

338/51. East Scotland. 19/2/52 H.L.E.

BLACKHALL
(Kincardine)

Blackhall Forest, which was formed in 1941, occupies the side of an extensive tract of woodland which was cleared by the Canadian Forestry Corps during the 1939-45 War. It is situated on the south side of the Dee, between that river and the Feugh, One mile south-west of Banchory, and 20 miles west of Aberdeen. The approach is from Bridge of Dee along a private road which passes the policies of Blackhall Castle, now demolished, and then winds along the south bank of the River Dee, which here courses rapidly down its broad and stony bed. Above the river, which is 250 feet above sea level, the land rises steeply to Scolty Hill, 982 feet, and the Hill of Gouach, 1,100 feet. The rocks are granite, covered with stony drift. The replanting of the forests 2,143 acres began in 1941 and by 1951 extended to 1,573 acres. Twenty-five men are employed and twelve houses have been built, seven of which form a small community on the approach road. The conifers used in re-afforestation include Scots pine, Norway and Sitka spruces, European and Japanese larches, and Douglas fir. The nearest station and bus services are at Banchory. A fine view of the Blackhall Forest is obtained from the North Deeside road, west of that town. The monument on the summit of Scolty Hill, which is a prominent local landmark, commemorates General Burnett of Leys.

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D U R R I S

(Kincardine)

Durris Forest consist of 16 scattered blocks of woodland around Kirkton of Durris, a village on the south bank of the Dee 13 miles west of Aberdeen; Banchory is 5 miles further west and Stonehaven is 12 miles south-east. Messrs. Strachan's South Deeside bus service passes near most of the woods, and there are stations at Crathes and Park, each 2 miles away, north of the river. When this forest was acquired in 1931, it consisted mainly of cleared woodland, with a few standing woods, and some rough hill land; the whole lies on a series of slopes and ledges, on the north face of the Grampians, rising from 100 feet near the river to 1,245 feet on Cairn ~~Men~~^{men} Earn, above the Slug Road. The underlying rocks are of granite, covered with glacial drift. An outlying area of 162 acres, at Maryn^{cu}alter, was added in 1936. The various blocks extend for 10 miles west of that village; most are accessible from the main South Deeside road, or the Slug Road to Banchory. The forest's surroundings to the north are well-farmed valley lands, while to the south are heather moors.

Durris Forest occupies 3,842 acres; plantations, established mostly between 1932 and 1951, account for 3,510 acres, 49 acres will be planted shortly, and 283 acres of high ground are unplantable. Trees grown in these thriving young woodlands include Scots and lodgepole pines, European and Japanese larches, Norway and Sitka spruces, and Douglas fir. The older stands are already being thinned to provide pitwood, boxwood, and small sawmill timber, most of the trees being sold standing to timber merchants. Sixteen men are employed, and there are five houses. Close to the forest is a seed extraction station, where some 1,500 lb $\frac{1}{2}$ of seed are obtained each year from cones collected in various parts of Scotland.

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MIDMAR

(Aberdeen)

Midmar Forest stands on the northern slopes of the Hill of Fare (1,545 feet), a prominent landmark 15 miles west of Aberdeen. It dates from 1926, when 1,148 acres of hill land ~~was~~^{were} acquired from the Midmar Castle estate. Planting began in 1929, and was virtually complete by 1937. Subsequent extensions, mainly of cleared woodland, in 1948 and 1950, have brought its total area up to 1,340 acres. Of this, 672 acres carry plantations, 370 are in process of planting up, and 298 of high-lying land are unplantable. The woods lie mainly in the basin of the Gormack Burn, at elevations of 700 to 1,300 feet, on granitic rocks; they extend west on to the slopes of Craigour, 1,382 feet, and east over Greymore, 1,291 feet. Eight coniferous species of trees are represented, the more important being Scots pine, European larch, and Norway spruce. The older plantations, now being thinned, provide substantial quantities of fencing posts and pitwood. Ten men are employed and three houses have been built.

Midmar Forest lies just south of the Aberdeen-Tarland road, which has a bus service. Tarland is 16 miles west, Echt village 2 miles east; Banchory is 10 miles south (by road), and Alford 19 miles north-west; Tarphins, the nearest station, is 6 miles south-west. Midmar Castle was a stronghold of the Earl of Huntly, when fighting the forces of Mary Queen of Scots, who is said to have witnessed the Battle of Corrichie (A.D. 1562) from the Queen's Chair, a rough-hewn stone seat beside the modern forest.