

Tree Farms System Launched in Alabama With Big Celebration

Governor Dixon Dedicates First Group of Alabama Tree Farms in Well-Attended Ceremonies at Brewton—President McGowin of Southern Pine Association Makes Address

MONTGOMERY, Ala., April 8.—Owners of Alabama forests and woodlands can now point with pride to a new force designed to further help Nature in keeping the forests perpetual.

Known as the "Alabama Tree Farm System," and sponsored by the Alabama State Chamber of Commerce, this new force for good forestry was formally dedicated on April 4 at Brewton, in the pine belt of the Southern part of the state. The ceremonies at Brewton were under the auspices of the Forestry Committee of the State Chamber of Commerce and were presided over by W. T. Neal, chairman of that committee and president of the T. R. Miller Mill Company of Brewton. During the next several weeks there will be other introductory meetings in other sections of Alabama, and there are indications that in coming months it will spread to many or all parts of the nation.

Formation of a somewhat similar "Tree Farm" system in New York State already is being undertaken by leading timberland owners, and the Alabama procedure also is being studied for possible adoption by woodland operators in Arkansas. Important "Tree Farm" areas have already been organized on the West Coast.

In Alabama the Tree Farm System, though sponsored by the State Chamber of Commerce, is working in close harmony with the State Department of Conservation and has adopted as its standard of good forestry the ideas which have been recommended by the Department's Forestry Division. These place emphasis upon fire protection, selective cutting, reforestation, and the dissemination of information about the program to owners of forestlands and to the public.

In the Brewton dedication, 25 persons or companies which State Forester Brooks Toler had found were already conforming to the state standards of sound forestry management, were presented with certificates by the State Chamber of Commerce and with "Tree Farm" signs to post on their land. The signs, two feet square, are painted in green and white and bear the name of the individual

owner, as well as the words "Tree Farm" in large letters, and the name of the Alabama Tree Farm System.

Some of the largest timber companies in the state were among those designated, but the majority of the list was made up of smaller individual operators. Emphasis upon the role of the small woodland owners in guaranteeing a perpetual basis for the forests in America is, in fact, one of the principal



Governor Frank M. Dixon emphasizes importance of proper use of Alabama's forest wealth, "our only renewable natural resource."

objectives of the Tree Farm System in Alabama, and was a principal topic in an address at Brewton by Earl McGowin, president of the Southern Pine Association, and one of the owners of the W. T. Smith Lumber Company of Chapman.

"It is not enough for the owners and operators of large forests to take the lead in good forestry practices," Mr. McGowin said. "To

make a conservation program effective, it is necessary for owners of small woodlands to be just as progressive as the larger owners."

Further, Mr. McGowin said:

Why the Lumber Industry Is Behind the Tree Farms Program

Prior to 1850, forests in Alabama were considered obstacles and had to be cleared away before civilization could advance. During the '50s, lumber manufacturers who had previously been operating in Virginia, Georgia and the Carolinas moved into Alabama and began buying timber lands in this and the other Pine regions of the state. From that time on, historians and economic writers have never failed to note the manufacture of lumber as one of the major enterprises in this state. Today there are nearly two thousand sawmills licensed to operate in Alabama and collectively they make this the principal lumber producing state of the South.

Defense and war needs for forest products have been proportionately greater than during the last World War. The primary need for ships, planes, tanks and other mechanized equipment has taken a large part of the metal supply, and construction, both light and heavy, has turned to wood and has found it an effective substitute and available in quantity. In the last year and a half, the Army and ordnance plants alone have bought well over three billion feet of lumber in addition to that used by the Navy, and for housing, for boxes, crating and hundreds of other purposes. Approximately 75 per cent of this lumber has come from the South, and Alabama has contributed a major share. It is significant that this enormous demand has been met with relatively few delays and has been accomplished on a purely voluntary basis, without any priorities, threats, restrictions or allocations. It is interesting to note that much of the lumber came from trees which have grown into saw-log size since the last World War.

