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Edward Phillips Turner: The development of a 'Forest Sense' in New Zealand 1890s to 1930s

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ABSTRACT: Edward Phillips Turner served as the second Director of Forests in New Zealand from 1928 to 1931. This was the culmination of a long public service career dating back to the 1890s. Although his formal qualifications were in surveying in many ways Phillips Turner *became* a forester. As such his career is a window onto changing official attitudes to forests and forestry in New Zealand from the last decade of the 19th to the first decades of the 20th century. This paper will consider events that drew Phillips Turner towards forestry, briefly discuss his main interests, and conclude with some observations on his post-retirement reflections on the management of forests in New Zealand.

1 INTRODUCTION

> A brave life; a true soul; an eye for the skies; a carriage distinguishing him in the forests of the world through which he trudged. Such was Edward Phillips Turner, gallant gentleman, surveyor, forester
>
> E. H. F. Swain

I nominated Edward Phillips Turner for inclusion in *The Dictionary of New Zealand Biography* but he did not make the final selection. As Secretary of Forestry (1920 to 1928) and as Director of Forests (1928 to 1931) he was regarded as a gentleman and he would have doubtless taken this rebuff with dignity. Yet Phillips Turner is deserving of some closer attention in that in the first two decades of the 20th century he *became* a forester, having originally trained as a surveyor. His response to the major environmental transformations in New Zealand of the late 19th and early 20th centuries saw him actively gravitate towards the conservation of forests. For convenience this paper will divide Phillips Turner's career into four phases. Each of these will be described prior to a discussion of his 'forest sense'. This paper can be positioned against the wider backdrop of Pawson and Brooking's (2002) *Environmental Histories of New Zealand* which devotes considerable attention to 19th century deforestation and the rise of forest conservation at the national level and to the special issue of *Environment and History* (Brooking and Pawson 2002). Whereas these environmental histories are operating at a regional and or national scale, this paper charts the response of one individual to environmental transformation in New Zealand.

2 EARLY CAREER AS A SURVEYOR AND AMATEUR BOTANIST

Edward Phillips Turner was born in 1865 at Havant in England. His Doctor father and the family migrated to New Zealand when he was aged five but later shifted to Tasmania, where he was educated. After a year at sea he studied in England in 1882 before returning to farm in Tasmania and again venturing to New Zealand in 1884. Here he trained as a surveyor. Qualifying in 1887, he worked in various regions of New Zealand, in New South Wales, and in 1891 on mining surveys in Tasmania. Married in 1892, he returned to permanently to New Zealand in 1894 working mainly for the Department of Lands and Survey in Auckland. This included an ascent of Mt Tarawera in 1900. The eruption of this volcano in 1886 had destroyed the famous pink and white terraces.

The forestry situation in New Zealand in the 1890s was one of almost moribund forest legislation with no specifically trained staff and the Commissioners of Crown Lands readily issuing timber cutting licenses. Forests were valued mostly for their potential as farmland and being rapidly felled with closer land settlement from the 1890s (Pawson and Brooking 2002). A Timber Conference in 1896 had raised the spectre of a coming timber famine and prompted the establishment of a Forestry Branch of Lands and Survey in 1897, though its activities were limited to exotic tree planting.

Reflecting on his early career he observed that 'from the first, life in the forest made him an ardent student of the arboreal and other vegetation' (Phillips Turner 1932, 198). Initially he pursued these enthusiasms by developing an interest in botany. Over time he developed real competence as a field botanist. He forwarded many specimens to the eminent botanists Dr Leonard Cockayne (1854-1934) and Thomas Cheeseman (1845-1923). Botany remained an enduring interest. In 1927 he returned to Mt Tarawera and aged 62 climbed the 1200m volcanic cone making notes on the revegetation as well as observing the presence of a solitary blue gum (*Eucalyptus globulus*). Subsequently he presented an account to the Wellington Philosophical Institute, the forerunner of the Royal Society of New Zealand (Phillips Turner 1929). His botanical interests were life-long (e.g. Phillips Turner 1936).

