

FORESTRY COMMISSION (SCOTLAND)

EAST CONSERVANCY

GLENLIVET FOREST

Visit of

The Royal Scottish Forestry Society

Aberdeen Region

29TH SEPTEMBER, 1961.

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DETAILS OF EXCURSION

1. Meet at Achlichnie plantation (P.54). Inspect Forest map and proposed excursion route.
2. Travel by Forestry Commission lorry to Coire-na-fuaraig section (P.62 and 63 areas) Inspect development of an area for afforestation, pre-planning of ground preparation, access road, fencing, compartment lay-out, burning for ploughing, ploughing, etc.
3. Return to Achlichnie and then by car through Glen Conglass to inspect plantations of the old Tomintoul Forest, adjoining the Tomintoul to Dufftown public road. Scots pine/Sitka spruce and P. contorta/Sitka spruce plantation, planted in 1948.

4. Continue by car to Tomnavoulin Wood. Brief inspection of remnant of Scots pine/European larch wood (planted 1855). Thereafter, by Forestry Commission lorry to inspect Nevie/Achorachen plantations (P54 and 55 - acquired wood planted in 1950) an example of afforestation and agricultural integration.
5. Return to Tomnavoulin, then by car to Cpt. 82 - Mullochhard, to inspect first thinning of Norway spruce planted on old agricultural ground in 1935. (Q.C.III - II(in parts) number of trees per acre in thinning - 250; thinning volume per acre - 430 c.ft; standing volume per acre after thinning - 1700 c.ft.by relascope - Forestry Commission Yield Tables).

GLENLIVET FOREST

The Forest consists of about seventy separate blocks of plantations, extending, in the North, from Upper Glen Rinnes, where the first ground for afforestation was acquired from Ballindalloch Estate in 1930, to the hills adjoining the Lecht road, some five miles South of Tomintoul village. In the West, parts of the Forest reach to the boundaries of Invernessshire, along Glenloch and Strathavon, and in the East, several plantations have been formed along the lower slopes of the Ladder Hills, and on the previously treeless Braes of Glenlivet.

The present area of Glenlivet Forest is:

Plantations	-	6,980 acs.
To be Planted	-	990 " *
Agricultural and Forest Workers Holdings	-	420 "
Unplantable	-	<u>300 "</u>
Total	-	8,690 acs.

- * This excludes about 2,000 acres of plantable ground in process of acquisition from the Crown Estate Commissioners.

The following age classes are represented:

Forestry Commission Plantations

0 - 5 years	-	1,915 acs.
6 - 10 "	-	2,600 "
11 - 20 "	-	1,050 "
21 - 31 "	-	880 "

Acquired Woods

0 - 30 years	-	160 acs.
31 - 40 "	-	25 "
41 - 60 "	-	20 "
61 - 80 "	-	145 "
81 -115 "	-	185 "

Total Forestry Commission Planted = 6,445 acs.

Total Acquired Woods = 535 "

Total = 6,980 acs.

These age class distributions indicate the rapid increase in the afforested area during the last eleven years. This development was made possible by a series of land acquisitions from the Crown Estate Commissioners which began in 1949, when about 1,500 acres were feued in the Tomintoul area and 1,100 acres adjoining the land which had been obtained from Ballindalloch Estate in 1930.

At that time there were two Forests, known as Tomintoul and Scootmore, but with the continuing acquisition of land from the Crown Estates, and the purchase of the Crown Estate's woodlands, Glenlivet Forest was formed in 1951.

Well-publicised difficulties were experienced in the early 1950's before a scheme of land utilization was developed, whereby the local Forest Officer and the tenant farmers discussed, and generally agreed, the allocation of ground for hill grazing and for forestry. This has resulted in the great variety of size and shape of our scattered plantations at Glenlivet, the largest being slightly greater than 1,000 acres and several of the smallest being less than 5 acres in area.

Geology & Soils

The underlying rock formations which are of the Highland Schist series are mainly black schists with quartzite outcrops and limestone seams. Rock outcrops are rare but the overlying drift is frequently formed from the parent material of the area. The soil varies greatly with site and parent material, being generally rich in some of the flatter well-watered basins, but degenerating to stone or rock on the steeper and higher slopes.

Typically, the soils are heathland with a thin surface layer of peat, overlying several inches of leached mineral soil above a layer of deposition. The formation of a definite hardpan is rare.

Climate

The average annual rainfall in the Glenlivet area is 37", but the important climatic factors are the hard Winters, with frequent periods of frost and prolonged snowfall and the severe exposure to winds experienced in nearly all planting sites.

Silvicultural Considerations

The main limiting factor to tree growth at Glenlivet is exposure to strong desiccating winds during the cold Winter months. This is particularly important as slightly more than 90% of our plantations are growing above the 1,000' contour.

The principal tree species now being used are Scots pine and Lodgepole pine (P. contorta), with some European and Hybrid larch and varying proportions of Sitka spruce wherever soil fertility and ground moisture conditions are adequate.

All areas are ploughed before planting, using the tine plough body on heathland and the Cuthbertson draining body where surface peat has accumulated to a depth greater than 15".

The Schlich spade is used for planting, and where necessary, because of site infertility, Ground Mineral Phosphate is applied at the rate of $1\frac{1}{2}$ cwts. per acre.

Thinning Production

The annual thinning production at Glenlivet Forest is now about 60,000 c.ft. This is unlikely to increase substantially until about 1970 when the big planting programmes of the 1950's will begin to produce thinnings.

It is anticipated that by 1970, thinning production at Glenlivet will have increased to about 90,000 c.ft. and by 1980 to approximately 200,000 c.ft. per year. This is based on an estimated Q.C.III to IV production for Scots pine and Quality Class IV to V for Sitka spruce (Forestry Commission Yield Tables)

Felling Production

Some of the older acquired woods have been felled as a consequence of the 1953 gale and subsequent annual fellings have been required in the older windblown and devastated plantations.

The present annual felling production varies from 10,000 to 20,000 c.ft. but it is not anticipated that fellings will produce substantial volume before 1980/1990, by which time some of the plantations, formed in the early 1930's, will require regeneration.

Forest Staff

- 1 Head Forester
- 2 Assistant Foresters
- 28 Forest Workers and Boys.