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A social and economic history of the Blackmount Deer Forest,

Argyllshire, 1815-1900

Presented by Brian Doogan

Submitted for Doctor of Philosophy degree in Scottish History  
University of Glasgow, November 2004

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**A social and economic history of the Blackmount  
Deer Forest, Argyllshire, 1815-1900**

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## Abstract

Scottish deer forests are mainly a Highland phenomenon. Many were formed during the nineteenth century when proprietors benefited from their economic marketability as 'sporting estates'. The Blackmount area was a forest, under the ownership of the Campbells of Glenorchy, since the fifteenth century. Situated in one of the most mountainous ranges of the west Highlands, its function was to serve as a hunting reserve for both that family and their aristocratic peers, whilst being protected by foresters from poachers and trespassers. The earlier Forest of Corrie Ba ceased to exist during the later eighteenth century when sheep farming became the predominant land use there. Blackmount Forest was re-formed anew in 1820 due to an economic recession after the Napoleonic Wars terminated.

This thesis identifies the social, political, economic, geographical and environmental reasons for Blackmount Forest's creation, growth and continued existence. It questions if this was for leisure alone or for a commercial ethos adopted by landlords of other forests. The Forest expanded during the nineteenth century, gaining national recognition, especially in the 1840s-1850s, and thereafter. However, the Campbells of Breadalbane faced internal and external challenges and criticisms, several of a legal nature. The family were long established, in the Scottish aristocracy, with extensive estates in the west-central Highlands. They retained Blackmount for themselves, excepting the period 1863-1885 when it was let out wholesale. The thesis also identifies its social impact upon the locality, and the extent to which this forest may have influenced others coming into existence later that century.

## Abbreviations for sources consulted

AA	- Argyll Archives
AT	- Argyll Transcripts (Campbell of Argyll papers)
BAR	- British Archaeological Reports
NAS	- National Archives of Scotland
NAS, E	- National Archives of Scotland Exchequer Records
NAS, GD 50	- John MacGregor Collection
NAS, GD 112	- Campbell of Breadalbane Muniments
NAS, GD 170	- Campbell of Barcaldine Muniments
NAS, RHP	- National Archives of Scotland Register House Plan
NLS	- National Library of Scotland
NLS, MS	- National Library of Scotland Manuscript
GUL SP. COLL.	- Glasgow University Library Special Collections
GCA	- Glasgow City Archives (Mitchell Library Archives)
OPS	- Origines Parochiales Scotiae
OSGR	- Ordnance Survey Grid Reference
PRO	- Public Records Office
RCAHMS	- Royal Commission for the Ancient and Historical Monuments of Scotland
SHS	- Scottish Historical Society
SMCJ	- Scottish Mountaineering Club Journal
SS	- Stair Society
TGSI	- Transactions of the Gaelic Society of Inverness

## Format and standardisation

In this thesis the spelling of place names have been standardised. Where possible I have used the standard Ordnance Survey spelling, and Ordnance Survey grid references are provided for some of the locations. Otherwise the form that appears in documents is used. 'Coireach a' Ba', as its standard O.S. spelling, has been simplified as 'Corrie Ba'. Due to differences in expression from the various sources, descriptions of geographical areas have been formalised. Those adopted are as follows: Blackmount is the area often written in documents as 'Black Mount'. 'The Forest' is an alternative expression I have often used for 'Blackmount Forest'. 'Glen Orchy' refers to the glen proper, however 'Glenorchy' is the district. The words and place names from extracts in contemporary documents are given standard modern spellings, and the grammar has been adapted where necessary. The spelling of 'Marquis' has been used rather than 'Marquess', as was used formerly.

A reference, where first used, is quoted in full with a shortened form shown in coiled brackets to indicate the format I have used where it appears thereafter. Commonly used references are given their shortened version in the introduction. A bibliography of all the printed sources consulted in this work is listed at the end. Within the chapters, reference is occasionally made to appendices at the end of this thesis. They contain information on local rentals, accounts and locations of deer numbers within Blackmount Forest.

### Acknowledgements

First and foremost I would like to thank Mr Robin Fleming, current landowner of Blackmount Estate, for providing me with substantial funding towards this Ph.D. research project during the last four years. Likewise, Professor Edward J. Cowan, holder of the chair of Scottish History at the University of Glasgow, kindly negotiated the arrangement of this scholarship with both Mr Fleming and his trustees. Thanks are also extended to Vicompte Aldophe De Spoelberg, landowner at Blackcorries Estate, who also gave a financial contribution. Others came from The McGlashan Trust, The Gaelic Society of Inverness and the Argyll Educational Trust, whose grants have been appreciated. The Faculty of Arts at Glasgow University generously reimbursed travelling expenses for my regular visits to Edinburgh to consult archival material.

Dr Martin MacGregor, lecturer in Scottish History at University of Glasgow, has for the last four years provided advice on the content and form of my thesis. His patience and academic professionalism inspired me to carry the work through, and I am very fortunate that he has been my tutor during this time. Mrs Dorothy Mallon, departmental secretary, has always been very accommodating and helpful. This research would not have been possible without help from staff in the National Archives of Scotland, and the National Library, who unfailingly presented many documents and books for my research consultation. My girlfriend, Severine Benevaud, has provided me with continued personal support and encouragement to complete this Ph.D. Family and friends have also maintained faith in my intentions in pursuing this subject, stemming from an interest in the history of the Scottish Highlands.

## Introduction

This thesis is on the history of the Blackmount Estate situated between Loch Etive, Glen Etive, Glen Orchy and west Rannoch in north Argyllshire. Its place in Scottish history, especially during the nineteenth century, is significant. Although 'sporting estates' developed generally into a regular commercial feature of Highland society, it is necessary to assess if Blackmount represented a typical or atypical example. This shall involve a study of primary archival material and printed sources, with a review of recent research on other deer forests, and related themes. My contribution is an original attempt to understand why forests are an important area of historical studies, by identifying the reasons for their coming into existence, and how they were managed, particularly during the nineteenth century.

An overview of medieval and early modern local forests is initially made in chapter 1, within the context of Highland history. This area was formerly the Forest of Corrie Ba, for which there is some evidence from c.1600 to the middle of the eighteenth century. Therefore I shall argue that one motive for commercial deer forest re-development at Blackmount during the nineteenth century is historical. Its timing of formation from 1820 is investigated in chapter 2. We should consider if scenarios such as economic recession and emigration nurtured the re-development of Highland deer forests from the early nineteenth century. Other conditions that affected the formation of Blackmount Forest were environmental and social ones.

Its re-development arguably represented an intermediate phase of commercial exploitation of rural upland landscapes in the Highlands, one that had started with sheep farming in the eighteenth century. There is ample evidence as to how Blackmount Forest originated and functioned. Likewise we shall identify ways in which it was marketed, in becoming popularly recognised amongst the aristocracy. The relationship between Blackmount and other forests emerging in the later nineteenth century shall be investigated until c.1900, and particular emphasis is placed on the political impact of their proliferation and how it became affected. Existing research shows that most other forests came into formation between c.1840 to c.1880; thus we shall address the compelling question as to why some, such as Blackmount, were formed earlier that century.

It has been possible to address these themes due to an abundance of local records. The Campbell of Breadalbane family archives, covering a 500-year period, are deposited in Edinburgh at the National Archives of Scotland. The Breadalbane Muniments, are classified under 'gifts and deposits' (GD 112), and are amongst the largest collections of any estate history in the country. Other archives consulted in the NAS, referring to the Blackmount area, include the Campbell of Barcaldine Collection (GD 170), and the John MacGregor Collection (GD 50). These sources combined have enabled an extensive study of Blackmount Forest to be made, and no detailed research of the area has been done until now. The Breadalbane collection forms most of the evidence on the area's history, with particular emphasis on the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries. The Barcaldine papers likewise provide us with detailed correspondence from

periods when the Campbell of Barcaldine elite managed Blackmount. It is from these archives that most of the research in this thesis is based, and we can compare it with other studies on deer forests.

By using these primary sources it is possible to understand how the area was used and adapted, within the context of wider politics and economy. Likewise, we can identify the impact of management by the Campbells of Breadalbane on local society. This is seen in an unbroken run of factors' correspondence available from c.1800-1860. In particular, a collection of letters between 1820 and 1830 shows instructions from Lord Glenorchy to his factor relating to Blackmount's formation and development, although little is known about the factor's response at this time.<sup>1</sup> Thus, there are periods where communication is one-sided. The Forest was let out wholesale between 1863-1885; thus, a gap exists in detailed knowledge of how it functioned then, other than who leased it and the rentals that were involved. Letters from local ground officers amongst others employed in the Argyllshire estates gives details on how Blackmount Forest was expanded and improved from earlier that century. Correspondence generated from legal disputes provide us with examples of the challenges that the landlord faced in his endeavours to maintain it.<sup>2</sup> There is also a rich availability of detail on the mid-nineteenth century when the area had gained a reputable status as a deer forest.

Local books highlighted the historical interest that the Campbells

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<sup>1</sup> NAS, GD 112/16/9/1/3 – Letters from Lord Glenorchy, near the most Noble the Marquess of Breadalbane, to Duncan Campbell of Rockhill. In reference to: The Formation and keeping of Blackmount Forrest. {Hereafter: GD 112/16/9/1/3: *Blackmount Forest Formation*}.

<sup>2</sup> These disputes are covered in chapters 4 and 5.



of Breadalbane held towards their estates and forests there. The *Black Book of Taymouth*, a compilation of documents relating to the Campbells of Glenorchy with their expansion into Breadalbane, from 1432-1648, is considered to be an important source for the social and political history of the west-central Highlands.<sup>3</sup> This does not exclusively focus on Blackmount's early history, rather the family estates as a whole, but some of the local documents referred to from it, for example the story of the white hind of Corrie Ba, were mentioned by the Marchioness of Breadalbane in her book: *The High Tops of Black Mount* in 1907.<sup>4</sup> She was the wife of the last Earl to own Blackmount and showed an affinity with the local area, used as an elite sporting reserve, representing a penultimate phase in the area's social development and history.

There are other contemporary nineteenth-century sources relating to deer forests. Some books, for example those by William Scrope and Augustus Grimble, were directed exclusively for audiences who held sporting interests towards Highland estates.<sup>5</sup> In contrast, whilst forests were proliferating throughout the Scottish Highlands, several critical publications emerged by individuals such as Professor John Stuart Blackie and William Robertson.<sup>6</sup> Official publications and parliamentary

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<sup>3</sup> Cosmo Innes (ed) *The Black Book of Taymouth and other papers from the Breadalbane charter room*, (Bannatyne Club, 1855) {Hereafter: *Black Book*}; Gordon Donaldson and Robert Morpeth, *A Dictionary of Scottish History* (Edinburgh, 1994), 21. {Hereafter: Donaldson & Morpeth, *Dictionary*}

<sup>4</sup> Alma, Marchioness of Breadalbane, *The High Tops of Black Mount*, (Edinburgh, 1907), 220. {Hereafter: Marchioness of Breadalbane, *High Tops*}

<sup>5</sup> William Scrope, *The Art of Deer Stalking* (London, 1839) {Hereafter: Scrope, *Art of Deer Stalking*}; William Scrope, *Days of Deerstalking in the Scottish Highlands* (London & Glasgow, 1883). {Hereafter: Scrope, *Days of Deerstalking*}; Augustus Grimble, *The Deer Forests of Scotland* (London, 1896). {Hereafter: Grimble, *Deer Forests of Scotland*}.

<sup>6</sup> John Stuart Blackie, *The Scottish Highlanders and the Land Laws*, (London, 1885). {Hereafter: Blackie, *Land Laws*}; Alexander Robertson, *Our Deer Forests: An Inaugural lecture delivered to members of the Highland Economic Society* (London, 1867), {Hereafter: Robertson, *Deer Forests*}.

inquiries investigated debates on Highland deer forests, and some of these referred specifically to the area.<sup>7</sup> On the whole, these sources combined allow us to place Blackmount within the context of Highland history, and to judge arguments for and against its existence.

In order to provide an academic synthesis of estate records and the other sources stated above, it is necessary understand the state of knowledge that currently exists by briefly reviewing some of the articles and publications available. First we shall discuss studies of a more general nature on modern Highland history, before focussing in on the Breadalbane area. This is followed by an evaluation of economic and environmental research on deer forests, and local publications that are available. Most historiographical interpretations tend to look at the wider economics as to why deer forests existed in such large numbers throughout the Highlands. It is hoped that this study can represent a benchmark for the detailed histories of other estates.