3 SCENERY PRESERVATION

Although the *Land Act, 1892* provided for setting aside as reserves areas of Crown Land for scenery preservation, only 76 721 acres were protected by this and related means to 1906 (AJHR 1907, C6, 3). The real impetus for forest preservation came with the passage of the *Scenery Preservation Act*, *1903* and the establishment of a Royal Commission on Scenery Preservation 1904-05. Although a Royal Commission was an effective means of identifying scenic areas in need of protection it was not a mechanism for the systematic purchase of scenic areas or for their maintenance. This was recognised and remedied in an amending Act of 1906 that created a Scenery Preservation Board. This provided an opportunity for Phillips Turner who although he had first joined the Lands Department in 1891 was not actually transferred to the permanent staff until 1905. Accordingly he applied for the position of Inspector of Scenic Reserves in 1907. Kensington, the Under-Secretary of Lands in recommending his appointment to the Minister noted that he 'Has always taken a deep interest in botany and also in all questions affecting the preservation of natural scenery' (Kensington 1907b).

As Inspector of Scenic Reserves, Phillips Turner spent a considerable amount of time visiting the reserves that had been established by the Royal Commission and by the Scenery Preservation Board. His annual reports from 1907 to 1915 detail his inspections of all existing as well as potential new reserves and provide a fascinating window into the prevailing conditions, for instance, the danger posed by fire and deer as well as his knowledge of developments in forest conservation in Europe and North America. The latter included a recounting of Pinchot's famous pouring of a jug of water onto a bare table top and onto a blotter to demonstrate the importance of forest cover in countering the dangers of accelerated erosion. Maori resistance to the creation of reserves was

lamented by Phillips Turner suggesting there is an opportunity here for a post colonial interpretation of scenery preservation (AJHR 1907, C6).

On several occasions he was able to report in more detail about the situation in the wider Wellington region (AJHR 1915, C1 Appendix IV) and on Kapiti Island (1914). Kapiti Island had been set aside in 1897 as a flora and fauna sanctuary and Cockayne had produced a detailed survey of the island in 1907 (AJHR 1907, C8A). In follow up inspections in 1912 and 1914 Phillips Turner reported an increase in the number of native birds, but observed that Australian possums were very plentiful and advocated their trapping for skins as they were a threat to the birdlife (AJHR 1914, C1 Appendix VI, 30).

In 1907 Phillips Turner was appointed as Secretary to the Scenery Preservation Board. His advocate was T. E. Donne, head of the Tourism and Health Resorts Department, charged with organising the transition from commission to a permanent board who wrote confidentially saying "He would I think be an excellent officer for work in this direction and personally I would very much like to see him appointed" (Donne 1907). Kensington agreed and recommended the appointment to the Minister, though a degree of parsimony is to be noted:

> Mr Phillips Turner … has taken a very great interest in all scenery preservation matters for many years, and has also a very fair knowledge of forestry and botany, is a very suitable person for the position. The more so as being a surveyor he can, without any further expense, see that all the boundary lines are marked and pegged, and that no encroachment is made by the adjoining owners upon the Scenic Reserves owned by the Crown (Kensington 1907a).

Two other important tasks intruded on Phillips Turner's duties at this time as well as responsibility for Lands and Survey sand dune restoration work. This included assisting Cockyane on his botanical survey of Tongariro National Park following on from an earlier government sponsored survey of Waipoua Kauri Forests (AJHR 1908, C14). Tongariro was New Zealand's first National Park, having been gazetted in 1894. Cockayne's report included a map, drafted by Phillips Turner that made the point that very little forest was within the original park boundaries. Phillips Turner's larger role was alluded to by Kensington who noted, in presenting it to the Minister of Lands that, 'a joint report [that] has been handed in by these gentlemen contains their recommendations for the extension and development of the park' (AJHR 1908, C11, 1).

At least partly on the strength of the Tongariro report Phillips Turner was asked to undertake a similar survey of forested country to the west of Tongariro. The resulting *Report on the Higher Waimarino District* was published in 1909 and contained a lengthy species list and discussion of their distribution as well as a map of the district. His verdict was unpalatable to those promoting land settlement; 'the Waimarino forest probably carries in its timber the most valuable crop it will ever produce' (AJHR 1909, C11, 6). During his investigations Phillips Turner collected many plant specimens. He noted of two of these that 'it was with astonishment that I received Mr Cheeseman's decision that the two plants are one and the same species' (AJHR 1909, C11, 3). One of these was subsequently recognised as a separate species *Pittosporum turnerii* which must have been something of a highlight for a self-taught botanist. In 1911 he reported finding a new plant of the genus Senecio and in 1912-13 reported numerous species growing in new habitats.

