

OBITUARIES

NORMAN JAMES DOLAMORE

Foresters throughout New Zealand and in many other parts of the world learned with regret that N. J. Dolamore died last September. A long-service member of our Institute, Dolamore was associated with forestry and the forest industries for thirty-five years. He joined the Forest Service on its inception in 1921, one of that forest ranger *corps d'elite* on whom fell the unenviable task of introducing and administering the new policy at its sharpest end—in the forest and sawmill. Travelling by horseback or bicycle these crusaders rarely knew whether the day's yield would be life-long friendship, or a period of convalescence resulting from violence offered by a sawmiller exasperated beyond control by "unwarranted government interference." It says much for the character of Dolamore and his early ranger associates that the State Forest Service, as it then was, quickly became accepted by the industry as a necessary and competent authority.

Promoted to Conservator of Forests, Southland, in 1931, Dolamore left an indelible mark on that Conservancy by instituting a bold, in those days almost prodigal, thinning programme at a time when there was much unemployment in the forest industries. When economic conditions brightened about 1934, he was the first to visualise the possibility of salvaging small sawlogs from thinnings, and engineered the first log sale of any magnitude made from an exotic forest in this country. The present-day high quality of Dusky and Conical Hill forests is undoubtedly due to the timely thinnings made under Dolamore's direction in the depression years. And despite the honours that came his way later, he always claimed this as the work of which he was proudest; thereby revealing the outlook of a true forester.

In 1939 Dolamore went to Rotorua as Utilisation Officer, his particular charge being the launching and operation of Waipa Sawmill, New Zealand's first large scale unit for the conversion of exotic timber. He held this onerous assignment for five years, a period of wartime shortage and manpower difficulties; felt nowhere more acutely than in a new organisation where every man had to learn new techniques by the age-old method of trial and error. Appointed Conservator of Forests, Rotorua, in 1944, Dolamore made a tour of duty lasting about a year in North America and Europe where he studied and reported on the latest wood conversion methods. He became Assistant Director of Forestry in 1946, relinquishing that position because of ill-health in 1950, when he retired to live in Tauranga. Even in retirement Dolamore's ability and experience were keenly sought after. He acted as a director and consultant of several

companies and was a figure well known and respected at all gatherings of the forest industries.

Norman Dolamore's contribution to forestry was immeasurable, working as he did in an era of transition, when initiative, enthusiasm, and zeal were never needed more. He had all three in full measure; and many and varied are the projects that will bear his hall-mark long beyond his generation. A colourful and generous personality, quick to detect and condemn the specious or the pretentious, he inspired respect and affection in his associates; and in turn accorded them a fierce loyalty that brooked no shadow of detraction. He will never be forgotten by anyone who worked with him at all closely; nor could he be remembered in any but the kindest recollection.

We extend our sympathy to Mrs. Dolamore and her son and daughter.

D.K.

RANGER A. W. WASTNEY

"Take him for all in all, I shall not look upon his like again."

—Hamlet.

A. W. Wastney died in March 1956 in his seventy-first year after a protracted illness. To at least a generation of foresters he was Dick Wastney; and without him, the Nelson/Marlborough Conservancy and its forests will never be quite the same again. Every forested country when it initiates a forest administration policy unearths the occasional natural forester who has evolved his own private discontent with existing forest practices. Such a one was Dick Wastney, and Nelson was the fortunate province that bred him and that drew the benefit of his services during the whole of his life. Born in 1885, he was one of the third generation that bore the name in the province after its founding; and there are three subsequent generations to carry it after him. By early youth he had acquired a mastery of most of the crafts and skills by which a rural livelihood was won from the coastal strip of fertile soil that borders Tasman Bay, and from the forests and the tussock uplands that stretch to the south and east. He was at home equally in commercial gardens, in hop gardens and orchards, and in bush and station camps. Axes and saws were his familiar tools; but secateurs and pruning and budding knives were not less familiar, nor were the requisite knives of the shepherd. His sports and hobbies were those of a rural community of an earlier age; and dogs and guns, birds and bees, flowers and plants of all sorts figured largely in them. It is not on record that he ever tried his hand at falconry; but in every other old time skill with birds of the countryside, he was adept.

Such was the man who was recruited to the infant N.Z. Forest