



RAPHAEL ZON  
1944

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"Best Known Forester In The World"

Dr. Raphael Zon was born December 1, 1874, in Simbirsk, Russia; the son of Gabriel and Eugenia (Berliner) Zon. In 1903 he was married to Anna Puziriskaya of New York; he has one son, 2nd Lt. Henry Zon with the U. S. Army, and two grandchildren, Judith and David Zon, whose father, Dr. Leo Zon, died in December 1942. He came to the United States as a Russian immigrant in 1897, becoming a naturalized citizen in 1903.

His early education was received at the Classical Gymnasium (regular curriculum of classical institutions of Europe) in Simbirsk, Russia, matriculating in 1892 with degree of B.A.; Imperial University of Kazan (Russia), 1892-96, B.S., natural sciences, specializing in zoology and especially in comparative embryology; L'Universite Libre, Brussels, Belgium, and the University of London, 1897-98, studying natural sciences, political economy and philosophy. He received his professional degree of Forest Engineer (F.E.) from Cornell in 1901.

Dr. Zon has been in the Forest Service, U. S. Department of Agriculture, for over 43 years, being appointed a Student Assistant July 1, 1901 at a salary of \$300 per annum, and assistant to forest investigations in the East. In 1907 he was made Chief of the Office of Silvics, later Forest Investigations, and in 1920 was put in charge of special investigations in forest economics. He organized the first Federal Forest Experiment Stations in this country, and one additional station on State lands in cooperation with the State of Minnesota, the Cloquet Forest Experiment Station. When the Lake States Forest Experiment Station was established in 1923, covering the three States of Michigan, Wisconsin, and Minnesota, Dr. Zon was appointed Director with headquarters in St. Paul, with a staff of four technical men, Joseph Kittredge, Jr., J. A. Mitchell, Herman Grossman, and A. E. Wackerman, and one clerk, Mary A. Norton. Mr. Mitchell and Miss Norton are still with the Station in St. Paul.

Dr. Zon is a professor in the University of Minnesota; a non-resident professor in the University of Wisconsin; a fellow in the Society of Forestry and the American Association for the Advancement of Science; and was for many years Chairman of the Forestry Committee of the National Research

Council, American Vice-President of the sub-commission on forest soils of the International Congress of Soil Science, and a member of the board of control of Botanical Abstracts.

Dr. Zon was connected with the American periodic forest literature continuously from its inception in 1902 until May 1928; first as a member of the editorial staff of the Forest Quarterly; then as the editor of the Proceedings of the Society of American Foresters, in 1905; and later as the editor of the amalgamated Forestry Quarterly and Proceedings -- the Journal of Forestry, resigning as editor-in-chief of the Journal of Forestry in May of 1928. He was editor of forestry and logging terms for Webster's New International Dictionary, author of the section on forests and forestry of the Encyclopaedia Britannica, and the article on forests for the Encyclopaedia of Social Sciences.

Dr. Zon pioneered in studies of the relation of forests, streamflow and flood control, his theories, -- principally set forth in his book, "Forests and Water in the Light of Scientific Investigation", -- being at first violently attacked, but now widely accepted.

He also played an important role in connection with President Franklin D. Roosevelt's shelterbelt planting program in the mid-west plains region in 1934. He was an enthusiast on the shelterbelts, helped plan the project and was put in charge of the technical phases of its development. Here again he saw early criticism turn finally to widespread approval.

A man of wide and diversified interest throughout his career, Dr. Zon is the author of more than 200 scientific publications, many of which were translated into Russian, French, Japanese, and German. He was one of the founders and first managing editor of the Journal of Forestry, official organ of the Society of American Foresters. In 1940, in connection with the New York World's Fair, he was named one of the 600 foreign-born citizens who in the past 100 years were judged to have made the most notable contributions to American democracy.

By his writings and by personal contact, Dr. Zon impressed a wide circle of readers and friends, both here and abroad, with his sympathy for the economically weaker groups and with his unflinching desire to make the forests of America a national instrument for bettering human opportunity and security.