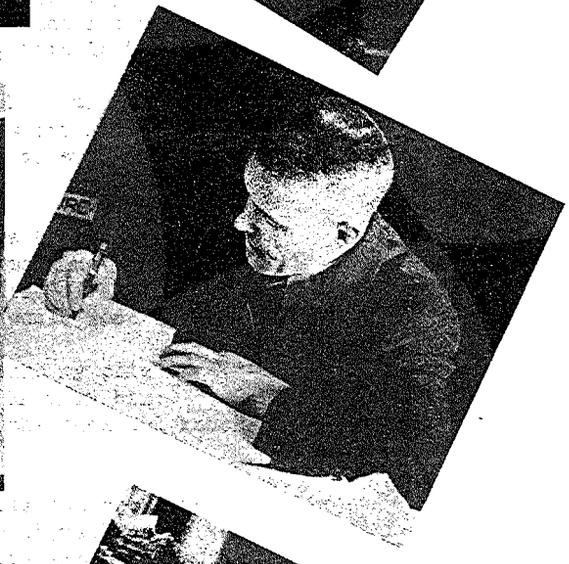
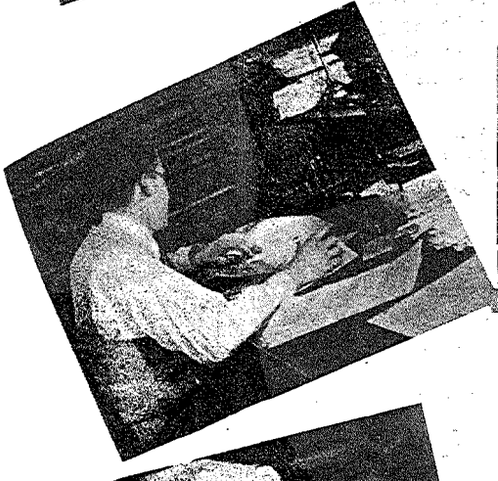
"But, Uncle Jake" (Jakes reaches for his hat as he hears his sister coming.)

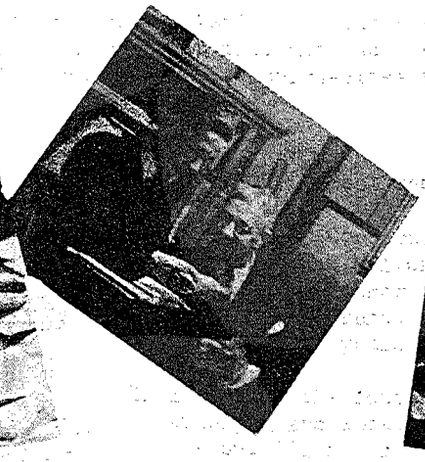
"Sorry, my boy, I can't tell you more just now. I promised to meet a man at the 'White Horse' and I'm late now. Good-bye."

The proverbial dear old lady is reported, on good authority to have remarked to a forest officer the other day: "It must take the Wardens an awful lot of time to get the fireweed planted every year!"

Ever since the advent of the "candid" camera we have ranked the addicts just a little lower than a snake's heel. Of all the prying, idly-curious, pestiferous pests, they seemed to qualify for one of the ultimate prizes. Funny what an entirely wrong slant one can get on things like that and how rabid we can get over an entirely innocent pastime--a tendency we should strive to overcome.

The other day we chanced on the use of one of those intriguing little instruments--2.8 lense--pretty nearly take pictures in the dark--and in a spirit of pure scientific investigation snapped a few pictures around the office. Some of them are printed on the next page. Perhaps you can recognize a few familiar forms.



The following parody was composed some ten years ago by C.D. Orchard for the possible (even if improbable) amusement of a Ranger Meeting in the Prince George District. Since then it has been in frequent demand on similar occasions but the author has steadfastly refused to let it out of his personal keeping, lest its libellous implications be interpreted, here and there, too literally. Dick lets us have it now reluctantly and with strong misgivings. He points out that the balmy atmosphere in which it has heretofore come to light has militated strongly against any misunderstanding, misinterpretation, or literal application. We don't understand ourselves how balmy spring air and the too-familiar smell of spruce and jack pine could affect the viewpoint, but perhaps his vaporings may make some sense to you. At any rate, in final response to repeated requests, here it is: (Tune, if any, "The Big Rock Candy Mountain.")

"Down behind the lumber yards on a cold December day,
In an old deserted bunkhouse the Forest Ranger lay,
His biltmore stick beside him, his compass and his chain,
And as he mopped his fevered brow he sang this last refrain:

"I'm going to a better land where I don't have to work,
Where Supervisors never frown or operators shirk
The slash disposal clauses; where no fire demon stalks,
And....

His head felt like a turnip, his eyes were blear and dim;
The whiskey bottles scattered round made mocking fun of him.
He swore that Ranger Meetings were the curse of all his tribe
But glimpsed anon a better land where he would soon abide.

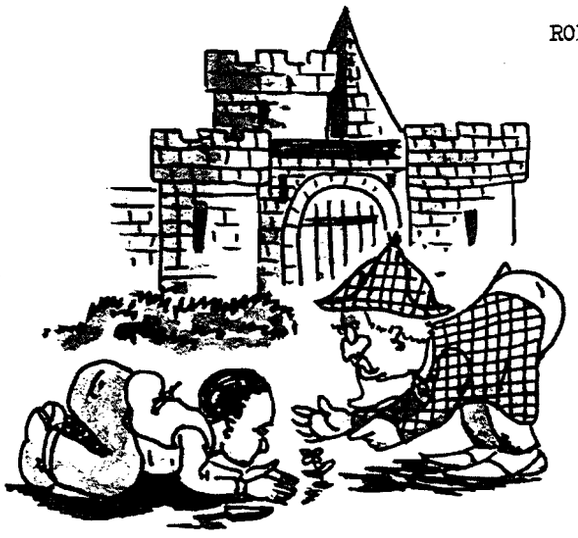
"I'm going to a better land where I can thumb my phiz
At petty local squabblers who think they know my biz;
Where district office letters never pass the buck and knocks;
And....

