

FOREST BRANCH NEWS LETTER



No. 26

Victoria, B. C., November 20, 1938.

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"Day before yesterday" we were worrying about last year's Annual Report. "Yesterday" the younger fry, with mixed feelings, were trooping back to school. "Tomorrow" we'll be worrying about this year's Annual Report. As the old lady said, "Tempus does fugit," and while our own symptoms may indicate nothing more than accumulating years, we sense a general fugiting all along the line that is going to call for our best thought and effort throughout the Service for the next few years.

"Day before yesterday" a few hundred men on a fire and a \$10,000 cost were something for real concern and a subsequent court of inquiry. "Today" we put a couple of thousand men on a fire and a dozen or more eighty-horse tractors, a couple of aeroplanes and a truck for every erstwhile packhorse, and the cost was sufficient to have turned every District and Victoria head gray under "yesterday's" regime.

"Day before yesterday" we felt ourselves far in the van when we designed a campfire grate and established a few camp places subsequently abandoned. Today multiple forest use with heavy emphasis on recreation is a subject for mature thought; and with a few park areas worth considerable pride replacing a few iron grates along the road, we are still doubtless lagging far in the rear.

"Day before yesterday" the odd sale stayed on our shelves shopworn and forlorn, usually because the applicant changed his mind. Today applications for sales are being turned down for the unheard-of reason that disposal simply would not be in the best interests of (forest management) the public. In the odd case this course is nothing short of bewildering to the would-be operator.

"Yesterday" we put our whole faith in old-growth logs, fir preferred. A little earlier we read in a British Columbia Act, "but no timber dues shall be payable in respect of hemlock trees"; and again, "This Act shall not apply to the cutting of trees known as hemlock." Today we begin to wonder and tomorrow we're certainly going to be sorry.

"Yesterday" we did thus and so. "Tomorrow" we're going to branch out into previously unthought-of lines and do many more things and do them all differently and better or be stigmatized as rank failures.

We started out with no other thought than to concoct a mild apology for the interval between Letters. It was the old lady's fugit that diverted us. Having got to where we are, let's forget the apology and suggest that any man who thinks the Forest Branch job is done or shortly to be finished; that the possible depletion of old-growth



fir spells disaster; that nothing more can be done about protection or that we can't protect; that timber-growing is a passing phase; that the profit from forests is about to be a thing of the past, has missed his calling.

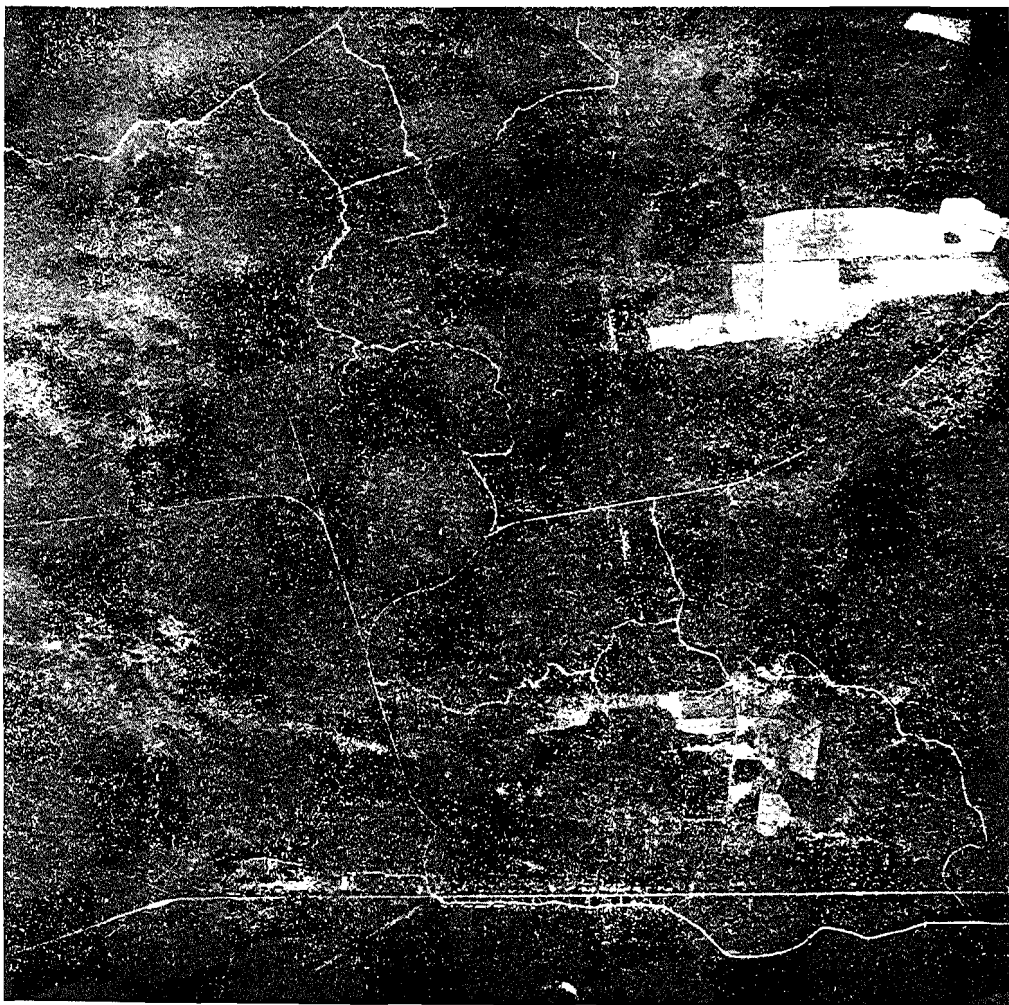
The industry and the Service have much to learn to their mutual advantage; are learning, and will perpetuate our principal resource and will direct its use along a dozen lines unthought of a short decade ago. We've got some busy years ahead, and we suppose the busier they are the faster they'll fugit.

