

then looked outside Parliament for support. He encouraged Sanderson to widen his Kapiti campaign: a body pressing for protection for native birds was needed to counter the opposition from the sporting lobby and apathy elsewhere.

Sanderson took up the challenge. Initially he raised the idea with friends in the Forestry League and suggested that the league might extend its brief to include the protection of native birds. The Forestry League evidently declined this

proposal but did offer its cooperation and support for any new organisation which would press for the protection of native birds alongside its own work for the protection of native forests.

Thus, it was in this context of cooperating with the league that the new Native Bird Protection Society was proposed and established at the inaugural public meeting organised by Sanderson in March 1923.

Sanderson also proposed that Will Lawson's *Forest Magazine* should be used as the official journal of the new society as it had been earlier by the Forestry League. This did not eventuate, as shortly afterwards Lawson moved on to bigger things in Sydney, and the magazine folded. Sanderson and the Native Bird Protection Society did, however, retain his Post

Office box (number 631 – still used by the society), and soon began its own journal, initially entitled *Birds*.

For some years the Forestry League continued to assist the new society with financial and other support, but the society soon had much the stronger voice. Sanderson was its driving force and chief organiser. He built up a band of supporters and cultivated a network of contacts in newspapers throughout New Zealand. With their help he became a very effective publicist for the cause of conservation.

By the 1930s the society was relatively well established, while the Forestry League was declining. It lacked leadership after the death of its first president, Sir James Wilson, and it also lacked a clear focus because of its dual interests in production forestry and preservation of native forests. But the Native Bird Protection Society was already widening its area of concern and taking up the League's cause of native forests as well as birds. In October 1933 the Native Bird Protection Society changed the title of its journal from *Birds* to *Forest & Bird*. It is not clear whether there was any contact with the eccentrically aging H.G. Ell in Christchurch, but shortly after his death in 1934 the society went on to adopt the name of his earlier organisation. As the Forest and Bird Protection Society it has continued to flourish. ♦

*A poster produced by the society in the 1920s. Even though the name of the organisation was not formally changed until 1934, the connection between wildlife and its forest habitat was emphasised from the beginning.*

FOREST AND BIRD ARCHIVES



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Land clearance near Upper Hutt about 1870.