

1,000 TREES PLANTED ON MIXED FARM

Parkes District Farmer Has Followed Sound Policy

By Our Special Representative

An excellent example of how trees can be used on a mixed farming property to provide windbreaks, shade and shelter for stock and to improve the surroundings of cultivation areas and homestead, is provided on the property of Mr. P. H. Symonds, at Coobang, in the Parkes district.

When Mr. Symonds took up a closer settlement block in the area more than 30 years ago, the land had all been cleared and there was only one tree left on the property. Mr. Symonds has carried out a judicious policy of tree-planting and now there are more than 1,000 different varieties of trees planted on his 926 acre holding.

Keenly interested in the tree-planting articles in "The Land" Sapper Earl Symonds, a son of Mr. P. H. Symonds, wrote to us from a battle-station in the north and suggested that "The Land" should visit his father's property and see what they had done to provide windbreaks, fodder in dry times, timber and to check soil erosion through the adoption of a sound tree-planting programme.

Came From Victoria

Mr. P. H. Symonds was originally a Victorian farmer in the Mallee. He was there during the disastrous 1902 drought, when thousands of acres were shown, but the crop never germinated.

Mr. Symonds left Victoria in 1907 for New South Wales. After sharefarming at Temora until 1913 he then took up a closer settlement purchase block of 398 acres, which was portion of the Coobang Station subdivision. Since then he has increased the holding to 926 acres.

When Mr. Symonds purchased the property at Coobang (about 10 miles from Parkes), it was just an area without fences or buildings of any kind. It had been cleared, however. In fact, only one tree remained.

Raised from Seedlings

Having known from his young days the useful purpose of trees, Mr. Symonds lost no time in re-planting, and more than 1,000 trees now on "The Gums" were raised from seedlings and planted by Mr. Symonds and his sons.

The varieties are sugar gums, peppers, blue gum, native pine, native red gum, white box and kurrajong. Some are shelter trees and others were planted for fodder and timber.

"The Gums" is a mixed farm in every sense of the word. In a season Mr. Symonds has had up to 500 acres of crop, but is now down to about 300. He has a sawmill plant with a 40-inch saw operated by a tractor, and a complete blacksmith's shop.

In addition to supplying Mr. Symonds own requirements the mill also cuts building timber for local farmers.

Livestock on the property include horses for farm work, sheep, a few head of cattle, pigs and poultry.

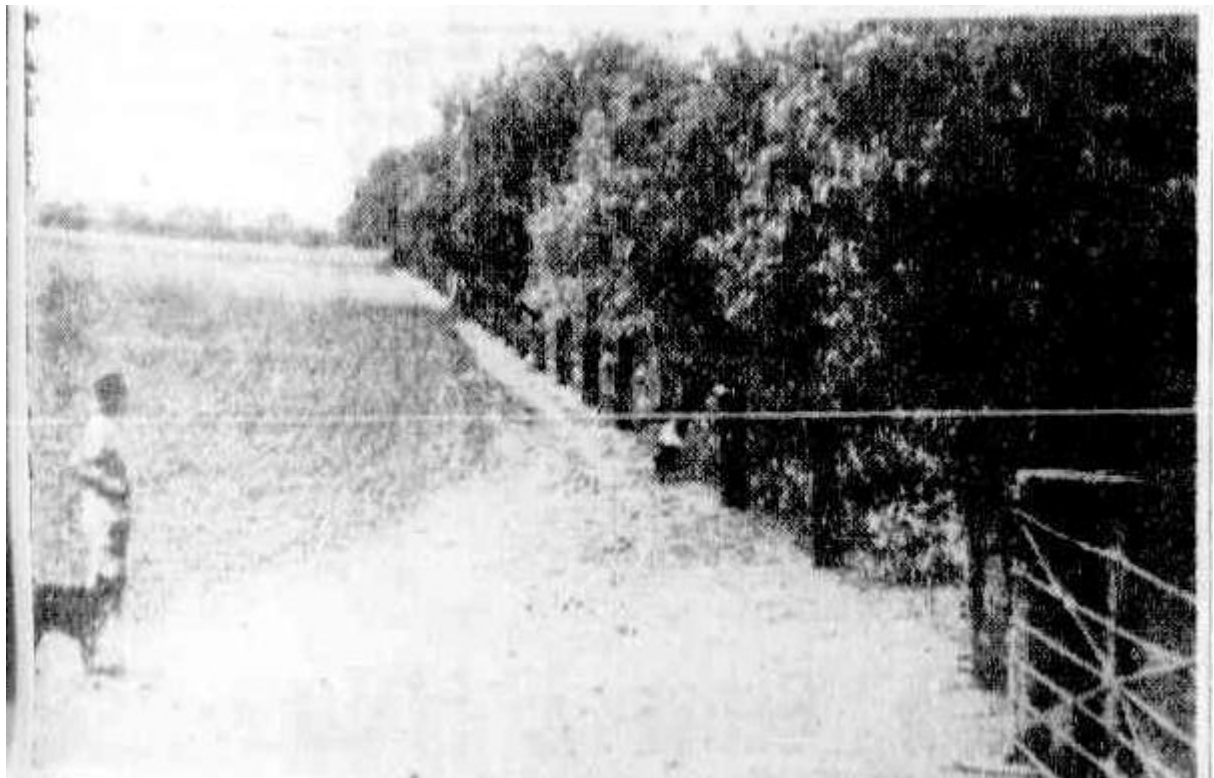
Mrs. Symonds and her two daughters, Merle and Vera, attend to the farmyard, stock, also the vegetable garden and orchard.