A Hop into Hyperspace

The Air Survey Section of the Surveys Division completed a successful season of field activities over a variety of country from the Nass River (Nass in German means wet) to the sunny Okanagan. "Vertical" photography was taken over some 7,000 square miles of British Columbia's forest areas, as follows:

"Island" Forests, Sonora, E. & W. Thurlow and Hardwicke	310 sq. miles
Kitimat and Kitsumgallum	2,600 " "
Kemano, Kumsquit, Kitlope & Gamsby Rivers for Water Rights Branch	175 " "
Hardwicke Island Timber Sale	15 " "
Bloedel Fire Area	225 " "
Okanagan Valley	3,700 " "
Harrison Lake	60 " "

approx. 7,085 sq. miles



Air fire map picture illustrating clear detail in certain features and complete lack of clearly defined fire boundary. The "crooked roads" are "cat" fire guards.

In addition a photographic reconnaissance ("obliques") over the alpine sheep ranges in the Kamloops district was made for the benefit of Alan Farlow and George Copley (and the sheep) who came along to look-see and show the way.

In all, 123 hours and 9 minutes of flying were used up--with a "Waco" plane, CF-BJR, especially fitted up for photography and piloted safely back to base each night by Claire Dobbin of the Pacific Airways, Ltd. Over 9,000 air photos were taken with the Eagle III Air Survey camera. Bill Hall acted as observer-navigator, emulating

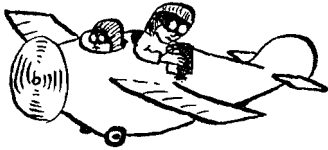
"that ancient, hoary-hearted, geographic navigator, Christopher Colombo." General supervision of operations was entrusted to the writer, whose "special" headache in the air was keeping the camera going by "biological drive" when the automatic electrical gadgets failed. We nearly forgot Bill's brilliant performance as chef de cuisine at Lakelse--our northern base--aided and abetted by Dick Farrow of the Water Rights Branch, their inspiration drawn largely from "Ella" and "Antie" who lived across the lake.

Photographs were taken at heights above ground ranging from 3,000 feet over Block 51 (Ladysmith) to 15,000 feet over the Kitimat. Everybody agrees that 15,000 feet is the bunk without oxygen--and we challenge even Fred Mulholland to do the simplest mental arithmetic at that altitude.

The extent and variety of the work enabled us to learn a few of the "answers" by the well-proven method of practical experience. We learned, for instance, that crisp definition in the photographs depends largely upon the camera being adequately insulated and balanced against aircraft vibration--but, more important, we learned after some trial and error how to achieve this. Proof? -- The Bloedel Fire and Okanagan photos. We know just about when to quit trying for pictures in smoky conditions. Although we learned these, and a number of other more technical answers--we also gathered a bag full of new problems which should keep us on our toes for a while.

