

Forestry in the British Scene



Forestry Commission
ARCHIVE

Cover photograph: View over Dovey Forest, from above Evan's Bridge looking towards Corris, near Machynlleth, Merioneth.

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R. Lines took the lower view on page 13, M. Nimmo took the top right-hand picture on page 43, M. V. Laurie took the photograph on page 60 and G. G. Stewart that on page 68.

FORESTRY IN THE BRITISH SCENE



Looking up the Water of Ae from Greenhill, above Craigshiels, Forest of Ae, Dumfriesshire.

Forestry Commission Booklet No. 24

Forestry in the British Scene

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CONTENTS

Introduction	<i>page</i> 5
Western Mountains	<i>page</i> 7
The Border Type	<i>page</i> 15
The Drier Uplands	<i>page</i> 26
Upland Heaths	<i>page</i> 33
The Southern Heaths	<i>page</i> 37
Old Broadleaved Woodland	<i>page</i> 45
Chalk Downlands	<i>page</i> 53
Special Uses of Trees and Woodlands	<i>page</i> 60

INTRODUCTION

A recent Forestry Commission publication in this series, by the well-known landscape architect Sylvia Crowe (1), has dealt with the principles which govern the appearance of large-scale plantations in our countryside. This present booklet has no particular message, and its sole purpose is to depict forestry under a wide range of conditions in Britain.

The text and the captions to the photographs are kept to the shortest length necessary to offer an explanation of the diversity of forest scenery. No attempt has been made to classify land in any ordered scheme; indeed, the 'forest types' in this booklet may well shock the forester or ecologist, and all that is claimed for them is that they are convenient 'labels' for tracts of country which by reason of topography, geology, soils and climate, have some community of conditions so far as the forest is concerned.

An effort has been made to show how our principal forest trees fit into these forest types. A booklet in the same series as this, by H. L. Edlin, provides a most useful guide to identification(2).

As most people know, Britain is short of conifers, having only Scots pine, yew and the shrubby juniper as true natives. Hence much reliance is placed on 'exotics'. This is a much misunderstood term, and to many seems to imply 'not belonging'. To the forester however, it is merely a technical label, useful whilst he is gaining an understanding of the tree concerned, but not thereafter. The farmer, fortunate man, does not use the term at all, as everyone has forgotten when his crop plants came in—if they ever knew! To call anything as homely as a potato an exotic would sound very odd to most people. In fact there is much that is fortuitous in the distribution of plants on the earth's surface, and you can find conditions in Britain which are more suited to a tree from western North America than to a native species which happens to grow 50 miles away. Except in countries which are lucky enough to have a wealth of good marketable trees, interest in exotics is world-wide. Indeed, some trees—for example the Monterey pine and certain Australian eucalypts—are now of more importance abroad than in their native habitats. To some, the emphasis on conifers in modern forestry is distressing. This is no place to discuss forest policy or economics, but two points may be made. Firstly, although the Ice Age and our subsequent separation from the Continent left us short of conifers, most of the country belongs by latitude and climate in the great coniferous zone; and secondly, everywhere in the world the demand for softwoods (the product of conifers) is

increasing as against that for hardwoods (the product of broadleaved trees). The forester has little choice but to adapt himself to this situation. 'Uniformity' is another aspect of economic forestry which is frequently under attack. Whilst the uniform crop is often a logical aim, since the resulting timber is all more or less the same size and thus convenient for industry, nature imposes its own diversity through the depth and fertility of soils; topography and exposure; windblow; and all the things which may happen to trees in fifty years or so. As the photographs will show, no extensive area of forest retains any high degree of uniformity for long. In this, forestry is very different from agriculture. The farmer has much more control over his environment and can, under suitable conditions, produce very uniform crops. Curiously enough, when he does do so, we admire the result—and say what a good farmer he must be.

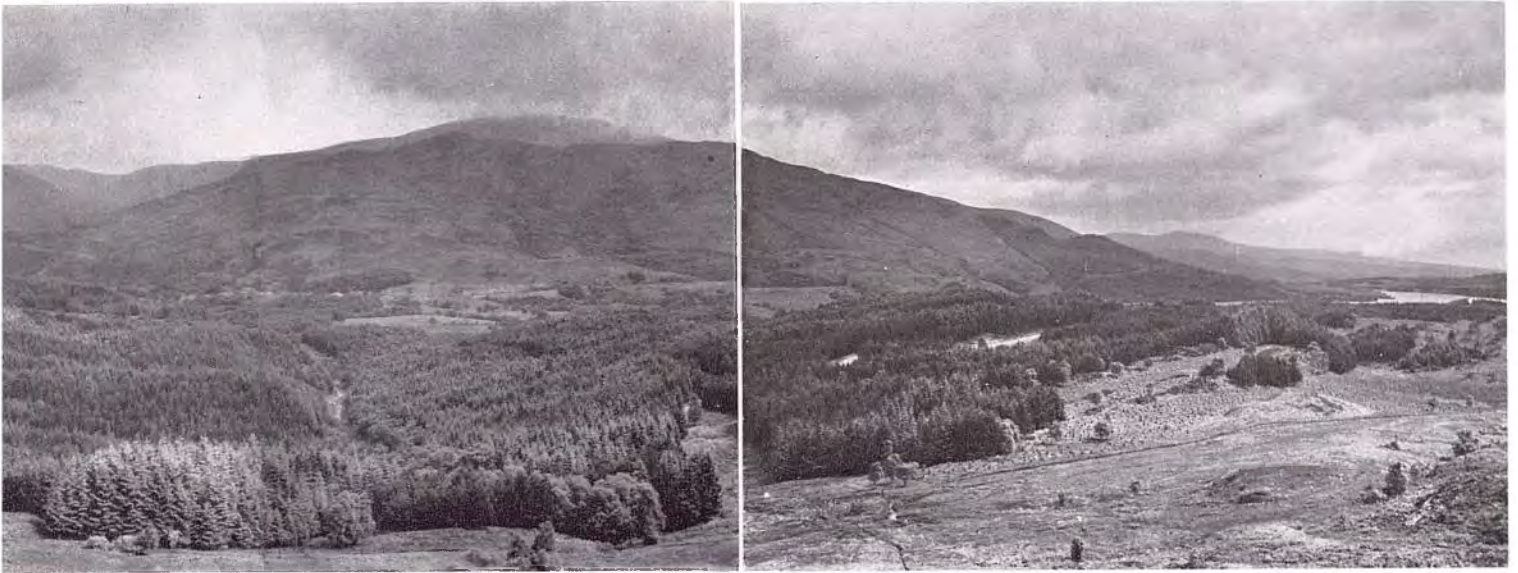
Scenery, however, is largely a matter of taste and habit of thought. The same person may admire the Black Forest in Germany but not Kielder Forest in Northumberland. Why? Perhaps the simplest explanation is that the former is thought to 'belong' whilst the latter is new and strange. Foresters in Britain are proud of their achievement, and hope that as the new forests become more familiar, they will be felt to 'belong' to our countryside also. This booklet may help people to see our forests in that light.

(1) Forestry Commission Booklet No. 18 *Forestry in the Landscape*, HMSO: 3s 6d net.

(2) Forestry Commission Booklet No. 15 *Know your Conifers*, HMSO: 5s od net.



Western Mountains



Queen Elizabeth Forest Park, Achray. A wide-angle view from west to east, through north. Taken from the Tom an t'-Seallaidh view-point over-looking the Duke's road, Loch Katrine can be glimpsed on the extreme left, whilst Loch Venachar can be clearly seen on the right. Ben Ledi, cloud-capped, is just right of centre.

The Trossachs provide an important recreational area for Edinburgh, Glasgow and the central industrial belt of Scotland. In this type of country, where mountain, water, and forest complement each other most effectively, it is desirable that plantations be kept well back from the road, as seen here.

