

OBITUARY

AN APPRECIATION OF THE LATE MR. KARL L. SCHORMAN

*“ . . . The Ides of March are come
Ay, Caesar, but not gone . . . ”*

The historic and tragic significance of the Ides of March is known to most people, but had there been even the slightest foreknowledge of the dreadful tidings that the 16th March, 1954 was to bring his many friends and colleagues (the two terms meant much the same to Karl Schorman) would assuredly have besought Providence, like Josue of old, that the sun might stand still in the heavens rather than that it should bring the day to snatch away with such appalling suddenness the kindly-hearted gentleman that was Karl Louis Schorman.

Karl (“ Charlie ”) Schorman was born in Queensland, Australia, just sixty years ago. He came to Ireland at an early age and entered the Public Service late in 1910, serving in the Post Office and in the Department of Agriculture and Technical Instruction (as it was then known) before being appointed as a Second Division Clerk (from open competition) to the Board of Public Works in 1914. There he remained until 1920 when he returned to the Department of Agriculture and Technical Instruction where he was engaged on the work of forestry as an Executive Officer.

Following the passing of the Forestry Act, 1919 (which established a Forestry Commission for the (then) United Kingdom), the work of forestry was, in April, 1920, transferred from the Department of Agriculture and Technical Instruction to the Forestry Commission in Ireland. In April, 1922 (with the advent of the new Saorstat Eireann) the staff of the Forestry Commission in Ireland was transferred back to the Department of Agriculture and Technical Instruction which was then styled the Department of Agriculture. In 1933 the Forestry Division was transferred to the Department of Lands and Fisheries, which the following year became the Department of Lands, and since then the Forestry Division has for twenty years remained attached to the Department of Lands.

Thus, out of nearly forty-four years in the public service, Karl Schorman spent the last thirty-four years of his life continuously in the Forestry Service, attaining to the rank of Principal Officer of the Forestry Division for the 2½ years immediately prior to his death.

He had seen during his official career three pieces of legislation affecting forestry entered upon the Statute Book—the Forestry Act, 1919 (mentioned previously); the Forestry Act, 1928 (brought into operation on 1st April, 1930); and the Forestry Act, 1946 (which came into effect on the 1st April, 1949). He was a representative several times of the Forestry Division at Geneva in connection with international conferences relating to forestry matters.

Karl Schorman had, throughout his long career on the administrative side of the Forestry Service, achieved a ripeness of experience, aided by an excellent memory, which was invaluable in solving the many problems which inevitably crop up in the course of work. He was always approachable and ever ready to help with suggestions or comment. Every colleague, senior or junior, whether on the administrative or on the technical side, had the same feeling towards him—that Karl Schorman was imbued always with a selfless and single-minded integrity of purpose—the good of the Forestry Division, which he loved with loyalty and sincerity.

Incapable of pettiness, with a certain endearing humility of self assessment, he had always a revulsion towards making unnecessary mountains out of relatively unimportant molehills. His straightforward dealings with every colleague earned him the respect and trust of all. The happy relationship between the public and the Forestry Division in its many facets is attributable in great measure to the courteous, fair and realistic approach which Karl Schorman brought to his duties over a long period of years.

He was an Associate Member of the Society of Irish Foresters since its inception and also served on its Council. He was always an interested and cheerful participant in various outings and visits sponsored by the Society. Readers of this journal will recall the interesting and thought-provoking article, "Scenic Amenities and the Forest," which he contributed to the last issue.

He was devoted to his family in an edifying degree. One felt that he was not only father but friend to his dear ones, who must miss him sorely, in a manner which his friends and colleagues, deep as they feel his loss, cannot appreciate to the full.

May he rest in the eternal peace which he has justly merited.
