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MEMORIAL ADDRESS

James Glenny Wilson, Of Bulls

L. J. WILD, Otaki.

JAMES Glenny Wilson was born on 29th November, 1849, at Hawick in the Border country of Scotland, where his father George Wilson, with his brothers and like their father before them, was engaged in the manufacture of woollens. James's decision in 1875, to settle in New Zealand was fortunate both for himself and the land of his adoption. It had been agreed that there was no place for him in the family business and he had gone out to Australia where his father had a partnership in a sheep station. The conditions of life there among well-to-do squatters making no demands on his ability and offering no scope for his energy, he went on what was planned as a holiday in New Zealand and found here a land of opportunity ready to avail itself of talent and initiative.

The youth had the natural endowments of an observant eye, an enquiring mind, and an appreciation of the beautiful in nature. His parents had provided the environment of a good home, pleasing schools, and a couple of years at Edinburgh University, as well as opportunities for the cultivation of music and field sports. He had had some business experience, some farming practice in the romantic Border country, and some travel in Scotland. Probably no better training could have been devised to fit him for useful participation in and the profitable enjoyment of colonial life, though such an object was never in mind. From Scottish progenitors he had inherited character and purposefulness, and three years on and about a sheep-run in Victoria, eating the bread of idleness, with no duties or responsibilities but ample opportunities for recreation and pleasures, brought to the young man of 23 a realisation that while paternal indulgence could amply satisfy the needs of the body it could in no way satisfy the claims of the spirit. "My life was pleasant, but it wasn't of much use," he has recorded of those days.

When Wilson settled in this country in 1873, agriculture was still in its infancy. The day of the run-holder was passing; that of the farmer had not arrived, though Grigg was beginning to make history at Longbeach in Canterbury. Refrigeration had not yet led to the export of meat in quantity; the dairy industry was yet unborn; artificial fertilisers had not yet been used, and top-dressing was still far in the future. In the evolutionary and revolutionary changes of the next half-century Wilson was a pioneer. In national and in local politics he took a full and usually a conspicuous part; but it was in giving unity and a voice to the growing body of farmers, in advocating more suitable forms of education for the recruits to the industry, and in pointing the way to the application of a growing body of scientific knowledge to the fuller understanding of soil fertility and plant growth that Wilson rendered to the country that signal service that was ultimately recognised by the honour of Knighthood, and unofficially by the title of the Father of Rural Education and the Patron of Agricultural Science in New Zealand.

That holiday in New Zealand in the first months of 1873, spent chiefly in the southern part of the South Island, brought him at length to Wellington and by this time he had decided that New Zealand would be a good country to settle in. Making enquiries of Messrs. W. and G. Turnbull he found there was soon to be a sale of land, the last unsold portion of the Rangitikei-Manawatu Block

bought by the Government from the Maoris in 1866. He went up the coast by coach, thoroughly disliked the accommodation at Foxton, was equally delighted with the hospitality of the Scotts at the Rangitikei crossing, and so on to Bulls where he met that pioneer settler James Bull. With a Government surveyor he rode over the land, fording the Rangitikei river to the South bank, thence across the country now occupied by his grandsons—Ormond, the late Quentin, and Hamish Jnr.—to Mt. Biggs; down the Mangaone South and West of the embryonic Feilding almost to Awahuri; thence back to Mt. Stewart and probably along the line of the present main highway, through the rising settlement of Sanson, and to Bulls. He liked the land; in fact he liked about 7000 acres of it. Did Mr. Turnbull think that if he bought the land his father would pay? Yes, certainly. Mr. Turnbull had done much business with his father in wool and knew him to be a wealthy man. Very well then. These were the sections he would like, and he pointed them out on the map. The sale would not be for a couple of months. Would Mr. Turnbull attend and bid for them, for he, Mr. Wilson, had important business in Melbourne. Mr. Turnbull did buy the land, a block of over 6000 acres stretching from the Rangitikei over Mt. Biggs down into the valley of the Mangaone. Unfortunately, as will presently be shown, but no doubt quite properly, the sale was registered in the name of the father, George Wilson. In the meantime James Glenny returned to Melbourne and presently married Miss Anne Adams, the daughter of a well-to-do run-holder, a lady of culture and charm, who was to be his help-mate and inspiration for 55 years.