WESTERN MOUNTAINS

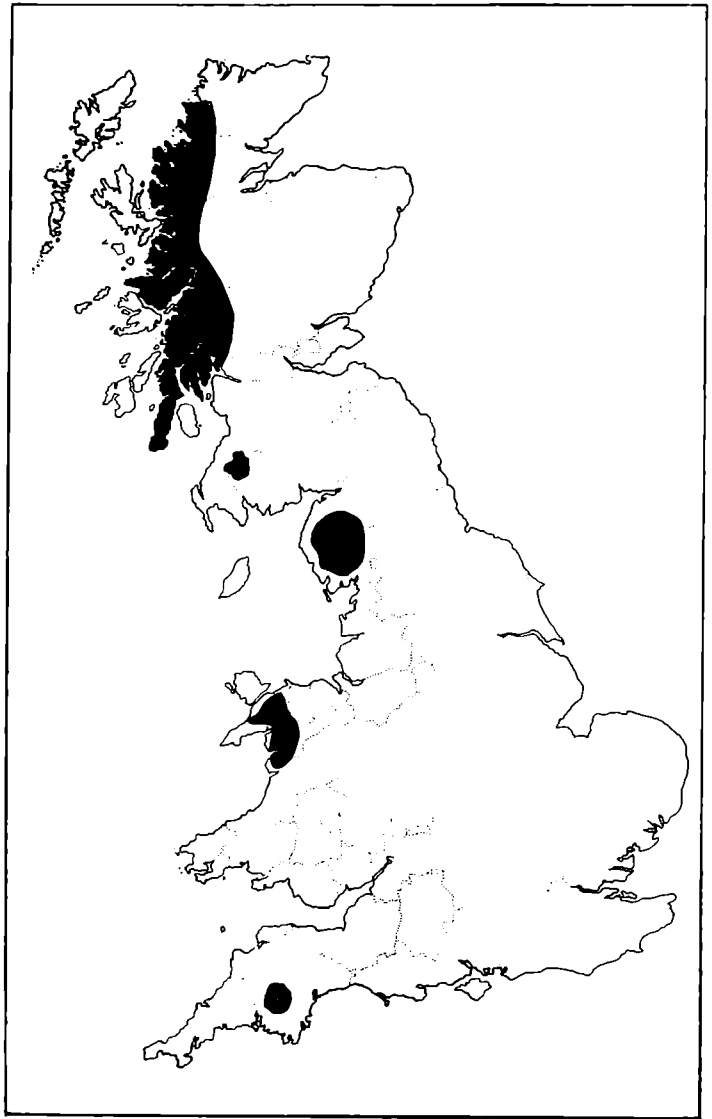
The mountainous areas of western Scotland, the Lake District, and northern Wales, have in common a very high rainfall. The rocks are usually 'old and hard' and the soil tends to be acid, shallow, and infertile. Deposits of peat become more extensive, and more frequent, the further north one goes.

Many of the western hills are very high by British standards, and rise well above the limits of satisfactory tree growth. Where there is little shelter from the west, exposure is of more importance than low temperature in fixing the level of the tree line.

Sitka spruce is the most important species in this region, and Lodgepole pine is useful on the poorer soils; but a wide range of conifers can be grown successfully where conditions are favourable.

right

Sitka spruce: Introduced from the Pacific coast of North America in 1831 by David Douglas, it is easily the most important afforestation tree in Britain. It is of special value throughout the moist and elevated westerly regions of the country, and has established itself as the preferred species for paper making in the wood-pulping industry.







above (left)

Western hemlock: Though an associate of Sitka spruce in the Pacific coastal forests, it has not been planted on such an extensive scale in this country. In part, this is because it is very difficult to establish on bare ground; but it is a high yielding species which may become of more importance in our forests when woodland conditions have been established.



above (right)

Lodgepole pine, another North-west America species. It is a valuable pioneer of the poorer soils, especially the infertile peats of the north and west.

right (above)

Llugwy Valley, Gwydyr Forest in the Snowdonia Forest Park: Coniferous plantations on the rocky slopes fit easily with the better agricultural land and broadleaved trees of the valleys.

right (below)

Penmachno, Machno Forest in Snowdonia, good agricultural land in the valley bottom with access to hill grazing on the unplantable land at high elevation.





above

Esthwaite Water below Grizedale Forest, Lake District: As the Lakes are an area of great natural beauty and are much frequented by holiday-makers, particular attention must be paid to the influence of forestry, and other forms of land use, on the scenery.

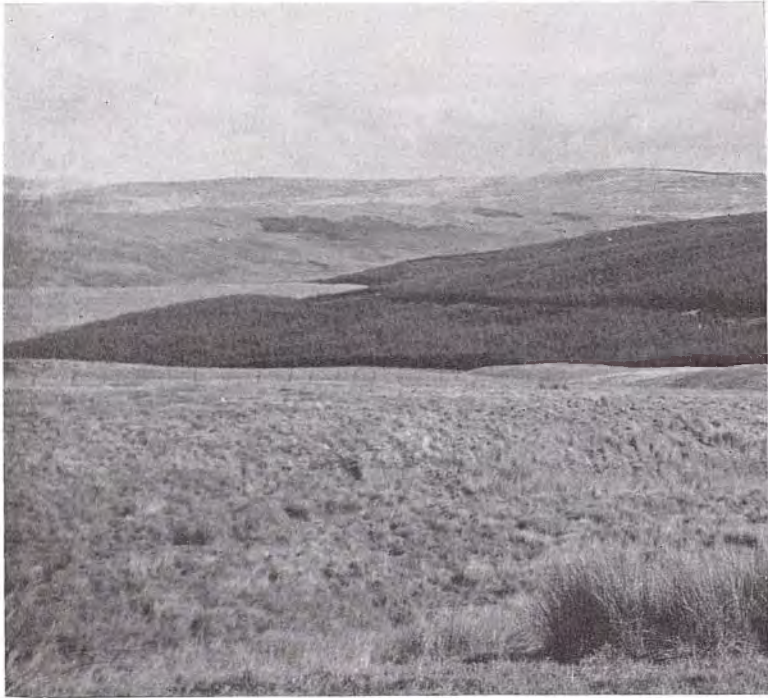
right (above)

Glen Affric: A remnant of the Caledonian pine forest fringing Loch Affric, with Sgurr na Lapaich in the background.

right (below)

Coulin, Wester Ross: Large old Scots pine of the Caledonian forest. Beinn Eithe and the Torridon Hills in the background.





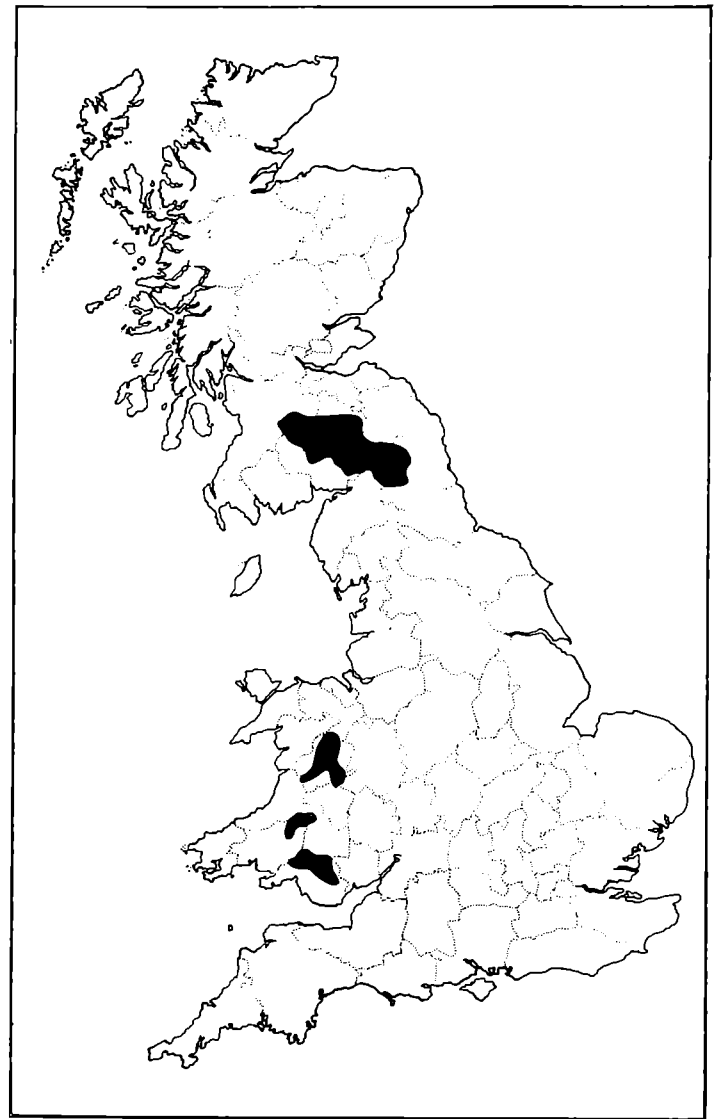
The Border Type



General view of the Forest of Ae, Dumfriesshire, looking south-east from Gilchristland Farm. The forest is typical of the work which the Forestry Commission has been doing in the Scottish borders. It was the first forest in Scotland to need a completely new village to house its workers. Before work started in 1927 most of the land was used for sheep grazing, and there was little woodland except for a few patches of oak and alder in some of the valleys.

