

Obituary

The death of Mr. Alexander McInnes, Managing Director of Messrs. McAinsh and Co., in Dublin, on the 7th May, 1944, after a trying illness, removes one who, in recent years, has played a notable part in the development of the home timber trade in Eire and also deprives our society of one of our keenest members.

He was a native of Crieff, Perthshire, Scotland, and was marked out at an early age for responsible work in the firm which he served all his life. After a short time spent in the North of Scotland he came to Ireland in 1904 as manager for P. McAinsh when timber in the country was cheap owing to great destruction caused by a severe gale shortly before that time.

After spending many years in Westport the firm moved its headquarters to Tourmakeady, County Mayo, where, in addition to his normal timber cutting activities, Mr. McInnes did quite a lot of planting, notably of Hybrid Larch. The firm later removed to Galway and finally to Dublin in 1935.

Mr. McInnes took an active part in 1939 in the formation of the Home Grown Timber Merchants Association of Eire, of which he was President and, acting in that capacity, his long experiences of both war and peace conditions and his sound judgment and foresight proved of great value in all matters affecting the Home Timber Trade, concerning which he was frequently consulted by the responsible authorities. The concern for which he was responsible had in the meantime developed from one saw mill to no less than fourteen mills widely scattered throughout the country and, apart from the useful productive work carried out by his firm, there is no doubt that he had a valuable steadying influence upon the trade at a very difficult time. One of the special features of the trade developed by Mr. McInnes was the production of railway keys from second-class oak.

Everyone who had any dealings with him came to appreciate his directness, honesty, uprightness and cheerful disposition. His whole mind was in his work and he had a high sense of value, caring little for outward show or cheap advertisement. It was his belief that a sound job of work, the satisfaction of his customers and of all those with whom he had dealings were the best form of advertisement. Many will remember him for his many unobtrusive acts of kindness and consideration, which he could extend even to his competitors. Even on his death-bed his thoughts were not of himself, but of his work and others.

He was an enthusiastic fisherman and at one time a keen golfer. One of the most remarkable aspects of his character was his ability to look at woods not only from the timber merchant's point of view, but also the forester's and, apart from his own efforts at planting, he was always ready, even at a sacrifice, to co-operate in any special effort to improve woods purchased by his firm by surrendering trees specially desirable for retention. He was held in high esteem and affection not only by his own staff, but by a wide circle of friends all over Eire, and his departure leaves a gap which will be filled only with difficulty. He lived a cheerful life, had a keen sense of humour, a fund of apt and pithy phrases which enlivened his conversation and an alert enthusiasm which belied his age.



The Late Alexander McInnes
March 19, 1877—May 7, 1944