

John Bentley, Jr.

Professor of Forest Engineering

June 8, 1880 — July 26, 1933

He was an able and stimulating teacher, beloved by his students and respected by his colleagues; a useful citizen. So may be summed up the life of John Bentley, Jr., Professor of Forest Engineering, whose death on July 26, 1933 terminated a span of more than twenty years of active, devoted, and loyal service to Cornell University and to education in forestry. It is impossible to measure Professor Bentley's influence, but it is certain that many foresters are today being guided by the force of his ideas and ideals. He had a clear, keen mind and a disciplined imagination. He played his part in the formative period of forestry in America. To Cornell University and to this community he contributed in many helpful ways. He will be missed by a wide circle of those who knew and loved him.

John Bentley, Jr. was born in Brooklyn, New York on June 8, 1880. In 1904 he was graduated from Wesleyan University, Middletown, Connecticut, with the degree Bachelor of Science, and in 1907 from Yale University with that of Master of Forestry. At Wesleyan he was awarded Phi Beta Kappa. At Yale he was elected to Sigma Xi.

Like many another graduate of the Yale Forest School of that time, Bentley soon joined the Federal Forest Service. For the next four years he was stationed in Colorado, serving in turn on several National Forests as Deputy Forest Supervisor, for much responsibility then rested on the shoulders of the younger men. He was one who helped to set the foundations. This experience gave him a background which was of great value to him in later years.

In January 1912. he came to Cornell, shortly after the reestablishment of forestry at this institution. In 1918 he was advanced to the rank of full professor. In his work in the Department of Forestry he contributed to all its activities, served faithfully on various college committees, and also bore his part in the affairs of the technical association of his profession, the Society of American Foresters. He wrote a number of bulletins in the College of Agriculture series and collaborated with two of his colleagues in a book, *Forest Management*, which is widely used in schools of forestry and by forest owners. During two of the World War years Professor Bentley, while on leave from Cornell, served as lecturer on lumbering at the Yale School of Forestry.

In civic activities Professor Bentley was never one to shirk responsibility. He served acceptably in local offices in the Village of Cayuga Heights and was active in movements for community betterment in Ithaca. But it was the teaching of students of professional forestry that lay nearest his heart. He had the happy faculty of quickly gaining the interest of his classes, and then by informal, comradely leadership, of drawing out latent abilities and guiding

these men skillfully in their preparation for their life work. On occasion he could be strict, for he was always actuated by high standards of accomplishment, to which he held himself rigidly. Professor Bentley's interest in the students did not, however, end with the classroom, nor with those in forestry. He was ever alert to lend a hand to any who needed encouragement or friendly counsel. Particularly was he concerned with those from other countries. For many years he was a faithful member of the Board of Directors of the Cornell University Religious Work.

By his ability as a teacher and by the sterling qualities of his character, John Bentley made a distinct place for himself in the life of Cornell University. His were substantial contributions. He will be gratefully remembered by his students, his colleagues, and the still wider circle of his other friends.

Source: Faculty Records, p. 1815 Resolutions of the Trustees and Faculty of Cornell University, November, Nineteen Hundred And Thirty-Three