There are numerous recent studies on the modern history of the Highlands, but other than those by Orr, described later, most do not relate specifically to forests since existing research generates a wider ranging perspective on the region. In *Clanship, Commerce and the House of Stuart*, Macinnes examines the Highlands as a centre stage for Jacobitism, and considers its social and economic impact. He identifies the Campbells of both Argyll and Breadalbane as shifting their estates

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<sup>7</sup> British Parliamentary Papers, 21: Agriculture, *Report of the Commissioners of Inquiry into the condition of Crofters and Cottars in the Highlands and Islands of Scotland*, (1884). {Hereafter: *Napier Commission*}.

towards commercialism relatively early.<sup>8</sup> Robert Dodgshon, recognises the disintegration of the clan system as linked to economics, and refers to estate archives, including those from the Campbells of Breadalbane, in his studies.<sup>9</sup> Taylor's *The Military Roads in Scotland* focuses on improving Highland communications, by General Wade and his successors, including a road from Stirling to Fort William, then allowing the Breadalbane estates to become more commercially exploited. Likewise, Haldane's earlier studies on Highland drove roads show the region's importance as a thoroughfare for the black cattle trade.<sup>10</sup> Other texts provide us with an insight as to how Highland estates developed, and were affected by wider economic forces from the early modern period onwards. There is research on landlords' commercial attitudes and the impact on society during the nineteenth century when several estates began to be used as deer forests.<sup>11</sup> Detailed studies of emigration from Scotland, particularly the north have been made. For example *The Highland Clearances*, by Eric Richards, is a comprehensive examination of the causes and effects of Highland depopulation. Likewise *Scottish Emigration and Scottish Society*, researched by various contributors, assesses the political and economic factors for emigration taking place on a widespread basis during that time.<sup>12</sup>

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<sup>8</sup> A. I. Macinnes, *Clanship, Commerce and the House of Stuart, 1603-1788* (East Linton, 1996). {Hereafter: Macinnes, *Clanship, Commerce*}

<sup>9</sup> Robert A. Dodgshon, *From Chiefs to Landlords: Social and Economic Change in the Western Highlands and Islands, c.1493-1820* (Edinburgh, 1998) {Hereafter: Dodgshon: *Chiefs to Landlords*}

<sup>10</sup> William Taylor, *The Military Roads in Scotland*, (Colonsay, 1996) {Hereafter Taylor, *Military Roads*}; A.R.B. Haldane, *The Drove Roads of Scotland*, (Edinburgh, 1952); *New Ways through the Glens*, (Edinburgh, 1962). {Hereafter: Haldane, *Drove Roads*}

<sup>11</sup> T.M. Devine, *Clanship to Crofters' War: the Social transformation of the Scottish Highlands* (Manchester 1994). {Hereafter: Devine, *Clanship to Crofters' War*}

<sup>12</sup> T.M. Devine, (ed), *Scottish Emigration and Scottish Society*, (Edinburgh, 1992).

William Gillies, Minister of Kenmore, published *In Famed Breadalbane* in the 1930s, and although much of this focuses on family history and genealogy, he also discussed local society, forests, courts and industries.<sup>13</sup> There is recent research on Breadalbane from articles by Jane Dawson and C.J.A. Robertson in *People and Power in Scotland*. They have examined ways in which the landlords capitalized on local communications and how natural resources were exploited.<sup>14</sup> Michael Vance provides detailed references to the Perthshire area of the Breadalbane estates in his thesis on assisted emigration, dealing with the period after the end of the Napoleonic Wars.<sup>15</sup> Andrew MacKillop's recent studies of Highland military recruitment in the British Army, particularly from both the Argyllshire and Perthshire portions of the Breadalbane Estates, show that this issue had also significantly affected the area's re-development by the end of the eighteenth century.<sup>16</sup> This range of research allows us to contextualise the phenomenon of why deer forests were later re-developed.

There have been detailed studies on medieval Scottish forests and hunting reserves by J.M. Gilbert on how these areas were managed from

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<sup>13</sup> William A. Gillies, *In Famed Breadalbane: The Story of the Antiquities, Lands and People of a Highland District* (Perth, 1938). {Hereafter: Gillies, *In Famed Breadalbane*}.

<sup>14</sup> Jane Dawson, 'The Origins of the 'Road to the Isles': Trade, Communication and Campbell Power in early modern Scotland', 74-103 {Hereafter: Dawson, 'Trade Communications and Campbell Power'}; C.J.A. Robertson, 'Railway mainia in the Highlands: The Marquis of Breadalbane and the Scottish Grand Junction Railway, 189-217, {Hereafter: Robertson, 'Scottish Grand Junction Railway'} in Roger Mason and Norman MacDougall (eds), *People and Power in Scotland: Essays in honour of T.C. Smout* (Edinburgh, 1992).

<sup>15</sup> Michael Vance, 'Emigration and Scottish Society: The background of three government assisted emigration schemes to Upper Canada, 1815-1821.' (University of Guelph, Canada, 1990). {Hereafter: Vance, 'Emigration thesis'}.

<sup>16</sup> Andrew MacKillop, 'Military Recruiting in the Scottish Highlands, 1739-1815: The Political, social and economic context', Ph.D., (University of Glasgow, 1995). {Hereafter: MacKillop, 'Recruitment thesis'}

c.1200. Many were 'royal' forests where the crown had exclusive rights to hunt. Gilbert stresses that there is a lack of evidence of hunting rights in the west and north Highlands during the medieval period. Although no evidence of a forest in the Blackmount area was found, he identified adjacent ones emerging from the fifteenth century at Rannoch, Mamlorne and Ben More. The latter two were sometimes reserved primarily as hunting grounds where no other economic activity took place.<sup>17</sup> Several of the nineteenth-century deer forests had been former forests that had fallen into disuse by the eighteenth century.

Willie Orr, in *Deer Forests, Landlords and Crofters*, examines the social and economic impact of sporting estates in the Scottish Highlands during the nineteenth century. He explains the decline of older forests in the eighteenth century as primarily due to the growth of sheep farming. Orr studies the reformation anew of former forests in nineteenth century, but mainly emphasises the development of commercial forests in the later 1800s, when a greater number emerged, replacing sheep farming and crofting activities.<sup>18</sup> As Orr has established, most Highland deer forests came into formation in the later nineteenth century. Thus, the date of origination for Blackmount is comparatively early. Invercauld estate near Braemar, formed in 1819, was the only other fairly large forest appearing around the same time. Only 28 forests were formed prior to 1839; a greater proportion originated after 1840, and they were still

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<sup>17</sup> J.M. Gilbert, *Hunting and Hunting Reserves in Medieval Scotland*, (Edinburgh, 1979), {Hereafter: 'Gilbert, Hunting Reserves'}.

<sup>18</sup> Willie Orr, *Deer Forests, Landlords and Crofters: The Western Highlands in Victorian and Edwardian Times*, (Edinburgh, 1982), {Hereafter: 'Orr, Deer Forests'}; original source from Scrope.

emerging in the Highlands at the end of the nineteenth century.<sup>19</sup> There is a study of deer forests from a social perspective in *Monarchs of the Glen* by Duff Hart Davis. This book highlights the emergence of sporting tenants, and how Highland deer forests represented a 'Victorianisation' of the region.<sup>20</sup> None of these sources clearly identify why forests, such as Blackmount, had re-formed during the early nineteenth century.

There are several local histories of Highland estates and the forests within them. Philip Gaskell, in *Morvern Transformed*, details estate management there, and the multiple commercial interests that existed.<sup>21</sup> A recent study is *Corrour: History of a Sporting Estate*, which accounts its development from the 1880s. Others focus on those with medieval origins, for example Kerr's *The Living Wilderness: Atholl Deer Forests*. This book establishes that parts of the Duke of Atholl's lands were used continuously as deer forest. Some local histories are more general, such as *The Dee from the far Cairngorms*, a social history of Deeside. *Contested Mountains* studies natural history, land use and disputes over rights of way in the Cairngorms since 1880. No local histories focus on deer forests in the west; however, a recent publication, *Pinewoods of the Blackmount*, gives some references to deforestation of trees there in former centuries, and natural history.<sup>22</sup>

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<sup>19</sup> Orr, *Deer Forests*, Appendix V, 168-180.

<sup>20</sup> Duff Hart Davis, *Monarchs of the Glen* (London, 1978). {Hereafter: 'Davis, *Monarchs*'}.

<sup>21</sup> Philip Gaskell, *Morvern Transformed: A Highland Parish in the Nineteenth Century* (London, 1968).

<sup>22</sup> Lisbet Koerner and David Brian Dick, *Corrour: A History of a Sporting Estate* (1998); John Kerr, *The Living Wilderness: Atholl Deer Forests* (Perth, 1996); Ian Murray, *The Dee from the far Cairngorms* (Ballater, 1999); Robert A. Lambert, *Contested Mountains: Nature, Development and Environment in the Cairngorms Region of Scotland, 1880-1980* (2001); Peter Wormell, *Pinewoods of the Black Mount* (Skipton, 2003).

Study of the environmental impact of deer forests and other forms of land use until the nineteenth century is a recent historiographical approach to Scottish history, initiated by Professor Christopher Smout, and has a far ranging research prospective, for historians and environmentalists alike. In *Scotland Since Prehistory*, contemporary historical evidence is compared with environmental data. John S. Smith's paper examines changing patterns of deer numbers in the Highlands since 1780, suggesting that they had been in steady decline until c.1800, a process latterly enhanced by the increase of sheep farming. Smith highlights the lack of detailed knowledge on this subject and points towards estate records as a source for examining it further. He notes that research of estate correspondence will enhance our knowledge of wildlife existing on sporting estates over the last 140 years.<sup>23</sup> Robert Dodgshon considers geographical and environmental aspects of estate development in the Highlands from the early modern period to 1820.<sup>24</sup> Environmental studies take this type of research out of the historical sphere alone and thereby provide an interdisciplinary approach.

In combining the existing research available on commercial deer forests we can begin to understand the potential of a detailed study on Blackmount. Thus, the primary objective is to research its history within the wider social, political and economic context during the nineteenth century, applying established historiographical and environmental approaches to Blackmount as a research area, and exploring the impact

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<sup>23</sup> John S. Smith, 'Changing Deer Numbers in the Scottish Highlands since 1780', 89-97, in T.C. Smout (ed), *Scotland Since Prehistory: Natural Change and Human Impact*, (Aberdeen, 1993). {Hereafter: Smith, 'Changing Deer Numbers'}

<sup>24</sup> Dodgshon: *Chiefs to Landlords*.

that Blackmount Forest may have had on the development of Scottish deer forests. Other historians state that the Campbells of Breadalbane were among the first Highland landowners to maintain their estates as shooting retreats for the aristocracy, with the third and fourth Earls being particularly active in this respect. Using estates in this way is said to have increased after Queen Victoria came north for her trips to Balmoral from the 1840s onwards.<sup>25</sup> Hence, there is scope for exploring the possibility that Blackmount was a role model for later estates, since it was recognised by a wider audience after being popularised by individuals such as Sir Edwin Landseer.

There is a scarcity of research on early modern forests, and their relationship with those developing in the nineteenth century. Willie Orr states that several earlier forests were stocked with sheep and cattle during the French wars.<sup>26</sup> My contribution here will be to examine this in detail, and to identify if Corrie Ba Forest ceased to be a forest at this particular time. Therefore, I shall identify, where possible, the Forest of Corrie Ba's early history and establish why it declined in the later eighteenth century, by placing emphasis on studying what happened there between then and 1820. In order to do so the political, social and economic developments around 1750, 1770 and 1790 are highlighted, with emphasis on a local industry, improvements and emigration.

The function and purpose of the earlier forests was somewhat different to the later ones. Highland landlords formerly enacted forest

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<sup>25</sup> Vance, 'Emigration Thesis', 72.

<sup>26</sup> Orr, *Deer Forests*, 28.



laws, through local courts, for the purpose of management in and around them. In 1767 the Earl of Breadalbane noted that persons found killing game on his grounds would be prosecuted according to local laws.<sup>27</sup> The older forest laws did not resurface when forests were later reformed anew, as parliamentary acts then protected landlords' interests. In both periods, hunting was an illegal practice for most, other than for some foresters who would follow set guidelines, or the aristocracy. Yet it was also a way of life for local populations and poachers as identified by Smith.<sup>28</sup> There is detailed primary evidence as to how the Campbells of Breadalbane tackled poaching and what they did to alleviate the problem.