It was in December, 1874, before Wilson with his bride came to live in a cottage in the township of Bulls, on a site where his home "Lethenty" was to be for the rest of their long lives. In the meantime he had sent Robert Linton, an employee of the Victorian run, to take possession of Ngaio Station (as it was named from a prominent grove of ngaio), to build a house for himself, and to buy stock. Today this area is subdivided into 15 or 16 farms where mixed farming secures high productivity. When Wilson arrived in 1874 it was a wide expanse of toe-toe and flax, with patches of manuka and fern, and open areas of native grasses and remnants of native bush in the gullies. But Wilson had courage and imagination. Events were to prove the need of both. Here is a diary entry of 25th April, 1874.

"How nice this place will look ten years hence if it gets justice. I fancy now that considering the ryegrass will be all over the place by that time it will carry 4 sheep to the acre—that is, if it is fenced well by subdivision fences. I imagine I see beautiful fat sheep quiet enough to let you walk past them without starting and rushing to the corner, feeding on lovely undulations covered with ryegrass and clover without a vestige of fern and toe-toe or flax to be seen. Strips of trees planted here and there adding to the picturesque. Shall I see that? I should say there is more chance of my doing so than of my not doing so; but there are many things that can happen in ten years."

Many things, indeed, were to happen. Here is a sentence from a letter of Mrs. Wilson to her father-in-law George Wilson, dated 2nd April, 1887.

"I have come to hate the very name of improvements." Wilson's plan for improvement was to cut the scrub, burn, plough, and then sow turnips, followed by oats, then down to grass. All this required capital, and the thought that there would be any drying-up of the stream that thus far had supplied all his wants never occurred to him. However, within a year of his settling down at Bulls, in the middle of 1875, disaster overtook him. The speculations of the Collie Brothers brought bankruptcy to his father who had placed too much trust in a partner. All his assets disappeared into the maw of the creditors, including Ngaio Station, still in the name of George Wilson.

James was able to redeem it from the creditors at a price double what had first been paid for it, and with a mortgage that was to burden him for many years to come. But it is of more than passing interest to record that such was the resiliency of trade in Scotland, and the business capacity of George Wilson and his elder sons, that within ten years all debts had been paid and the manufacture of woollens in Hawick was able to assist his son, the woolgrower in New Zealand, labouring heavily in the trough of the depression that followed the Vogel borrowing boom.

That phrase—"labouring heavily in the depression"—was a large part of the story of Ngaio for over 20 years. There was interest to find on the still unreduced mortgage, there was a young family to bring up and to educate, and always income to be applied to improvements, income that had to be used to do the work of capital development, income that had to be applied in the efforts to convert Ngaio—in Mrs. Wilson's phrase—"from a state of nature to a state of grace." Even after 20 years, improvement was very far from complete. Outlying sections of the run were in a worse state because sheep had spread the seeds of manuka that had thus far defeated all efforts at eradication; the Ngaio flock was still far short, only half of the reasonable expectation of 18,000

It is clear that 6000 acres of that class of land, scrub, fern and toe-toe—was too much for one owner to tackle without ample capital and the labour and equipment that capital provides, and without close personal supervision. It is equally clear, I think, that Wilson, temperamentally and physically, was not suited to the daily routine and the hard manual work required. Moreover, it was in the nature of things that a man of his education and character should be drawn into public life. For 15 years, from 1881 to 1896, he was a member of the House of Representatives, and also took a large part in local body work. Participation in politics, as his father in his letters often told him, was inconsistent with the proper management, still less the development of Ngaio; and besides politics there was polo, hunting, and various social activities of the country gentleman. The Wilsons lived a full life. They made in their day perhaps the best contribution they could make to the growing needs of the life of the rural community, for man does not live by bread alone, and it was good for farmers to be shown that while a round of toil from dawn to dark may be a useful life for the economic development of a country's resources, it is not the complete life for those on the land to which the resources of the country should be made to contribute. But when all has been said, the fact remains that Ngaio in these years got less than justice.

The trouble was that the chief product of Ngaio was, till after the turn of the century, mainly wool. The freezing industry had of course helped in providing a market for surplus fat sheep, but Ngaio was not able to export fat lambs till 1909. Wheat, oats and barley were grown in greater or less quantity but sold at prices that left little margin of profit above overhead and production costs. Wilson's hopes and prospects depended on wool. Now a glance at the Table below will show at once the instability of fortunes so based. The figures conveniently arrange themselves, so that it is not necessary to give them year by year.

Overall average value per lb. of wool exported: From figures supplied by Department of Agriculture from Official Year Books.

