

cent over a two-year period, wool values by 60 per cent over five years and national income falling by 40 per cent over three years; that the industry survived at all is remarkable. The president J. N. McLeod noted in his 1933 report, "It is a pleasing feature of the year just passed that the bankruptcies have fallen to one half of those in 1931".

By 1933, 81,000 New Zealanders were unemployed which equated to 12 per cent of the workforce. Without doubt the massive drive and use of unemployed people in the planting of the targeted goal of 120,000 hectares of state forests between 1930 and 1934 greatly assisted the nursery industry.

One such example is in Taranaki. Lucy's Gully today is a notable destination on the western-most part of the Kaitake Ranges, and features redwoods, Douglas fir and eucalyptus, all remnants of a local enterprise to deal with unemployment in Taranaki.

The region, like all others in New Zealand, was faced with a massive problem of finding work for the great army of unemployed people. T. C. List, chairman of the Egmont National Park Board, discussed with VC the idea of having unemployed people plant the foothills of the Kaitake Ranges. VC was the honorary ranger of the Egmont National Park at the time. The scheme was adopted and Duncan and Davies was contracted to undertake the planting. The company also purchased shares in the venture and each of the five Davies children was allotted 25 shares. The project was a commercial venture under the name 'Taranaki Permanent Forestry'.

Initially there were 50 acres (20 hectares) planted in pine along with 15 acres (six hectares) in eucalyptus and macrocarpa. Plantings were later extended to about 300 acres (120 hectares) predominately in pine. The area planted was a wilderness of high gorse, fern and ragwort, the latter constituting a great menace to farmers on adjacent land. VC supervised the planting, establishment and management of the forest, and when told of fires breaking out on the plantations would personally inspect the forest and assess the situation.

Near the western end of the plantation was a sheltered and landlocked gully in which VC decided to do something unusual. Eucalyptus and macrocarpa trees sheltered the seaward entrance to the gully and Douglas fir and coastal redwoods were planted deep inside. While the Douglas fir was not a particular success the coastal redwoods thrived and, today, form a notable feature of Lucy's Gully.

Even before the plantings the gully had been well known as a fortified and gardening site for local Maori. The gully was named after a Maori woman who lived there alone in the latter years of the 19th century. Lucy Stevens was born in 1820 in a whare next to the Waimoku Stream in the gully, and spent much of her life at Oakura Pa. Her husband and two sons were buried in the area, and on the anniversary of each death she returned to the gully for a day long vigil. She was highly respected and when she died her burial in the gully attracted a great Maori gathering. Today, Lucy's Gully is the only area within the National Park where exotic trees are allowed to continue to grow.

While other areas in New Zealand were suffering the effects of the Depression horticulture continued, as illustrated by correspondence between VC and his friend W. Douglas Cook who had returned from the First World War dismayed at the enormous destruction of European forests. He set about building a great collection at Eastwoodhill, north-west of Gisborne, by securing every temperate tree he could lay his hands on from New Zealand nurseries, Hilliers in England and nurseries in the United States. Today the Eastwoodhill National Arboretum has the premier collection of temperate trees in New Zealand. Douglas Cook and VC became great friends through their shared interests. Both were involved in grounds management at Massey College, the establishment of the New Zealand Rhododendron Association and the founding of the Pukeiti Rhododendron Trust.

On 29 June 1932 VC wrote to Douglas Cook:

*Sorry to hear things are so bad in your district, and naturally your farmers being so dependent entirely on wool makes a vast difference. However we can sympathise with you as we have to depend on the farmers in this district and their prices being down to bed rock naturally reflects on us.*

*Re - magnolias. We have a particularly fine lot of these this year and would be pleased to supply whatever you may require. We would particularly recommend you have M. campbellii if not among your lot as this plant flowered with us last year having 27 blooms on the one plant. It reminds one of a large M. grandiflora but of glorious pink colour. It is said to be the most beautiful magnolia grown and we think this is correct. Your whole trouble with magnolias would be to get them started, after that they should be quite all right as they are deep rooted.*

*We can quite realise how hard it must be for you not to get your usual new plants as we know you are so keen on your garden. The writer is looking forward to the day when he can come up and go through your wonderful collection.*