In preparation of this thesis, I am deeply indebted to my professor and guide, Dr. M. R. Chaudhuri, Prof., Department of Geography, Burdwan University. Dr. Chaudhuri has meticulously guided me in classifying the broad parameters of my study. He has tirelessly advised me about the specific area which I am required to cover and the authorities to be approached for the collection of relevant information and the procedure to be followed to collate them in proper perspective in order to give the thesis, a real body. I regard his guidance and supervision to be so effectual that I state with reverence that without his assistance, help and cooperation, it would have been impossible on my part to complete my thesis in its present form.

I express my sincere gratitude to Shri Subimal Roy, Conservator of Forest, Government of West Bengal for kindly helping me in collecting the data on the working of the forests and for arranging my trips to various forest areas in Dooars for the purpose of my field study.

I am very much grateful to Sri G. K. Dutta, Director General, National Atlas and Thematic Mapping Organisation, Govt. of India for kindly allowing me to use the restricted maps and the library facilities.

I take this opportunity to express my heart felt thanks to Central Bank of India- Lead Bank for the district, Forest Department, Govt. of West Bengal, Regional Transport Authority
of the district and The District Agriculture Office for their help and assistance in the collection of data and other information. I also acknowledge with gratitude the help I have received from the District Small Scale Industries Centre, Tea Association of India, Calcutta, and the Buxa Dooars Tea Co.(I) Ltd., both at their respective tea gardens in Dooars and Calcutta Head Office. I express my thanks to Shri Sudhangshu Choudhury, Superintendent, Buxa Group of gardens for his help and assistance.

My acknowledgements are also due to Shri Ashit Sen, Chairman, Jalpaiguri Municipality and to various other persons and departments I have visited during the course of my field work and also numerous friends, colleagues and acquaintances for their help and cooperation. I would like to be forgiven for not mentioning them by name.

I am indeed thankful to Shri A. K. Basu and Smt. Kalyani Basu of Kapstan Printers, Calcutta for their help and cooperation in printing the coverpage of my thesis and the other relevant printing parts of it.

I am also greatly indebted to my parents, Shri Prafulla Kumar Sinha and Smt. Roma Sinha for inspiring me from the beginning to conduct and continue with the research work till its completion. Their blessings have worked as a constant source of my incentive and inspiration.

I shall be failing in my duty if I don't put on record, my deep sense of appreciation for the contribution made by
Shri Chinmoy Bhadury, my husband who has untiringly helped me in preparing my thesis at its various stages, in arranging my frequent visits to different tea Estates in Dooars to carry on my field study and in facilitating me to have copious photographs covering the field operations, manufacturing process and the welfare activities of the tea Estates.

Sandhya Sinha (Mrs. Bhadury).