

Obituary

Mr. N. H. Cooper



TO his colleagues, and to a very wide circle of friends, the death of Mr. Norman H. Cooper, at Heidelberg Repatriation Hospital on 24th July, brought a deep sense of personal loss. The late Mr. Cooper, who was 59 years of age, had been absent from his work on sick leave since late in April.

He was one of the pioneers connected with the construction

of the main transmission line between Yallourn and Melbourne and for the past 11 years had been engaged on the construction of transmission and distribution lines for the Electricity Supply Department outside the metropolitan area.

An ex-serviceman of the First World War, Mr. Cooper was at the outbreak of hostilities an instructor at an Officers' School of Military Engineering in Sydney and in March 1916 he became a member of the 12th Field Coy. (Engineers) serving with this unit in France and being promoted to commissioned rank.

He was also a member of the Rescue and Demolition Work Committee of the State Emergency Service for a year and was one of a committee which prepared the standard Rescue and Demolition Manual for the Commonwealth Government. Another of his interests was the organisation and training of various rescue and demolition squads throughout Victoria.

He joined the service of the Commission in November 1922 as a foreman on the construction staff and in November 1925 he became Officer-in-charge of Ringwood District. He remained with the Eastern Metropolitan Branch until appointed Assistant to the Construction Engineer, Distribution Division, E.S.D., in September 1937.

During World War II, Mr. Cooper supervised the construction of high voltage lines, urgently needed for defence purposes, in the Darwin and Townsville areas, his services being on loan to the Allied Works Council from August 1943 to September 1945.

The late Mr. Cooper took a keen interest in the affairs of the S.E.C.O.A. and was an ex-councillor of the Association. One who had been associated closely with him in his work described him as big of stature and big-hearted, an extremely competent officer, an excellent pal and one whose loyalty was unquestioned. He was, in his work, essentially a practical man and yet at the same time something of an idealist.

The attendance at the funeral at Springvale Crematorium on 26th July was an indication of the high esteem in which Mr. Cooper was held. The Commission was represented by the Chairman and the Secretary and a large gathering of officers, and many touching tributes were made during the three services — Church, Masonic and returned soldier — which were held.

Deepest sympathy in their bereavement is extended to Mrs. Cooper and two daughters, the younger of whom, Norma (Mrs. Roth Jones) was a member of the Commission's Publicity Branch prior to her marriage.

V A L E.

NORMAN H. COOPER.

The passing hence of Norman Cooper on July 24th shocked his very many friends and colleagues.

Norman Cooper combined the "elements which, strangely mixed, make a true man." He was a lover of home and the simple pleasures of life, and at the same time pursued typically "he-man" vocations. He was a champion footballer, representing Western Australia in the Australian Rules Carnival Games in N.S.W. His enlistment in the Permanent Corps, Australian Engineers, and appointment to the 35th Fortress Coy., Fremantle, at an early age gave rise to training which eminently fitted him for the real test of 1914-1918. He served throughout that Great War, engaging in the famous Western Front fields of France and Belgium, in the 12th Field Coy. Engineers, from 1916 to the end. It was in England earlier that he gained his Commission in the R.A.E. as Lieutenant.

The war over, Norman Cooper put himself on the look out for a really vigorous and useful job of work on which to apply his talents and his very first appointment by the Commission in November, 1922, was as Foreman on the main tower 132 kVA. transmission line from Yallourn to Melbourne. Later he became Senior Foreman on the Sugarloaf-Thomastown transmission line.

From 1926 to 1937 he filled the responsible position of Officer-in-Charge of the large Ringwood District of the Eastern Metropolitan Branch, E.S.D., thus being more free to cultivate his latent home and social instincts, and serving the immediate electricity supply needs of a large and appreciative community.

Returning, however, to his real forté—major construction—towards the end of 1937 he took up a position as Assistant to the Construction Engineer, Distribution Division, E.S.D., retaining it during the past 12 years.

The quality of his leadership and his immense knowledge of construction made him an obvious choice for loan to the Allied Works Council for two extensive periods in 1943-1945. In these tasks he performed most noteworthy feats of construction under the stress of urgency inherent in the war effort.

In the midst of his crowded job he made time to study, plan and work for the welfare of his fellows and readily took an active part in the affairs of the Sub-Branch.

Norman Cooper was a spinner of tales par excellence. His personality was impressive and his eloquence persuasive to the extent that his not being with us is the more incredible. He is missed in many circles—war veteran reunions, construction camps, the 10th floor canteen, the S.E.C.O.A. committee room, the Masonic meeting—where the memory of his fluent commentaries and audacious jests will cheer many a passing moment.

He, like Stevenson, "laid him down with a will."

A very large gathering of friends at the last ceremonies included representatives of the Commission, staff, ex-servicemen and Freemasons—fitting tribute to his sterling qualities and wide friendships.

To Mrs. Cooper and family sincere sympathy is extended.

OBITUARY

NORMAN COOPER

The death occurred on July 26 at the Heidelberg Military Hospital of Norman Cooper following an illness of several months.

Norm Cooper was well known in the Ringwood district where for 12 years he was manager of the Ringwood branch of the State Electricity Commission.

He was appointed at Ringwood in 1925 and in 1937 was transferred to the constructional staff and later with his wife and family took up residence in Balwyn.

While stationed in Ringwood he took a keen interest in public and sporting activities. He was a member of the Cricket Club and was a prolific run-getter. He delighted in boundary strokes. He was also an official and member of the tennis Club. In his earlier days he was a prominent league footballer. For some years he was a member of the Ringwood District Football Tribunal.

He was a good friend, a fine gentleman and one who was always ready to help in time of trouble.

Many of his friends will remember Norm for his good comradeship, his helping hand and his broad outlook.

Mrs. Cooper was keenly interested in welfare activities in Ringwood and was an official of the Children's Hospital Auxiliary.

To the bereaved family is extended deepest sympathy.

The remains were cremated at the Fawkner Crematorium on July 27.

OBITUARY

The passing of Norm, Cooper, Assistant Engineer (Construction), E.S.D., ex-digger (1st A.I.F.), ex-Councillor S.E.C.O.A., loved husband and father, and loyal friend and general companion to many in and outside the Association, leaves a gap in all these and other circles.

Only a few months ago Norm was full of the joy and zest of life, absorbed in his construction job, building high tension lines all over the State under difficult conditions, working for staff betterment, reading prodigiously on world politics, cultivating his garden, yet never too busy and certainly never too pre-occupied to pass on to his pals the latest gag or disreputable anecdote. Norm, in his conversations and stories combined some of the characteristics of Falstaff, the Abbe Coignard and a Paris gamin—particularly the Abbe. A great humanity motivated his realistic-cum-idealistic attitude to the world.

The funeral on Tuesday, 26th July, revealed the regard in which Norm was held by all his friends and colleagues. It was one of the largest there has been in the Commission, which was represented by the Chairman and Secretary and a large body of officers. At the Crematorium, touching tributes were paid in the three services, Church, Masonic and returned soldier.

Norm had served well in many spheres, and in all of them he will be remembered with affection and respect.

R.W.