Those of us who are manufacturers of lumber know better than anyone else that the attitude in the past has been to regard our industry as temporary. The question generally asked among sawmill neighbors until recently was "How many years do you have left?" That viewpoint has gradually been changing and today most of the mills owning substantial stands of timber are operating on a sustained yield basis, and now regard themselves as permanent institutions.

Despite that progress, however, we realize these operations are in the minority. With the development of the truck and tractor and the building of good roads all over the state, a new system of lumbering was evolved. No longer was it necessary to have a large tract of timber and to build a logging road into it to have a swamill. Any patch of trees was now accessible and new value was added to small forest areas and wood lots on farms all over the state. I estimate today that more than 80 per cent of the forest products in this state comes originally from farms and small independently owned lands.

It is not enough that a few land owners fol-



Alabama farmers listened intently to the preaching of the "Tree Farms" gospel.



Tree Farms Queens present certificates to Tree Farmers, W. T. Neal and E. N. McCall.



State Forester Brooks Toler explains essentials of forestry to a group of Boy Scouts, 4-H and FFA boys.

low good forest practices. If we are to survive as a major industry in the state, sound cutting practices must be followed on all forest lands and it is toward that objective that the "Tree Farms" system is dedicated. As I see it, the lumber manufacturer has a joint responsibility in the establishment of these practices. It is true that the ultimate responsibility rests on the landowner, and I would not want to change that for it is the very foundation of the private enterprise system. But I do say that manufacturers must assume part of the obligation and do what they can to see that the minimum cutting practices recommended by the State Department of Conservation are followed. I cannot speak for any individual, but insofar as the lumber industry is organized, I pledge our full support in perpetuating our forests.

Governor Dixon Endorses Movement

Principal speaker was Governor Frank M. Dixon, who gave his emphatic endorsement to the movement and told the crowd of several hundred forest owners and farmers that "there is almost no limit to the benefits which perpetual forestry can bring to the people of Alabama." Pledging the cooperation of the state administration to the Chamber of Commerce forestry enterprise, the Governor warned against dangers of what he called "regimentation from outside the state." He said the American people "always have done their work best when the responsibility for doing it right has been upon the individual."

Brooks Toler, speaking on behalf of the State Forestry Division, said his unit would give a hearty cooperation because "we feel it is another step in the progressive work which is being done by individual land owners throughout the state." He asserted there are already thousands of forest owners in Alabama who are now conforming to the forestry standards recommended by his division and expressed confidence that the spread of conservation practices of recent years will continue at an increasing pace with the added impetus provided by the Tree Farm System.

Among the nationally-known firms which received Tree Farm certificates recognizing good forestry practices in six counties of Southern Alabama were: The T. R. Miller Mill Co., of Brewton; Alger-Sullivan Lumber Co., Century, Fla.; Alabama Power Co., Birmingham; Southern Kraft Corporation, Mobile; W. T. Smith Lumber Co., Chapman; Vredenburgh Sawmill Co., Vredenburgh; Tennessee Coal, Iron and Railroad Co., Birmingham; and the Scotch Lumber Co., Fulton; together with a number of small individual owners of timbered lands. The first certificate was awarded to E. N. McCall of

Dixonville, who is practicing conservation on his 40 acres of wooded land.

The celebration at Brewton was in the nature of an all-day affair, featured by a big barbecue at noon following Governor Dixon's speech. In the forenoon, while the crowd was gathering, State Forester Brooks Toler escorted a group of Boy Scouts, 4H Club members and FFA boys on a forestry tour in the near-by pine forests, giving the boys a short talk on the elements of good forestry. The ceremonies opened at 11 A.M. with a flag-raising, accompanied by the strains of The Star-Spangled Banner.

Immediately following the flag-raising, Mr. Neal called the gathering to order and in a short talk explained the Tree Farms movement and its sponsorship by the State Chamber of Commerce. He then introduced W. A. Steadman, president of the State Chamber, who introduced the following speakers.

