

Terra Nova's editorial policy is complementary to the objective of the Institute of Forestry, so we wish the venture every success.

Its objectives are:

- (1) To establish a forum to stimulate discussion and raise public awareness on options ahead for resource management in New Zealand.
- (2) To investigate, critically scrutinise and express informed views on current resource issues.

- (3) To present information and debate about differing approaches to new environmental challenges and priorities.
- (4) To focus on issues of sustainability and the reconciliation of conservation and development.
- (5) To ensure that Maori and Pakeha perspectives are brought to bear on resource issues and also, where relevant, the perspectives of other cultural groupings within the New Zealand community.

- (6) To distil and interpret technical and scientific research and information so that this can be more readily applied to project and policy development.
- (7) To become a journal of record by gazetting key resource management decisions by central government, regional, and local authorities, and planning, judicial, and statutory bodies.

Judging by the content of the first issue, Terra Nova will do well.

History of Forestry

by Michael Roche

Peter McKelvey

New Zealand Forestry Corporation Limited in association with GP Books. A 1990 Official Project. 466 pages. ISBN 0-477-00004-5.

The 1980s have been a period of revolutionary change for New Zealand forestry. The New Zealand Forest Service, the State forest manager and forest authority for almost 70 years, was disestablished, its role split three ways between a commercial corporation, a conservation department and a ministry with advisory, regulatory, consultancy and research functions. The private forestry sector, in response to new deregulatory policies, regrouped with bewildering complexity and the two biggest conglomerates have become involved internationally on an impressive scale. The careers of many of those working in the forestry sector have changed; for some the change has been invigorating, for others disappointing. One of the reactions from people on whom the changes impacted most, the employees of the old Forest Service, was to want recorded the contributions the Service had made to New Zealand forestry before the details are forgotten. This book is in part a response to that wish, in part also a general realisation that New Zealand forestry in 1990 warrants an up-to-date history. The choice of historian was a good one. Michael Roche brings, as an historical geographer, the necessary professional objectivity. Moreover he has shown, in his other writings on New Zealand forestry history, that he has a good understanding of the subject.

The approach has been scholarly, the research comprehensive and the treatment fair. The book is a *tour de force*, a wide-ranging definitive account. The author has separated well the tangle of relevant economic, political and envi-

ronmental threads so that the presentation is clear. In particular, he has written about the forestry sector in a broad national context, for example showing how the general policies of past governments in such things as unemployment relief, housing subsidies, price control of timber and wartime regulations influenced forestry affairs.

Many themes are followed, too numerous for all of them to be commented on here. However the most obvious is the way the forestry industry, which started with the British Navy trading axes for kauri spars at the end of the eighteenth century, has burgeoned to its current scale and complexity. The story about this is all there, including features like the early, fierce inter-regional competition between sawmillers which often led to mill closures and waste of resources; the machinations on both sides of the Tasman of the Kauri Timber Company; the organisation of sawmillers for their own protection first into regional associations and then into a national federation; and the development in parallel of the two pulp and paper giants at Kinleith and Kawerau.

Any good story is concerned with individual people and there are accounts here of the key figures. Among the State principals are the first professional forester, the objective and perceptive Campbell-Walker, and the initial triumvirate of the new Forest Service: Ellis the innovator and leader, Hansson the technocrat and Phillips Turner the bureaucrat. There is Entrican too, the dynamic and confrontational director of forestry who had to make the hard decision to persist with his 'Murupara Scheme' in the face of the threat to the Kaingaroa stands from the *Sirex* wood wasp. There is an account of the contribution made by

McGavock, the director who preceded Entrican and whose profile has long been shadowy. Among the equally dynamic and influential figures in the private sector are the mercurial Holdship of the Kauri Timber Company; William Butler and Alwyn Carter, both Presidents of the Dominion Sawmillers Federation who had the welfare of their industry at heart; and Douglas Wylie and Henry Landon Smith who launched the bond scheme. There is due acknowledgement of the achievements of David Henry, the father of NZ Forest Products Ltd, whose personality matched that of Alex Entrican so that both made less progress as a result. There is justifiable mention too of the expansionist role played by Reginald Smythe, Henry's successor. The two men who stand out among the politicians are Vogel, who developed a genuine if late interest in forestry, and the statesman-like Francis Dillon Bell, the founder of the Forest Service.