He thought he knew his gullet's length, his own capacity,
But Rangers of his stature should confine themselves to tea.
He felt the daylight slipping, felt his end approaching fast,
But glimpsed a happy cruising land where he could rest at last.

"I'm going to a better land where office work is nil
Where devil's club is never found; where cruise strips run downhill,
Where every day with ample cheques the Ghost comes forth and walks,
And....

Now all good Forest Rangers there's a moral to this tale.
Pay strict attention to your work; to fire, cruise, and sale,
Lay off all cheap frivolity, lay off the gin and beer,
And some day you may find yourself in a land that knows no fear.

You'll find a fairer better land where sun eternal shines,
Where superannuation pays ten thousand bucks a time,
Where you won't have to work, or criss-cross timber blocks,
And.....



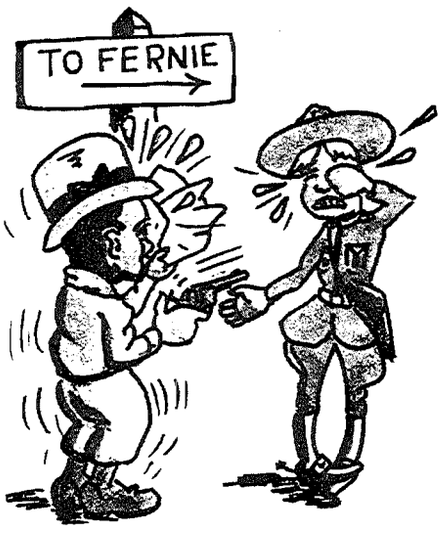
ROBERT CAMERON (Forest Ranger at Fernie, B.C.)

To Whom it May Concern: Born in Scotland. Attended public school at Miltonduff. Served apprenticeship as landscape gardener on the estate of Sir William Gordon Cumming, Bart. Followed this work as journeyman for several years throughout Scotland and England.

In 1905 took the notion of going to Canada. Emigrated to Winnipeg and worked on a farm near Tuelon for six months but did not relish the milking of cows.

Went west as far as Lethbridge, but there was a strike on there and no work to be had. Moved to Frank; this was two years after the slide. Got work on a railroad helping to construct a branch line to the C.P. Hill mine until the frost stopped the work,then moved to Jaffray. There was a great demand for ties in that district at that time and Bob reckons that for a greenhorn he became quite an expert with the broad axe. This district was only just tapped, almost a virgin forest from Fernie to Cranbrook. There were mills at Waldo, Elko, and Jaffray, but no great inroads had been made on the forests. Followed the lumbering with Jewell Lumber Company and East Kootenay Lumber Company at Jaffray. Did a little bit of everything around a mill, except saw lumber.

In 1910 was appointed as Forest Guard (thinks that was the name) and was placed at Michel. District was from Crows Nest to Sparwood including the Elk Valley. Transportation by



saddle horse. Had one memorable experience there when a policeman went off his head and held up hotel from 3.00 a.m. to 1.00 p.m. using two guns. As a government official was called upon to take the policeman out and, after the second trial, managed to do so and to get one gun away from him. Started to walk to Fernie but a phone message had reached the Chief of Police, informing him of the situation, who immediately started to Michel and relieved the heroic guard of the man temporarily. Was made Special Police Officer and carried on the two jobs for three weeks. Had to look after two prisoners, one being the policeman.

In 1911 was moved to Fernie. In 1912 was moved to Jaffray and was Forest Guard there until the fall of 1916. In the spring of 1917 got all worked up over the war, having two brothers in it from the start. Enlisted with the Forestry Corps and went overseas. Landed in a place called La Joux near the Swiss border. Discharged in 1919 at Westminster.

Took the Assistant Ranger exam in 1920, was placed with Ranger McParlon at Waldo. Took Rangers' exam and was made Acting Ranger at Fort Steele in 1926. Early in 1927 was made Ranger at Cranbrook. Moved to Fernie in 1938. "Cannot see where this account is of any interest or value to anyone--even to the Forest Branch."

"This impolitic diminution of our forests has proceeded---from the prodigious havoc caused by such as were tempted not only to fell and cut down but utterly to extirpate, demolish, and raze, as it were; all those goodly woods and forests, which our more prudent ancestors left standing for the ornament and service of their country. And this devastation is now become so epidemical, that unless some favourable expedient offer itself, and a way be seriously and speedily resolved upon for a future store, one of the most glorious and considerable bulwarks of this nation will, within a short time, be totally wanting to it." (John Evelyn's "Silva, York, England, 1776).

As this Letter leaves the office for printing No. 1 copy of the Ontario Forest Service News Letter comes in. We have had no opportunity to examine this but are glad to take this opportunity to wish its originators good luck and the Letter, a long and useful life.

We put this page back into the machine again to announce we had a letter from Prince George today mentioning a daughter born to the Greggors on January 11th. Our source of information is entirely unofficial but, we think, reliable.