A feature of the celebration was the presence of two "Tree Farm Queens"—Miss Betty Brannan of Brewton and Miss Eloise Kelly of Montgomery, who assisted Mr. Steadman in the presentation of the official Tree Farm certificates and signs. Following the presentation of the certificates, John M. Ward, secretary of the State Chamber of Commerce, introduced a number of visitors. Cooperating with the State Chamber in the barbecue and program of entertainment was the Brewton Chamber of Commerce, of which Ernest Outlaw is president and Flournoy Lovelace secretary.

After the speaking and barbecue, a large part of the visitors were taken in busses on a trip to the timberlands of the T. R. Miller Mill Company. Here they had an opportunity to see the results of the company's selective logging practices, and also to inspect the company's plantations of more than a million planted pine trees.

Plywood Lifeboat

PORTLAND, Ore., April 8.—A plywood lifeboat, described as the first ever constructed of that material, was pronounced satisfactory today by Captain William Fisher of the Coast Guard.

Captain Fisher said the boat weighed only 1700 pounds and contained only 150 pounds of steel. The conventional lifeboat weighs around 2500 pounds and is nearly all steel.

The new boat was built by a Portland company.

Heavy Demand for Lumber Predicted

Lumber Survey Committee Sees Total Consumption of Thirty-five Billion Feet—Problem of Equipment

WASHINGTON, D. C., March 28.—The Lumber Survey Committee has submitted to the Department of Commerce its 43rd quarterly report on consumption, stocks, and anticipated consumption of lumber in the first quarter of 1942.

The Committee reports that the demand for lumber and timber products during 1942 is expected to continue at a high level, possibly exceeding 35 billion feet. The war effort will require an increasing volume of lumber. There will be a greater demand for special grades and sizes. Defense housing will consume an even greater volume of timber products. The demand for lumber for boxes and crating will greatly increase. These increased war demands for timber products are expected to more than offset the anticipated decline in civilian uses.

Substitution of lumber for metals and other critical materials is increasing. Timber products are now being widely used for purposes until recently restricted to other materials, and also for many entirely new purposes.

The installed producing capacities of the lumber and timber products industries, if they can be kept operating, are adequate to supply expected war needs and essential civilian requirements. Continued production of logs and lumber depends especially on the availability of heavy logging equipment and logging truck tires.

Further centralization and co-ordination among the war procurement agencies of lumber specifications and purchases will enable the lumber and timber products industries to furnish needed war supplies more effectively and to provide acceptable substitutes for critical materials urgently needed for fighting tools.

The Lumber Survey Committee consists of Thomas S. Holden, president, F. W. Dodge Corporation, New York; M. W. Stark, economist, Columbus, Ohio; Calvin Fentress, chairman, Baker Fentress and Co., Chicago, Ill.; and Wilson Compton, secretary and manager, National Lumber Manufacturers' Association, Chairman. Phillips A. Hayward, chief, Durable Goods and Materials Unit, Bureau of Foreign and Domestic Commerce, Department of Commerce, is secretary of the committee.

New Georgia Company

AUGUSTA, Ga., March 21.—The Empire Lumber Company has recently been organized and has taken over the old Graham-Lee Lumber Company's plant at Oliver, Ga., and will operate it in the future.

The new firm is composed of Edwin L. Douglass and C. C. Royal of Augusta, and J. D. Clarke of Oliver. Mr. Douglass and Mr. Royal are respectively president and secretary-treasurer of the Augusta Hardwood Company. Mr. Clarke will be in active charge of the operation at Oliver.

The plant consists of a band mill, with dry kilns and planing mill, and will continue as in the past, manufacturing pine, hardwoods and cypress.

Sales headquarters for the new firm will be at Oliver, Ga.

Honor for Fred Morgan

MOBILE, Ala., April 8.—Col. C. Fred Morgan, a member of the Mississippi Forestry Commission and the Mississippi Park Board, has been named by Gov. Paul Johnson as state director of civilian defense.

Mr. Morgan has been active in Mississippi's defense program, and recently completed a chemical warfare course in the East.