THE BORDER TYPE

The term is used, for want of a better, to describe conditions similar to those on the Scottish border. Typically grassland, it is rolling country with rounded hills of no great height, much of it on shaley rocks of the Silurian and Carboniferous systems. The soils are usually rather clayey, derived from glacial drifts, and there is often a shallow layer of black friable peat derived from the *Molinia* grass. This type of country also occurs in Wales. It is distinctly moist, and this is one reason why a good deal of it has fallen out of sheep pasture. The forests are predominantly spruce. Drainage is of great importance and wind-throw is one of the principal hazards.



Sitka spruce is the most important species on this type of land. The photograph is of one of the pioneer plantations of Sitka spruce in the Borders. Established about 1850-55 at Wooplaw, Roxburghshire, the trees attained 110-115 feet in height at 100 years of age, with breast-height girths of about 112 ins.





above

Kielder Forest, Northumberland: Extensive spruce afforestation in the hill country of the North Tyne and its tributaries. Some 75,000 acres of plantations have been established in this general area.

right (above)

Mynnyd Ddu Forest, Brecon and Monmouth: Sitka spruce plantations at very high elevations (2,000 ft.) in the Black Mountains of south-central Wales.

right (below)

Castle O'er Forest, Dumfriesshire: Extensive spruce afforestation in the Southern Uplands. The photograph was taken from the ancient fort which gives the forest its name.





above

Eskdalemuir, Dumfriesshire: Typical hill country in the valley of the White Esk, near the well-known observatory. Note the common use of Norway spruce in shelter-belts for farms.

right

Norway spruce: This species ranks second to Sitka spruce in this type of country.





above

Coed Morgannwg, Glamorgan:
The Ogmore Valley in the South
Wales Coalfields. Afforestation in
this old industrial countryside
has covered many of the scars,
including some of the old colliery
spoil heaps.

right (above)

Kielder Forest, Northumberland:
Looking towards the Scottish
border, with Kielder Castle in
the older trees in the right centre.
Afforestation is carried up to
about 1,500 ft. and blankets many
of the lower ridges.

right (below)

Forest of Ae, Dumfriesshire: View
of the north-west corner of the
Gubhill section of the forest, over
Craigshiels bridge. Scots pine in
the foreground and, on the higher
slopes, Norway spruce and
Japanese larch.





The Drier Uplands



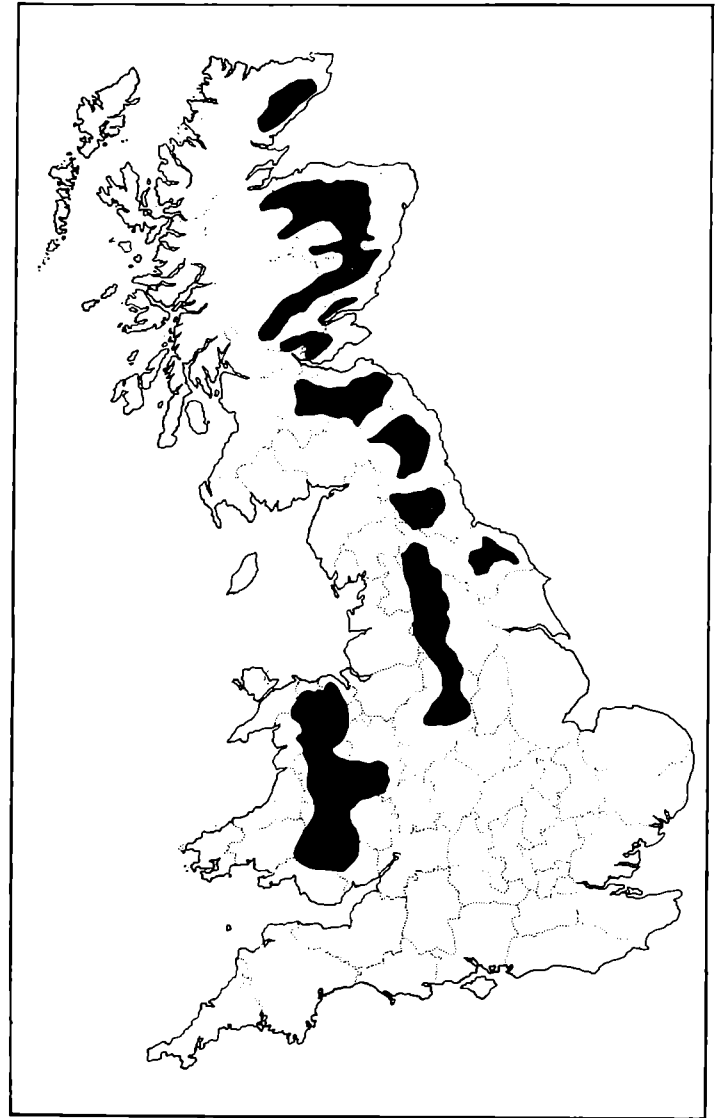
Glentress Forest, Peeblesshire, looking North: The river Tweed runs in the line of broadleaved trees across the centre of the picture. Caresman Hill (1,807 ft.) is the highest ground in the centre. Plantations are carried up to 1,700 ft., Douglas fir, spruces, larches and pines being the principal species.

THE DRIER UPLANDS

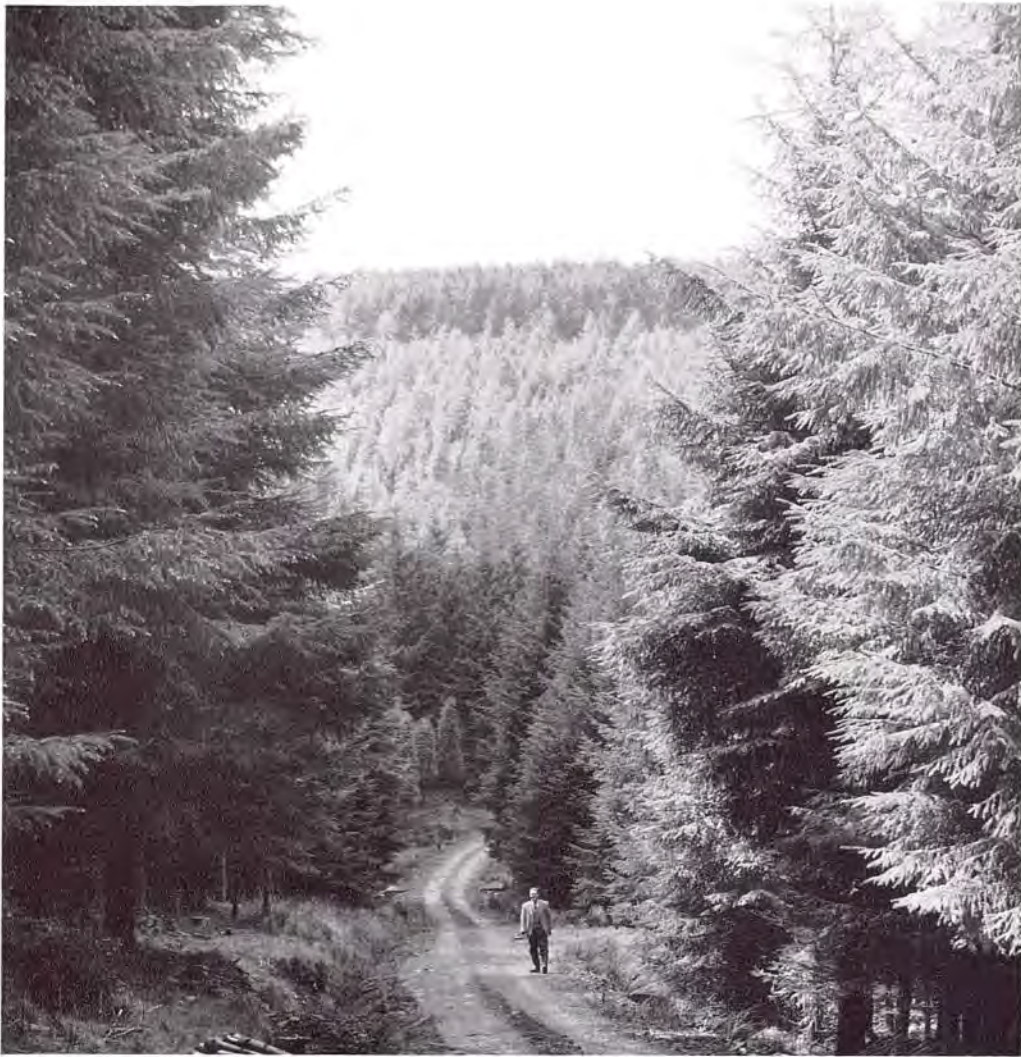
This is not a well-defined type, but is distinguished from the Border type by the generally lower rainfall. The vegetation is usually poor mountain grassland with fescues, *Agrostis* and *Nardus*. There is little peat except at the highest elevations. Frequently bracken has invaded the better slopes and reduced the grazing values. Occasionally there is a transition to heathy conditions. This very general description would apply to much land in central Scotland, eastern parts of the Scottish border, and some of the drier areas of central Wales and the Welsh Marches. The choice of species is rather wide, though much of the ground is too dry for spruces. Scots pine, the larches, and on the best sites Douglas fir, are the commonest species.