1875 to 1880	15.00d. falling to 9.99d.
1881 to 1886	10.39d. falling to 7.53d.
1887 to 1890	8.20d. rising to 8.93d.
1891 to 1895	8.58d. falling to 6.85d.
1896 to 1899	7.64d. falling to 6.46d.

These figures are for sales in New Zealand. Wilson sold in London but the prices he received would conform to the general run. Little wonder that he turned when he could to cash crops of grain.

But there is another and a larger question. Admitting that Wilson attained only partial success in the development of Ngaio, what contribution did his work make to the general development of farming in the North Island. There is a great deal to his credit. Without expert assistance of any kind, for there was no Department of Agriculture, he set about his improvement programme on sound lines; no better methods could be suggested today though the modern farmer has mechanical equipment and improved seeds and plants to work with. He pioneered draining in the Rangitikei; he probably was the first to import superphosphate into the North Island, and more certainly was the first to import basic slag into New Zealand. He introduced new grasses and fodder plants though not all proved of local value. He introduced the "Sparrowbill" oat which was soon widely grown, though now displaced. Though he himself did not evolve the most suitable type of flock ewe for his run, and in fact failed to recognise the significance of the Romney, he maintained high quality stud flocks of Lincolns and Shropshires, and the Shropshire elsewhere, and indeed later on Ngaio, was to prove a valuable aid in building up the fat lamb trade. He maintained pedigree Short-horn cattle and Clydesdale horses of quality which were an asset to the district. Above all, he made an intelligent study of nearly every aspect of his farming operations and was as receptive of the ideas of others as he was able and willing to communicate his own, as I shall presently show.

Wilson's father died in 1898. By 1900, partly by means of a bequest and partly by the sale of some sections, Ngaio was practically freed of debt. In the next few years, further sections amounting to some 2000 acres were also sold. By 1900, too, Wilson's three sons were of an age to take over most of the work and of the management of the station, so that their father had more leisure for taking part in an ever wider range of public life which was to engage more and more of his time and interest in the future.

The first 25 years of Wilson's life may be looked on, metaphorically, as the raising and transplanting of a tree. In the next 25 years that tree was to send its roots deep into the earth and to spread its branches aloft and draw nourishment from New Zealand soil and the free air above. Wilson grew in wisdom and knowledge, not only from his own farming observations and experience, but from reading and from a wide correspondence with workers in the extending field of agricultural science. Continuing with the metaphor, in the next 25 years—the first quarter of this century—the tree was to flower and yield an abundant harvest of fruit.

I shall deal only with Wilson's major activities, chiefly the Conference of A. and P. Associations, the Farmers' Union, the Board of Agriculture, and with his abiding interest—Rural Education.

Societies for the improvement of agriculture and in particular for the exhibition of livestock and machinery began to be formed in New Zealand as soon as farming was well established. An Auckland Association in 1943 was the first, Canterbury followed in 1859, Hawke's Bay in 1863 and Manawatu in 1866. An early attempt to form a Royal Agricultural Society of New Zealand was made in 1879 when a meeting of delegates of South Island associations was held in Oamaru "in the large coffee room of the Star and Garter Hotel." As befitting the place and the occasion some famous men were present: Thomas Brydone, John Grigg of Longbeach, John (later Sir John) Roberts, the Hon. Mr. (later Sir John) Hall, the Hon. Matthew Holmes (in the chair). It is recorded that when the necessary resolutions had been

carried the Chairman said: "It now remains with the various local societies throughout the Middle Island to bestir themselves and secure the necessary numbers to give the Royal Agricultural Society a living reality as, depend upon it, if this opportunity is let slip it will be years before another effort is made." Those were prophetic words. The depression of the 'eighties was already casting its shadow before, and the required 400 subscribers were not to be found, though it is equally certain that provincialism had something to do with the failure.

By 1892, however, associations were so well established throughout the country that it was thought worthwhile to convene a Colonial Conference of delegates for the discussion of matters of mutual concern. Politics were strictly avoided but measures for the improvement of the status of the industry and of methods of farming were freely discussed. This first Colonial Conference convened by the Canterbury Association set a pattern which was followed for about 20 years. After some discussion directed towards uniformity in the administration of shows, the Conference went on to consider remits on insect pests, noxious weeds, analysis of manures, the sheep tax, the appointment of veterinary surgeons, prohibition of importation of stock from Britain, sheep stealing, railway charges, sheep trucks, improvement of horses, the small bird nuisance, etc. All these and other subjects were to be threshed in years to come until the Government was persuaded to get done what was asked to be done, or, as in some cases, to show good reason why it should not be done. Two remits, however, deserve rather special mention: (1) that the establishment of a properly equipped expert Agricultural Department is urgently required; (2) that steps be taken to introduce elementary agricultural teaching into State schools.

