

Spade among the rushes



This lucid account of crofting life during the second World War has been a popular classic since its first publication in 1949. One of very few books available on Moidart in the north-west of Scotland, it evokes the enchanted, magical beauty of this much-loved area of the country. Margaret Leigh was already a successful author when her longing for freedom and independence led to her decision to become a crofter in the West Highlands. These memoirs describe her attempts to transform a deserted croft into a home, and her struggles to snatch land back from the wilderness. Although far from the Blitz, the effects of the war are felt throughout the Highlands, and the rationing of food and vital materials, the battles with bureaucrats who had no understanding of a crofters needs, and even the appearance of a Nazi mine off the coast, all frustrate Margaret Leighs efforts. But despite the hardships, the land and the people of the Highlands gave her a contentment and happiness she had never known before.

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