right

European larch: A 70-year-old plantation. European larch has been planted from the mid-18th century, and has always been specially valued for the strength and durability of its timber. It has been a tree of particular importance to agriculture, being the most widely used fencing timber, and suited to use in the construction of farm buildings.







above (left)

Sitka spruce: A forest road through a 30-year old plantation of Sitka spruce in Glasfynydd Forest, Breconshire.

above (right)

Norway spruce: Familiar to everyone, especially as a Christmas tree. Norway spruce is an exotic since, unlike Scots pine—its associate in Europe, it failed to return to Britain after the Ice Age. It has been used as a forest tree for many years, and is seen to advantage on moist and fairly fertile soils in sheltered conditions over much of our uplands.

right

Douglas fir: A 50-year old plantation of good quality. The tree is named after the famous Scottish explorer who introduced it to this country in 1827. It is one of our most productive species, but it is only seen at its best on deep well-drained soils in fairly sheltered situations.





above

Dunkeld, Perthshire: The river Tay and parts of the Atholl Estates viewed from Craigvinean Forest. The district around Dunkeld is of particular interest since it was here that the first extensive plantations of European larch were established by the Second Duke of Atholl in the mid-18th century. The Tay valley has a long arboricultural and forestry tradition, and there is no better part of the country in which to study conifers and woodland scenery.

right (above)

Drummond Hill, Perthshire: View from the North. Drummond Hill has plantations of larch and spruce in succession to the noted larch woods planted in the 1820's and felled during the first World War.

right (below)

Brecon Forest in mid-Wales: Plantations of larch, spruce and pine, occupying the poorer grazing land—mainly heather with bracken on the slopes. There is no high unplantable land.





Upland Heaths



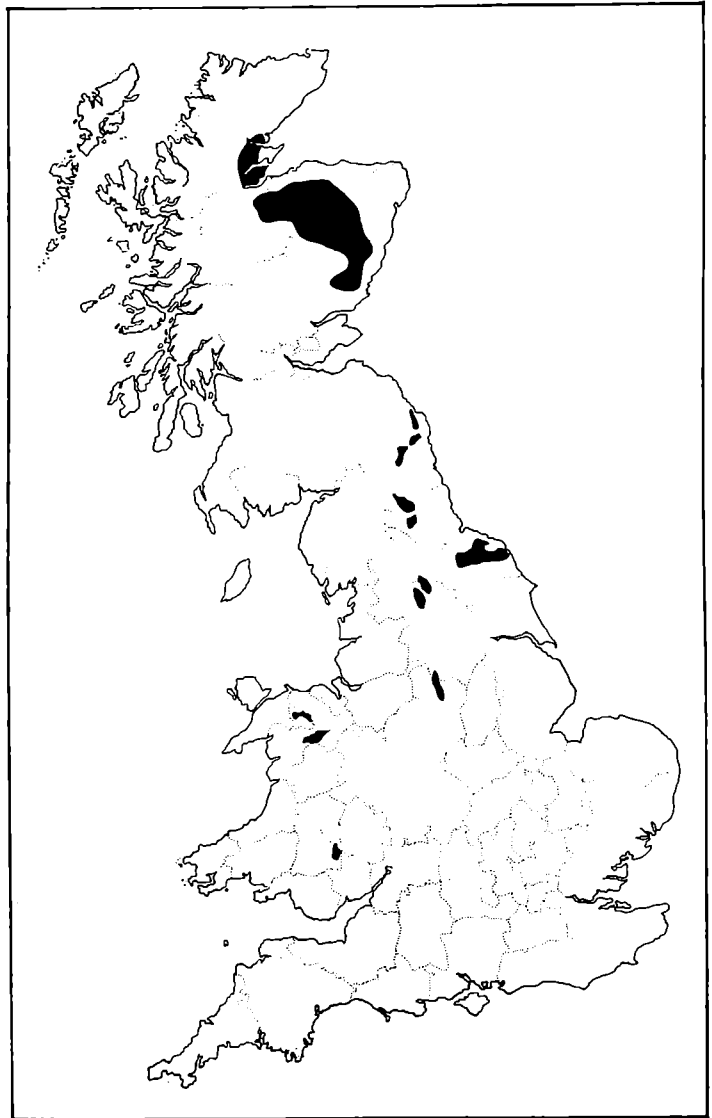
Clashindarroch Forest, Aberdeenshire: One of the larger heathland forests in the east of Scotland, and the site of much experimental work on the afforestation of this particular type of land. Ben Rinnes can be seen towards the left.

UPLAND HEATHS

The Upland Heaths form an important type throughout the drier hilly districts in the north of the country. They have usually—though not always—developed over acid sandy soils.

As the name implies, they are dominated by heathers, principally the common ling (*Calluna vulgaris*), which has in fact had much to do with the development of the soil conditions. There is usually a thinnish deposit of peat, with a light coloured layer of soil below, from which most of the nutrients have been leached. Sometimes there is a pronounced hard 'pan' a foot or more below the surface, where minerals leached from the surface have settled.

The heaths require cultivation to suppress the heather and open up the sub-soil (especially to break any pan) before they can be planted. On the poorer heaths it is also necessary to apply phosphates. Pines are the principal species, but sometimes, when the pines have prepared the way, more productive and demanding trees can be grown.





Allerston Forest, North Yorkshire Moors: Looking over Troutdale to Langdale Rigg. Although much of the underlying rock on these moors is Jurassic limestone, grazing over many centuries and the development of a heathy vegetation has brought about leached, acid, soils known as 'podsoils', often with well-marked 'iron pans'.



The Southern Heaths



Wareham Forest, Dorset: Hardy's 'Egdon Heath', a tract of particularly infertile sands and gravels of the Bagshot Beds. A view north-east from the crest of Gallows Hill over young Corsican pine plantations established on ploughed land, across typical heathland, to the older pine plantations on Philliols Heath and Bere Heath.