A 7,000 yard dam near the homestead is for stock and garden use. The dam has a pine tree screen around it, all planted by Mr. Symonds.

Two sons, Keith and Earl are in the Army, and another son, Roy, assists Mr. Symonds on the farm.

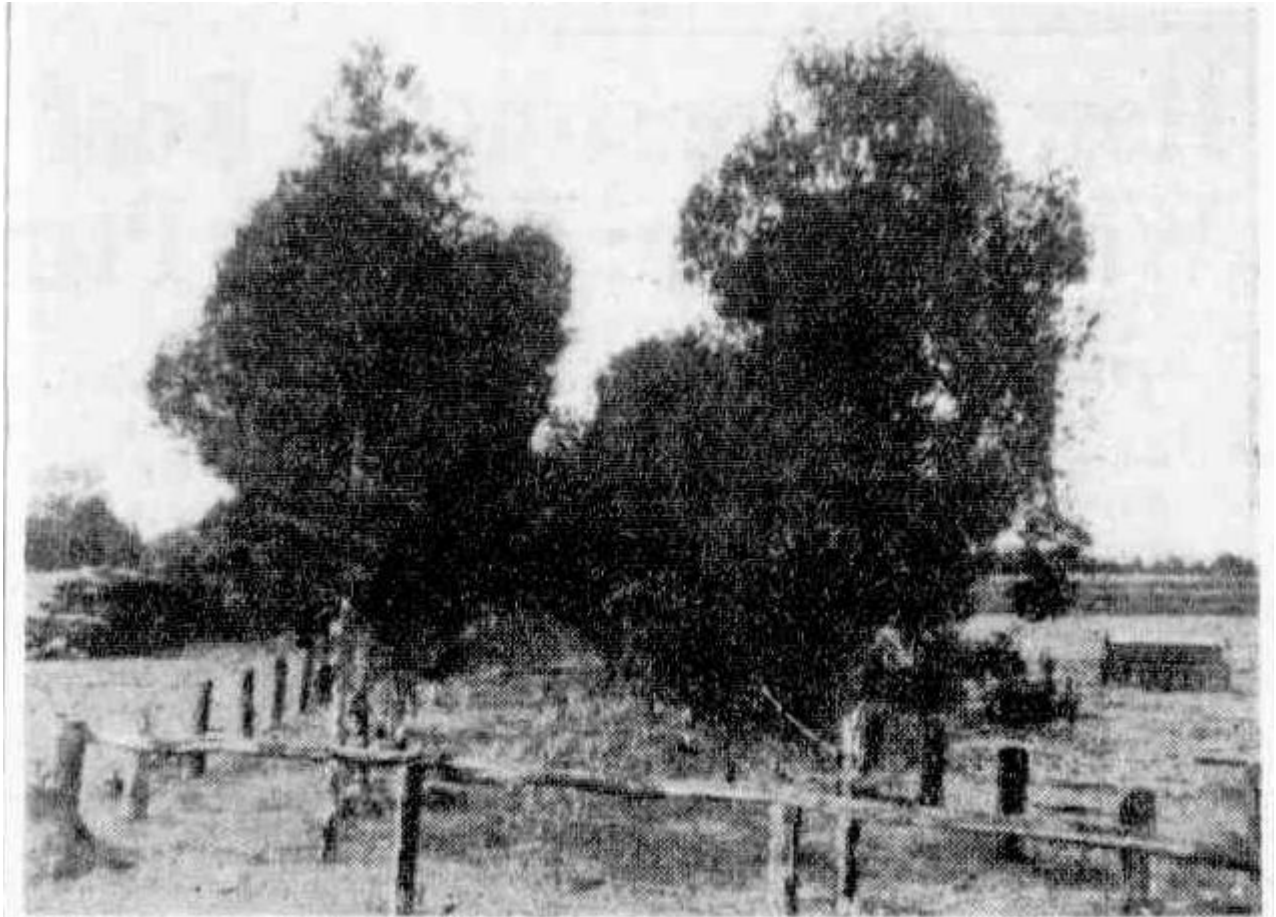
Last year they had a 16-bag crop of oats, a 14-bag crop of barley, and a 11-bag crop of wheat.

The present season, Mr. Symonds said recently was the worst he had experienced since 1907.





Trees are planted on all four sides of the homestead and farm buildings on the mixed farm of Mr. P. H. Symonds, Coobang. This view is from the east side showing sugar gums planted by Mr. Symonds about 28 years ago.



Double rows of trees are planted as windbreaks on "The Gums", Coobang. Here are two rows of sugar gums between a crop paddock and the homestead, forming a valuable protection against westerly winds.



Mr. P. H. Symonds, of "The Gums", Coobang, with his son, Roy, who assists the farming operations. Two other sons are serving in the military forces.

