



WABE WIERINGA,
at his desk in the Rijksherbarium, Nonnensteeg 1,
taken by Mrs. R. R. Dieterle, August 1958.

WABE WIERINGA — IN MEMORIAM

13 December 1904—3 August 1965

It is with deep regret that I have to announce here the passing away of the Chief of the Technical Staff of the Rijksherbarium, WABE WIERINGA, at the age of 60 years.

Born at Rauwerd, in the north of the Netherlands, in the province of Friesland, he was a genuine Frisian, of the Nordic race, possessing its good qualities, tall, strong, honest, devoted to work, and diligent in organizing. Always ready for a joke or a laugh he was a most pleasant man to meet and to have on the staff, praised by his directors and scientific staff members and respected and trusted by his own personnel whom he would always shield and whose interests he would always keep at heart. I am very certain that the many visiting scientists he met in his long term of service will have a similar memory of his personality in soliciting his help with their work in our collections.

Wabe attended the secondary school at Leeuwarden which he finished in 1923. His elder brother worked at the Agricultural College at Wageningen. This induced him to go there and work as technical assistant with the professor of botany, Prof. J. Valckenier Suringar, and later with his successor, Prof. J. Jeswiet. The latter suggested him to go to Java and have a job in the Sugarcane Experiment Station at Pasuruan. He would have done this, but for the ardent wish of his mother he stayed in Holland.

December 1st, 1928, he came to the Rijksherbarium, where he became attached as amanuensis under the directorship of Dr. J. W. C. Goedhart, later under that of Prof. Dr. H. J. Lam. In proportion to the growth of the technical staff and growing responsibilities his position was raised; in 1948 he became technical assistant-A, in 1957 senior technical assistant, in 1959 chief technician.

This service was interrupted for two periods of three years, from July 1st 1949 to January 12, 1956, when he was loaned to the Indonesian Government to act as chief of the technical staff of the Herbarium Bogoriense at Bogor. This satisfied him immensely and his tolerant, pleasant personality was very much appreciated by the Indonesian personnel whom he trained in herbarium techniques. His zeal inspired the staff; he set to the large task of rehabilitating exchange and loans and arranging collections and thus provided great facilities to the Flora Malesiana project. He was also instrumental in cleaning a considerable part of the huge backlog of undivided collections by the distribution of duplicate specimens. He would have liked to prolong his work at Bogor, but the Rijksherbarium could no longer afford to permit this. His work with the duplicates at Bogor was fortunately continued in an honorary capacity by Mr. J. Schuurman for several years and later by the indefatigable Dr. A. J. Kostermans c.s. who wrote me recently that this work has now really been finished.

After his return to the Rijksherbarium in 1956, Wabe turned his full devotion to the work in our institute and he was eager to make improvements to facilitate work and adjust schemes. He greatly enjoyed participating in the planning for our present

new building. Early October 1964 when the transfer of herbarium and library started, he seemed less active and looked fairly suddenly rather tired and aged and by January, when the transfer was completed, walking became a great stress to him, so that he has hardly enjoyed occupying the fine room which he was to share with his right hand, Mr. A. K. Groenewegen, now his successor. He was several times in hospital, but largely at home where he enjoyed the frequent visits of staff members.

WIERINGA was a religious man; both in Holland and in Java he served as elder in the Protestant Church. He was also a very active member of the 'Frysk Selskip' of which he was for a long time a member of the General Board. In particular he was the spirit of the Frisian troupe and seems to have been an excellent amateur player.

For a long time he served on the board of the Society of Technical and Administrative personnel of the University.

After the war he was a member of the official committee for the screening of the technical and administrative staffs of Leyden University. One of the members of this committee, in his commemoration at the cemetery of Rhijnhof near Leyden mentioned the high esteem of this committee for Wabe's integrity and his tolerant and balanced opinion in that emotional postwar period, full of hate against wartime fellow travellers.

Wabe married in 1929 Miss Everdina Cornelia Mulder, by whom and their three children and grand-children he is survived.

The entire staff badly misses him and he will linger in our memory as a beloved and respected person, a wise man, who took things as they came and made the best of it, who always swiftly found ways and means to cope with situations, tenacious at times when found fit, who saw no merit in worries, a sunny and inspiring personality.

C. G. G. J. VAN STEENIS