The Campbells of Breadalbane often used their political power to achieve their aims through the courts. They won a legal dispute over the marches of the Forest of Mamlorne in the eighteenth century. During the 1840s the second Marquis initiated a dispute against drovers who had passed through Blackmount from 'time immemorial'. He succeeded in having their stance removed from Inveroran to Bridge of Orchy. At the same time he disputed with Campbell of Monzie on the marches of Stob a Coir Albannaich, but both landlords had to make compromises on who owned what. In the 1880s the landlord appealed over the valuation of Blackmount and managed to have it partially reduced.<sup>29</sup> These legal cases have not been researched in detail; thus, a detailed investigation of this theme can highlight the challenges that existed in managing a forest.

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<sup>27</sup> Orr, *Deer Forests*, 55.

<sup>28</sup> Smith, 'Changing Deer Numbers', 91.

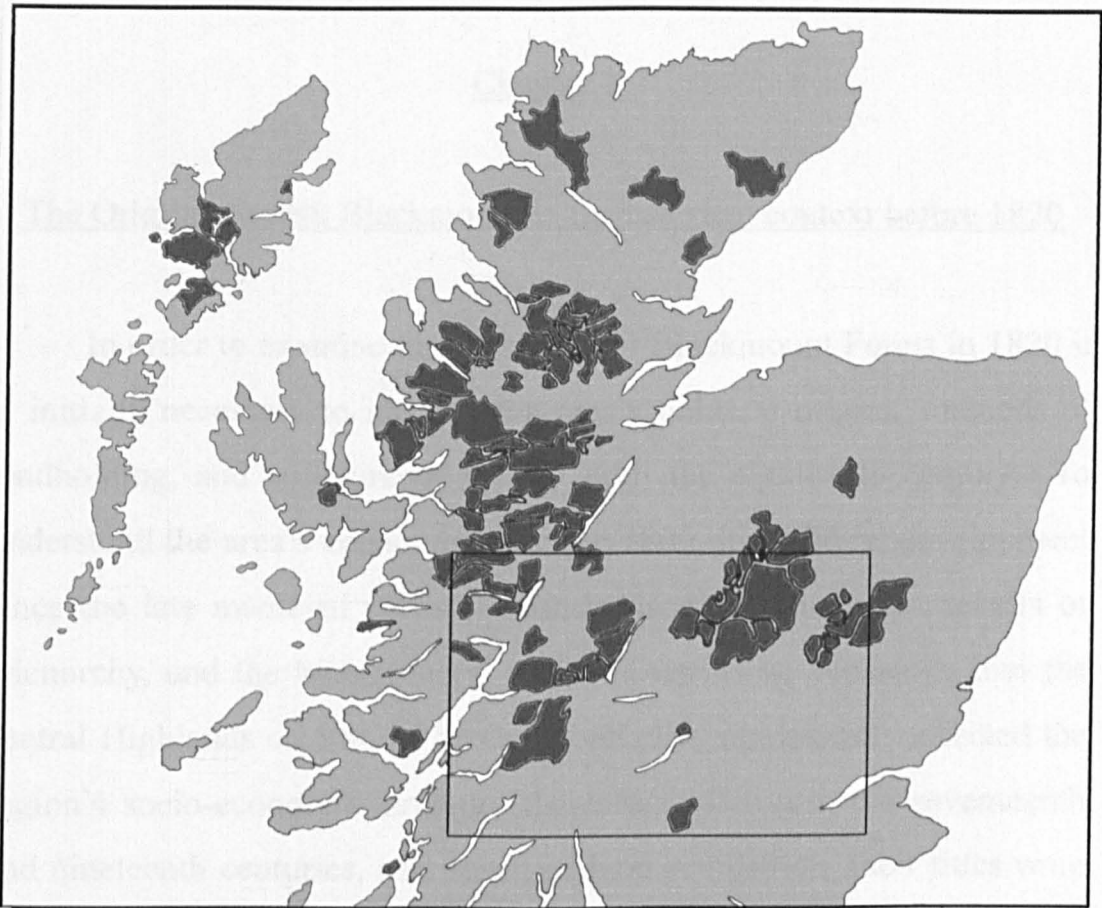
<sup>29</sup> These issues are covered in chapters 4 and 5.

As commercial forests began to increase in number, there arose criticism of social and economic conditions existing in the Highlands. The wealthy classes, and the aristocracy, were accused of regressing to a former state of human nature in the way they perceived the world. Man originated as a hunter, but commercial deer forests emerged to cater for sporting and no longer represented a means of survival.<sup>30</sup> When industrialisation came to the fore in British cities, c.1840, those who had generated wealth were workers on low wages, but their employers, who were entrepreneurs, reaped the benefits and several spent their riches to lease sporting estates. Cities became increasingly unhealthy, and many, mainly those in the middle classes, took vacation in the countryside, escaping from the towns and cities they created, and rural Highland areas were used for outdoor activities such as mountaineering from c.1890.

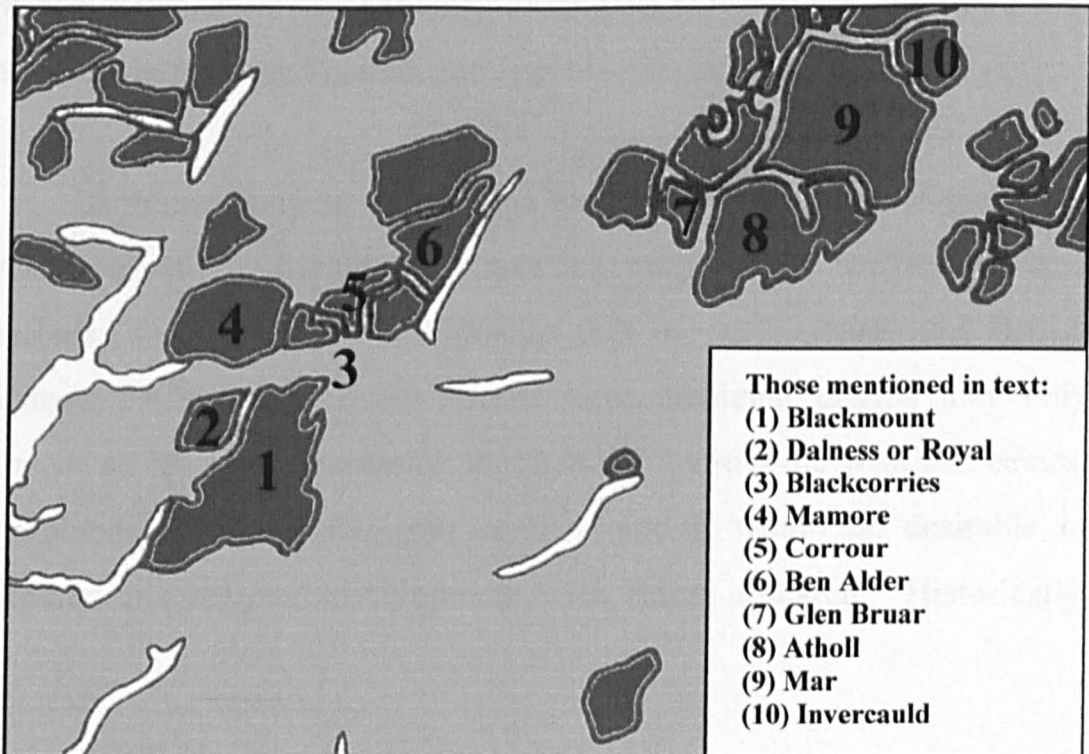
The use of Blackmount as a study area, and its relationship to the themes covered above, can serve to establish its relative significance in Highland history as a deer forest. The relationship with the political and religious ideologies of its landlords, particularly Lord Glenorchy who later became the second Marquis of Breadalbane in the nineteenth century, are also studied. The earlier forest emerged primarily for political control and leisurely use by the Campbells of Breadalbane, but was later re-developed and improved for commercial leasing to the aristocracy. Blackmount Forest had gained significant recognition by the mid-nineteenth century, but inadvertently became targeted for criticism along with other forests after it was let out wholesale.

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<sup>30</sup> Blackie, *Land Laws*; Robertson, *Deer Forests*.



(Map 1 - Deer Forests in the Scottish Highlands)



## Chapter 1

### The Original Forest: Blackmount in its historical context before 1820

In order to examine the formation of Blackmount Forest in 1820 it is initially necessary to identify the area's political origins, methods of landholding, and structure of society until the eighteenth century. To understand the area's economic history c.1800, its political development since the late medieval period is summarised. Both the Campbells of Glenorchy, and the MacGregors, achieved territorial expansion into the central Highlands c.1500.<sup>1</sup> The Campbell elite significantly affected the region's socio-economic structure thereafter. Between the seventeenth and nineteenth centuries, as a result of land acquisition, their titles were elevated from the lordship of Glenorchy, to earldom and later marquissate of Breadalbane. They not only controlled local affairs, but were also involved in both the Scottish and later British parliaments.

It is necessary to explore the extent to which some of their land was reserved for hunting and sporting purposes, in earlier and later periods, and the wider relationship this has to Scottish and British history. Although Scottish forests have medieval origins they only appear on record in increasing numbers throughout the west and central Highlands from the sixteenth century, and it would be desirable to explain this regional development with future research. Historically,

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<sup>1</sup> See below, p.28-29.

forests had been designated areas of mountainous land where exclusive rights of hunting were presumably being displayed by a landlord on approval from the crown. In taking Corrie Ba as a case study, tenants were allowed to continue grazing their livestock on their peripheries, and some fertile lower grounds were also being used for arable farming purposes.

Combining income generated from rentals, the Campbells of Breadalbane used forests to exploit their land politically, economically and environmentally. This represented part of Campbell ideology involving embryonic shifts towards improvement and commercialism of their estates; this was tied in with British unity achieved through the amalgamation of Scottish and English crowns in 1603, and parliaments in 1707. The Forest of Corrie Ba, on record from c.1600, can be compared with the sporting estate, Blackmount Forest, developing there during the nineteenth century. The area was adapted in both periods for the protection and pursuit of deer to serve an exclusive class within society. However, it becomes evident that the earlier Campbell of Breadalbane elite saw it necessary to employ foresters to primarily police the area around the Forest of Corrie Ba, against poachers, as part of the management practices they had adopted during the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries.

Although similarities exist with the way in which the Campbells of Breadalbane exploited the Blackmount area for hunting purposes in earlier and later periods, we need to assess why the area had not been used in that way continuously through time. This area of study, between

Loch Etive, Glen Etive, Glen Orchy and west Rannoch was also used for a pastoral economy, becoming mainly confined to sheep farming, during the later eighteenth century, when Corrie Ba ceased to exist as a forest.<sup>2</sup> A shift towards grazing alone suggests that hunting for sport there had become less fashionable, and sheep farming reached a peak, c.1770, due to economic demands then imposed on Highland estates.

More particularly, understanding why and when Corrie Ba was developed requires detailed analysis. Identifying this forest within the locality's social history shows that there had been conflicts over property of both land and animals. Tensions existed between what the dominant landlords saw as their exclusive hereditary rights and others had wished the land to represent. For many, hunting may have been still a means of survival, whereas landlords perceived it as a sporting privilege exclusive to themselves. Hence, the formation and development of forests were intended to regulate illegal hunting practices and incidences of trespass in specified areas. Inevitably, this caused more unrest and social instability in parts of the Breadalbane territory itself and adjacent districts. Foresters were employed to tackle the problem, and became involved in a system where demands on land resources were often in competition with each other.

Wider political events also significantly affected local stability in the hundred years until c.1750. Lochaber, with the regions of Argyllshire and Perthshire bordering it, including the Rannoch area, had been

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<sup>2</sup> Scrope, *Days of Deerstalking*, 308.

collectively perceived as the 'epicentre' of Highland disorder in the seventeenth century.<sup>3</sup> This was because of a lack of law and order, but also hunting and grazing restrictions imposed within forests resulted in the former unregulated practices were being made illegal. Regional justiciary courts show several examples, and forests became regulated and managed with local courts held in the Breadalbane estates until the mid-eighteenth century.<sup>4</sup> The Barons of Exchequer considered practices of poaching game as one reason why disorder prevailed in some of the former Jacobite estates.<sup>5</sup> Some challenges in managing forests are recognisable during the early modern and modern periods. Landlords attempted to alleviate this by policing them with foresters who were local tenants with a good knowledge of the areas they policed.

The British army named the Blackmount area when they built a military road through it, c.1750. This phase accelerated improvements already initiated by the Campbells of Breadalbane earlier that century. As already stated, we see another key phase, c.1770, when sheep farming production had reached a peak. From the last decade of the eighteenth century, major improvements were initiated in the Breadalbane Estates, brought on by wider political events, especially the Napoleonic wars lasting until 1815. However, before examining these phases during the later eighteenth to early nineteenth century, it is first necessary to briefly review how the area developed prior to then.

