

The Editor, *Irish Forestry*

Re. Creating an archive of Irish forestry

Dear Sir,

Forestry, as a national effort, can trace its origins back to the Department of Agriculture and Technical Instruction when it established Avondale Forest, Rathdrum in Co. Wicklow as “Forest Number 1” and the training school for the fledgling Forest Service. Since then the foresters of the early Forestry Division and its successors, in both public and private forests, have established an estate that now covers eleven percent of the country and delivers many benefits to society.

Although their work can be seen in every district of the country, the story of the men and women who worked on this great national project is not widely known or appreciated. In the mid-century period “the forestry” employed thousands of people, often providing the only sustainable employment in remote areas where employment opportunities were limited. Some of this work was recorded in a series of photographs, dating back to the 1930s showing the people, the work practices, the machinery and the landscapes they transformed, and will now form the basis of a forestry collection to be digitised and made available through the National Folklore Collection.

With impetus from this collection of photographs, the National Folklore Collection, based in UCD, is now setting out to document and preserve an account of this effort by assembling and copying any surviving photographs, diaries or relevant correspondence of men and women involved in forestry in the past. We feel it is timely and important to record as many individual accounts of the challenges and work practices that led to the creation of the national forest estate.

If you wish to contribute documents, photographs, or if you would like your own personal memories of your own contribution to Ireland’s national forest estate to be recorded and preserved, please contact either of us.

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Yours faithfully,

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