

Waimarino County Call
Tuesday June 1, 1948

Ringling Down the Curtain.

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THIS issue of the "Waimarino County Call" is the last that will be published.

For 40 years this paper and its contemporaries have gathered and recorded reports of the day to day life of their communities and have endeavoured with some measure of success to further the interests of those communities. Through their channels and their stimulation of public activity individuals and isolated settlements have been welded into the civic unities of boroughs and counties and the lesser units of district self-government. As with all public services their very nature has made them easy butts to criticism, but being critical themselves as part of their public duty they have taken the criticism with the praise and continued their functions to the best of their ability and opportunity. But now the organisation of the communities they have served in good times and in bad has outgrown them.

When the "Ohakune Times" was founded in 1908 by Joseph Ivess, this district was bush-clad and isolated. In that year the Main Trunk railway line was completed and the founding of the first regular newspaper was a comparable step forward from the raw pioneering era to stable settlement with its economy based on the sawmilling industry. Mr Ivess disposed of his founding in the same year to Messrs Fryer and Jones who dissolved their association in the following year. It was a happy dissolution for Raetihi as Mr Fryer then founded the "Waimarino County Call" publishing from Raetihi. Both boroughs then had equal services and the two papers grew side by side becoming closely identified with the life of their respective towns and serving their common aims and divided interests.

The "Ohakune Times" changed hands in 1909 to Mr P. J. Dunn who continued as owner and editor until 1913 when Mr C. C. Nation bought the printing business and newspaper. Five years later Mr Nation bought also the "Waimarino County Call" establishment from Mr Fryer and operated the two newspapers. The district then, in 1918, was still largely devoted to sawmilling and had few settled farming areas and little access except by rail. The economic and social life was centred in the two towns created and living by their adjacent mills and timber areas.

On the death of Mr C. C. Nation in 1929, the Nation family's interest was continued by Mr L. W. Nation who founded the company of L. W. Nation, Limited, to acquire and continue the business. The depression years slowed the natural process of converting de timbered land to farming, but

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So the curtain must be rung down on two township publications which did their duty well but which have been outgrown by the communities they served. Their place will be taken by a publication which is being founded with district unity of town and country Waimarino as its fundamental policy and the aim which it will serve.

That aim is expressed first in the title which has been selected for the new newspaper—"Central District Press."

It will be carried further in the columns and content of the paper and by distribution over a far wider area than was contemplated by its predecessors. Whether it can achieve its aim and finally serve its communities by removing their grounds for calling themselves "the Cinderella district" is entirely in the hands of the residents both town and country. An equal service to both boroughs and recognition that these are dependent now for their existence on the farming community will determine its policy.

But the time for its full introduction will be in its first issue on Friday, June, 11, 1948.

This is the time for paying tribute to those men who under difficulties of transport, of isolation, of motive power, machinery and untrained labour produced newspapers regularly for 40 years no matter what the cost in personal sacrifice and effort. Who in all weather and at all hours faithfully discharged the duty they had undertaken of recording the fleeting moments that comprise the history of their communities and who above all that singularly distinguished themselves as a profession by their long record of service in public life to which each successive editor and proprietor gave himself. The impersonal black and white print of each issue is a cold record which does not reveal the characters and personalities of those who created it. To all of them as to all pioneers there is a tribute due of admiration and respect which words cannot discharge.

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The closing of these papers also marks the ending for one generation and one branch of the long and honourable association of the Nation family with printing and with newspapers. It is an association that is woven into the tradition of newspapers in England, Australia and New Zealand for more than 200 years. More than 100 years ago that family tradition was established in New Zealand by William Nation who founded the "Nelson Colonist," a paper which continued for 90 years until 1918. His son, William Charles Nation, left an even greater mark on the newspaper history of this country, founding newspapers at Christchurch, Blenheim, Greytown, Levin and Otaki and also being managing-editor of the "New Zealand Times." A leading spiritualist and a prolific writer he published more than 150 books and pamphlets. His son, Charles Cecil Nation devoted himself to the papers now ceasing publication which have been continued since his death by his son Lawrence Watty Nation. Because of that tradition and that association so long and honourable we are proud to retain the name L. W. Nation, Ltd., by the kind consent of Mr L. W. Nation, although his family is no longer represented in the ownership of the Company. We trust that we may step worthily in the path laid by the Nation family. To them, to all others who have been associated with the "Ohakune Times" and "Waimarino County Call" and to those publications we give the ancient words of parting

Ave atque Vale.