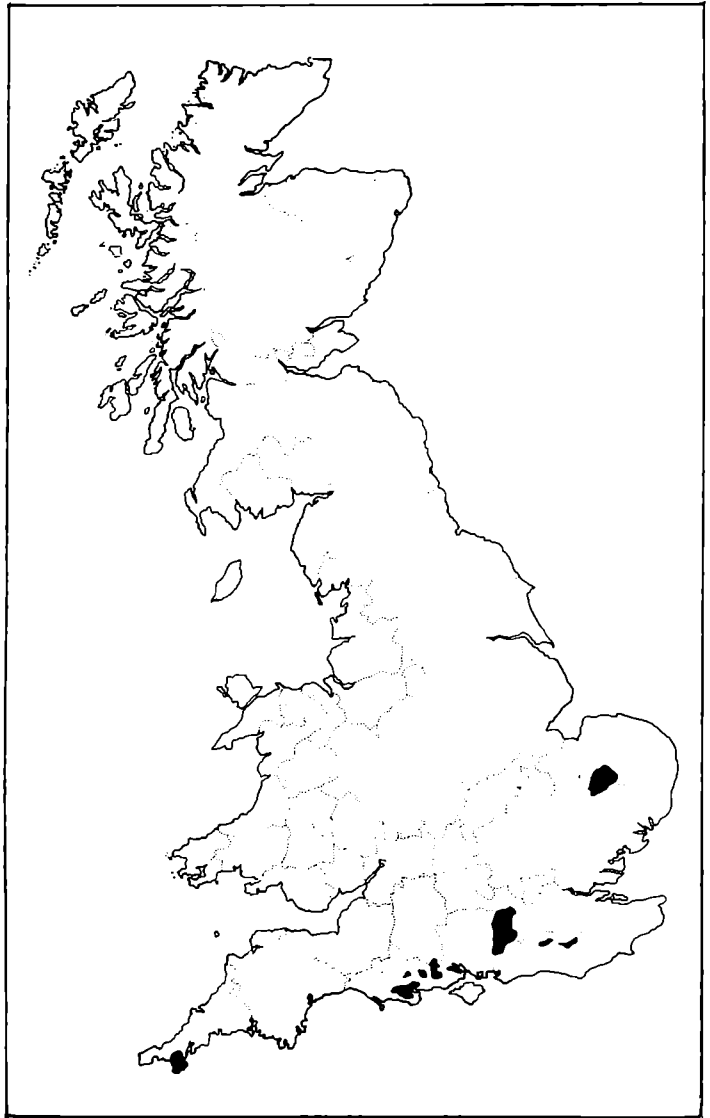
THE SOUTHERN HEATHS

The Southern Heaths are mostly at quite low elevations, and therefore have a much warmer climate than the Upland Heaths of the North. They are all on infertile, usually very acid, sands and gravels, and have not in past times been able to support any sustained agriculture. Many have had some form of common grazing, and, where this has lapsed, have passed into scrub or semi-woodland. The true commons are of great value as open spaces.

Pines are the most suitable species on much of the Southern Heathland, though the better soils will support good growth of Douglas fir.

right

Douglas fir: Some of the finest old Douglas firs in the south of England. Planted about 1860 in Bolderwood in the New Forest, Hampshire.







above

Corsican pine: One of the most productive species on the sandy soils in the south of England. It is a southern European tree, and the form which we grow does in fact come from Corsica, though we can now collect nearly all the seed we need from our own woods.

right (above)

The pine plantations at Thetford Chase, Norfolk and Suffolk, now form one of the largest continuous areas of forest in the country. They will support a new wood-using industry. The plantations were established partly on degraded agricultural land, and partly on open grass-heath known as Breckland.

right (below)

Wareham Forest, Dorset: View east from Woolsbarrow across rather uneven Scots and Corsican pine plantations to Morden Heath Nursery and Morden Park Lake. Wareham Forest is an active centre of research into the nutrition of trees in the nursery and the forest.





above

Scots pine hedge: On the extensive areas of light sandy soils in Suffolk and Norfolk it used to be the practice to establish shelter hedges of Scots pine to prevent wind erosion following cultivation. Many of these hedges, like this example, have been allowed to grow into rather distorted trees.

right (above)

Severe soil erosion: Not a very common sight in this country. It can readily occur on the poorer sands if the vegetation is continuously disturbed.

extreme right

The sand sedge—*Carex arenaria*, colonising wind-blown sand at Brandon, Suffolk.

right (below)

The New Forest, as is well known, was defined and placed under forest law as a royal sporting reserve by the Norman kings. Much of it was probably heathland at the time. The greater part of the Forest remains under rights of common grazing, and forms a valuable and popular open space. The plantations are confined to inclosures, and a number of these are managed more for their scenic value than for timber. This is a typical area of heath as seen from Anses Wood, looking to the north-west.





Old Broadleaved Woodland

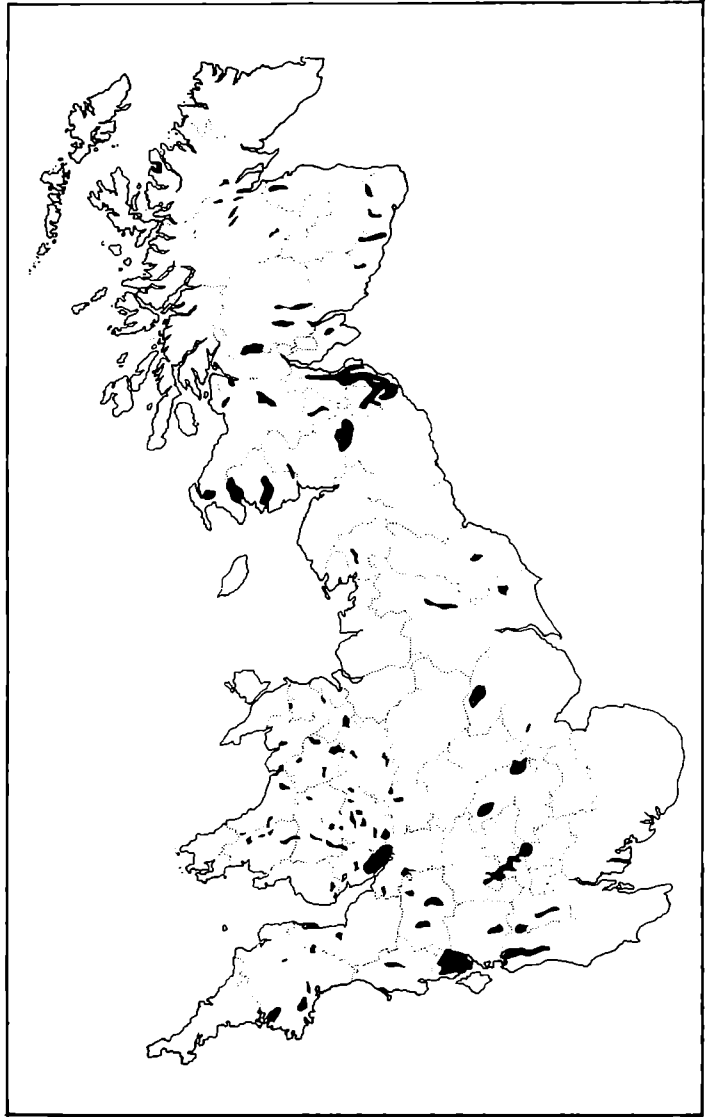


Forest of Dean: View from the Buckstone at Reddings Wood, looking north towards Whitchurch and the Great Doward ridge.

The old Crown Forest of Dean is one of the tracts placed under forest law by the Norman kings. It has considerable areas of oak planted during or shortly after the Napoleonic Wars for ship timbers; but is very varied in soils and has also a good deal of beech and some particularly fine conifers. In appearance, at least, it remains an extensive broadleaved forest.

OLD BROADLEAVED WOODLAND

Apart from Scots pine, yew and the shrubby juniper, Britain has no native conifers, and the old natural forests were mainly broadleaved. Little if anything remains in a truly natural state, due to the interference of man and his grazing animals. However, much of the existing broadleaved woodland, though greatly changed, may well be descended directly from natural forest. Broadleaved woodlands of many species have been managed from ancient times for certain special products, and what is often thought to be a natural condition is simply a relic of past forest management. Not by any means all the common broadleaved trees are native. Sweet chestnut, Horse chestnut, and sycamore, though familiar, are all introductions, and so are walnut, plane, and many poplars.