Concern about future timber supplies is a recurring theme, present even last century. It stimulated the National Forest Inventory of 1923 and its more accurate successor, the National Forest Survey of 1955. More attention could have been paid here to the detailed final results which emanated from the latter, results which were markedly different from the interim results mentioned in the text, which in fact were provided reluctantly by the Survey.

The resources of the indigenous forest estate were initially the dominant term in the national timber supply/demand equation, but one which diminished in significance with time. However they were of paramount importance when Ellis burst upon the scene in 1920 and he was soon wrestling with the major

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related question of the manageability of these forests for a sustained yield, at first optimistically. However as the uncertain results from the research he had commissioned in the kauri and rimu forests came in slowly, and he came to realise the insecure grip the Forest Service had on the provisional State forests, that optimism declined. It was ironic therefore, as Roche points out, that Cockayne's enthusiastic report on the silviculturally more tractable beech forests became available only after Ellis had decided that he had to take the afforestation option. If it had been available sooner it may have made some difference, but probably not.

So commenced the first planting boom, involving both the State and private sectors, which is described well including, with the latter, the heady days of the bond-sellers. The moves resulting in legislation which enabled bonds to be transformed into shares, so enabling the large areas of private forests to be utilised, are described fully with due recognition of the importance of this step. And then on to the second planting boom which commenced in 1960 and was initiated by the Forest Service after comprehensive analysis of future timber supply and demand. This time export potential was taken into account and provision made for an exportable surplus. The role of the forestry conferences of 1969, 1974/75 and 1981 in indicative planning for new planting, in which the efforts of State and private sectors were co-ordinated, is acknowledged, although more could have been made of the contribution to the conferences, and to other forestry matters also, of the Forestry Council. This organisation enabled the State and private interests to reach agreement, to a significant extent because of personal contacts, on a range of forestry issues and communicate a unified sector opinion to the Government of the day. (That was something several other countries envied.)

The related themes of forest conservation and multiple-use forestry are dealt with too. Evident are the crucially different interpretations of forest conservation held on the one hand by those who favoured use with replacement and on the other by those who favoured the preservation of the 'pristine' status quo. Evident too is the constant position of the Forest Service who, right from the time of Ellis, followed the former interpretation and the multiple-use philosophy in forest management. As Roche points out, the revolution changed this to segregated single uses, Treasury and the environmental lobby having carried the day.

The book does not tell the whole full story of New Zealand forestry. Nor



The author of 'History of Forestry', Michael Roche and Mrs Roche.

would that be possible between the covers of any one book; the range of the subject matter is too wide. Roche deals with the field of timber forestry well but not protection forestry. Adequate coverage of this facet of forestry would have to include details of projects such as the afforestation of the soft rock country in Poverty Bay for erosion control, as at Mangatu; and coastal sand-stabilisation projects such as those at Aupori, Foxton, and Bottle Lake near Christchurch. It would have to chronicle also the acceptance in 1956 by the Forest Service of the responsibility for the control of deer, chamois, tahr, possums etc., an undertaking which, until the commercialisation of deer and the arrival in force of helicopters, placed heavy demands on the Forest Service, administratively, technically and politically. (The environmental issue of the late fifties and early sixties was deer control.) Nor does Roche deal, to the extent that the importance of the topic warrants, with the steady entry of the Forest Service into recreational management in both indigenous and exotic forests. Finally, there is an exciting story yet to be told about the achievements of forestry research in New Zealand.

However, these observations should not detract from the importance and the quality of this book. It is a major, authoritative, historical account of New Zealand forestry and the industry it supports and as such will occupy a place of prominence in forestry literature for a long time.

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