

Wilderness

*Wild and lonely moor swept by scouring winds
Where waving sedge and rushes sound the emptiness
Here fluffs of white cotton grass silently wear the centuries down
Above their saintly heads whaups wail and burble mournful as sinners
Tufts of wiry heath grass like bleached beards
Stream along the wind shaking their hair resignedly
And mist grey as lichen swirls in its cold wraith
Wakes ghosts of lost and tarnished centuries
Ghosts of dim years of strife
Through this opaque dampness muffled owls maraud
Silent as wind-hung gossamer, deadly as the winging arrow
And the peat's raw sweetness tinges the mist with time
Smells of dark brown ages, martyrs' graves, lost causes
And wild and lonely moors*

by Bryan Simpson

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written about the Whitelee Plateau in 1960, before the forest

Introduction

Before the Forest (1920s–1961)

- The Whitelee Plateau

Developing the Forest (1961–1980s)

- From Farming to Forestry

- Preparing for a New Forest: Trappers
and Tractor Drivers

- Planting 10 Million Trees: Squad
and Contractors

- The Work of Trappers, Rangers and
Shooting Tenants

- Foresters and their Work

- Changing Ecology

- Local People and the New Whitelee Forest

The Forest Matures (1990s–present)

- The End of the 20th Century

- The New Millennium

- The Second Rotation Whitelee Forest

- Europe's Biggest Wind Farm

This Extraordinary Time

- Looking Back