In connection with the Bloedel Fire job--some had hoped the photos would show literally (almost) in black and white, what was burned and what was not. Imagine our dismay while flying the Okanagan when we received this terse comment from Kinnear in Victoria: "The Campbell River pictures are excellent--but was there a fire up there?" The photos are sharp and clear, but the country recently burned over could not be distinguished, in most cases, from country which had been burned in previous years. Areas where the fire crowned are easy to pick out, especially in the stereoscope--but where the fire passed over previously barren logged and burned--and where it smouldered leisurely through deciduous cover and under timber without disturbing the original structural detail of the cover, it is impossible to define the boundaries of the recent fire on the photos, without checking on the ground. One interesting feature did show up well--delineating

YEP! BEEN A FIRE
DOWN THERE



eloquently the campaign waged against that fire--every road, grade, cat road and fire guard, in all their wiggles and wanderings, showed up in the photos so that even a child could understand. By virtue of these and other detail such as farms, buildings, swamps, etc., Langstroth's, Silke's and others' personal knowledge of the fire, Hall and the writer were able to "traverse" something over 75 miles of fire boundary in two days--without resort to compass, chain or pacing.

The need for some experimental air photography, trying out various kinds of filters over different types of forest cover, including recent burns, is well indicated by our experience with the Bloedel Fire job.

During the course of the summer's operations we were able to give several of the rangers a bird's-eye view of their country. The reactions were all favourable, if varied. Perrin, at Penticton, said, as he stepped out of the plane, "Well, I've done 5 inspections and checked 2 trespasses." Syd Cooper was all set to quit when he came down, protesting that his territory was "nearly all snow, glaciers and mountains", (as though he didn't know that before!). Joss Wood commented that in the next war he still preferred to do his fighting on the ground. -- G.S.A.

The Forest Development Projects got under way on the first of November.

The Forest Experiment Station at Green Timbers has its quota of 100 men and will be busily engaged in clearing a larger area to take care of the increased planting programme. The U.B.C. Demonstration Forest will have 100 men busily engaged in clearing up that area. The crew at Elk Falls Park will complete a bridge across Campbell River as well as continue with the park work started two years ago. On the Koksilah River a forest protection road will be pushed farther back towards the head waters of the San Juan. Capilano Park will be further developed; Seymour Mountain Park will be made accessible by the construction of a good trail. A 50-man crew will build a protection road from Elk Falls south to hook up with the road up the Oyster River, which will be built by a crew working from the mouth of the Oyster River. Englishman's River Falls Park will be further improved. Cultus Lake Park, Dean Park, Thetis Lake Park and Harrison Lake Park will also have crews. Hugh Ferguson will again attempt to make a hook-up between the Sahtlam Road and Skutz Falls Road.

A few of these crews will also carry on a snag-falling programme.

The usual correspondence courses will be available again this year. Subjects are listed below. The rules should be common knowledge by now--one man, one course, application to be made to the District Forester. No other announcement will be made of these courses this year. If you want to take advantage of one of them, send your application promptly to the District Office.

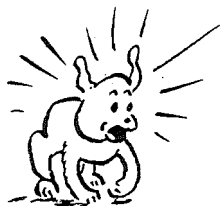
Surveying	Forest Act	(Phone-line	Scaling	Operation	(Stumpage
Arithmetic	Typewriting	(Construction	Grazing	Management	(Appraisals

Looking through our (meagre) file of accumulated copy we find it running heavy to dogs. The following reports come respectively from Noble at Birch Island and McParlon at Grand Forks:

"In connection with Preliminary Fire Report #1243G, 'Dill' Fire, it has been brought to my attention that this fire was first seen and reported by the dog at the logging camp of Bill Atkins, near Cedarside, in the Valemount District, C.N.R.

"There was a severe electric storm at about 9 P.M., July 30th, which set two known fires in this locality, one of them being only a short distance from Atkins' camp. Shortly after the bright flash of lightning the men of the camp were aroused by the camp dog, who kept rushing up to the camp door, then out into the woods and returning constantly to camp with sharp barking. One of the men remarked that they must be having a return visit of the night prowling bear, so two of them decided it best to get up and take a shot at it. When they went out with the rifle the dog immediately rushed up a trail ahead of them pointing out the way in the darkness by rushing back and forth and constantly barking to encourage them to hurry to the point where they could hear a cracking in the brush. When they rounded a bend in the trail they saw the cause of the cracking--the lightning had started a fire in the heavy dry logging slash near to where the mill had been operating last spring.