Succeeding conferences were held in 1894 and in 1898, and thereafter biennially till 1913, when out of the Colonial Conference evolved the Dominion Council of Agriculture which met annually. Our Mr. Wilson, as a past President of the Manawatu Association (1887-88), attended nearly all the conferences, and in 1900 when his friend W. C. (later Sir Walter) Buchanan, M.H.R. of the Wairarapa was President he gave a long address on "Grasses with special reference to Permanent Pastures." At the Conference in 1905 Wilson was himself elected President and delivered an address entitled "What Science has done for the Farmer," in which he gave evidence of unusually wide reading in the fields of animal and plant breeding, soils, and manures. Many papers were read and discussed, but the great feature of this Conference was a large gathering at the Museum, including the Governor, the Chief Justice, members of Parliament and of the University, officials of Government Departments and teachers. The purpose of the meeting was to hear and discuss an address by Dr. Truby King on "Rural Education in Japan," and participants in the discussion included the Governor, the Chief Justice, the Inspector-General of Schools, Dr. Gilruth and many others. The discussion on ways and means of improving rural education was resumed next day. Before this conference closed Mr. Edwin Hall, then Secretary of the Auckland Association, was appointed Permanent Secretary, and so began for J. G. Wilson and Edwin Hall a period of over 20 years of fruitful work in the cause of agriculture and especially of agricultural education, which developed bonds of close friendship broken only by Hall's death in 1928.

Wilson was again President of the 1907 Conference and again special attention was focussed on the question of agricultural education. A feature, however, was the bringing in to read papers of most of the small band of scientists of the Department, including Aston, Kirk and Reakes. As yet there was no Journal of Agriculture, and the reading and later publication of these papers was valuable not

only for what the experts gave, but for what they received from a critical audience of practical farmers.

It is impossible in the time available to follow the Conference further. It was a real Farmers' Parliament and its deliberations were closely followed by Ministers of the Crown. It developed, as I have said, into the Dominion Council of Agriculture in 1913, and out of that emerged in 1924 the Royal Agricultural Society of New Zealand. But this I would say: that the Conference made a real contribution to the advancement of agriculture there can be no doubt at all. Under the inspiration of leading farmers, the public and the Government were kept continually in mind of the needs of agriculture for a new outlook on education, for research and experimental work in laboratory and field, and for the carrying of new ideas to the farmer on his own farm. It would be difficult, indeed, to bring to the credit of the Royal Agricultural Society such a volume of constructive effort in the last 25 years as was put forward by the Conference in the first 20 years of the century.

The Farmers' Union.

Union among farmers in New Zealand or elsewhere is a comparatively recent growth. The farmer is an individualist; he does not readily co-operate. But always there have been enthusiastic advocates of united effort, and always some supporters of the idea. The earliest to make any notable impact on farmer opinion in New Zealand was a Mr. Sam Brown of the Auckland Co-operative Society, whose advocacy aroused the interest of Mr. A. G. Glass, a farmer near Hokianga, and to him belongs the credit of being the founder of the N.Z. Farmers' Union. Mr. Glass was not altogether without honour in his own district, but it was Kaitiaki that first received the gospel with sufficient gladness to form, on 1st September, 1899, the first properly constituted Branch of the Union, with an entrance fee of 6d. and an annual subscription of 2/- payable in half-yearly instalments. The Union as a national organisation was brought into being at a National Conference in July, 1922, and J. G. Wilson of Bulls was unanimously elected President, an office to which he was re-elected unopposed in each of the next 20 years. Wilson was an ideal man for the office. He was acceptable to the large land-owners because he was of them and with them in most of their aims. But his interest in the industry was evident to all, as was also his sincere conviction that closer settlement of the land by an increasing number of substantially independent small farmers was the only road to further national progress and prosperity. He was widely recognised as a keen student of every branch of farming; though not himself engaged in dairying he was prime mover and first Chairman of the dairy factory in his own district. The "tactfulness, urbanity and sagacity of their esteemed President" so praised by Mr. Leadley in nominating him for re-election in 1908 were qualities that recommended him as much to the "cockie" as to the "squatter" and were as valuable in official deputations to Ministers of the Crown as in the more comfortable conferences of the Union.

