OBITUARY

Thomas E. Simpson
1899-1981

Thomas E. Simpson died in Rotorua on May 13 at the age of 82. Tom will always be remembered not only for his book From Kauri to Radiata but also for his unending well of knowledge from which he was always ready and willing to impart advice.

Tom was born at Kauaotuna in the Mercury Bay area in 1899, one of a family of nine. After leaving school he joined the family butchery business before putting up his age and enlisting to fight in World War 1.

After the war he returned to the Coromandel area where he bought a farm but decided to put in a manager and go logging. He worked in one of the kauri logging gangs which were a common sight in those days, and was a member of the Kauri Bushmen's Association. In 1920 he joined Hamilton and Jones, a logging and milling company, for whom he worked until 1928 when he went to British Columbia to see how logging was done over there.

On his return, Tom joined the William Casey Sawmilling Co. and was manager until their lease expired in 1934 when he returned to farming. During this time he served for nine years on the Coromandel County Council and in 1946 was made a justice of the peace.

Always a keen rugby man, Tom did not retire from the field until 42 years old. At one time the Simpson family fielded a Simpson 15 which beat the local Coromandel team.

In 1947 Tom joined the N.Z. Forest Service at Kaingaroa working in a wages gang supplying Waipa mill. He worked on and set up the original skyline hauler used in exotic logging. This hauler was built by A. & G. Price of Thames and a full description can be found in From Kauri to Radiata.

In 1952 Tom was promoted to logging officer in charge of all Waipa supply crews. In 1955 he become commercial superintendent at Waipa Mill before becoming logging superintendent of the Forest Service in 1958 from which position he retired in 1963.

After retirement Tom began 10 years of tireless work to research a book which followed the rise of the timber industry in New Zealand. A determination that all facts must be verified before inclusion in his book meant many thousands of hours search-
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ing through archives and museums. In 1973 *From Kauri to Radiata* was finally published and is still today the only definitive work on the history and expansion of the timber industry in New Zealand. It reflects Tom’s great love for the industry and his great practical knowledge and understanding of the mechanics in logging.

In recent years Tom carried on his work to help people to understand logging. He built a one-twentieth scale working model kauri dam which he was always keen to demonstrate.

*From Kauri to Radiata* will always be a memorial to a man who will be remembered as one of the leading lights of the logging industry during its formative years.

A. W. Williams
1910-1981

A. W. (Bert) Williams commenced his career in forestry on timber appraisal work in Westland during the early years of the depression, and could recount the trying conditions experienced on cruising jobs in those days, especially in the swampy bush areas of south Westland. In 1947 he transferred to Rotorua Conservancy and after a further period in indigenous forest work went to Whaka Forest where he had the opportunity to broaden his knowledge in exotic forest management and utilisation.

A move to Westport in the 1950s as District Ranger was followed shortly afterwards by his appointment to Conservancy Senior Ranger, Hokitika, where he later gained further promotion and was Acting Conservator at the time of his retirement.

In later life Bert was able to spend more time on social activities and especially golf, but at the same time he took an active interest in local body work, serving on both the borough council and catchment board up to the time of his death.

A member of a Hokitika family, Bert had a friendly nature and pleasant personality and was well respected in the region.

W.R.P.