

LETTERS

McIntosh Ellis

Sir,

Mrs Barbara Ellis Colby, the youngest daughter of Leon McIntosh Ellis, visited New Zealand with her husband in February and March of 1996. She had already written to the Ministry of Forestry expressing a desire to meet people who knew, or knew of, her father, about whom she was anxious to gather information.

Lindsay Poole, Andy Kirkland and I met her in John Valentine's office and had a long conversation. Lindsay, as far as I know, is about the only forester in New Zealand who had met and knew Cappy Ellis; Andy and I could only give references to literature which are numerous. We could, though, express our appreciation in 1996 of the exceptionally good work that Ellis did in New Zealand in the 1920s. We reassured Mrs Colby that Ellis was far from forgotten and indeed left the impression with her that as time went on his reputation was becoming even further enhanced.

On the same day the Colbys had a session with Michael Roche who had done so much work on the Ellis era and who came down from Palmerston North especially for the occasion. The meeting was reported to be mutually valuable.

The Colbys subsequently travelled on to Nelson, Greymouth and Christchurch

where they met the other New Zealand Cappy Ellis expert, Peter McKelvey. Peter reports that he enjoyed Mrs Colby's company very much and apparently the feeling was again mutual. Peter arranged a great deal of photostat material for what is hoped will be a small publication by Mrs Colby.

Priestley Thomson

State forest asset sales

Sir,

After reading Mr Priestley Thomson's article in the last NZ Forestry (May 1996) I feel bound to comment on his down-playing of forest industry initiatives which have developed since the sale of State forest in 1990-92.

The new initiatives may seem minor in relation to the Bay of Plenty region, but they are certainly not minor for the people living in places such as Gisborne, Dunedin, Masterton, Kaitia etc, and of course the size of the industries is naturally enough related to the size of the plantations in each region. The sale of the CNI forests is likely to see new ventures in that region too.

The new mills and expansion of forest planting and silviculture initiated by companies like Juken Nissho, Wenita FP, Ernslaw One and Rayonier NZ have brought a breath of fresh air and new momentum to the forest industries of Northland, East Coast, southern North

Island, Otago and Southland.

Examples of new ventures include new mills at Gisborne and Masterton (JNL), revamping of a triboard mill in Kaitia (formerly in receivership) (JNL), pruning to 9 m (JNL), upgrading of the old State sawmill at Conical Hill (Ernslaw), large-scale new planting of Douglas-fir (Ernslaw), large-scale new planting of radiata pine in southern NI (Ernslaw, JNL), a new MDF plant at Maitua (Rayonier), an attempt to set up a large-scale integrated processing plant at Mosgiel (Wenita), opening up of East Coast forests for production at Mangatu and Ruatoria (Rayonier), and large-scale planting in East Coast, e.g. Ihungia station (Ernslaw). The list goes on.

The owners of the ex-State forests have demonstrated that they are here for the long term and they are prepared to invest further in expansion of the resource and in upgrading existing mills and/or setting up new wood-using industries.

There is no reason why the BOP sale should not result in similar new ventures and on a scale relative to the size of the resource, i.e. "large".

I believe the privatisation of the State forests so far has been successful. I expect the sale of FCNZ will also be successful in reducing foreign debt and attracting new investment to New Zealand's expanding forest industry.

Alan Bell

'Coup' or 'Coupe' – terminology in forestry

Sir,

In response to a continuing confusion in the use and pronunciation of a term that has become fashionable, we resorted to a little etymological research. The term **coup** (pronounced "coo" like the soft sound of amorous pigeons) is not used in forestry texts. **Coup** generally refers to things more sudden or violent than is desirable in forestry and should not be confused with **coupe**.

The term **coupe** (pronounced "coop", as in the cage for fattening fowls) derives from the French verb "couper", meaning to cut, and is widely used in English-language forestry. The French appear to have been using this term in forest ordinances for over 600 years (*Ordonnance de Melun 1376*). The more recent French standard text on beech (E. Tessier du Cros, 1981, *Le Hêtre*) describes **coupes** in a chapter by Lanier. The international five-language *Dictionary of Forestry* (Elsevier, 1966)



Mrs Barbara Colby and Mr Colby, on right, are pictured with three of the Directors-General of Forests, from left Lindsay Poole, Priestley Thomson and Andy Kirkland. Below them are photographs of New Zealand's Directors of Forestry and Directors-General of Forests.