companies and was a figure well known and respected at all gatherings of the forest industries.

Norman Dolamore's contribution to forestry was immeasurable, working as he did in an era of transition, when initiative, enthusiasm, and zeal were never needed more. He had all three in full measure; and many and varied are the projects that will bear his hall-mark long beyond his generation. A colourful and generous personality, quick to detect and condemn the specious or the pretentious, he inspired respect and affection in his associates; and in turn accorded them a fierce loyalty that brooked no shadow of detraction. He will never be forgotten by anyone who worked with him at all closely; nor could he be remembered in any but the kindliest recollection.

We extend our sympathy to Mrs. Dolamore and her son and daughter.

D.K.

RANGER A. W. WASTNEY

"Take him for all in all, I shall not look upon his like again."

—Hamlet.

A. W. Wastney died in March 1956 in his seventy-first year after a protracted illness. To at least a generation of foresters he was Dick Wastney; and without him, the Nelson/Marlborough Conservancy and its forests will never be quite the same again. Every forested country when it initiates a forest administration policy unearths the occasional natural forester who has evolved his own private discontent with existing forest practices. Such a one was Dick Wastney, and Nelson was the fortunate province that bred him and that drew the benefit of his services during the whole of his life. Born in 1885, he was one of the third generation that bore the name in the province after its founding; and there are three subsequent generations to carry it after him. By early youth he had acquired a mastery of most of the crafts and skills by which a rural livelihood was won from the coastal strip of fertile soil that borders Tasman Bay, and from the forests and the tussock uplands that stretch to the south and east. He was at home equally in commercial gardens, in hop gardens and orchards, and in bush and station camps. Axes and saws were his familiar tools; but secateurs and pruning and budding knives were not less familiar, nor were the requisite knives of the shepherd. His sports and hobbies were those of a rural community of an earlier age; and dogs and guns, birds and bees, flowers and plants of all sorts figured largely in them. It is not on record that he ever tried his hand at falconry; but in every other old time skill with birds of the countryside, he was adept.

Such was the man who was recruited to the infant N.Z. Forest
Service in 1921; and he brought with him the friendship and the respect of the whole local population of the day that made its livelihood in and around the two million acres of indigenous forest country which was now to be administered as State Forests. The Forest Service report of the time records that 42.7 per cent. of the land area of the district was State Forest; and that none of it was planted forest of exotic species. It followed therefore that no small part of the population depended on these forests: and Wastney's standing amongst them was one of the greatest invisible assets that the Service secured in those early days. Conflicts between the newly constituted authority and many of those who had acquired or assumed interests in the forests were inevitable, as they always are in that stage of a country's forestry. Wastney was the buffer that absorbed most of the shocks of conflict. By the forest inhabitants he was usually accepted as a just arbiter; and none will ever know how many of these shocks were deflected from the new and none too experienced central administration by nothing more than Wastney's reputation for experience, skill and fearless rectitude. Some few know that his acceptance as a reasoned and skilled thinker in such matters came less rapidly from belligerents in the administrative camp, when all his skill and tact could not avert open conflict. That did not daunt him in the least. He expressed his honest opinion as fearlessly (and as forcefully) to one side as to the other: and the prestige of the Forest Service was always enhanced by his words and his actions.

By 1926, he came under the influence of Dr. Cockayne, who at that time was engaged in his now classical survey of Nothofagus forests. He found in Wastney first a guide and then a coadjutor, whom he speedily recognised as without equal. Wastney had felled and hewn and split and sawn and burned beeches and beech forests from childhood; and had railed for years against the misuse and the non-use of both beech timber and beech-bearing land. Cockayne, as was his wont, asked questions. Brusque barrages of questions, couched in morphological and ecological terms, searching for differences that would give clues to the riddle of disputed species and suspected natural hybrids. For the whole now-accepted theory of natural occurrence of hybrids amongst wild plants was then barely accepted by orthodox botanists. Wastney knew nothing of morphology or of ecology as such; but he could virtually feel the matters at issue, through the edge of his axe. His extensive gardening and animal breeding knowledge enabled him quickly to appreciate the hybridism-in-wild-plants argument; and the whole of the jigsaw puzzle of beech timber qualities that had mystified him for years fell into position. He then led Cockayne vigorously and relentlessly from place to place where relevant and irrefutable evidence of specific and of hybrid qualities was to be found; and Cockayne was quick and generous to acknowledge his assistance and his discernment. Nor did the assistance stop at Nothofagus and its hybrids. Obscure plants that Wastney had
known for years as a bushman were located, and displayed, and accepted as hybrids. Hebe species by the dozen were grown in Wastney's garden; and their progeny isolated and re-grown. Wastney the forester speedily became that invaluable rarity, the dependable botanical collector. His reputation grew in this direction and no botanist of repute visited Nelson without calling on his services and accepting his local knowledge as authoritative. To him, however, such matters were pastime, always subordinate to his prime interest and duty of protecting and improving forests; and they were of value only as potential providers of clues to the riddles of forest regeneration and growth. His routine duties as senior ranger went on always under high pressure. He laid out sawmill areas, tallied timber, controlled fires, sleuthed opossum and other poachers; and in his later years of service, established restorative forests of exotic species in difficult country where decades of fires and of misdirected pastoral farming had spoiled land which he had known in his youth as forest land. There are but few of those who practise forestry who have so successfully mastered all phases of their craft, from seed collection and selection, to axemanship and timber use; and who could speak with the authority of practical knowledge in the field of exotic as well as of indigenous trees and timbers.

For not the least of Wastney's merits was that he had the gift of forceful exposition to as high a degree as he had the gift of accurate observation. He disseminated forest knowledge as widely as he practised forestry. In his later years this was recognised by many awards. In 1942, he was the recipient of the Loder Cup, an annual award made by the Ministry of Agriculture for excellence in the preservation and the cultivation of N.Z. plants. He was an elected Fellow of the Royal N.Z. Institute of Horticulture; and an Associate Member of the N.Z. Institute of Foresters. He was appointed in 1954 Associate Botanist of the Pelorus Scenic Reserve Board, which controls, under the Department of Lands, one of the extensive Scenic Reserves, in which he had done his earliest classical collecting with Cockayne. His active work for forests and forest plants thus continued to the last: and his influence will continue for many years to come.

He is survived by five sons and his widow; and it is fitting to record that to her, as to many foresters' wives, is due much of his practical success in garden, kennels and field. The foresters and the botanists who accepted and enjoyed her hospitality and invariable equanimity at all hours were innumerable; as were the outback farmers and sawmillers who sent long distance telephone calls at all hours with the perfect assurance that the forester's wife was a safer and more intelligible and patient transmitter of forest messages than any post office.

His ashes are scattered, as he wished, over the forest and the scrub of the Dun Mountain, near Nelson.

—C.M.S.