forests he knew so well as a young man. The areas thinned at Hanmer under Roche's direction twenty to thirty years ago are today a living monument to his confidence in sound forestry principles.

Hub Roche may not have ranked with the great in academic learning or technical brilliance; nor did he lay claim to these attributes. His outstanding characteristics were his humanism, his shrewd common sense, acquired the hard way, and his ability to lead people, especially the young, along sound lines without the led ever being aware of the process. He looked on the success of those in whose training he had a hand—and they were many—as a personal triumph; and many a figurative lame dog found the obstructing stile had somehow become an escalator as a result of Roche's kindly and practical assistance. Memories of Herbert Roche—forester, Samaritan, man—will always be recalled with respect and affection by his host of friends in all walks of life. May he rest in peace.

Throughout his career and to the last he had the untiring support and skilled devotion of his wife. To Mrs Roche, staunch friend to her husband's friends, we extend sincere sympathy in her bereavement.

—D.K.

C. O. SCRIVENS

Charles Owen Scrivens died in Reefton in the early hours of New Year's morning 1959. He had served with the Forest Service continuously from 1924 and was due to retire in 1959. He became an associate member of the Institute in 1945. It was particularly tragic that his death occurred just a few months before the Institute for the first time in its history was due to hold its annual meeting in his headquarters town, of which he was so proud and for which he had done so much to promote and to popularise the cause of forestry.

Scrivens was unique in the ranks of the Forest Rangers. He came to New Zealand in the 1920s after service with the Gloucestershire Regiment and the Tank Corps in its earliest days of 1916–17. He belonged to Forest of Dean country, where he had worked as a miner from early youth. On arrival in New Zealand he immediately found employment in the coal mines of Denniston. It was by the merest accident that during a visit to Nelson in 1924 he accepted a short temporary job with a tree-planting gang at Dumgree Forest, and from that day never left the Forest Service; nor did he ever miss a day from sickness until the onset of his fatal illness a few months before his death.

It is hard to describe his value as a forester and as a man in few words. To the writer, who knew him from his earliest forestry days, he always typified Merrie England. He was the carefree British soldier of the citizen army of 1915–18, with the single aberrancy that he had never developed (and could not have developed) the traditional soldier's "grouse". All work was pleasure to him; but his pleasure lay mostly in the complete physical and intellectual mastery of the task in
hand. In his earliest days at Dumgree, he invented the “game” of practising planting technique, dexterity, and speed as a military drill at the double! It was in the days of the 7 lb. triangular iron planting spade and Scrivens had his “track” laid out with pegs at a measured 8 feet. The complete rules now elude one, but the art of it was to take two paces and throw the spade in accurately and hard so that it sank to the hilt, and then to arrive with seedling in left hand as right re-grasped the spade and opened the spit—marks for distance, alignment, speed, and so on. In default of competitors (and there soon came to be many defaults) he would do a few practice lengths himself, and his speed and accuracy grew to be astonishing, for he was a magnificent natural athlete with remarkable muscular development and a true eye. He was, in his early days, a good sprinter and a wing-three-quarter of the hard-running forcing type. It so happened that he was one of the occasional English settlers who had played rugby football from childhood, and this was a factor in his ready acceptance in the New Zealand rural communities. Rugby and cricket were his games and he was no mean exponent of both, the ready banter with which he upheld British superiority being part of the sideplay in his conversations in all camps and quarters. From planting gangs he moved steadily through the whole gamut of tasks in field forestry and to each he gave the same seemingly jesting attention that he had early given to planting techniques; but of each he set himself to acquire complete manual mastery and mental understanding. His powers of unobtrusive observation were remarkable and incessantly exercised: as was his very retentive memory. From the forest officer’s point of view his qualities were unfailing reliability and promptitude together with the easy technical “finish” that he provided for all his work. In the course of time, after a long period in the formative stages of Golden Downs Forest, he moved as ranger to Reefton, a difficult station because of its demand for forest-plus-mining knowledge. Perhaps unconsciously in what could be called public-relations forestry he found his true metier. The pit-prop and mining-timber trade is a trap for many a field forester who is quite skilful and at home in other spheres. Scrivens was a man whom no “proppie” could hoodwink and whom no over-exacting forest specifications could dismay. He knew from early experience exactly what was required of timber underground and would just as cheerfully and competently inspect work there as he would examine logs at the loading bank. “Men’s lives are at stake” was his unanswerable reply to all criticism of his rejections of faulty props; “No pieces go from here if I wouldn’t go with them”. By the same token, groundless complaints by buyers met the fearless reply that he had passed the lots himself and that they were usable safely for such-and-such purposes (in the esoteric jargon of the miner). Protests and subterfuges died away in the district; and a distinct veer of public opinion in favour of forest replacement work was very soon quite perceptible. The beech forest with its ready natural regrowth and
splendid potential yield of prop timber from early thinnings fascinated him as it did many others; and he was quick to correlate it with the nursery and bare-ground afforestation work he had been pursuing before. The sceptical local workmen believed in him and accepted his enthusiasm. The young miner from the Forest of Dean finished his career as the accepted exponent and practitioner in Reefton of re-growth of red beech forest. It is a far cry and no unworthy career for a forester by his own unaided training and intelligent and industrious observation.

The pity was that he did not live to see at least another decade of growth on the young natural forests he had protected and the artificial ones he had introduced. For he had intended to retire in Reefton, where he found the easy friendly rural community that suited him and that he suited. From the time that the writer knew him, he never knew him to visit a city larger than Nelson. His spare and vacation time was all for his home with his wife and family. He left a widow and family of four, together with two grandchildren. They have the deep and sincere sympathy of his many friends in all walks of life.

C.M.S.