The Scenery Preservation Commission identified a considerable amount of land alongside major rivers and the route of the North Island main trunk railway line for gazetting as scenic reserves. Others were alongside the Wanganui River, at the time one of New Zealand's more important inland waterways. By 1916 issues had arisen about the preservation of adjacent forest and in response to the concerns of Maori along the river a commission chaired by T. A. Duncan and including Phillips Turner was established to look at the boundaries of forest reserves. This commission inspected forest reserves up the river Wanganui from the coast to Taumaranui, a distance of about 250 km.

4 FORESTRY YEARS

The decisive career move for Phillips Turner took place in 1913 when he was appointed Secretary to the Royal Commission on Forestry. This Commission was established to report on existing forest lands that might be retained for purposes of protection forestry, areas of merchantable forest that were also suitable for land settlement, the best methods of managing indigenous forests, the possible prohibition of Kahikatea exports and the future demand for timber (AJHR 1913, C12). His dedicated work resulted in a £25 salary increase 'in recognition of services as Secretary to the Royal Commission on Forestry' (Under-Secretary of Lands 1913). Although the Royal Commission recommended a classification of forest on economic grounds, a survey of beech forests with a view to instituting sustained yield, a new timber sales policy, emphasised the damage caused by deer, and stressed the importance of protection forestry, the war delayed any significant government response to the forestry question in New Zealand. Phillips Turner still sought to advance his career within the department. But in this regard he was unsuccessful in applying for the positions of Commissioner of Lands for Westland in 1915 and Marlborough in 1917, and the lesser position of Land Officer in Gisborne District in 1916. He was however transferred to the newly created Forestry Branch of Lands and Survey in 1916 as the responsible official. The Lands and Survey Department had begun to pay more attention to native forests in the early years of the 20th century. Two detailed reports on timber supplies were published in 1905 and 1907 (AJHR 1905, C6; 1907, C4). Phillips Turner was asked to prepare to reports on the native forests in 1917 and 1918 (AJHR, 1917, 1918, C3). These were largely concerned with the output of sawn timber, revenues received, consumption trends and duration of timber supplies. On the latter he remarked 'our supplies of milling-timber are much less than has been generally estimated, that they are being rapidly used up, and that great care and economy must be exercised in the management of our remaining forests' (AJHR 1917, C3, 33). Privately he expressed some alarm and frustration at an impending 'shortage or exhaustion of our native forests' (Phillips Turner 1917a).

Government interest in forestry picked up again after the war. In 1919 the Forestry Branch of the Lands Department was granted administrative independence. Phillips Turner was appointed acting Secretary (i.e. head) in August 1919 and confirmed into the position three months later. Colonial forestry expert Sir David Hutchins, who had been hired by the New Zealand government in 1915 to prepare a report on forestry in New Zealand, wrote to congratulate him, lauding the establishment of Forestry Department as 'the best thing that has happened to New Zealand since the winning of the war' and applauding Phillips Turner's appointment; 'you are the only man in New Zealand with a knowledge of forestry, and who could work with the trained Conservator of Forests when he is appointed' (Hutchins 1919). This now advanced his income to £600 p.a. Ever correct Phillips Turner wrote to the head of the Lands Department, 'Though my new position in the public service is much improved, I shall leave your Dept with many regrets, for it is now nearly thirty-six years since I first joined it, during this time I have always had the friendliest of relations with the many officers who I have come in contact' (Phillips Turner 1919).

Phillips Turner not a vigorous advocate in a face-to-face setting but he was heavily involved in the behind the scenes manoeuvring to establish a separate forestry department and secure professionally trained staff from 1916 to 1919. In this regard he enjoyed some success, the details of which will be returned to later. The creation of a new government department demanded much of the staff. In this respect the State Forest Service was to be well served by its first Director L. M. Ellis, who embodied a mix of visionary persuasiveness and determination. Phillips Turner's real importance was reflected in the structure of the department. He was the senior permanent staff officer, an experienced public servant and responsible for its day to day running, while Ellis was on contract and was charged with developing a national forest policy. The latter took the unexpected turn toward large scale exotic plantation forestry in the mid 1920s.

