

Joshua Alban Cope

December 31, 1887 — August 26, 1950

Joshua Alban Cope, Professor of Forestry, and one of the nation's leading extension foresters, died Saturday, August 26, 1950. Professor Cope had been a member of the Cornell University Faculty for twenty-six years. His death occurred at "Spruce Top", his Christmas tree farm and summer camp on Blackman's Hill in the Town of Caroline. He was 62 years old. Professor Cope was born on December 31, 1887 at Hatsboro, Pa. Most of boyhood was spent on an island off the Massachusetts coast where he received his early education. After preparing for college at the Westtown School, he entered Haverford College in 1908 and from that institution was graduated with the Bachelor of Science degree in 1912. The same year he entered the Yale School of Forestry and in 1914 was graduated with the degree Master of Forestry.

After completing his forestry training he entered the United States Forest Service and spent two years working with that organization in Montana. In 1916 he returned to the Westtown School, and for two years taught there. In 1918 he entered the service of the Department of Forestry of the State of Maryland as Assistant State Forester, and continued with that organization until the fall of 1924. While at Maryland his primary duties dealt with the organization of a system of forest fire protection, as well as extension and research work on the management of locally important timber types. He gave special attention to the management of loblolly pine, and was the author of a widely used bulletin on this subject. In September 1924, he came to Cornell as an Assistant Professor of Forestry to take charge of the extension work in this field. Since that date he has been continuously with the College of Agriculture carrying on actively and vigorously his work as project leader in forestry extension. He was advanced to a full professorship in 1937.

Professor Cope's knowledge of and interest in forestry were broad, though he was especially interested in all fields of silviculture, wood preservation and maple sirup production. Noteworthy was his work in organizing with the late C. R. Pettis, formerly Superintendent of Lands and Forests of the State Conservation Department, the 4-H reforestation project which over the years has been instrumental in widening interest in forestry in the state. He was within this project responsible for organizing the annual 4-H forestry tour to the Adirondack Mountains, an activity which still continues. In 1947 he pioneered in starting at Spruce Top a 4-H forestry camp, the forerunner of the 4-H Conservation Camp that has for each of the past three years been held at the Arnot Forest. He was a leading authority in the Northeast in the field of maple sirup production and as a result of his studies and extension

work, the production of maple products in this state was increased greatly over the years. During his many years in the extension field he worked with hundreds of farmers in improving woodlands, starting new reforestation projects and in marketing woodland products.

Professor Cope was serious in all his professional responsibilities, taking an active part in local and regional meetings and in participating in matters dealing with state forestry policy. His publications were numerous. Not only did he prepare nine bulletins on various phases of forestry which were published by the College, but he contributed many articles to the Journal of Forestry, American Forests, and numerous farm journals.

Professor Cope was active in Boy Scouting and worked with the scouts in many of their projects. Prior to coming to Ithaca he had been a Scout Master at Baltimore for six years. He was a member of the local Troop 19 Committee from 1928 until 1933 and chairman from 1933 to 1941; also a Deputy Boy Scout Commissioner from 1926 to 1934 and Field Commissioner from 1932 to 1936. He was always prominent in the work of the Society of Friends.

During Professor Cope's residence at Cornell he was granted three sabbatical leaves. The first of these in 1932 was spent in the forests of Scandinavia and Central Europe. The second in 1942 was devoted to a study of the problems of farm forestry in eastern United States under the auspices of the Charles Lathrop Pack Forestry Foundation. As a result of this study he published his well known bulletin "Farm Forestry in Eastern United States" a study of methods used by public and private agencies to interest farmers in the proper management of their woodlands. This excellent publication has had wide distribution and use. His third sabbatical was in 1949. During this period he spent six months in Finland under the auspices of the American Friends Service Committee, working with the foresters of Finland. During the later part of his trip he lectured at Helsinki University. From that institution he was awarded a Certificate of Merit for service to Finnish Forestry, being the first American to receive such an award.

While at Haverford he was elected to Phi Beta Kappa. He was a member of the Society of American Foresters and numerous other professional organizations. Also he was a member of the honorary extension fraternity Epsilon Sigma Pi.

Surviving are his wife Mrs. Edith Cary Cope, two sons, Harold C. Cope of Richmond, Ind. and James B. Cope of Centerville, Ind., and a daughter Mrs. Mary Elizabeth Cope Probasco of Cambridge, Ind.

His special avocational interest was in the growing of Christmas trees on his property in the Caroline Hills. This project he carried on with signal success and his Christmas tree farm was a center for visits from many authorities

and groups of Christmas tree farmers from the Northeast. There was nothing that he enjoyed more than spending his spare time with his trees at Spruce Top. Professor Cope was an extraordinarily able and aggressive forester. Hard working, sincere and enthusiastic, he imparted his knowledge and enthusiasm for forestry to large numbers of farmers throughout the state as well as to great numbers of boys and girls.

C. H. Guise, R. R. Hoff, C. B. Raymond