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<sup>3</sup> Macinnes, *Clanship, Commerce*, 47.

<sup>4</sup> John Cameron, (ed), *The Justiciary records of Argyll and the Isles*, 2 vols, II, (The Stair Society, 1949). {Hereafter: Cameron, *Justiciary Records*, SS}

<sup>5</sup> See below p.49-50.

Aquisition and management of the Breadalbane estates by c.1800

The Campbells of Glenorchy, later Breadalbane, had a phenomenal impact on the social, political and economic history of the west and central Highlands for nearly 500 years.<sup>6</sup> The territory they had acquired by the seventeenth century extended from Loch Etive in the west, to Kenmore, near Aberfeldy in the east. By 1794, the Breadalbane Estates in Perthshire and Argyllshire were described collectively as 'the greatest held by any subject superior in Europe'.<sup>7</sup> Although this was exaggerated, the land they possessed in the Highlands was unrivalled territorially. Strategies of expansion adopted by the Campbells in the later medieval period can be related to both local and wider politics. By then, they had become one of the most powerful clans in the Highlands because of their political affiliations with neighbours and their judicial role as agents to the Scottish crown; several historians have studied this phenomenon.<sup>8</sup> The Campbell family came to the area around Lorn from the thirteenth century, settling at Loch Awe. After the MacDougalls failed to support Robert I they lost the lordship of Lorn to the Stewarts who, similar to the

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<sup>6</sup> This family held the Glenorchy/Blackmount area from 1432-1928. The National Archives of Scotland, (NAS), holds an extensive collection of papers relating to the Campbells of Glenorchy, later Breadalbane; these are known as the Breadalbane Muniments, (GD 112). The correspondence also relates to local politics, accounts, estate improvements, factors' letters, petitions and other matters.

<sup>7</sup> William Marshall, *General View of the Agriculture of the Central Highlands* (1794), 23.

{Hereafter: Marshall, *Agriculture, Central Highlands*}.

<sup>8</sup> In recent years those who have made a detailed study of this include: Steve Boardman, 'The Tale of Leper John and the Campbell acquisition of Lorn', 219-247, in Edward J.Cowan and R. Andrew MacDonald, *Alba: Celtic Scotland in the Middle Ages* (East Lothian, 2000). {Hereafter: Boardman, 'Campbell acquisition of Lorn'}. Jane Dawson, 'The Origins of the 'Road to the Isles': Trade Communications and Campbell Power in Early Modern Scotland', 74-103, in R. Mason & N.MacDougall (eds), *People and Power in Scotland: Essays in honour of T.C. Smout* (Edinburgh, 1992). {Hereafter: Dawson, 'Trade, Communications and Campbell Power'}. Martin D. W. MacGregor, 'A Political History of the MacGregors before 1571' (Unpublished Ph.D. thesis, University of Edinburgh, 1989) {Hereafter: MacGregor, 'Political History'}.



Campbells, had recently moved into the area.<sup>9</sup>

Acquisition and expansion of territory from the fifteenth century by the Campbells was coupled with their heritable titles having originated. In 1432, Sir Duncan Campbell of Loch Awe granted the 80 merkland of Glenorchy to his son, Colin, who then became the first laird there. The MacGregors and Fletchers were already settled there and became clients to the Campbells of Glenorchy afterwards. In 1457, James II granted the earldom of Argyll to Sir Colin's nephew, also Colin, who became the first Earl there at his new base in Inverary.<sup>10</sup> These events combined begin to signify a distinction emerging between the Campbells of Argyll and the Campbells of Glenorchy; the latter eventually became the Campbells of Breadalbane by gaining more land, heritable titles and aristocratic status.

Their emerging identity as the Campbells of Breadalbane, began to become more apparent when the Campbells of Glenorchy had moved east into Breadalbane, via Glendochart, after the Albany Stewart regency collapsed in the fifteenth century. The MacGregors followed their expansion and took a route via Glen Lyon. Feuding between the Menzies and Stewarts over lands in Rannoch resulted in movement there by the Campbell/MacGregor alliance, c.1500. Both became the most dominant

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<sup>9</sup> John MacInnes, 'Gaelic Poetry and Historical Tradition', 142-161, in: *The Middle ages in the Highlands*, Inverness Field Club (Inverness, 1981), 151; G.W.S. Barrow, *Kingship and Unity* (Edinburgh, 1989), 112; Alexander Grant, *Independence and Nationhood* (Edinburgh, 1991), 209-10.

<sup>10</sup> *Black Book*, 10; Scots Peerage, Campbell, Earl and Marquess of Breadalbane (Edinburgh, 1905), 174-175. {Hereafter: Scots Peerage, II, 'Campbell of Breadalbane'}.

clans in the area, but their relationship later deteriorated.<sup>11</sup> The increasing power of the Glenorchy lairds, at the expense of the MacGregors, allowed them to become recognised as separate from the Campbells of Argyll.

Territorial acquisition was also achieved by political affiliations with neighbouring families to the west and north. In 1449, Sir Colin, first laird of Glenorchy acquired the 18 merklands of Braelorn by his marriage to Janet Stewart, daughter to John Stewart, the lord of Lorn. The Earl of Argyll aided the Stewarts in acquiring remaining MacDougall lands in Lorn, receiving a large share of this territory in return. However, Walter Stewart later became in debt to Earl Colin, and the Stewart presence had receded to the north side of Loch Creran after the Earl of Argyll was given the Lordship of Lorn by James III in 1470. Then, Sir Duncan, second laird of Glenorchy, was granted one third of the lands of Lorn from Earl Colin. This, with the 1432 acquisition, meant that the lairds of Glenorchy then held all of the lands from Glen Orchy to Glen Etive in the west.<sup>12</sup> The area is now known as the Blackmount Estate, the boundaries of which originated from territorial consolidation at that time.

The Campbell lairds of Glenorchy, and the Argyll Earls, bolstered their regional power with fortifications. Kilchurn Castle on Loch Awe was the Glenorchy Campbells' base from the fifteenth century, started after the first laird gained land there. His successors built bases at

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<sup>11</sup> MacGregor, 'Political History', 120-135; Scots Peerage, II, 'Campbell of Breadalbane', 175.

<sup>12</sup> Boardman, 'Campbell acquisition of Lorn', 238-247; MacGregor, 'Political History', 204.

Finlarig, near Killin, and Balloch, near Kenmore. Sir Duncan, seventh laird of Glenorchy, was a noted builder of fortified residences, including Achallader, built c.1600, near Loch Tulla. In the later fifteenth century the Campbells of Argyll also held Castle Gloom in Clackmannanshire. This allowed the family branches to keep in contact; with these bases and networks in place they had dominant political control in the region.<sup>13</sup> We can see that both adequate communications and bases were crucial to successful control of territory held by the Campbell chiefs.

The Campbells of Breadalbane, formerly titled in Glenorchy alone, had significant political influence both locally and in British terms. They, and the Campbells of Argyll, continued to inherit notable aristocratic titles within Scotland. The Earldom of Breadalbane existed from 1681, but the House of Argyll had this status since 1457. Their involvement in wider politics earned them further titles, especially after the treaty of Union with England in 1707. The Argyll Campbells were already conferred a dukedom by 1703, and the Breadalbane branch was created a marquissate by 1831.<sup>14</sup> Landlords possessing noble titles often displayed their large estates, amongst other functions, as places for hunting to serve themselves, their aristocratic peers and royal superiors. The Campbells were particularly active in this respect, and their status was partially gained from hunting restrictions they enforced on behalf of the crown, but mainly from the large areas of land they possessed.

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<sup>13</sup> Gillies *In Famed Breadalbane*, 135-6; Dawson, 'Trade, Communications and Campbell Power', 89.

<sup>14</sup> Eric Cregeen, 'The Changing Role of the House of Argyll in the Scottish Highlands', 5-23, in N.T. Philipson and Rosalind Mitchinson: *Scotland in the age of Improvement*, (Edinburgh, 1970), 6; Scots Peerage, II, 'Campbell of Breadalbane', 210.

Campbell ideology was clearly a dominant political and militaristic one. As crown agents, the Argyll chiefs had judicial control of the west and central Highlands, and attempted to curb disorder there since the late medieval period. From 1628-1748 they were hereditary justiciars of the west Highlands and Isles. The justiciary court at Inverary administered strict penalties, usually death, for many of the criminal cases heard there.<sup>15</sup> Similar to other Highland lairds the Campbells of Breadalbane exercised exclusive judicial powers, until the mid-eighteenth century, with a right to hold baron courts in the territories they possessed. The court records of Breadalbane show judicial administration on a local level from the sixteenth to eighteenth centuries.<sup>16</sup> These, and other family papers, show that forest courts were held particularly to protect them.

In the seventeenth century, Campbell territorial power in the west and central Highlands often agitated, rather than curbed, disorder. They were involved in external political and militaristic affairs, sometimes making them vulnerable to hostility. Both the Argyll and Breadalbane branches were Covenanters during civil wars in the 1640s, resulting in the destruction of much of their lands which were invaded by the Royalists.<sup>17</sup> The Campbells were particularly targeted from their neighbours because of their overarching power and differences in religious ideologies. The MacNabs who held the lands of Glendochart, and others in Breadalbane, became disinherited by the Campbells after

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<sup>15</sup> Cameron, *Justiciary Records*, SS, introduction.

<sup>16</sup> Gillies, *In Famed Breadalbane*, 253.

<sup>17</sup> Macinnes, *Clanship, Commerce*, 104-5; Macinnes states that much of the land in Lorn and Breadalbane was devastated with an estimated £800,000 in damage.

supporting the Royalists.<sup>18</sup> This allowed a further extension of power in the Breadalbane territory held by the Campbell lairds of Glenorchy. However, the wider political tensions continuing in later decades may have been partially responsible for local incidents of disorder that prevailed from c.1670-1690.

The first Earl of Breadalbane reacted to this problem by imposing stricter management policies in his forests. However, his career was complicated by the ways in which he changed his political loyalties. He favoured the Revolution in 1688/9 and was involved in events leading to the Massacre of Glencoe. The first Earl was imprisoned for Jacobite dealings in 1695, and openly supported the Jacobites in 1715, but was not attained due to old age.<sup>19</sup> His son was staunchly Hanoverian, as were the third and fourth Earls who followed the government in times of war and imperial expansion. The Campbells of Breadalbane had clearly understood how national affairs affected, or had the potential to affect, their estates both politically and from an economic sense.

They possessed exclusive rights of entail and land inheritance similar to other Scottish aristocratic family chiefs, but they encountered succession problems. In 1721, the second Earl's peerage was challenged, whilst his elder brother, Lord Ormelie, was considered incapable of succeeding. The third Earl had only one son who died at the age of six in 1727. Williema, Viscountess of Glenorchy, managed the estates after his

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<sup>18</sup> Gillies, *In Famed Breadalbane*, 98.

<sup>19</sup> Donaldson & Morpeth, *Dictionary*, 26; *Scots Peerage*, II, 'Campbell of Breadalbane', 207; *The House of Argyll and the Collateral Branches of the Clan Campbell*, (Glasgow, 1871), 135.

death in 1771.<sup>20</sup> Succession was passed to a cousin in 1782; this fourth Earl, first son to Colin Campbell of Carwhin, was the nearest male heir.<sup>21</sup>

Broken phases of proprietorship, and more involvement in wider British affairs, resulted in absenteeism amongst the Breadalbane chiefs and less willingness to manage their Argyllshire estates. The family's expansion eastward into Perthshire from the sixteenth century, resulted in their headquarters being moved to Balloch. This was the site on which Taymouth Castle was later built from the early nineteenth century. Thus, the Campbells of Barcaldine, who held lands and the castle of their name in the Benderloch district of Lorn, were appointed to manage the Argyllshire portion of the Breadalbane estates during the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries.<sup>22</sup> John Campbell of Invergeldie and Barcaldine, whose sons held lands in upper Glenorchy from the later seventeenth century, was a cousin to the first Earl of Breadalbane's father.<sup>23</sup>

We can identify how the Breadalbane estates generally provide, from the sixteenth century, some of the most detailed rental statistics in the Highlands.<sup>24</sup> The Campbells, in similarity to other large Highland landowners, held their territory by crown charters, and their subordinates did so either by use of a 'tack', when land was granted to a 'tacksman',

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<sup>20</sup> NLS: Hall 195.g - T.S. Jones, *The life of the Rt.Hon. Williema, Viscountess Glenorchy*, (London, 1824). {Hereafter: Jones, *Viscountess Glenorchy*.}

<sup>21</sup> Scots Peerage, II, 'Campbell of Breadalbane', 206-209; In the nineteenth century two individuals, both claiming inheritance, questioned the legitimacy of Carwhin's succession.