Phillips Turner maintained a wide involvement beyond the State Forest service in forestry affairs as a foundation member of both the New Zealand Forestry League and what was to become the Royal Forest and Bird Protection Society. It was on Phillips Turner's motion that Sir Thomas

MacKenzie was elected to the Chair at the first meeting of the latter in 1923. During the 1920s he wrote short articles for a variety of magazines intended to educate and inform the New Zealand public about the forest species (Phillips Turner 1922, 1922a, 1923, 1924, 1926a). He was also a charter member of the New Zealand Institute of Foresters from its foundation in 1928.

Phillips Turner's forestry knowledge had developed from a reading of forestry texts almost in isolation and from meeting visiting foresters such as Sir David Hutchins. He read the available overseas reports from Britain and facilitated the republishing of Schlich's paper on New Zealand Forests in a local journal (Schlich 1918). In 1924 he attended the Australian Forestry Conference. In 1927 he visited Perth en route to Europe, for medical treatment for Mrs Phillips Turner, where with S.L. Kessell, the Conservator of Forests, he discussed the management of the Jarrah and Karri forests as well as softwood afforestation. Although his opportunities were limited he was able to visit forest plantations near Cape Town and in Scotland he studied the forest management systems on several estates (Phillips Turner 1927). The Third Empire Forestry Conference held in Australia and New Zealand in 1928 gave him an opportunity to showcase local achievements when he led the New Zealand tour (Troup 1929). The handbook for the New Zealand tour was a volume entitled *The Trees of New Zealand* (Cockayne and Phillips Turner 1928), which went through four editions, the last in 1958, and its publication doubtless gave Phillips Turner much satisfaction.

5 RISE TO DIRECTOR OF FORESTS

Ellis having secured a further three year extension of his contract resigned abruptly in 1928. Phillips Turner was left in charge but after two months was pressing the Minister for appointment to the position of Director. He expressed the opinion that Ellis viewed him as his natural successor and reminded the Minister that he had declined the appointment in 1919, 'solely because at that juncture forestry would never get proper official and political consideration except under an imported expert' (Phillips Turner 1928a). Cabinet approved the appointment but initially only for 12 months. In making his case for a further term of two years he reiterated that his understanding of New Zealand forests was acknowledged within and beyond New Zealand, though probably of more interest to the politicians was his claim that his salary would still be less than that of other forestry heads in the Empire and that bringing in an overseas forester would create disharmony within the State Forest Service and the sawmilling industry (Phillips Turner 1929).

As Director of Forests 1928 to 1931 Phillips Turner faced difficult times. Ellis had instigated a national forest survey, placed timber sales on a sounder footing, begun indigenous forest research, but most notably initiated an extensive state exotic afforestation programme in 1925. Phillips Turner confronted some real challenges with the indigenous sawmill industry over-cutting to counter falling timber prices and with public sector retrenchment. Afforestation activity continued through the Great Depression before coming to an abrupt halt in 1934.

Phillips Turner was conscious of New Zealand's place within Imperial forestry. This was manifest in his membership of the Empire Forestry Association from in 1929 but more strongly through his obituaries of Sir David Hutchins whose reports on New Zealand forestry played a part in the establishment of the State Forest Service in 1921 and of Sir William Schlich, a pioneer of British forestry management in India and later Professor of Forestry at Oxford University (Phillips Turner 1921, 1926).

6 AFTERMATH

The years following Phillips Turner's retirement were difficult ones for the State Forest Service, with the government for a time considering amalgamating it with the Department of Lands and Survey. Both Phillips Turner and his predecessor Ellis publicly opposed the move. Describing himself as 'perturbed and disappointed', Phillips Turner expressed concern about this 'retrograde step'.