"Three men worked through the night and brought the fire under control but I do not know just how to compensate the discoverer of the fire for services rendered."



"Lookoutman E.J. Nelson took his dog, Laddie, along with him for company when beginning his duties at the start of the season. Everything went fine and Laddie seemed to be enjoying his surroundings until Radio VX3E was set up and Assistant Ranger Holmberg, who went up to help Nelson, called the station at Grand Forks.

"Laddie sat on his haunches a few yards away from what we presume he thought was just some kind of a 'tin box'. When Holmberg sent in his first call he stood his ground until Dispatcher Reid replied from VX2G at Grand Forks. The signal came in very strong and could have been heard for three city blocks. This was too much for Laddie. He let out a yelp and a couple of bow wows and took to his heels and within a split second was heard barking and yelping away down near the headwaters of Morrissey Creek quite some distance from the lookout.

"Laddie ventured back to his master a couple of hours later. However, for the several days following this event he kept running around in circles wondering what it was all about. By the end of the season, however, Laddie was what could be classed as a radio fan."

Bob St. Clair sends us the following clipping from a local paper and ties it in to Fire No. 98:

"A monkey got away from the Crescent Shows while playing at Hazelton last week. It got mixed up with Olof Thom's young turkeys and killed four of them. An order was issued to shoot the monkey on sight. No monkey business is desired around these parts."

Fire No. 98 was discovered by a Mr. Bugg while engaged in hunting for the monkey. Bob suggests that he has often heard of monkeys hunting for bugs, but this is like "man bites dog" and should be news.

The following is culled from our esteemed contemporary, "The Forest Log". It is repeated here partly because we've done some wonderin' ourselves at times, and partly because it comes from the pen of Charlie Cowan. It was written, the Log tells us, following newspaper criticism in August last of forest services that could not "at least keep our summer skies clear of smoke."

THE WARDEN'S A WONDERIN'

There's smoke on the ridges,
An' smoke down below;
There's a haze in the city,
Where men come and go.

There's fury an' roarin';
The wind's lashin' higher;
There's a tough job o' fightin'
To head off the fire.

There's hell just aboomin'
Up the side o' the hill,
With a fine lot o' timber
To fatten the kill.

There's the public acussin';
The Press all aflame;
An' the warden's a wonderin'
Why his is the blame.

Who started the fire
Which roars in the dark?
Did he, pickin' berries,
Forget that last spark?

Did he, with his strainin'
To keep the skies clear,
Neglect for a moment
What he learned in a year?

Was his the freak second--
To flip out the snipe;
That now is a 'streakin'
A hellish red stripe!

Shall he take the cussin'--
When his earnin' is praise?
When days are but minutes;
And nights are his days?

While fightin' an' sweatin',
In smoke and in smother,
He conquers one fire--
Then turns to another?

--C.S. Cowan.

Extract from personal letter received from Supervisor Conway

"Trout Lake Fire was small, only covered 18 square miles. Salmon Bay or Toba Inlet fire only succeeded in getting over five miles of the wildest rock mountain imaginable when the rain caught it. OTHERWISE the end of the season was quiet."

Bert's Campbell River Fire (74,000 acres) appears to have affected his point of view.



The New Logger - (a true story)

Scene: Ranger in office doing nothing, as usual. Phone rings.

Ranger - "Forest Service!"

Voice - "What in the H__ is a radio slash burn?"

Ranger - (Nonplussed and mystified) "I don't quite understand."

Voice - "Hang on there, I'll get the letter you people sent me.Pause....."

"Here it is! (reading letter with many mumbles and arriving at the words) "And slash must be disposed of by broadcast burning." There you are, and what in the heck do you mean?"