The Chiltern beechwoods in Buckinghamshire are an ancient tract of woodlands of at least semi-natural origin. The beech is thought to have been managed on a coppice system, mainly for the supply of fuel to London. In more recent times, the woods have supported a furniture industry based on High Wycombe and Chesham. There is a tradition of silvicultural management by natural regeneration on certain estates, notably Hampden, where this photograph and the one on page 49 were taken. Both show mature, 160-year-old beech with natural seedlings developing after the felling of groups in the old crop.





above (left)

Beech has been widely planted in Britain outside what is thought to be its natural range. This is a famous old wood at Tynninghame, East Lothian.

above (right)

Beech is usually associated with limey soils, but some of the best stands are on old acid loams. These particularly fine trees are at Slindon, Sussex, on land owned by the National Trust. The larger trees are over 120 ft. tall, with girths of 130 inches at Breast height.

right

The Chiltern beechwoods. (See page 47)





above

Birch readily colonises sites where the original vegetation has been disturbed. If rarely an economic crop, it is often a useful pioneer for more productive species.

right (above)

Oak standards with chestnut coppice in Hampshire. 'Coppice with standards' is an ancient and highly evolved system of management of woodland. The standards—usually oak—provided timber of large dimensions for ship and other forms of building, and the coppice went for fuel, fencing and other agricultural requirements. Changed circumstances have made the system uneconomic.

right (below)

Sweet chestnut coppice in Sussex: Sweet chestnut and hazel were two of the commonest coppice species. Hazel coppice has largely fallen out of management due to changes in the agricultural economy—it was specially important for the manufacture of hurdles for folding sheep. Chestnut coppice, however, remains a valuable crop owing to the popularity of chestnut pile fencing.

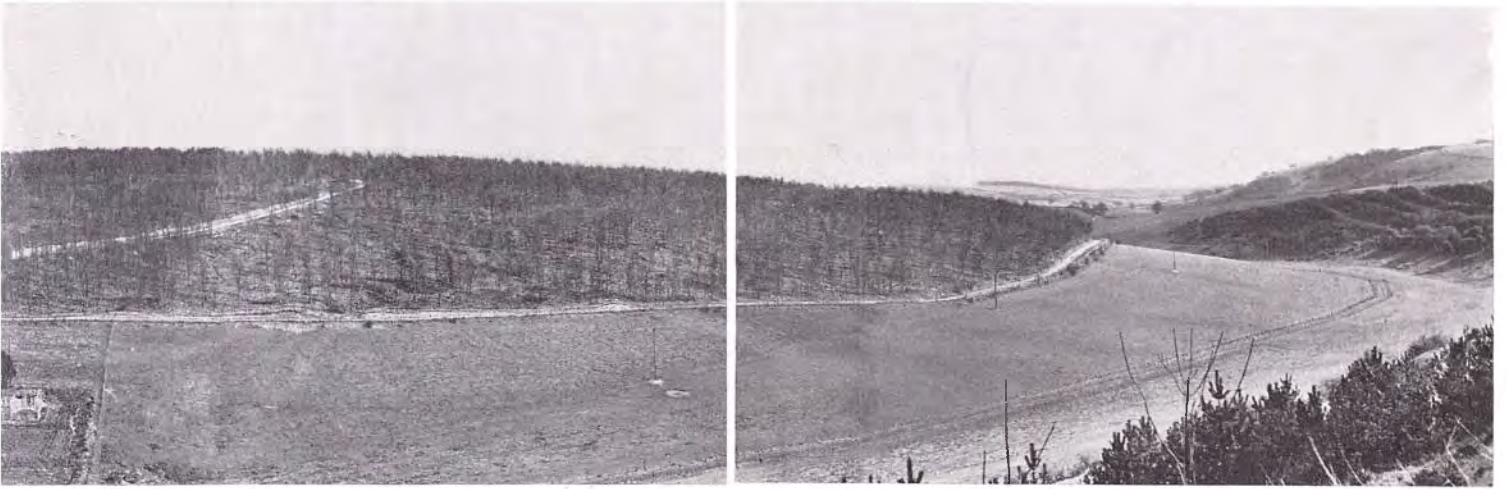
extreme right

Oak at Dunster, Somerset. In the south-west, many of the old oak woodlands, which have undoubtedly been managed as coppice at one time, are of particularly weird and scrubby appearance.





Chalk Downlands



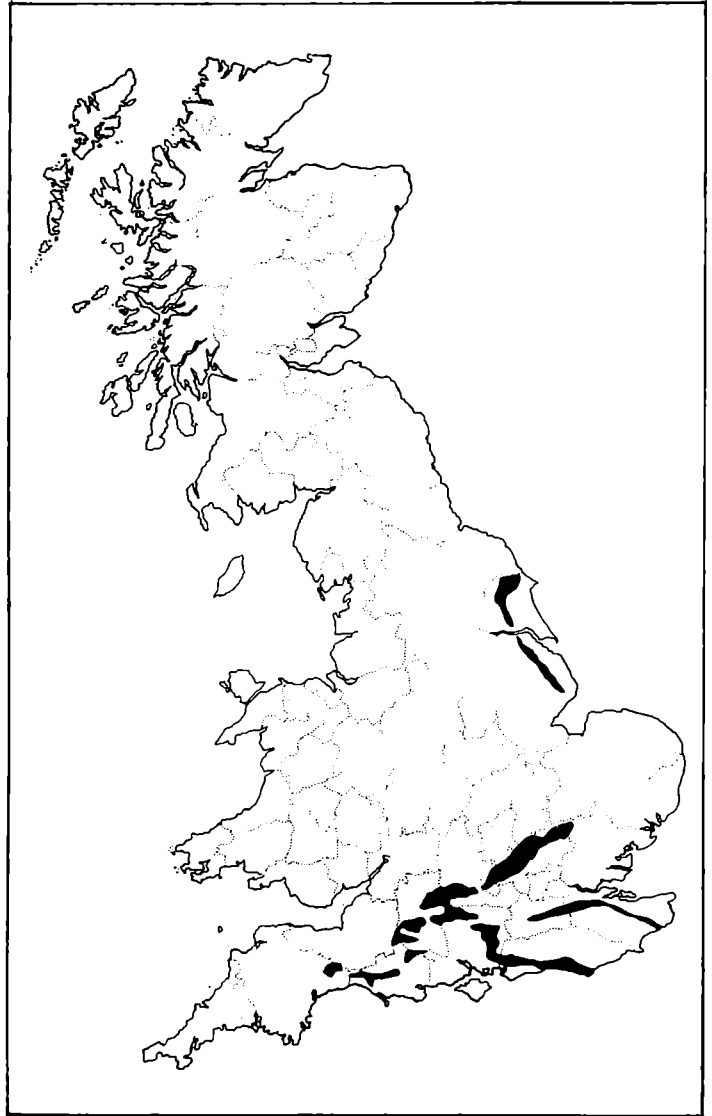
Queen Elizabeth Forest, Hampshire: A general view looking east from above the Portsmouth Road. One of the more extensive tracts of chalk downland afforestation. The young woods in the middle foreground are beech, raised with larch nurses which have recently been removed.

CHALK DOWNLANDS

The Chalk Downs of the south of England and the Yorkshire Wolds are typically grassland, with good arable farming on the deeper soils. Some hilly country on the chalk bears ancient woodland—the Chiltern beech woods for example, and a limited amount of woodland has been planted on the chalk. Much of this is beech, a tree which is indigenous and well adapted to chalk soils. Chalk Downlands are notoriously difficult subjects for planting, due mainly to the intense competition of grasses, and it is customary to establish beech with 'nurses' of pine which are less sensitive to such competition, and improve the site for beech.

right

A beech plantation with extremely well-shaped stems, at West Dean, Sussex. The 125-year-old trees are some 100 ft. in height. Such stands are of special value for seed collection.







above

Some of the famous Goodwood beeches, well-known to race-goers. 170-year-old beech woodland on a sheltered slope of the South Downs in Sussex.

right (above)

Natural woodland on the chalk has several quite typical tree species. Here, on a chalk scarp near Princes Risborough in Buckinghamshire are seen beech, whitebeam and yew.