The nub of his concern was that the State Forest Service controlled 8 million acres of indigenous forest and over 300 000 acres of exotic plantation, so that:

> On their competent management the Dominion relies for her future timber supplies the regularisation of the flow of her rivers the sustaining of the equitability of her climate, and the providing of recreation resorts for her people … It seems to be thought by some that our indigenous forests can be used and at the same time perpetuated with out the application of trained management, but this is entirely erroneous. Others think that having planted 307 000 acres with valuable foreign timber trees all there is to do is wait until they reach milling size and cut them down. This is also dangerously erroneous. (Phillips Turner 1931)

Phillips Turner maintained an active involvement in forestry matters. He produced a revealing account of progress in forestry New Zealand from 1894 to 1931. This was orthodox in that it unproblematically equated the introduction of state forestry with progress but is unexpectedly rich in detail about some of the behind the scenes manoeuvring to get the government to embrace state forestry in the aftermath of the Royal Commission on Forestry in 1913 (Phillips Turner 1932). For a number of years he also prepared commentaries on the State Forest Service annual reports for the *Empire Forestry Journal* (E.P.T. 1933, 1934, 1936). No longer constrained by public service conventions he took the opportunity to criticise the transfer of 3400 acres of forest from the State Forest Service to the Lands Department as scenic reserves (E.P.T. 1933, 137).

In 1936 he was elected to the Executive Committee of the Royal New Zealand Institute of Horticulture, that same year he wrote the forestry entry for the *Australian and New Zealand Association for the Advancement of Science Handbook* for the Auckland meeting held early in 1937. More significantly he undertook a six week forestry tour of Japan in 1935. This trip he wrote up in some detail for the *Empire Forestry Journal* (Phillips Turner 1937). Although the circumstances giving rise to the trip are not discussed Phillips Turner was impressed with what he saw of Japan and Japanese forestry practices:

> As the overseas traveller approaches Japan he cannot but be impressed by the prevalence of forests on all the outlying islands, on the coastal hills, and on the high inland ranges visible from the sea, and this impression is deepened after landing, when it is found that forests often exist in close proximity to the cities and large towns. (Phillips Turner 1937, 4)

He further explained what, in effect was a Japanese forest consciousness: 'It is not utility alone which makes forests valued by the Japanese. They have an innate reverence and love of trees, and they look upon groves of trees as temples of nature' (Phillips Turner 1937, 9) and 'Forestry practice in Japan is of a very high order. This satisfactory position is the result of the far-sightedness of Japanese statesmen, the endeavours of enthusiastic and highly competent foresters, and the 'forest sense' which has through many years developed or been engendered in a receptive and intelligent people' (Phillips Turner 1937, 9). One wonders if in the comments on Japan there was something of a mirror reflection of the forestry struggles that he had faced in New Zealand.

In 'retirement' Phillips Turner's view of forestry broadened rather than narrowed. He resumed some old interests that he had withdrawn from in the 1920s as he rose in the State Forest Service, serving as a Vice President of Forest and Bird from 1931 until his death, and on the Council of the New Zealand Institute of Horticulture in 1936 and 1937. There was a return to print on various forest species as well as a significant chapter on New Zealand forests for the ANZAAS Handbook for the Auckland meeting (Phillips Turner 1933, 1936) and a detailed but largely rather dry chapter on forestry in New Zealand for an important volume *Agricultural Organisation in New Zealand* (Phillips Turner and Beasley 1936). Here some of the ideas that persist through Phillips Turner's other writings were reiterated, particularly the extent of deforestation in New Zealand during the latter 19th century, the manner in which state forestry had overcome the virtually unchecked harvesting of the sawmilling industry, and afforestation development on lands unwanted for agriculture. Yet he also presented state forestry as having to continually combat 'a considerable portion of the

population who, ignorant of the importance of maintaining supplies of timber for future requirements, and also ignorant of the value of forests for the regularization of stream-flow, prevention of erosion etc., make strong demands that the reserved forests be made available for farming' (Phillips Turner and Beasley 1936, 581).

Perhaps equally important was a short paper on the role of scenic reserves and national parks that included some reflections on his experiences as Inspector of Scenic Reserves. In this, one of his last publications, he discussed competing conceptions of national parks as 'scientific sanctuaries reserved most strictly in order that Nature may operate without any interference by man' (Phillips Turner 1936, 2) and as places which the public are encouraged to visit but in which the natural flora and fauna is protected. In New Zealand, he reflected, the Acts under which the parks were constituted did 'not define the PURPOSE [original emphasis] of the reservation' (Phillips Turner 1936, 3). This he considered flowed on to inconsistent management of parks and reserves. He also envisaged that the natural beauty of the country would through tourism at some future stage become a source of considerable revenue. In addition, Phillips Turner saw parks as both preserving representative samples of primitive vegetation as well as scenic features before advocating a new national parks act that defined the purpose of the parks and the establishment of a separate Bureau of National Parks and Scenic Reserves. He quoted from Ruskin about the importance of holding the beauties of nature in trust for future generations. Was it intellectual sleight-of-hand or pragmatism that allowed Phillips Turner to on the one hand criticise the transfer of forest lands from the State Forest Service to Lands and Survey as Scenic Reserves, and on the other to link scenic reserves and national parks and advocate for new legislation and an administration, separate from the State Forest Service?