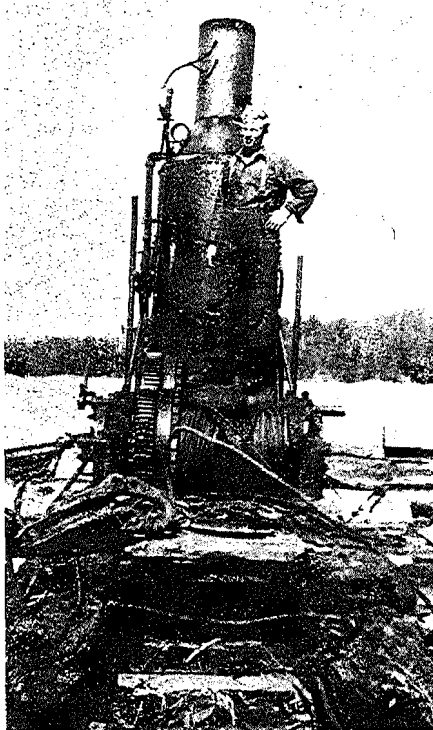
Lawrence Ott (Nakusp) has done a good job of salvage in combining trombone pumps from discarded Wajax canvas units with the metal tanks of old Cowan pumps. The name of the hybrid is scholarly even if not entirely original.

We have a painstaking elucidation from Kenny McCannel, but if you remember any of your Latin you don't need it, and if you don't, you can look it up easier than you can follow the intricacies of Kenny's explanation.

Just as September morn was making her 1938 appearance, Nelson District was experiencing a prolonged dry lightning storm lasting about 48 hours spotting fires here and there all over the country. An unknown number of "strikes" registered on the timbered hillsides. The District staff, with the co-operation of the Honorary organization, set in motion 62 separate fire crews within two days, thereby extinguishing or controlling 57 fires. The remaining 5 outbreaks were uncontrolled when showers brought welcome relief. Ranger Schupe organized 21 fire crews in two hours.

At the Vancouver Ranger Meeting last spring, Greenhouse (Lund) incited some ribald mirth when he brought into the discussions some of his one- and two-man crew steam-donkey logging shows. One man-one donkey-one side. Highball outfit. Now he forwards us visual proof and the News Letter welcomes the opportunity to vindicate his veracity. He says that in the photograph the donkey "really looks larger than it actually is".

We understand that these outfits are run strictly according to "Hoyle"--the operator runs in and toots the whistle, runs out and sets choker, runs in and signals, and only when all the prescribed ceremony has been completed is the log hauled in. It takes a lot of hot-footing back and forth when he hits a snag. A two-way electric signal system would help considerably.



JAMES ALEXANDER PEDLEY (FIRE INSPECTOR) KAMLOOPS.

Jim's first impressions of the world were gained in London, England, where he reported for duty sometime during that period known as the Gay 90's. Received his education there and was threatened with a journalistic career but thought he would rather build railroads in Canada. This he proceeded to do in 1912. For two years helped considerably with the G.T.P. and C.N.R. construction in B.C. but hurriedly changed his occupation in August, 1914, when he enlisted with the first Canadian Contingent, serving two years in France in the Canadian Infantry (5th Battalion) and later with Forestry details, also in France.



The war over, he headed again for northern B.C. and took up a ranch in the Francois Lake country in 1919.

His first duty with the Forest Branch was as Patrolman on Babine Lake in 1926, then Assistant Ranger at Francois Lake, 1927, Ranger, same point, 1928 to 1934, and for a period during the latter year as Ranger at Prince Rupert, from where he made the long jump to Revelstoke as Ranger, remaining there till April, 1937, except for a brief absence at the Coast as Forest Development Plan Supervisor. Latest move to Kamloops, due to his promotion to his present position.

Spare time (if any) is devoted to home life (family of three), good books and good music. However, he isn't averse to taking in a baseball, lacrosse or hockey game.

The old adage about things happening in threes has come true again, as we have to report three recent weddings, all bridegrooms being recruited from the Forest Surveys Division.

On August 5th Mrs. Cassie Lambert of Vancouver and H. McWilliams were married.
On September 3rd Miss Phyllis Whitchelo of Vancouver married C.F. McBride.
On October 15th Miss Jean Bergtholdt of Auburn, California, and G.S. (Jerry) Andrews were married.

Lots of other interesting things have doubtless happened in the personal line during the past couple of months but not much has filtered through to us.

Jerry McKee (Prince George) and Don Smith (Southbank) are rejoicing in the arrival of son and daughter respectively. Donald Isobel Smith, dated August 16th, and Robert Gerald McKee, October 3rd.

Eric Garman (Research, Victoria) is the latest addition to our list of proud fathers, a son having arrived on November 10th. (Name not yet chosen).

R.G. Gilchrist transferred on September 1st from Vancouver office to the draughting office in Victoria.