<sup>22</sup> The National Archives of Scotland holds an extensive collection of papers from the Campbell of Barcaldine family (GD 170); it contains correspondence on their involvement, and that of the Campbells of Glenure, in managing the Argyllshire portion of the Breadalbane estates from c.1700.

<sup>23</sup> Lorne Campbell, 'Duncan Ban's foster child' in: *Notes and Queries of the Society of West Highlands and Islands Research*, XVI, 1981, 8. {Hereafter: Campbell, 'Duncan Ban's foster child'}.

<sup>24</sup> Dodgshon, *Chiefs to Landlords*, 38.

usually a senior member of a clan or kindred, as leaseholder. This was an established practice in many Highland districts where principal tenants often leased a sizeable area of a chief's lands, and sublet them to several subtenants in agreement with the landlord.<sup>25</sup> In the Breadalbane estates tack arrangements involved senior members of the Campbell family, maintaining the use of legal charters, which varied in formality and detail between one district and another.

As well as adapting forests for organised hunting, the Campbells of Breadalbane allowed their tenants to farm with both pastoral and arable subsistence on their peripheries. Small areas of land, in both Glen Etive and upper Glen Orchy, were used in this way. One established form of tack tenure locally was 'steelbow', on record from at least the sixteenth century.<sup>26</sup> Tenants were supplied with stock, seed and implements, which were returned accordingly on expiration of their lease, and were obliged to hand over certain profits. Some steelbow tacks may have involved dealing with newly cultivated land.<sup>27</sup> The first Earl of Breadalbane used this form of tenure to increase production in his estates, and by 1681 two-fifths of his rents were invested in steelbow arrangements.<sup>28</sup> This was still used, or considered as an option, in parts of northern Argyllshire until the early nineteenth century.<sup>29</sup> Varying types of 'steelbow' existed from one area to another and periods of time.

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<sup>25</sup> Donaldson & Morpeth, *Dictionary*, 212.

<sup>26</sup> To explain: 'steel' means rigidly fixed, and 'bow' indicates a stock of cattle or quantities of grain.

<sup>27</sup> Dodgshon, *Chiefs to Landlords*, 63-4; Margaret H.B. Sanderson, *Scottish Rural Society in the Sixteenth Century* (Edinburgh, 1982), 22.

<sup>28</sup> Edward J. Cowan, 'Clanship and Campbell expansion in the time of Gilleasbuig Gruamach', TGSI, LVI, (1984-1986), 269-312. {Hereafter: Cowan, 'Clanship and Campbell expansion'.} Macinnes, *Clanship, Commerce*, 148.

<sup>29</sup> See chapter 2, p.149.

Evidently, agricultural areas around the early forests had been exploited for their economic potential. As the above evidence suggests there seems to have been more of an emphasis on the experimentation of land use for arable purposes. Presumably, this had little or no effect on the adjacent forests, as they existed on lower grounds in their peripheries. However, we cannot underestimate that pastoralism was as equal, if not a more fundamentally more important economy for both landlords and tenants alike. A more detailed analysis of how the early forests functioned, will furnish us with a clearer picture of these relationships in land use, particularly around the Forest of Corrie Ba.

Commercial trends introduced by the Campbell of Argyll and the Campbell of Breadalbane elite have set precedents for other Highland landlords. Macinnes states on Campbell policy: 'the phasing out of the tacksmen as managers of single townships suggests a fundamental shift away from traditionalism towards commercialism' in the later 1600s.<sup>30</sup> However, tacks were still used in upper Glenorchy and Glen Etive in the eighteenth century indicating that 'the phasing out of the tacksmen' there arrived relatively late.<sup>31</sup> It is appropriate to distinguish the differences that existed between the policies held by both the House of Argyll and the Campbells of Breadalbane by comparing the ways they exploited lands and the various commercial benefits they reaped from it.

A shift towards improvement had already begun in the sixteenth

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<sup>30</sup> Macinnes, *Clanship, Commerce*, 142-148.

<sup>31</sup> See below, p.54-55.



century, and by the Restoration in 1660 commercial development gained momentum, seen from an increase in the drovers' trade. Landlords were exploiting this economy to curb crippling debts after the Covenanters' wars. The first Earl of Breadalbane wadset some lands in Glenorchy as a means of income. Whereas, the House of Argyll used exclusive heritable jurisdictions to exploit industries such as fishing and slate quarrying.<sup>32</sup> As described later, the Campbells of Breadalbane continued to find ways of generating estate income throughout the eighteenth century. However, the following pages describe how and why they exploited mountainous areas of their estates as forests from the early modern period.

Before doing so it is necessary to summarise some of the other forests existing in the Highlands. From the late medieval period, Munro, High Dean of the Isles described that Jura had a 'fine forest for deire'. In 1695, Martin Martin's tour to north-west Scotland noted on the existence of large deer forests. In 1892, it was stated that the ancient forests of Atholl, Mar, Gaick and Glenfeshie, amongst other further north:

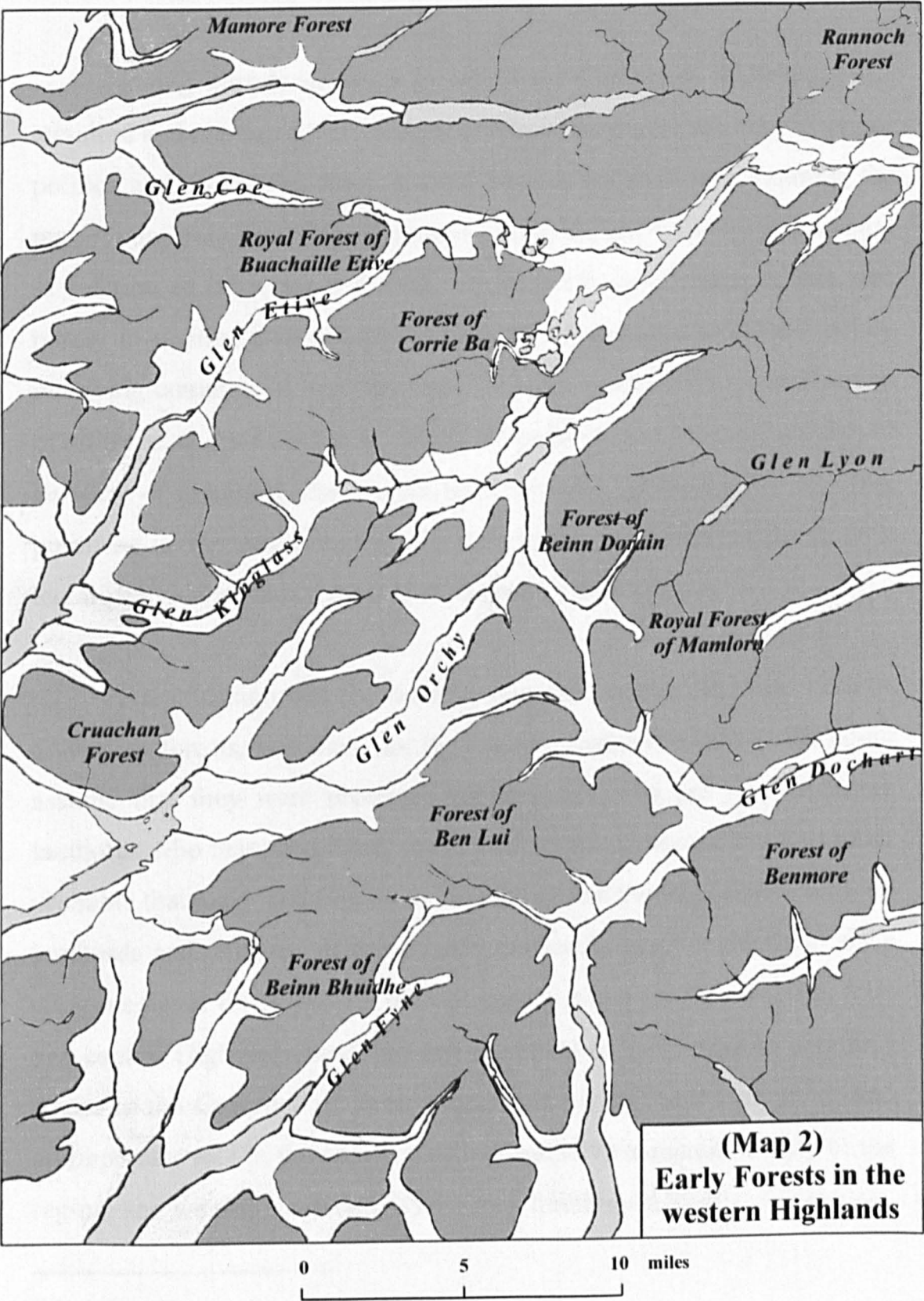
are precisely those of which we often find in the ancient authorities, the inference being that, from the earliest references down to the present day, these extensive tracts have been devoted to this form of occupation, from being unfitted, owing to their high situation, and rugged sterile character, for any other known profitable purpose.<sup>33</sup>

Thus, we shall now discuss if this was a pattern viewed locally.

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<sup>32</sup> Macinnes, *Clanship, Commerce*, 142-148.

<sup>33</sup> E. Weston Bell, *The Scottish Deerhound: with notes on its origins and characteristics*, (Edinburgh, 1892), 79.



### Management of Corrie Ba within the context of other local forests

Having introduced ways in which the Campbells of Breadalbane attained and managed their estates, and how they were affected by wider politics and economics from an early period, we shall now examine the purpose and function of the Forest of Corrie Ba, and how it was managed in relation to other local forests. It is worth considering if this was purely to control disorder, for leisure, or as part of a Campbell policy involving commercial exploitation. This was presumably a combination of all three, and we shall now follow these themes. However, we should be wary of assuming that Corrie Ba may have functioned for leisurely purposes in the sense that it did during the nineteenth century; only tentative evidence exists for this in the earlier period.<sup>34</sup>

Areas designated for hunting purposes within Scotland became known as forests, but were not necessarily clothed in trees. We could assume that they were protected for the exclusive use of aristocratic landlords who managed them, under their royal superiors, but it is more probable that many had functioned to distinguish the legal rights between landlords and tenants. Although they existed in parts of Scotland since early medieval times, forests did not appear much on record in the west and central Highlands, until the late medieval or early modern periods.<sup>35</sup> Those in the Campbell of Breadalbane and Argyll family territories had an important role in the social, political and environmental history of the region, and we shall now define how they functioned.

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<sup>34</sup> See below p.53.

<sup>35</sup> J.M. Gilbert, *Hunting Reserves*.

Early local forests are recognised in both Campbell of Argyll archives from the fifteenth century, and in surveys from the sixteenth century by Timothy Pont and others.<sup>36</sup> Some forests eventually became designated as 'royal', including those at Buachaille Etive and Mamlorn. These, and the forests at Beinn Dorain, Ben Cruachan, Ben More, Beinn Bhuidhe and Rannoch, can be examined from the early modern period. (Map 2) The Forest of Corrie Ba has unclear origins, and, clearer details of it do not emerge until c.1600. Part of it, on the Glen Etive side, was formerly called the Forest of Penniemore, shown in an inventory charter of 1470, mentioning one third of the lands in Lorn.<sup>37</sup>

Forests emerged in areas of non-arable unproductive land in the west and central Highlands, and became recognised for their hunting potential. Identifying when and how the earlier forests originated is particularly difficult, especially those in areas held by the Campbells of Argyll and Breadalbane. The Forest of Benmore, situated within the Lordship of Glendochart, is known to have existed from at least 1576, managed by the Campbells of Glenorchy. Other contemporary ones include Cruachan at the north end of Loch Awe, and Beinn Bhuidhe at the head of Loch Fyne with its headquarters based at Dundarave Castle.<sup>38</sup> Some local forests may have had earlier origins, but the point to emphasise here is that many only come on record during the sixteenth

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<sup>36</sup> Argyll Transcripts: Campbell of Argyll papers, 7 vols, Scottish History department, University of Glasgow {Hereafter: AT}; Sir Arthur Mitchell (ed), *MacFarlane's Geographical Collections*, 3 vols, II, SHS, 52, (1907), 536. {Hereafter: Mitchell, *MacFarlane's Geographical Collections*, SHS}.

<sup>37</sup> NAS, GD 112/2/107 – Titles of land in Lorn.