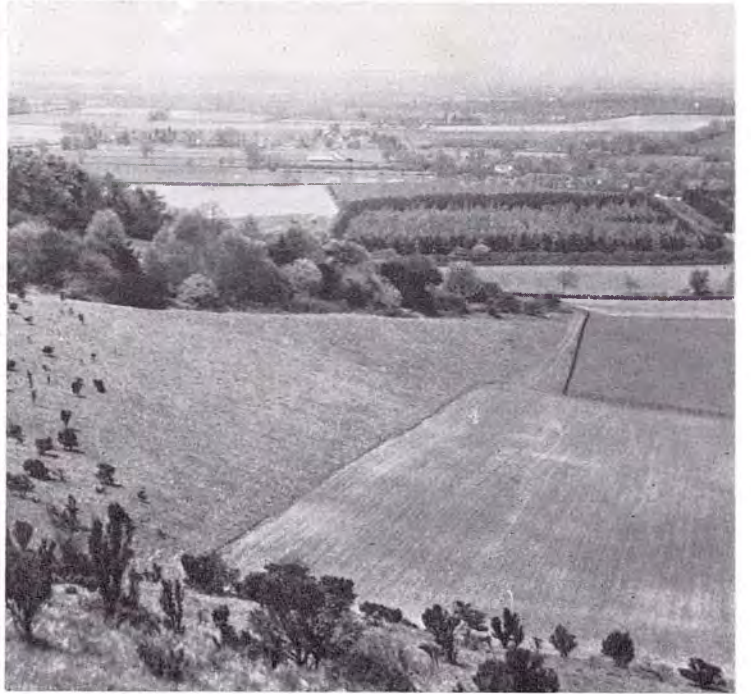
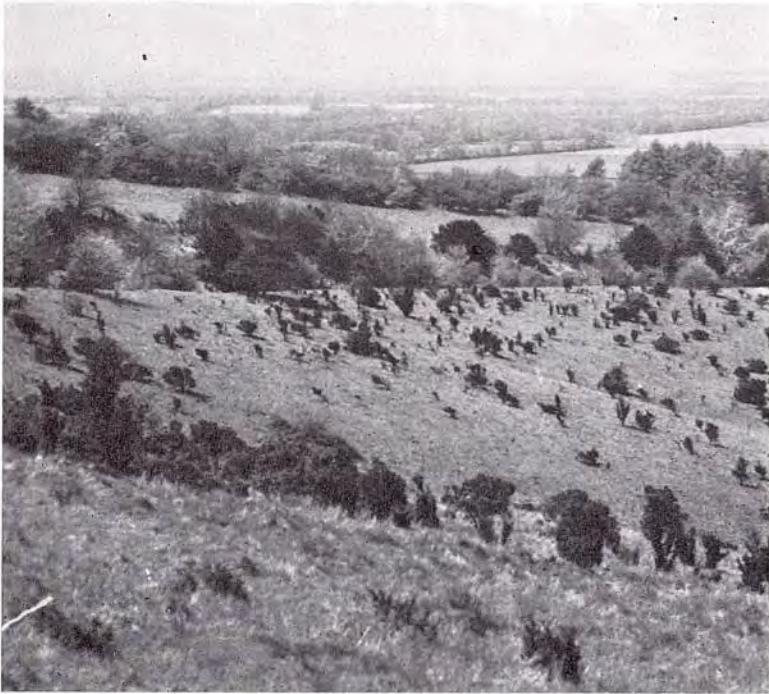
right (below)

A trial plantation of small-leaved lime at Holt Down, Queen Elizabeth Forest in Hampshire. Lime is at home on calcareous soils, including the chalk.

extreme right

The grass *Bromus erectus* is a common element of chalk swards. It forms dense mats through which it is difficult to plant trees.





Special Uses of Trees and Woodlands



View from the Chiltern escarpment north-east of Watlington in Oxfordshire, looking west. Bald Hill (with natural whitebeam, yew, and beech) is on the left; natural juniper in the foreground; Beacon Hill on the right.

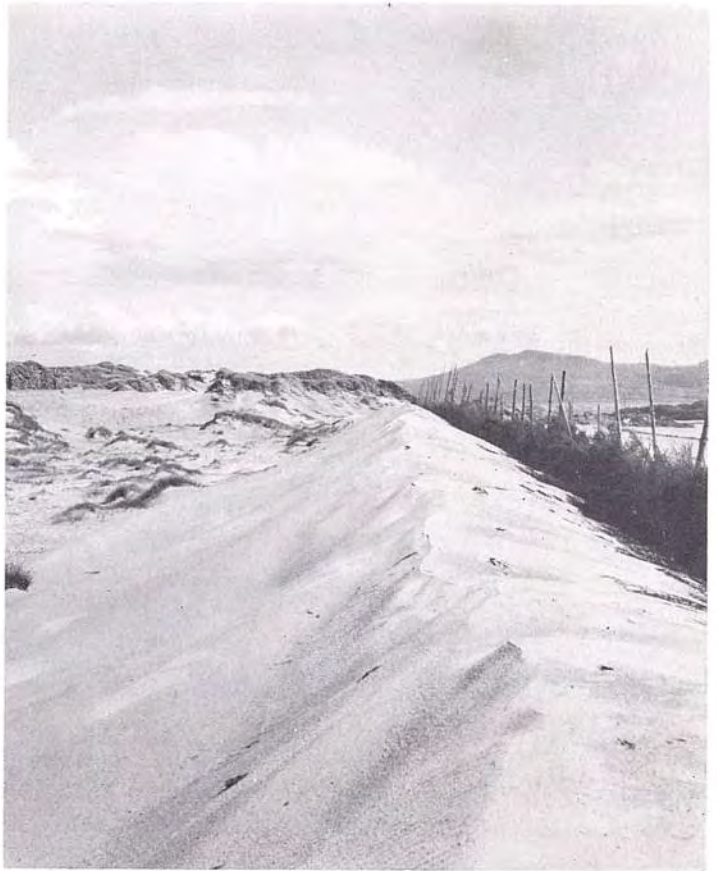
In the centre, behind the buildings of Hill Farm and surrounded by agricultural ground, are The Knapp plantations. The extensive hedgerows and shelterbelts of the Thames Valley fill the background.

SPECIAL USES OF TREES AND WOODLANDS

Usually the first aim in managing a forest is to produce timber, but forests can serve many other purposes. They may protect the land against erosion, or prevent sand shifting in the wind. Forests are often valued as cover to the land in water catchments, since the water from them is pure and free from silt. They are becoming increasingly important as places of recreation—especially in the more crowded countries such as ours.

Forestry is often said to compete with hill farming for land, but since forests require more labour for a given acreage, they help to maintain the rural economy and thus indirectly benefit the major land-using industry. Trees are not, of course, confined to the forest proper. The hedgerows still support large volumes of hardwood timber, though changes in agricultural practice seem likely to reduce the importance of the hedge. Shelterbelts on the other hand, because of their value to farm stock in exposed districts, seem likely to remain. Specialised crops such as poplars and willows are usually sited on good land outside of the forest.

Trees are used to improve the amenities in numerous ways; in parks, on roadsides, in towns, as screens against ugly industrial buildings and, perhaps most important of all, to soften the raw landscapes torn by industrial activities.





left

Sand fixation: In several countries afforestation has been used as means of stabilizing shifting sand. Before plantations can be made, it is often necessary to fix the dune nearest to the sea by erecting a palisade—as seen here at Newborough Warren in Môn Forest, Anglesey.

above

Culbin Forest, Morayshire: The largest area of plantations on previously shifting coastal sands in this country.



above

Trees and water, Lynford Hall, Thetford Chase, Norfolk.

right (top)

Taf Fechan, Talybont Forest, Breconshire: The attractions of natural features such as this need not be impaired by afforestation, provided that care is

taken to leave room to see them.

right (centre)

Viewpoint, High Meadow Woods, Dean Forest Park: View across the Wye from Symond's Yat, looking downstream to Coppet Hill.

right (bottom)

Forests and water supplies, Lake Vyrnwy Reservoir, Montgomeryshire: Much of the gathering ground of this well-known reservoir has been afforested in a joint enterprise between the Forestry Commission and the City of Liverpool. Forestry as a form of land management

in catchments has certain advantages. The purity of the water is maintained, and the silting-up of reservoirs is minimised. Against these advantages, the trees evaporate rather more water than does grassland, but the significance of this may not be great where the rainfall is high.





above

Queen Elizabeth Forest Park: The Forest Parks have been established in areas where open or mountain country has been acquired in connection with afforestation. Readily accessible, they are open to all, and have well equipped camping grounds. The Queen Elizabeth Forest Park

was opened in 1953 to celebrate Her Majesty's Coronation. It is in fine country on the edge of the Trossachs, and is of especial value to the people of Glasgow.

right (above)

Roads constructed for the extraction of timber and the general management of the forest are not normally open to private motor vehicles, but provide access to forest country for walkers and riders. A view in Allerston Forest, North Yorkshire, showing the Forest Drive, an exceptional scenic route open to cars.

right (below)

The walker on most forest roads will meet nothing worse than the occasional timber truck.

extreme right

Pony trekking is becoming increasingly popular, especially in Scotland; a forest road near Aberfoyle.





above

Denny Ecological Reserve in the New Forest: Such reserves are maintained specifically for ecological and other scientific studies.

right (above)

Glenlivet, Banffshire: Extensive pine plantations on moorland, with improved agricultural land in the valley. This is a land improvement scheme planned jointly by the Crown Estates Commissioners, the Department of Agriculture for Scotland, and the Forestry Commission, in which agricultural rehabilitation, afforestation and sporting interest each play a part in the enhancement of rural economy.