The Union stood for the Freehold and were therefore opposed unofficially though not officially to the Liberal Party then in office; its satisfaction was considerable at the accession of the Reform Party in 1913. But time does not permit me to tell much of the story—of the establishment of an official paper and Wilson's stream of contribution thereto; of his informative annual addresses on the part the Union played in defeating the great waterfront strike in 1913; of the post-war problems of marketing. By 1920, Wilson being then in his 70th year, some of his once youthful disciples were becoming restless; they wanted what they called progress. Sir James—he had been knighted in 1915—saw the trend and wisely declined a further term of office as President.

The Board of Agriculture.

One of the first acts of the Massey Administration was to institute a Board of Agriculture. It is evidence of the Government's high opinion of the Conference of agricultural associations that of the twelve members of the Board four were appointed on recommendation of North Island associations, four by South Island associations and four by the Government. Almost as a matter of course Wilson was appointed Chairman, while J. C. N. Grigg was Vice-President. The Board's duties were defined as making recommendations to the Government in the whole field of agriculture, including agricultural education. The Bill setting up the Board was opposed by Sir Joseph Ward who said, in effect, that a Minister was in practice obliged to be guided by the advice of his Departmental officers, and that an Advisory Board would prove to be an expensive embarrassment. However, the Board started off full of hope, passed through a stage when its efforts were thwarted and its advice slighted, and ended under the axe of the Economy Commission in the slump of the nineteen-thirties, though the Act has never been repealed. Unfortunately for the Board, the war soon involved a Coalition Government and Massey relinquished the portfolio of Agriculture to W. D. S. Macdonald, who was a follower of Ward and not greatly enamoured of the Board.

The first job the Board tackled was to depose F. S. Pope, the head of the Department. It thought a man with scientific and practical experience was required and Pope had only clerical training though good administrative ability. However, the Board found it was not so easy as it expected, because of a fact, well recognised today, that while it may be difficult for a man to get a position in the public service, it is much more difficult to get him out once he is in. In this case it took three years, but at last Reakes was installed as Director-General With Pope as Assistant-Director.

Meanwhile there was a thorough inspection of the experimental farms, and a report recommending drastic changes, on which little immediate action was taken. A thorough cataloguing of noxious weeds was also made under Cockayne's direction with a view to determining the order of significance of them in different parts of the country and to devise a more satisfactory method of legislative attack. These matters, and the various remits from the Council of Agriculture, and the evergreen question of rural education occupied the Board fully at its monthly meetings, and Wilson most of the time in between.

When the war ended the problem of the disposal of primary produce assumed alarming proportions. Cool stores were full, ships were not lifting the meat, a new season was at hand, and the wartime agreement for purchase by Britain was ended and nothing had yet taken its place. Up to this time farmers generally had been well content to leave the Board to wrestle with problems of agricultural welfare. But now there came forward an astonishing number of public-spirited men (whose pockets were in some danger) anxious to come to the aid of their country with advice, and to push aside the Board of Agriculture that was perhaps the most competent body to give it. Mr. Massey was also worried; the wartime coalition had been dissolved, and his party had won the post-war election; but another election was looming ahead and the Government was losing ground. Under the pressure of producer interests the Board was rather unworthily thrust aside. The Farmers' Union also was beginning to ask why the Agricultural Associations instead of the Union had been having all the say in the nomination of members of the Board. However, so imposing was Wilson's personal standing that the Board survived and, as will presently be shown, was given in 1925 the important task of reporting on the whole system of agricultural education. Thereafter the work was largely routine till Wilson's death in 1929, after which the Board gradually faded into oblivion.

Rural Education.

Wilson's interest in rural education probably began when he was a cadet on a Scottish farm. Education was one of his chief interests in Parliament, and he was active in moves to bring about a number of reforms, such as centralisation of the inspectorate, a uniform salary scale for teachers, and others that came later—not in his time in Parliament. He constantly urged including agriculture in the curriculum of country schools. As far back as 1890 he urged that Crown lands be set aside in the North Island to endow a School of Agriculture. He advocated a scientific forestry policy. When he retired from Parliament in 1896, the conference of Agricultural Associations and later the Farmers' Union provided platforms from which he continued the advocacy of a better system of agricultural instruction in schools, the establishment of farm training schools, improved facilities at the University level, and, over 50 years ago, the training of veterinarians. He constantly advocated the testing of fertilisers and of new plant varieties, and himself secured the Department's co-operation in trials and experiments on a piece of land that he provided at Marton in 1911 and which is still in use as an experimental area. He encouraged his wealthy friend and collaborator Sir Walter Buchanan to endow a Chair of Agriculture at Victoria College, and himself endowed the Farmers' Union (Research) Scholarship tenable at Massey College.

