

## Letter to the Editor

Dear Sir,

In this centenary year of the birth of James Joyce readers of *Irish Forestry* may be interested in the following short passage from *Finnegans Wake*, published in 1939.

'... sweet gum and manna ash redcedera which is so purvulent there as if there was howthorns in Curraghchasa which ought to look as plane as a lodgepole to anybody until we are introduced to that pinetacotta of Verney Rubeus where the deodarty is pinctured for us in a pure stand ...' (p. 160)

There are at least four references in these few lines to matters which are currently of interest to Irish foresters.

Curragh Chase, Co. Limerick, ancestral home of the two Aubrey de Veres, is at present being developed as a forest park and major amenity area by the Forest and Wildlife Service.

Lodgepole pine, as the common name for *Pinus contorta*, came into widespread use in the Republic of Ireland in 1975.

'Verney Rubeus' may be presumed to carry a reference to the poplar variety *vernirubens*, bred by Professor Augustine Henry in Dublin, together with *P. generosa*, the first two artificial forest tree hybrids ever to be produced.

'deodarty ... in a pure stand' must remind us of the rare pure stand of *Cedrus deodara* at Glengarra Forest, Co. Tipperary, and described by O. V. Mooney in *Irish Forestry*, 8 (1), 1951, pp.3-7. That account includes the statement that the species 'is not generally found naturally in pure stands'.

To show that Joyce's knowledge of forestry may have extended even to instruments and natural forest succession we also find (p. 235) 'The hypsometers of Mount Anville is held to be dying out of arthataxis but, praise send Larix U' Thule, the wych elm of Manelagh is still flourishing in the open, because its native of our nature and the seeds was sent by Fortune'.

Yours faithfully,  
Niall O Carroll,  
12 Mapas Road, Dalkey, Co. Dublin.

P.S. A passage from Joyce's *Ulysses* (1922), based almost entirely on the names of trees, was reprinted in *Irish Forestry*, 27 (1), 1970, p. 37.