<sup>38</sup> AT, VII, 19-20, 282-4.

century. Thereafter these forests may have functioned to serve a renewed royal interest in hunting; this was certainly the case when James VI of Scotland and I of England took an interest in pursuing the white hind of Corrie Ba in 1622 as described later.

From 1597 the Earl of Argyll granted the hereditary keepership of the Forest of Cruachan to Sir Duncan of Glenorchy. Sir Duncan had encouraged stocking the forest with roe and red deer and to improve the land there. His obligations also involved imposing hunting restrictions to protect deer 'from all damage of shooting with gun or bow or slaying and destroying the same by hunting with dogs or sleuth hounds'.<sup>39</sup> Hence, local forests were managed by both branches of the Campbells, with policies to accommodate these mountainous regions with more deer, and to guard them from intruders. This also shows that the Campbell elite possessed exclusive rights over hunting in their respective estates.

The emergence, development and regulation of forests modified the landscape. Macgregor has stated on the Campbells of Glenorchy during the sixteenth century: 'The very landscape became a manifestation of their will'.<sup>40</sup> It was from later that century that measures to improve their lands began, especially by Sir Duncan, the seventh laird. He may have adopted unpopular policies and legal powers in his estates but they became one of the most well administered and law-abiding areas in

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<sup>39</sup> MacGregor, 'Political History', 265; NAS: GD 112/1/5/344; Cowan, 'Clanship and Campbell expansion', 272-273, (from O.P.S, II, 127, 155-6).

<sup>40</sup> MacGregor, 'Political History', 265.

Scotland at that time.<sup>41</sup> The Campbell landlords could display regional dominance through the very existence of the forests they managed. They adopted a system where foresters were employed to police their hunting grounds, and laws enacted through local baron courts allowed successive landlords, especially Sir Duncan, to administer power *effectively*.

Only certain groups were allowed to hunt in forests. Some of the MacGregors were traditionally given exclusive hunting rights; Malcolm, son of John the Black was allowed to hunt freely in Alba according to a poem dating between 1415-1440.<sup>42</sup> The fact that this poem boasted about these privileges shows that hunting restrictions were already in place in the region, even if actual Campbell managed forests did not exist until later. Pdraig mac Ghille-Choluim (MacGregor) was keeper of the Royal Forest of Mamlorn between 1457 and 1462.<sup>43</sup> This was a particularly early example of a local forest, and possibly shows that their emergence locally was not necessarily a novel creation by the Campbell lairds. The MacGregors settled at Achinnis Chailein, now Auch Farm, from an early period. James IV visited there in 1506 and hunted in the locality, whilst the Macleans of Lochbuie and Duart provided evening entertainment.<sup>44</sup> Achinnis Chailein was presumably then a hunting base for nearby forests.

Details of agrarian activities at Achallader, and its connection with

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<sup>41</sup> Cowan, 'Clanship and Campbell expansion', 274.

<sup>42</sup> Gilbert, *Hunting Reserves*, 232.

<sup>43</sup> A unified discussion of the local 'royal' forests is made from p.45-47.

<sup>44</sup> MacGregor, 'Political History', 157, 155 from: Mitchell, *MacFarlane's Geographical Collections*, II, SHS, 132 and n.338; Gilbert, *Hunting Reserves*, 44.

the adjacent Forest of Beinn Dorain, emerge in 1567, and it is here that priorities on hunting may have been focussed thereafter. A nineteen-year tack for the lands and 'house' of Achallader, and other nearby lands was given by Colin Campbell, the sixth laird of Glenorchy, to Archibald or 'Gill-easbuig' Campbell. He was to appoint a keeper for the Forest of Beinn Dorain who would 'hold and nourish as many deer in it as it may reasonably sustain'.<sup>45</sup> One of the Campbells at Achallader was retained as forester of Beinn Dorain to Sir Duncan, the seventh laird.<sup>46</sup> Evidently, the area was then managed by Campbell lairds, and although the origins of the jurisdictions they held over Beinn Dorain is unclear their successors had adapted this and other parts of their estates for hunting purposes.

The 1567 tack emerged after recent feuding by the MacGregors, as the lands of Achallader had been lain 'waste'. A ruling MacGregor died there in 1528 and the chiefs had a residence at Achallader before 1550, but their status, and occupation of it, was reduced thereafter.<sup>47</sup> The Fletchers, a MacGregor branch, lost political control there, between 1497 and 1523.<sup>48</sup> The MacGregors had formerly occupied the area; a Gaelic poem indicated that Eoin, son of Griogair came from 'bright shored Loch Tulla', and died in 1390.<sup>49</sup> Between 1547-1550 lands held by this family and others were passed onto the Campbells of Glenorchy. These included Ardvrecknish on its north shores and Coir' Orain to the south; to the west was Drumliart, Glenkinglass, and Letterdochart, and

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<sup>45</sup> *Black Book*, 409-10.

<sup>46</sup> Cowan, 'Clanship and Campbell expansion', 273.

<sup>47</sup> MacGregor, 'Political History', 45, 232, 360.

<sup>48</sup> NAS, GD 50/59 - John Fletcher, *The Fletchers of Achallader*, (unpublished volume), 6. This research states that some of their descendants still lived there three hundred years later.

<sup>49</sup> MacGregor, 'Political History', 35.

Glenceitlein in Glen Etive.<sup>50</sup> With these, and the 1432 and 1470 charters for Glenorchy and the one third of Lorn, Campbell land acquisition in northeast Argyllshire was almost complete by the mid-sixteenth century.

More forests, including the Forest of Corrie Ba, emerged after Campbell political dominance of the area was achieved. Sir Duncan, the seventh laird of Glenorchy, erected a fortified stronghold at Achallader by c.1600, and one of its functions may have been to serve as a hunting lodge or headquarters for the nearby forests at Beinn Dorain, Corrie Ba and Glen Ceitlein.<sup>51</sup> It protected the northern approaches of Sir Duncan's estates.<sup>52</sup> Its situation, on the southeast <sup>west?</sup> fringes of Rannoch Moor, was an important one strategically, but in 1603, the MacGregors attacked the 'house of Achallader', and other residences held by Sir Duncan. This may have prompted him to attempt in making hunting in the area more regulated, as ten years later, a local court listed individuals who stole deer from the Forest of Corrie Ba.<sup>53</sup> This is its first apparent mention on record, emerging because of recent events, but the exact origins are unclear. The tentative evidence existing at this time suggests that Corrie Ba was either under utilised or of little significance to the landlord who may still have focussed priorities towards nearby Beinn Dorain.

References to local hunting laws begin to emerge, showing the

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<sup>50</sup> *Origines Parochiales Scotiae* (O.P.S.), II, 142; *Black Book* – Feu Charters and tacks, 407.

<sup>51</sup> *Black Book*, 35; The particular document to which it refers does not chronicle Achallader Castle's date of construction, leaving a blank space. It was built at the cost of 1000 merks; *New Statistical Account of Scotland*, VII, (1845), 96.

<sup>52</sup> RCAHMS: Argyll, II, *Lorn* - 277: Achallader Castle, (1974), 171-174, *Black Book*, 35; some of the MacGregors were later tried and executed for burning Achallader: *Pitcairn's Criminal Trials*, III, 113-4, 232, 249.

<sup>53</sup> NAS, GD 112/17/1/2/10 – Note of those who stole deer from the Forest of Corrihaba, (1613).



landlord's aim to administer power. Game was strictly protected in Sir Duncan's Glenorchy estates, and tenants who sheltered poachers would be fined £20. They were obliged to make traps for killing wolves and to destroy the eggs and nests of carrion birds. He also encouraged the breeding of rabbits and fallow deer on Inshail, Loch Awe.<sup>54</sup> Whether these regulations were actually rigorously followed is unknown, but they do show that it was the landlord's intention to effectively govern in his estates. The emergence of forests demonstrates the Campbell policy of superior control over others, including adjacent landlords.

Tensions existed between Sir Duncan and a politically weaker neighbour, Colin Campbell of Glenlyon, whose hill pastures, bordered the Forest of Mamlorn. Sir Duncan was granted permission from the Privy Council to destroy any of the summer shielings built by Campbell of Glenlyon.<sup>55</sup> Although Sir Duncan had government approval to remove his neighbour's pasture grounds, it appeared that this had little effect, as the shielings continued to exist afterwards. This was the beginning of several disputes, lasting for the next two centuries, in the Mamlorn vicinity.<sup>56</sup> The existence of such disputes serves to show that conflicting interests existed between what different landlords had perceived their land should be used for.

Timothy Pont located some Highland forests in his topographical notes from the later sixteenth century. However, it is unclear if those

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<sup>54</sup> Cowan, 'Clanship and Campbell expansion', 272-273, from O.P.S, II, 127, 155-6.

<sup>55</sup> *ibid.*

<sup>56</sup> Disputes from the 1730s in the Forest of Mamlorn are discussed on p56-57.

recognised in the west and central Highlands can be attributed to him or Sir Robert Gordon, who annotated Pont's notes in the following century. The Forest of Beinn Dorain was described as being five miles in length; the adjacent Forest of Mamlorn, extending for ten miles, was the 'kings forrest', and very plentiful in deer. From 1617, James VI had given heritable rights of the Royal Forest of Mamlorn, with other listed lands, to the Campbells of Breadalbane<sup>Glenorchy</sup>; the first Earl was re-affirmed as hereditary keeper of Mamlorn in 1694.<sup>57</sup> This forest was presumably considered a particularly important one with its 'royal' status.

Why landlords preferred, or were possibly obliged, to have some of their forests recognised under the crown's auspices at this time is unclear. The presence of 'royal' forests indicated that the monarchy had exclusive authority over the hunting privileges in them, especially post 1603. Not only were the Campbells of Glenorchy hereditary keepers of the Royal Forest of Mamlorn, as the Royal Forest at Buachaille Etive was under the hereditary keepership of the Campbells of Argyll. Presumably, these landlords favoured the idea of their hunting lands being recognised as royal, possibly in return for increased status and political gain. Likewise, they could also give justification for restricting other activities there, probably those involving grazing livestock.

The reason for designated forests existing, especially those with 'royal' status, later becomes clearer. Although some had been defined as

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<sup>57</sup> Mitchell, *MacFarlane's Geographical Collections*, II, SHS; *Black Book*, 56.

Margaret M. MacArthur (ed), *1769 Survey of Lochtayside*, Scottish History Society, 3<sup>rd</sup> series, 27 (Edinburgh, 1936), ix {Hereafter: Macarthur, *1769 Survey of Lochtayside*, SHS}

crown lands forests were generally described by the Breadalbane lairds in the eighteenth century to have originated out of their remoteness:

That large tracts of ground, whereof there are many in the northern parts of Scotland, and which, by reason of the rigour of the climate, are uninhabitable, it has been thought more beneficial to have those mountains erected into a Forest, and to have the heritable office of the Forester under the crown, than to have the property of the lands; and that upon that account it was no uncommon thing for one to desire his property lands to be erected into a Forest, and to have the keeping of this new Forest, instead of the property of the lands.<sup>58</sup>

The Campbells of Breadalbane used this definition to their advantage, during a pasturage dispute with neighbouring landlords, arguing that there was no other economic use for the land.<sup>59</sup>

Until the early modern period all land was held under the crown, and they had authority over who could hunt in estates granted to the nobility. J.M. Gilbert has conducted extensive research on the hunting estates and royal forests existing in Scotland until the later medieval period.<sup>60</sup> His explanation of 'royal' forests is clear, but few had emerged on record in the west and central Highlands by then. Hence, we cannot assume these later 'royal' forests had the same function as those existing earlier elsewhere. There is extensive scope for an examination of this theme, but it appears that though several forests were 'royal' the crown

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<sup>58</sup> NLS, Nha.misc.157(1), Legal papers, *Petition and additional answers for John Earl of Breadalbane to the petition of James Menzies of Culdares and Angus Macdonald of Kenknock*, 11.

<sup>59</sup> See below, p.56-57.

<sup>60</sup> J.M.Gilbert, *Hunting Reserves*.

no longer held jurisdiction over them by the late eighteenth century.<sup>61</sup>

Although the Forest of Corrie Ba was not recognised as 'royal', the crown had some authority on hunting in it during the seventeenth century. This is seen in 1622 when the Earl of Mar had informed the king about a white hind he had spotted there. In February that year, James VI sent an English hunting trio led by John Skandever to pursue it, and, although they came within sight of the white hind they did not manage to fulfil their duty to the king.<sup>62</sup> Since this deer was never caught the incident was popularly remembered, and when the forest became re-developed as a commercial estate during the nineteenth century stories of another white deer being spotted in the vicinity were emerging.<sup>63</sup> This theme links the earlier and later forests towards an emerging fame and recognition for Blackmount amongst sporting circles.

