

Glenbranter Forest

Glenbranter forest totals 8726 acres and is formed from part of the Glenbranter Estate, acquired from Sir Harry Lauder in 1921 and from Ballemenoach Farm, acquired in 1926. It is thus one of the oldest forests in the Conservancy, planting beginning in 1922. To date 3,443 acres have been planted and 138 acres remain to be planted. 2,300 acres are under thinning and the annual area thinned is in the region of 6-700 acres, giving a volume production of 250-300,000 H.ft.

A high proportion of the stands are of Sitka Spruce, with Norway Spruce as the main subsidiary. Areas of larch and other conifers are small. Productivity is very high and the stock quality good.

Rainfall averages approximately 95 ins. per annum and the forest is generally on deep soils derived from the underlying mica schists.

At present the staff is of three Foresters, three Assistant Foresters and over 100 workers. Among these workers are a proportion approx. 142 of contract workers, and there is in addition a great deal of ancillary employment by timber merchants, engineering.

The forest road programme is rapidly being completed and large areas of the forest have now been broken up by roads at 300 yard intervals. The side slopes are generally too great to permit the use of a tractor and, after extensive experiments with ropeways, it has been decided that the most economic method of extraction is by horse, over an controlled distance. It was the economic horse drag which decided the road spacing. There are at present 22 horses working in the forest of which 8 belong to the Forestry Commission.

17th February 1956

Loch Eck Forest

Loch Eck Forest was planted between 1926 and 1947 and, of the total area of 5,502 acres, now has 2,412 acres of plantations. It was formed from three sheep farms of Sir Harry Lauder's Glenbranter Estate and the plantable ground of the Inverchapel estate, acquired in 1935. Some 1,200 acres are under thinning and the annual programme is about 350 acres. Unit production is not so high here as on Glenbranter, over the greater part of the forest, due often to the comparative thinness of the soil.

Extraction has been a great problem on the forest but the Forestry Commission complement of eight horses have, together with the advance of the road programme, helped to reduce the difficulty. Thinning and drainage upkeep are done by contractors. The Forester and his Assistant Forester have a staff of some thirty men, in addition to the contract workers.

The steep rocky slopes are planted with a wide variety of species which helps to improve the amenity of this much visited part of the Argyll National Park. A 10% stocking of larch is well dispersed through the 45% of Sitka Spruce and 40% of Norway Spruce.

As in all Argyll, the forest utilization history begins with the coppicing of oak for smelting, on a 20 - 24 year rotation. That system survived on Loch Eck side within living memory for the production of tan bark. A relic may be seen in the stored stems underplanted with beech, by the road, south of Whistlefield Hotel. This block was thinned in 1955 in an effort to encourage girth production on the better oak and to permit more light to reach the young beech.

17th February 1956

Production and Utilisation in Cowal

As in many forest areas, maintenance work had fallen behind in the Cowal forests during the war. To these arrears was added an enormous amount of organisation and work as the forest requirements in labour and equipment were established for production. This new concept, which might otherwise have built up gradually, was established within the last four years and it is only now that the organisation begins to run smoothly and the plans are completed on schedule.

We have thus overcome our growing pains in Cowal and look forward confidently to an ever increasing smooth flow of produce from the forests. The figures given here reflect the heavy production, but also the arrears of thinnings and the check of utilisation as the extraction organisation struggled to keep up with the thinning programme.

Areas Thinned & Volume Felled :

Forest:	F.Y. 52		F.Y. 53		F.Y. 54		F.Y. 55	
	Area acs.	Vol. H.ft.	Area acs.	Vol. H.ft.	Area acs.	Vol. H.ft.	Area acs.	Vol. H.ft.
Glenbreanter	215	109,822	491	214,284	717	399,378	215	139,522
Loch Eck	128	35,968	388	102,441	446.5	126,224	139.5	40,708
Benmore	144	59,630	210	67,851	318	34,222	237	94,215
Glenfinart	65	10,437	316	42,868	430	52,570	536	97,279
Totals:	<u>552</u>	<u>215,857</u>	<u>1,405</u>	<u>427,444</u>	<u>1,911.5</u>	<u>612,394</u>	<u>1,127.5</u>	<u>371,724</u>

Figures for F.Y. 56 are expected to approach those of F.Y. 54.

There was a standing sale of 29,148 H.ft. at Glenbreanter in F.Y. 53 but since then utilization has been as under:

Forest/

Forest	Timber	F.Y. 53		Other	Timber	F.Y. 54		Timber	F.Y. 55		Other
		P.	Length			P.	Length		P.	Length	
Glenbranter	-	60,284	8,409	5,131	96,080	11,357	50,052	232,658	24,467	2,600	5,183
Loch Eck	-	22,232	-	-	55,344	3,904	-	73,500	5,183	11,590	43,840
Benmore	58,031	9,820	11,030	9,777	24,445	4,673	14,319	79,896	45,799	11,590	43,840
Glenfinart	-	13,835	503	-	19,862	633	6,511	45,799	11,590	43,840	43,840
Totals:	58,031	106,171	19,932	14,908	195,731	20,567	70,882	431,853	43,840	43,840	43,840

District Officer.

There is a further 1000 tons of timber in the Glenbranter Forest, which is being cut by the Glenbranter Forest Co. Ltd. and is being sold by the Glenbranter Forest Co. Ltd. at Glenbranter Forest.

ARDGARTAN FOREST

Thinning Production

F.Y.59		70M	cubic feet
F.Y.60		105M	" "
F.Y.61		105M	" "
F.Y.62		95M	" "
F.Y.63		138M	" "
F.Y.64		145M	" "

In F.Y.58 33M cubic feet were handled producing 28M cubic feet of pitwood and 5M cubic feet of logs.

In F.Ys. 59 and 60 the production of logs is in the region of 20M cubic feet or 20%, but this will rise to some 33.1/3% by 1964.

Roads

There are 30 miles of forest roads at present, with an annual programme of 3 miles for the next five years. Roading intensity of 1 mile per 80 acres approximately.

Caravan Park and Camping Grounds

During the past year the following numbers of persons availed themselves of the facilities. The current year figures are, of course, not complete but should exceed the 1958 figures.

Succoth Camping Ground	5,463	person	nights
Ardgartan Juvenile Camping Ground	1,620	"	"
Ardgartan Caravan Park	42,442	"	"

ARDGARTAN FOREST

The plantations immediately to the right at the top of the Rest-and-be-Thankful were formed in P.41 and lower down Glen Croe in P.40.

The patchy areas suffered damage by voles, sheep etc., but have now been made good.

This area is due for roading in F.Y.61.

Coming down Glen Croe the next plantations were formed in P.31, P.30 and P.29 and have been thinned twice. Extraction problems had to be faced at first thinning, cableways and chutes were used.

The first plantation met on the left-hand side of the main road is P.35 due to be thinned in F.Y.61, and the second block on the left hand was planted in P.34.

The thinning demonstration is in P.28 area.