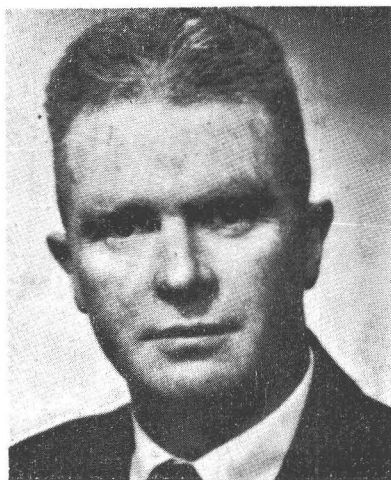


Gerald Scully

The sudden death of Gerald Scully at the end of last year came as a shock to his colleagues in the Forestry Service and to the members of the Society.

Gerald Thomas Scully was born at Bantry, Co. Cork in 1925 and he entered the forestry school at Avondale at the age of twenty. Following the completion of his training in 1948 he served for four years in different forests as assistant forester until he was placed in charge of Enniskerry forest in 1952. It was during his



period there that he decided to pursue a course at Trinity College, Dublin. These were for him the days of great endeavour. Early in the morning he was astir to get in some study before breakfast and again often late into the night he worked, while during the day he carried out his official duties conscientiously. This is not to say though, that his life at Enniskerry was something akin to a medieval monk because with his bouncing energy he was able to participate to a reasonable extent in the social round as well.

His studies were rewarded in due course by a Diploma in Public Administration and later by the degree of B.Comm. In 1958 he competed successfully for a post of forestry inspector and was posted to Galway on land acquisition work. For many this would have been the end of formal study but not for Gerald. He continued his studies at Galway University and was awarded the degree of M.Comm. In 1963 he applied for and was awarded a scholarship by An Bórd Scoláireachtaí Comhalairte and in September of that year he entered Yale University on a Fellowship in forestry economics. At the end of the course he did an eight week study tour in the United States and Canada.

Following his return he was transferred to Sligo where he remained until his death. While there he was a member of the Sligo Rotary and the Sligo-German circle and he lectured on economics and statistics to extra-mural students of Social Science for Galway University. He also wrote articles and notes for various publications. Up to the end he remained an avid student; for him the magic never faded.

But those who knew him well will remember him not so much for his academic achievements against great odds, nor for his skill as a forester, which was considerable but rather for his excellent personal qualities. His generosity of mind was quite exceptional; he was incapable of harbouring enmity or spitefulness towards anyone and his philosophic view of life was an example that many could follow with advantage.

To his mother and brothers we extend our deepest sympathy in their sad and unexpected bereavement.

J.J.D.

Computermatic Stress Grading Machine

Following the demonstration at the Forest Products Research Laboratory, Princes Risborough in 1962 of the basic principles on which a machine might be produced which could automatically and continuously assess the bending strength of timber, considerable interest has been centred on the probable value of such a machine to industry. Machine grading is potentially much more accurate and faster than visual grading and could lead to increased efficiency in the structural use of timber. The Forest Products Research Laboratory has recently taken delivery of a Computermatic stress grading machine, the first of its type in Europe. The machine was developed in 1966 by the Division of Wood Technology, Forestry Commission, New South Wales, Australia. Of the three grading machines now manufactured this is the least expensive and it is basically the most suitable for use in this country. Timber is fed through the machine at speeds up to 200 ft. per minute. A load is applied to each piece of timber and the deflections are measured. A computer unit, translates deflections into bending strength ratings. The strength rating or stress grade at every 6 inches along the length of the timber is identified by a coloured dye sprayed on the surface. The machine can classify timber into four stress grades at a single control setting.

It is claimed in Australia that the Computermatic machine can stress grade both planed and sawn timber. The Forest Products Research Laboratory is now carrying out trials to determine the adjustments and modifications which may be needed to make the machine perform satisfactorily especially from the viewpoint of accuracy under conditions obtaining in this country.