Landlords faced challenges from poachers and individuals who grazed their animals in forests, as well as coping with disorder. Evidence of judicial attempts to curb these problems in the local forests is seen in baron court records, which provide a particularly useful source of how local forests were policed. Although these are available for parts of the Perthshire estates, few seem to exist for Argyllshire. The 1613 account of those poaching deer from the Forest of Corrie Ba is one exception.<sup>64</sup> The regional justiciary courts dealt with incidents involving offences

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<sup>61</sup> Orr, *Deer Forests*, 52.

<sup>62</sup> *Black Book*, 58; Sir James Fergusson of Kilkerran, 'The White Hind', 97-118, in: *The White Hind and other essays*, (London, 1963).

<sup>63</sup> See chapter 3, p.209.

<sup>64</sup> NAS, GD 112/17/1/2/10 – Note of those who stole deer from the Forest of Corrihaba, (1613).

beyond control of local baron courts, or where none existed. Offences allegedly committed in the Forest of Benmore in 1679 were heard in the justiciary court at Inverary. The forester there, Donald McIlvain, was accused of killing deer without his superior's permission, and of receiving stolen livestock and harbouring them in the forest, but he was acquitted of theft. John Campbell was fined £40 Scots after confessing to pasturing his livestock in the Forest of Benmore.<sup>65</sup> The Rannoch barony courts also recorded offences involving poaching by tenants settled there; fines and banishment were threatened to those who hunted deer illegally. Poachers killed approximately a hundred deer when they moved out of Rannoch Forest, following a severe storm in early 1684.<sup>66</sup>

The religious instability existing throughout Scotland during the 1670s –1680s affected the Highlands, and since central authority lacked in strength during that period local landlords found it difficult to curb general problems of poaching. James, Duke of York, the future James VII had taken draconian measures in administering authority in Scotland, and since the Highlands were predominantly pro-Stewart at that time many individuals saw it as their right to vent their discontent against both the pro-Hanoverian Campbells of Breadalbane and the House of Argyll. The Privy Council in Edinburgh admitted they had lost control of governing the Highlands by 1679, and sent troops to guard the passes from the Highlands/Lowlands to prevent trouble spilling south.<sup>67</sup>

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<sup>65</sup> Cameron, *Justiciary Records*, I, SS, 109.

<sup>66</sup> Dodgshon, *Chiefs to Landlords*, 98; From GD 50/135, Barony Court Books – Menzies and Rannoch, 25<sup>th</sup> March 1684.

<sup>67</sup> David Stevenson, *Alasdair MacColla and the Highland problem in the seventeenth century*, (Edinburgh, 1980), 287.

Already, the Campbells of Breadalbane appeared to have taken measures to curb poaching. The Forest of Corrie Ba was one where deer had been protected from poachers and trespassers. In 1687, John MacIntyre, residing at Blaraven was commissioned as forester to protect the southern side of this forest 'in order to keep off broken men and destroyers of deer'.<sup>68</sup> A similar role existed for Alexander Campbell, keeper of the 'brae watch' at Loch Dochart. In 1674, he apprehended two individuals, in possession of stolen animals, at the Larig Dochart.<sup>69</sup> In the previous year, Angus McInlester (Fletcher) of Bracklett harboured stolen cattle and horses in the Forest.<sup>70</sup> Thus, it became necessary to police the area during unstable periods, especially when central administration was particularly weak.

Evidence of this role is seen again during the following century. Malcolm MacIntyre, forester of Corrie Ba residing at Glenceitlein, was given licence to carry arms as forester there during 1745. His warrant would protect the Forest from intruders and allow him to apprehend any individuals carrying arms there, or those who might disturb any deer. His warrant was appended with a certification three years later, giving him special licence to carry weapons.<sup>71</sup> The Disarming Act, following the recent Jacobite rebellion in the Highlands, would have otherwise made it

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<sup>68</sup> *Black Book*, Feu Charters and Tacks - 426.

<sup>69</sup> Cameron, *Justiciary Records*, I, SS, 42; Larig Dochart is the pass north of Loch Dochart, leading towards others in Glen Etive, mentioned in: Duff Hart Davis, *Monarchs of the Glen*, (London, 1978), 130. {Hereafter: Davis, *Monarchs of the Glen*}

<sup>70</sup> Cameron, *Justiciary Records*, I, SS, 28.

<sup>71</sup> NAS, GD 170/3357 – Warrant, 1745, and certification, 1748 for Malcolm MacIntyre, forrester of Corrichyba in Argyllshire. Glenceitlein is situated five miles from the head of Corrie Ba; however, the Forest of Corrie Ba presumably extended westwards towards Glenceitlein at that time.

difficult for MacIntyre to continue his task during such a turbulent period. Hence, foresters were employed to police the territories they served from poachers as well as encouraging deer numbers.

During the 1750s the Barons of Exchequer ordered factors, serving on the forfeited Jacobite estates, to continue prohibiting Highland dress and to observe that the Disarming Acts were still being employed there. Linked with this, they were instructed to discourage poaching of game:

You are likewise to be attentive to the execution of laws for the preservation of game against such inhabitants of the estate under your management as may transgress the same, because the habit of poaching is an inducement to idleness, and keeps up amongst the people the use of and the desire of having arms.<sup>72</sup>

James Small, the factor at the forfeited estate of Strowan in Rannoch, stated that no gamekeeper was present, but the landlord had formerly employed a forester there to kill roe and red deer.<sup>73</sup> Evidently, poaching was linked to disorder in Highland estates, as its continuation encouraged the retention of weapons. The practice could only be terminated with adoption of rigorous game management policies; however, it may have been tolerated in many estates when resources were plentiful.

Agrarian practices continued on the settled areas of Loch Tulla and Glen Etive, without the Forest of Corrie Ba affecting them to any great extent. Grazings were abundant there, c.1600, when Sir Duncan seventh

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<sup>72</sup> NAS, E723/1: Forfeited Estates, reports to king and treasury, (1755-1761).

<sup>73</sup> NAS, E783/84/(1-20) – Strowan: Reports by James Small, Factor, (1755-1775).

laird of Glenorchy was landlord. The settlements of Clashgour, Blaraven, Drumliart, Achallader and Ardvrecknish were stocked with cattle, sheep, horses and goats. Many were at Achallader, showing that much of the former 'waste' ground there was used for pasturage.<sup>74</sup> Rather than assuming the Campbells of Breadalbane were the first to farm the area, it may have been neglected, possibly because it was used intensively to a point where it had been exhausted prior to then, thus being overlooked for several years. The term 'waste' ground may indicate that Achallader was destroyed due to attack, as it was by the MacGregors in 1603.

It is difficult to scale the extent to which activities around the Forest of Corrie Ba in the seventeenth century may have been expanding at the expense of existing agrarian practices. Nevertheless, the first Earl generated estate income on its periphery in 1682, when the castle and lands of Achallader, with Barravurich and Breacklate, had been wadset to John Stewart of Ballachulish for 7500 merks.<sup>75</sup> Six years later a valuation for Glenorchy and Inishail shows that £205 6s 8d were drawn from rentals there.<sup>76</sup> Comparing this with the combined rentals in that district, totalling £1656, shows that a thriving community existed at the head of Glenorchy, and that forest activities co-existed with farming. However, closer examination of particular settlements located nearer Corrie Ba, indicates that the landlord had put measures in place to avoid resistance

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<sup>74</sup> Dodgshon, *Chiefs to Landlords*, 175; from NAS: GD 112/12/1/2/1 – The Soums of Glenorchy in Sir Duncan's Time. ('Souming' described the proportion of cattle a tenant could keep on common ground).

<sup>75</sup> NAS, GD 50/184/7 – Campbells of Achallader (Source: Register of Sasines in Argyllshire, fol 352, 10<sup>th</sup> December 1680).

<sup>76</sup> Argyll County Archives: AGN 470-498, Book of valuation of Argyllshire.



or interference in forest activities by tenants or poachers.

This is evident from John MacIntyre's commission in 1687 when farming restrictions written into it; he resided at the shieling of Blaraven, but was not allowed to have any other shielings, or to pasture his stock elsewhere.<sup>77</sup> Estate policy shows that forest activities expanded at the expense of tenants; this is a pattern seen again from c.1820.<sup>78</sup> The 1687 commission also gives tantalising clues with regard to the Forest's extent by then, and there are indications that it had recently expanded. Presumably, the southern limits encompassed the area west of Loch Tulla. However, when the Forest of Corrie Ba was surveyed c.1710, its bounds were more clearly described. Of particular interest was a proposal then to expand the Forest on the Glen Etive side, incorporating Glenceitlein, thus converting the whole area to its former land use. Hence, this shows that Corrie Ba had at some stage reduced in size, possibly because of other land use on its boundaries or more priority directed to adjacent forests.<sup>79</sup>

Indeed, from the early 1700s forest activities were focussed further south at Mamlorn and Beinn Dorain where stipulated rules were set out regarding deer management practices. In 1710, John MacNab, in his appointment as forester of Mamlorn, was required to kill eight deer

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<sup>77</sup> *Black Book*, Feu Charters and Tacks - 426.

<sup>78</sup> This theme is discussed in chapter 2 from p.137-144.

<sup>79</sup> NAS, GD 112/16/11/6/1 – Rental of the Forest of Corroichiba in case the earl of Breadalbane's friends do think it fit to set it for rent, c.1710.

{Hereafter: 'NAS, GD 112/16/11/6/1- proposed Forest rental, c.1710'}.

between May and November annually, and send them to Taymouth.<sup>80</sup> At Beinn Dorain, Duncan Campbell was paid twenty merks for managing the forest there in 1721, with obligations involving administration of forest laws, and protecting deer within its bounds; from here, six deer were to be hunted for the landlord.<sup>81</sup> Evidently, the direct duty of these foresters was to kill deer on the landlord's behalf, but comparing this with earlier periods shows that they were required to undertake numerous other roles through time.

Corrie Ba functioned relatively low key compared to other nearby forests during the early eighteenth century. In a letter book, the first Earl of Breadalbane stipulated some forest regulations for Mamlorn, Beinn Dorain and Corrie Ba. The management practices of the other two were described in more detail, but it was briefly stated that 'the forest of Corichbay to serve the family when att the castle or when the earl pleas to dispose of the deer'.<sup>82</sup> Clearly, this shows that it was not fully used then, and was only being hunted in at certain times. This may have been due to low deer numbers, possibly as a result of poaching. Alternatively, it may have been the landlord's policy to encourage an increase in deer numbers with the aim that it could be leased out in future. 'Corichbay' was a relatively small forest at that time, and since drovers passed through the area there must have been competing interests regarding grazing use. We can make some assessment of estate priorities in this

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<sup>80</sup> NAS, GD 112/41/3 – Breadalbane letter book, 1708-16: (138), The regulation of forests of Mamlorn, Bendoran and Corichebay. {Hereafter: 'NAS: GD 112/41/3 – Breadalbane Letter Book, 1708-1716, 138 - forest regulations'}.

<sup>81</sup> NAS, GD 112/10/1/3/22 -Tackduty of Duncan Campbell; GD 112/10/1/3/18; GD 112/10/1/3/21.

<sup>82</sup> NAS, GD 112/41/3 – Breadalbane Letter Book, 1708-1716, 138 - forest regulations; the castle referred to here was the one at Achallader.

respect, as is done so in the following pages.

Corrie Ba indeed appears to have been recognised as having some economic potential; however, developing it would presumably affect the tenants who pastured their livestock in the locality. A closer examination of the survey from c.1710 highlights not only its proposed expansion, but also shows the landlord's intention to assess the Forest's value for possible rental to friends. By then, several other corries were listed with three areas of settled land surrounding them. The lands of Ardvrecknish and Blaraven, with the hills and corries on the western side of Corrie Ba, were valued at £60. The second area, covering the southern end of the Forest, included the lands at Clashgour, Arachan and Leitir Dhochard, with adjacent corries, valued at £20. Glenceitlein and nearby corries at the Forest's western end were valued at £33 6s 8d. The foresters' total wages were estimated at £90, indicating that several employees would be required for it to be a success. Comparing this with a rental income of £113 6s 8d would leave the landlord a profit of £23 6s 8d.<sup>83</sup> Whether the Forest was actually marketed at this time is unclear, and if it were competing interests over grazing would have certainly increased.