The advent of the Massey Administration encouraged renewed activity. At this time the scheme in primary schools had assumed a satisfactory pattern. Post-primary schools were willing to move forward, and so was the Department of Agriculture, but qualified teachers were difficult to find. Lincoln College was giving little aid in this direction, and the complete lack of imagination and inspiration in that institution was the strongest influence in generating the demand for an agricultural college in the North Island. Wilson was assiduous in collecting information and advice on this question, and the Board of Agriculture was consulted by the University in connection with the report on Lincoln College which the University had commissioned A. E. V. Richardson of Melbourne to make. Two years later the Minister of Agriculture asked the Board to report on the whole question of agricultural education with a wide order of reference. This job occupied four months of travelling, visiting, hearing evidence, and writing. The problem was a difficult one. By this time there were professors at both Victoria College and Auckland. The Board had 6 South Island members to look after southern interests, and as a co-opted member from the University Senate it had Sir George Fowlds, who as an Auckland had certain ideas. I have the private notes made by Wilson as he was drafting the report. Here is an extract: "The present position is specially difficult; Canterbury, a special School of Agriculture without a Professor; Victoria College, with a Professor and 10 students but no School; Auckland, with a Professor and neither students nor School." The Board's recommendations were: One fully-equipped, fully-staffed residential college, centrally situated, to be established some day, but not till enough degree students were available; in the meantime, Victoria College to work in with new laboratories, etc. at Wallaceville, Auckland to have the co-operation of the Ruakura Farm Training College, Lincoln to have a grant for more accommodation, etc. However, before the Board's report was finished, the Reichel-Tate Royal Commission on University Education was at work. The Royal Commission was not troubled about local rivalries and jealousies. It did not form a high opinion of Lincoln. It recommended the pooling of resources and efforts of Auckland and Victoria, and that, thanks to the goodwill and guidance of the two professors, is what happened, and the result is the Massey Agricultural College. There were repercussions elsewhere, but that is not part of Wilson's story. There is time now only to

mention that Sir James became a member of the Council of the New College, and remained so till his death in 1929.

I should give a very incomplete picture of Sir James if I omitted his great human qualities, his wide sympathies and the great encouragement he gave to all those who served agriculture. I doubt if there was a single research worker in the first quarter of the century to whom he was not known personally or by correspondence. His unflinching courtesy, cheerfulness and consideration for others—it was said of him in his parliamentary career that he had many friends and no enemies, and even when his party was routed at the elections, he himself retained his seat. His love of sport—he played cricket for Wanganui in 1881 against the first Australian visiting team, and in 1882 for a Wellington team against A. Shaw's team of English professionals. He introduced polo to the Rangitikei, and in 1894 captained the Rangitikei team that won the Saville Cup. He was a keen huntsman and a follower of racing, sometimes as an owner; he played a good game of tennis until his declining years. He had deep feelings for his Church. He attended the services from the earliest days, and acted as organist till near the end of his life. Finally, his friends remember him for his homely virtues and for his kindness and courage.

His high courage and calm spirit remained with him to the end, and even as his last numbered days drew to a close, his thoughts continued to dwell on the satisfactions of a life he had so fully enjoyed, and he contemplated death with equanimity. His favourite Adam Lindsay Gordon was often quoted:

"I've had my share of pastime and I've had my share of toil
And life is short, the longest but a span;
I dare not now to tarry for the corn or for the oil
Or wine that maketh glad the heart of man."

Typical of his valedictory messages was one to a co-worker on the Hospital Board: "My dear friend, the hour of zero is approaching and I hope to be over the top in a few days. Thank you for your kindness and assistance. I am going with a great feeling of gratitude to Providence to have given me a long, peaceful and joyous life. Happily married for 55 years, and a family grown up around us. Good-bye, good luck, fight on."

Sir James Wilson died before the birth of the New Zealand Society of Animal Production; but I am sure that would be his message for you. Good luck, fight on.