In 1934 he had became President of the New Zealand Forestry League, though by this time it was more of a forestry interest group in decline rather than the lobby group it had been in the early 1920s. He presided over the Forestry section of the Australia and New Zealand Association for the Advancement of Science meeting in Auckland in January of 1937 but died suddenly later that same year. A measure of his character and standing was found in his obituaries (Anon. 1937, C.M.S. 1937, Oliver 1937-38).

7 DISCUSSION

There is much that could be discussed out of Phillips Turner's career. This section will briefly note his increasingly negative attitude to his own profession of surveying when it came to forestry and in more detail consider his private efforts to promote state forestry in the period 1916-1919. Some of this lobbying he touched on in a review of forestry progress in New Zealand (Phillips Turner 1932). It is interesting to compare this with other surviving material.

In the absence of a forests department the Department of Lands and Survey had been de facto custodians of the forests in New Zealand. The regional heads, the Commissioners of Crown Lands, were typically surveyors by background. Phillips Turner was emphatic in his advice to the war time National Efficiency Board about not involving them in forest management:

> [They] are ordinary surveyors who by length of service and sufficient work have been promoted. Those who have served in bush districts have the same amount of knowledge of forestry as the average settler, those who have served in the open country not so much. They know nothing of the modern scientific forestry as long practiced in France Germany and recently in the USA (Phillips Turner 1918a).

The reader is left to judge whether there was a residual disappointment in his being twice overlooked for such a position.

The Royal Commission on Forestry heightened expectations but the declaration of war in 1914 slowed progress. Prime Minister Massey, 'farmer Bill', was not enthusiastic about state forestry although a more sympathetic ear was found in Sir Francis Bell the Commissioner [i.e. Minister] of

State Forests (Stewart 1937) and the influential Sir James Wilson, a former MP, the Chair of the Board of Agriculture. Late in 1916 Phillips Turner wrote to Wilson initially expressing concerns that Hutchins' appendix on New Zealand in his *Australian Forestry* (Hutchins 1916) would be unhelpfully divisive (Phillips Turner 1916). In New Zealand to provide further reports to government, Hutchins further alarmed Phillips Turner by the slowness of his writing. Phillips Turner was clear, however, that the appointment of a trained forester as director was imperative. He expressed his fears to Wilson that 'if this was not done there will be an attempt to patch up matters by amendment to acts and regulations' (Phillips Turner 1917b). He then spelt out what he regarded as a desirable course of action.

> As regards the Director I think a properly graduated man who has also had experience in Australia or the Pacific Coast would be far preferable to a man who has only experience with Tropical forests and black labour. The only qualified man in Australia is Jolly of Queensland (that is if he has the force of character that will be requisite to manage things here) (Phillips Turner 1917b).

Perhaps his contact with Hutchins, an archetypal British colonial forester with experience in India, Africa and Cyprus reinforced this view. Wilson agreed to bring up the question of a director of forests at the Board of Agriculture. Massey remained unsympathetic. Phillips Turner continued to push for the appointment of a qualified forester as director. His rationalisation was that such a person would have the professional authority to act whereas in amending the legislation first, 'I know that my hands would be so tied that there would be little chance of real reform' (Phillips Turner 1917c).

The Under Secretary for Lands was also opposed to the creation of a separate Forest Department and to N. W. Jolly being appointed as director. However, Wilson used his political connections to good effect and lobbied Guthrie, the newly appointed Minister of Lands, highlighting that the National Efficiency Board, the Board of Agriculture and the New Zealand Forestry League (set up by Hutchins, Wilson, and Bathgate in 1917 with Phillips Turner also a member) were all seeking the establishment of a separate forests department under a qualified forester. H. Goudie, the nursery superintendent of the Afforestation Branch of Lands was discounted. Others mentioned were W. Fraser, a New Zealander and a recent Schlich trained forestry graduate from Oxford (who was later employed only to die in WWI) and Jolly. Phillips Turner meanwhile made it clear he would serve under a professionally qualified officer. His 1932 account is reasonably consistent with the above except that he omits to mention his behind the scenes role in advising and a cajoling Wilson and Bell.

