

The Franklin Press and The Highlands Maconian peaks and ridges of 5,000 feet or THURSDAY, JULY 26, 1956 For all of its remoteness and

## Memorial Forest To 'Trees' Author Newly Accessible By Improved Road

tract of wilderness deep in the the thick branches overhead. In Fontana Village, largest resort in North Carolina mountain country, the spring, wildflowers and blos- North Carolina's Great Smoky is newly accessible by improved soming shrubs line the forest trails Mountains. Near the memorial motor road as it nears the 20th anniversary of its dedication as a memorial of the man who wrote foliage is like that through stanthe immortal poem "Trees."

The memorial forest, one of the turies ago, was dedicated on July 30, 1936, 18th anniversary of Sergeant Kilmer's death in France during World War I. It lies within Nantahala Forest, southwest of the Great Smoky Mountains National Park, and is preserved in its primitive and natural state. An improved motor road looping around Lake Santeetlah from Robbinsville, and Highway 129 is the approach route to the memorial forest. The short spur road from this route to the forest entrance was rebuilt last year. The spur road terminates in a cool glade where there is a parking and picnic area. From the glade, a marked hiking trail leads into the forest. Beside the trail stands a section of tree trunk bearing a plaque with Kilmer's poem "Trees" lettered on it. Further along the trail, beneath the glant trees in Poplar Cove, there is a bronze plaque bearing the inscription: Joyce Kilmer

165th Infantry—Rainbow Division Soldier and Poet Author of "Trees"

Born in New Brunswick, N. J.

December 6, 1886 Killed in action in France July 30, 1918

Movement for the memorial was initiated by the Veterans of Foreign Wars at their 1934 encampment, which petitioned the Federal Government to set aside a fitting area of trees to stand for all time as a living memorial to the soldier-poet.

Giant poplars, hemlocks, oaks sycamores, basswoods, beech, and other varieties of trees grow in the forest. Some of them are 80 inches in diameter and more than 150 feet tall. Native ferns mosses, flowers, and shrubs grow on the forest floor,

At any season, the forest gives visitors the feeling of exploring a true wilderness, becaue a fiveminute walk into it seems to take them miles from civilization and years back into history. It is very quiet in the forest, and always cool, even in mid-

Joyce Kilmer Sorest, a 3,800-acre only a little sun filters through and is less than 50 miles from ed glass windows.

pilgrimage to the memorial forest Some 20 miles marked hiking an annual attraction. Nearby is few remaining examples of the trails lead through the marvelous a lodge popular with sportsmen vast hardwood forests which cover. and varied vegetation, along cool who hunt bear and Russian wild ed the Southern Appalachians cen. streams, and up over the bold boar in the Santeetlah Wildlife summer. The light is dim, since Management area.

primeval beauty. Joyce Kilmer Memorial Forest is within an

hour's drive of lodges and motor

courts at Robbinsville and Tapoco.



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