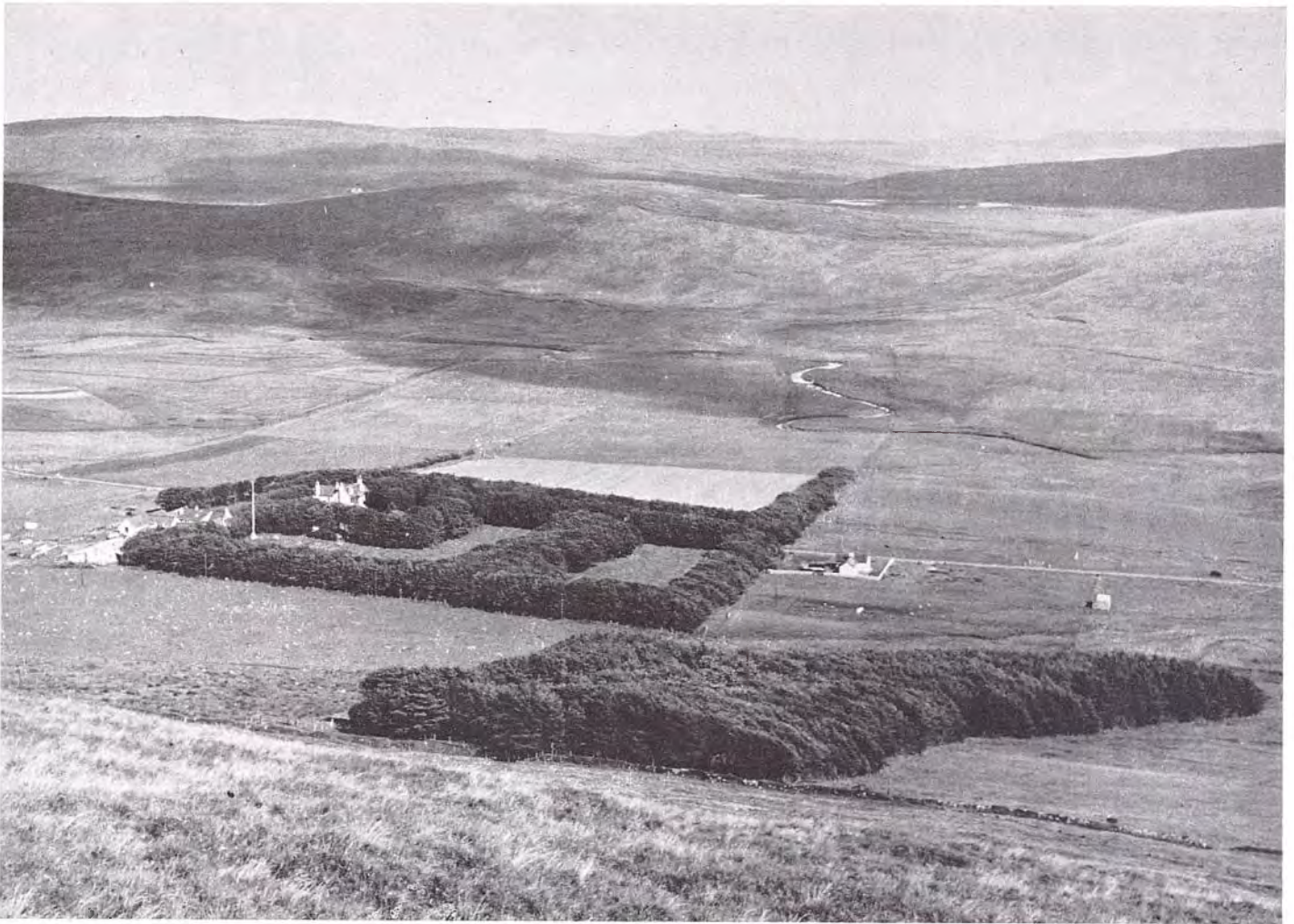
right (below)

Well sited and equipped caravan and camping sites let people into the heart of forest country without the motor car being allowed to dominate the environment.

extreme right

Footbridge over the Wye at Biblins, High Meadow, Forest of Dean, constructed to give access from the river meadows, where there is a youth organisation's camping ground, to Lady Park Woods.





above

The Kergord shelter plantations in the Shetlands: this is a notable achievement by a private landowner as these islands are almost devoid of trees.

right (above)

Forestry and hill grazing: In hill country, where afforestation is not carried over the tops, it is customary to plan the plantations to leave sheepwalks from the better unafforested grazings in the valley to the unplantable land above the forest.

right (below)

Farm shelterbelts in the Tweed Valley.





above

Line planting of poplars (*Populus* 'Robusta', one of the best of the 'hybrid Blacks'), on the Ryston Hall estate, Norfolk: Poplar is a very specialised and demanding crop, and the wood is used in the manufacture of matches, chip baskets, etc.

right (above)

Elm is probably the most important hedgerow timber in England. The common English elm usually produces large and well-formed butts, requires little attention and reproduces itself readily from suckers in the hedge at no cost. The timber retains a high value for furniture.

right (below)

It is often insufficiently appreciated that a great volume of hardwood timber is to be found in hedgerows. Most of it is self-sown or, as with elms, comes from root suckers.





above

Forest Workers' Holding in Eggesford Forest, Devon: The tenants of this type of holding are guaranteed 150 days work a year in the forest, and have a few acres of land for farming.

right (above)

A Forest Village at Dalby, Allerton Forest, Yorkshire: In certain areas where housing for workers in the new forests has been in short supply, it has been necessary to build new villages. Wherever possible, it is desirable to add to existing communities where there is already some social life.

right (below)

Gwydyr Forest in Snowdonia: Where extensive afforestation has been carried out, the old farm buildings are often improved and used to house Foresters and forest workers.





above (left)

Roadside planting: The combination of good engineering and well chosen and sited trees can be very pleasing.



above (right)

The well-known Lombardy poplar is often used very successfully to screen industrial sites. It is unwise of course to plant too close to buildings.

right

An interesting tunnel effect in a beech plantation on a side road in Scotland.





above

Many of the older colliery spoil heaps eventually develop a woodland flora. Birch is common on heaps which have burned to a red shaley soil.

right (top)

Mineral rights are sometimes exercised on a small scale without undue disturbance to the forest. Here is a small privately operated colliery within Coed Morgannwg, Glamorgan.

right (centre)

Forestry has had big effects on the scenery in the Welsh valleys, and has alleviated the worn-out appearance of a good deal of this neighbourhood after more than a century of mining operations. Here modern colliery plant is seen against a background of young plantations forming part of the Rheola beat of Coed Morgannwg.

extreme right

A spoil heap absorbed in the plantations at Michaelston, Coed Morgannwg, Glamorgan.

right (bottom)

Woodland can often be established on sites disturbed by industry or mining. Alder is a particularly useful species on colliery spoil heaps or opencast mining sites.





above and right

A forest backdrop to ruins of the old lead mining industry in North Wales. Though the scars of the workings can often be planted, poisonous substances sometimes remain in the wastes and delay the establishment of vegetation.



Postscript

Forestry has always had its critics. Naturally, we're biased; but, as said in the Introduction, it's all a matter of taste. Within limits, we've tried to show something of British forestry, but, even with the best will in the world, monochrome reproduction cannot do justice to the scene—it needs colour to bring it alive, so GO AND SEE FOR YOURSELVES!

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