In 1920 his efforts came to pass when Canadian trained L. M. Ellis was appointed Director of Forests. Ellis was however appointed on a three year renewable contract, outside the permanent public service and Phillips Turner was appointed to the position of Secretary of Forestry, and arrangement that Sir Francis Bell favoured.

8 CONCLUSION

The origins of Phillips Turner's forest sense stemmed from time as a surveyor in the New Zealand bush. Initially it took the form of an appreciation of the forest from a botanical perspective but expanded to include the aesthetic. In the 1890s forest clearance by burning reached a peak. Like others Phillips Turner appreciated the magnitude of the changes wrought on the environment and was influenced by concerns of a coming 'timber famine'. What is interesting is the extent to which Australia also subtly shaped Phillips Turner's growing forest sense. Not only had he farmed and surveyed in Tasmania but he saw the Australian forest legislation as providing models for New Zealand. He also saw in Australia the working model of the advantages of separating forestry from lands department administration. Furthermore, initially he supported the idea that Jolly be sought to

fill the position of director, for which he regarded forestry qualifications as essential. His visit to Western Australia further sharpened his appreciation of Australian forestry. Appropriate then was the sentiment, if not the quality, of E. H. F. Swain's in memoriam verse published as part of his obituary in the *New Zealand Journal of Forestry* (C.M.S. 1937).

Phillips Turner's forestry sense was a product of his encounter with the New Zealand bush, a consciousness of the extent and rate of deforestation enriched by his knowledge of botany, presumably deepened by his working association with Cockayne, further informed by his embracing of the principles of forestry science. It was however not expressed explicitly in his writing, official or otherwise, except for two papers both written late in his lifetime (Phillips Turner 1936b, 1937). In broad outline he progressed from a surveyor's appreciation of the forest as potential farm land to a botanist's knowledge of species, then to an aesthetic appreciation of forest scenery and on to a forestry science vantage point and finally after retirement something approaching a holistic view of forestry. A fundamental element of Phillips Turner's forest sense was the central role he accorded to the state. He regarded the sawmill industry as having controlled timber prices and was critical of the efforts of the private afforestation companies, justifiably so in view of the subsequent bondholders scandal. While pleased with what had been achieved in forestry New Zealand in his lifetime he nevertheless was clear that the State Forest Service had to remain vigilant against the demands of the land settlement lobby that would, as Ellis remarked on more than one occasion, 'cut down two trees to plant one blade of grass'. Nor was Phillips Turner's post-retirement 'holistic' view of forestry without weaknesses and inconsistencies. Interestingly he did not assert that the State Forest Service ought to be the custodian of national parks and scenic reserves so that all of the Crown's forest estate would be controlled within a single department.

The closest that Phillips Turner came to articulating a fully developed forest consciousness was in his trip to Japan in 1935 when he wrote of so approvingly of their strong forest sense. In spite of the progress of forestry in New Zealand to the 1930s, the reader is left feeling that in some ways Phillips Turner regarded New Zealand, through having too much of a pioneer mentality, as lagging behind Japan. Phillips Turner battled hard behind the scenes for the establishment of State Forestry in New Zealand in 1916 to 1919. He went to the limits of what was acceptable for a public servant and expressed views in writing, of necessity early in the telephone age, which today would probably not be committed to paper. The bigger pictures of deforestation and environmental transformation of New Zealand from the late 19th to early 20th centuries are discussed in Pawson and Brooking (2002). Phillips Turner's career engages with some of their themes at the individual scale. The growing appreciation of forests, aesthetically, botanically and from a scientific forestry perspective and the struggles that were involved in successfully instituting State Forestry in New Zealand after two failed attempts in the 19th century are all embodied in Phillips Turner's career. He also exemplifies the degree of malleability and melding between differing concepts of forest preservation and forest conservation prior to the 1930s. Of particular interest however is the way in which Phillips Turner moved from an aesthetic to a utilitarian view of conservation and then to a more holistic perspective.

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