

Reminiscences of the Ranger Class '30

BY FORESTER VICENTE AGCALOOS
District Forester Antique

This class is composed of 31 adventurous young men hailing from various sections of the country. Aside from being one of the last batches of all Belo Boys, Class 1930 represents the ranger class with the biggest number of ranger graduates.

With 30 Belo scholars and 2 private students, the class started in full swing with the opening of the summer class in botany in April 1928. At the end of the summer session the two private students qualified and became Belo scholars, too. But at the end of the first year one of the students fell by the wayside leaving 31 to finish the course.

The real grind commenced in June, 1928. Each student had to struggle hard throughout the school year, not only to maintain, at least, passing grades in all academic subjects, but also to submit himself to rigid discipline, toughen himself by waking up early each morning to scrub the floor and clean his quarters surroundings. Each Saturday was spent in tree planting or brushing the forest plantations in the school premises. Sunday was a rest day. Students were allowed to leave the school campus to attend Sunday services but they had to return and be in the students' quarters not later than 9 p.m. One must be alert and industrious to avoid being listed in the School's Blue Book which was kept by an oldtimer known for his physical stamina, proficiency in forestry activities which required brawn and brain, and strictness to students under his charge. For two whole school years, the students had to perform religiously such duties and other assignments as were given them by the school authorities. Any student failing to make passing grades on all subjects and could not stand the rigors of actual field work was given a warning to improve himself and if af-

ter two warnings he failed to improve himself he was immediately ordered to pack up and "beat it." This rigid training and strict discipline imposed upon the students made the pre-war Belo boys well prepared for the forestry service.

The summer of 1929 inured the students to field camping exercises for about thirty days in Mt. Banahaw, San Bartolome, Laguna. This was a training in forest surveys and reconnaissance under the supervision of the late Forester Antonio P. Racelis and Foresters Mamerto Sulit and Juan Versoza. The object was a reconnaissance of the Talahibin Block at the southeastern side of Mt. Banahaw, San Bartolome, Laguna. The students pitched camp on a site where there was a good water supply at the base of Mt. Banahaw. The party was divided into 5 groups of six students with a captain for each crew. The crews were given daily assignments to perform. Rain or shine, the students had to wake up early, "gobble up" breakfast and start working not later than 7 a.m., each day, and return to camp in the afternoon.

At Mt. Banahaw the students practised their knowledge of forest surveying by running actual strip surveys, sketching, contouring and timber estimating.

Each crew had to run strip surveys. At times the strip survey lines passed through perpendiculars, precipices, deep ravines and swollen streams. At one instance a student complained that he could not go on with his crew because of the rough topography aggravated by the succession of precipices to be traversed. The professor remarked: (Gee whiz), you cannot become a ranger; if the pigs can pass that way why can't you." Henceforth nobody complained anymore.

The Senior Class composed of 31 strong in spite of many obstacles successfully ended their two-year training with their graduation exercises on March 18, 1930. The next morning they were all appointed and sworn in as full-fledged rangers of the Bureau of Forestry. For the upbringing of this corps of 31 rangers, credit should go to the undying devotion to duty of Director Arthur F. Fischer, Foresters Carlos Sulit, Antonio P. Racelis, Doroteo Soriano, Porfirio San Buenaventure, Juan S. Versoza, Alberto Barros, Ricardo Buhay, Marmerto Sulit, Evaristo Tabat, Harold Cuzner and Mrs. Anne Pendleton.

After the lapse of about 27 years, 14 men in the Ranger Class of 1930 have remained thru thick and thin, in the forestry service; 7 had passed to the Great Beyond; 2 are holding responsible positions in the Bureau of Fisheries; 1 with the Bureau of Mines; 1 is a Lieutenant in the Philippine Army; 2 are holding key positions in private business firms; 1 is a practising lawyer; 1 doing private business by himself; and the whereabouts of 2 are unknown.

Of those remaining with the forestry service, 2 are District Foresters; some are forest supervisors, administrative officers, lumber graders, Chief of Land Classification parties, Officers in Charge of regular forest stations and reforestation projects.

Compliments of

RUFINO MALONJAO

SAWMILL OWNER

AND

LOG EXPORTER

Cotabato, Cotabato

Compliments of

Estaniel Lumber Enterprise

Cotabato, Cotabato

**Exporter * Importer
Contractor * Manufacturer
Concessionaire**

Exporter-Producer & Dealer

**PHILIPPINE MAHOGANY &
HARDWOOD LOGS AND
LUMBER**

**ANTONIO P. ESTANIEL
Gen. Manager & Proprietor**

Main Office:

**127 Sinsuat Avenue
Cotabato, Cotabato**

Manila Office:

**ESTANIEL BOOK STORE
288 Doroteo Jose
Sta. Cruz, Manila**

Compliments of

PLARIDEL LUMBER CO., INC.

Cotabato Branch

Cotabato, Cotabato

**Exporters * Importers
Concessionaires**

MANILA OFFICE:

**RM. 5, Metropolitan Theatre Bldg.
Plaza Lawton, Manila**

MAIN OFFICE:

**256-258 Uyanguren Street
Davao City**