A lack of detailed knowledge on Corrie Ba, c.1700, leads us to examine the lands in the forest's periphery, rented to Campbell kindreds. In 1705, Robert Campbell of Blairmore, later Kintraw, was set for life the lands of Clashgour and Ardvrecknish with their adjacent shieling grounds covering Leitir Dochard and Arkine. In 1714, he had received

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<sup>83</sup> NAS, GD 112/16/11/6/1 - proposed Forest rental c.1710.

Drumnachaise in Glen Etive, and was then described as the principal tenant of Clashgour and Arkine.<sup>84</sup> In 1736, tacks between 15 to 19 years were granted for lands in Upper Glenorchy, Glen Etive and alongside Loch Etive to Patrick Campbell of Barcaldine. His 19-year tack of Clashgour, Leitir Dochart and Arkine, for 200 merks, also included the 'Grazings of Corrie Ba'.<sup>85</sup> This indicates that pasturage continued there, but actual forest activities existing then were not mentioned, showing priorities being focussed on generating income from grazing livestock.

The Forest of Beinn Dorain was still being used until the mid-eighteenth century. The Gaelic bard, Duncan Ban MacIntyre, born in Upper Glenorchy in 1724, is thought to have been a forester there, and under forester at Mamlorne. No dates are provided to substantiate this, but a Duncan MacIntyre was certainly present at the Forest of Beinn Dorain in the 1760s, and was witness to an incident of trespass there.<sup>86</sup> Whether this is the same individual is unclear, but Duncan Ban's songs provided ample evidence that he hunted in the vicinity, best remembered in his *Praise of Beinn Dobhrain*. Likewise, in his *Song to a gun called Nic Coseim*, he referred to specific land features in and around Corrie Ba, and in Glen Etive. Angus MacLeod, who recently edited Duncan Ban's works stated: 'Probably the duty of providing for a wife and young family, either in Dalness of Claisgour, made heavy demands on the

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<sup>84</sup> Campbell, 'Duncan Ban's foster child', 8; The Clan Campbell: Abstracts of entries relating to the Campbells in the sheriff books of Argyll at Inverary, (Edinburgh, 1915), 20.

<sup>85</sup> NAS, GD 112/10/1/3/73&74 – Tacks for Clashgour and Kinlocheteive – The commissioners for the Earl of Breadalbane to Patrick Campbell of Barcaldine, 1736.

<sup>86</sup> NAS, GD 170/3487 – Document relating to scaring of black cattle with dogs out of the Forest of Mamlorn in 1761, mentioning Duncan MacIntyre.

roving bard and hastened his departure'.<sup>87</sup> However, Duncan Ban disliked the Campbell policy where sheep were introduced to the area during the later eighteenth century, and this may have motivated his moving to Edinburgh to join the city guards there.

Management of local forests sometimes resulted in disputes with other landlords in the absence of accurate maps and clearly defined boundaries. This phenomenon emerged in the 1730s over the marches of the Royal Forest of Mamlorn; the second Earl of Breadalbane challenged neighbouring landlords, Menzies and Culdares, on pasturing practices they adopted on its periphery. The dispute resulted in detailed maps of this forest's boundary being drawn up in 1732 and 1735.<sup>88</sup> Litigation was lodged in the Court of Session and the House of Lords between 1738-1744.<sup>89</sup> Clearly, tensions existed between the Campbells of Breadalbane, and other neighbouring landlords towards what they perceived the land should exist for. Legal proceedings were deemed necessary between both parties in order to settle the debate over grazing rights, and it appeared that the second Earl of Breadalbane had won the case.

Evidence of this exists from local court books for the Forest of Mamlorn, which give details the of management practices adopted there. John Campbell, younger, of Achallader was appointed as deputy keeper

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<sup>87</sup> Angus MacLeod (ed), *The Songs of Duncan Ban MacIntyre*, Scottish Gaelic Texts Society, IV, (Edinburgh, 1952), xxiv-xxvii, 197-227; 227-230; NAS: GD 170/3487 – Campbell of Barcaldine.

<sup>88</sup> NAS, RHP 566: Plan of the Forest of Mamlorne, David Downie, (1735); RHP 568: Plan of the Forest of Mamlorne, Colin Foster, (1732).

<sup>89</sup> NAS, GD 112/59/33/11 – Details of dispute, Forest of Mamlorne; NLS, Nha.misc.157(1), Legal papers, *Petition and additional answers for John Earl of Breadalbane to the petition of James Menzies of Culdares and Angus Macdonald of Kenknock*. (one of a series of five pamphlets on the dispute)

of it in 1744. The grazing of cattle, sheep, horses and pigs within its bounds was strictly prohibited, and Campbell was empowered to seize animals that entered the area.<sup>90</sup> In theory, this gave the Campbells of Breadalbane unrivalled rights against the wishes of their neighbours in Glen Lyon. However, the fact that many incidences exist where grazers continued to pasture their livestock in the disputed area suggests that the litigation was ineffective in the short term. In the longer term Campbell of Achallader was successful, but his role was one that involved gaining understanding of the conflicting use of resources, and taking appropriate action on neighbours that trespassed onto the Breadalbane Estate.

Conflicting interests in land use are also evident in the periphery of the Forest of Corrie Ba. In 1725, Robert Campbell of Kintraw, based at Clashgour Farm, was accused of hindering the Forest's improvement.<sup>91</sup> But two years earlier, the Earl of Breadalbane made interesting comments on the various functions it served. Then it was described as ten to twelve miles in length, with broad glens and shelter, thus providing a good situation for highland drovers. He stated that grass growing there in the summer could feed nearly 2000 cows. The Forest was compared with the one at Beinn Bhuidhe; both were estimated to be the same size, but Corrie Ba provided a much larger area for grazing.<sup>92</sup>

Evidently, the area was then also being used to generate income

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<sup>90</sup> NAS, GD 112/59/58 – Court Book for Mamlorne Forest, from 7<sup>th</sup> November 1744.

<sup>91</sup> NAS, GD 112/14/13/5/10 – Memorial for the Earl of Breadalbane, (29<sup>th</sup> July 1725).

<sup>92</sup> NAS, GD 112/14/13/5/5 – Memorial, Earl of Breadalbane with his remarks on the sederunts and county affairs, March 1723; Beinn Bhuidhe, described then as 'Banebuy' is the hill and former forest at the head of Loch Fyne: OSGR – NN204188.

from drovers as a place where their cattle could be rested. A rental for 1727-8 shows the 'Grazings of Corrie Ba' were rented for £100.<sup>93</sup> This, in contrast to the Forest of Mamlorn, shows that different policies were being adopted around Corrie Ba. It is clear that its location was a crucial for both drovers, who grazed their livestock, and the landlord; but at Mamlorne, the second Earl was not receiving any income from the neighbouring landlords' grazers. Thus, he saw it as his right to impose measures that recognised his control over others where it involved use of the land on his estates.

The southern periphery of Corrie Ba was a focal point for passing trade and droving traffic, presumably for centuries before then. A survey of routes and inns between Callander and Fort William, dating between 1724-c.1740, attributed to the period when General Wade was in the Highlands, described 'Corichebae', the area between Achallader and Glencoe, as a forest. This sketch located various inns and stopping points on the route, including a good inn at or near Achallader.<sup>94</sup> In 1710, mention of a change house at Derrybeg on the north shores of Loch Tulla, indicates that this was the inn the survey later referred to. The Earl of Breadalbane instructed Hugh Campbell, officer of Glenorchy, that no tenants or cottars at 'Auchiniscallen or Breaklete' could brew or sell any whisky, brandy or ale.<sup>95</sup> The inns at Kingshouse and Inveroran were built on either side of the Blackmount later that century to provide lodgings for soldiers, drovers and other travellers.

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<sup>93</sup> NAS, GD 112/14/13/5/10 – Memorial for the Earl of Breadalbane, (29<sup>th</sup> July 1725).

<sup>94</sup> NLS, MS 58(m), Sketch of proposed road from Callander to Fort William, Wade Collection, Map department.

<sup>95</sup> NAS, GD 112/41/3 – Lord Breadalbane letter book, p.132, (11<sup>th</sup> June 1710).

Increased rentals for farms surrounding the Forest of Corrie Ba, by 1728, indicate shifting land management practices where the priorities in reserving parts of it for deer, since the seventeenth century, were possibly being replaced by an increased emphasis on pastoral farming. (Appendix 1/1) These farms were not only being grazed, but also used for sowing, mainly oats and bere, showing that even townships on the fringes of Rannoch Moor had then been exploited for their agricultural potential.<sup>96</sup> The landlord sought to increase profitability from higher rentals, as competitive bidding for farms was taking place there, but the effect this had on specific localities is unknown. In 1729, the ground officer was instructed to warn all tenants of possible eviction, but to offer the present possessors first choice during bidding.<sup>97</sup> Evidently, the cattle market was then a lucrative business for tenants with capital, and the landlord.

Research by Macinnes also shows that the eighteenth century was one in which commercialisation of Highland estates was well advanced, even before the defeat of the Jacobites in 1746. Their economies were based on the cattle trade, especially after the union of 1707.<sup>98</sup> Drovers from Inverness-shire and the Hebrides commonly passed Blackmount's eastern periphery. The use of resting places there that century can be interestingly compared with a dispute emerging during the 1840s over 'stance rights'.<sup>99</sup> The cattle trade was beneficial to earlier Highland

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<sup>96</sup> Dodgshon, *Chiefs to Landlords*, 180-182.

<sup>97</sup> NAS, GD 112/14/13/5/16 – Memorial, Breadalbane and Glenorchy, 1729.

<sup>98</sup> R.H.Campbell, *Scotland since 1707: The rise of an industrial society*, 34-35, (Edinburgh, 1985). {Hereafter: Campbell, *Scotland since 1707*}.

<sup>99</sup> This is discussed in chapter 4, p.263-287.



landlords, and there is little evidence that it interfered with local forest activities during the eighteenth century. As already stated, drovers were allowed to graze their livestock in Corrie Ba in the 1720s, and this generated estate income.

The Breadalbane chiefs were also exploiting natural resources throughout the eighteenth century, especially in their Argyllshire estates. The second Earl had encouraged the development of cottage industries such as spinning and weaving.<sup>100</sup> Trees cleared for sale was profitable in the Glenorchy area where woodlands were felled on an extensive scale, c.1730; land was leased to an Irish company who felled trees for sale and export. However, they were later accused of illegally cutting down many of the fir trees in the district, but complained that local tenants were responsible for this.<sup>101</sup> The Breadalbane landlords also took particular interest in mining in parts of their estates. Ores were being extracted, such as lead, from Tyndrum by Sir Robert Clifton from the 1740s.<sup>102</sup>

These commercial schemes had been initiated in the Breadalbane estates to generate an increased and regular income for the Campbell landlords' lavish lifestyle. In continuing to manage their local forests effectively, it was deemed necessary to control land use amongst tenants, neighbours and passing drovers. Rather than being perceived for its commercial potential, the Forest of Corrie Ba, amongst others, existed as

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<sup>100</sup> Gillies, *In Famed Breadalbane*, 187-193.

<sup>101</sup> NAS, GD 112/64/22/14 – Campbell of Carwhin's nephew's report of the earl of Breadalbane's affairs in Argyllshire, (1728). Some Irish tenants resided in Upper Glenorchy. One of these was Roger Murphy, at Drumliart, who in 1732 was tried for murdering Francis Galbraith at Dalmally Inn. This is described in: Cameron, *Justiciary Records*, II, SS, 452-463.

<sup>102</sup> Gillies, *In Famed Breadalbane*, 187.

an area where the Campbells of Breadalbane were compelled to employ tenants to police them. After the family had moved into Perthshire it had become increasingly difficult for them to single-handedly manage a part of their estate they no longer lived on, thus other Campbell kindreds were employed to facilitate this task.

### Management and estate reorganisation in the later eighteenth century

Having discussed Corrie Ba within the context of other forests, and local estate practices until the mid-eighteenth century, we can now move onto an analysis of management later that century. Estate reorganisation and improvement required officials such as factors, and local ground officers employed to manage local affairs and to administer tenancies in the Campbell of Breadalbane lands during the eighteenth century. A chamberlain served as a treasurer and factor for a landlord, managing the proprietor's household affairs, and having judicial powers as bailiffs. Colin Campbell of Carwhin was factor and chamberlain in Argyllshire for the second Earl of Breadalbane since at least 1727.<sup>103</sup> Captain Archibald Campbell was the chamberlain for Argyllshire until 1778.<sup>104</sup> John Campbell of Lochend, residing at Ardmaddy on Loch Etive, held this position for Glenorchy and Nether Lorn, c.1790.<sup>105</sup>

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<sup>103</sup> NAS, GD 112/64/22 – Correspondence between Colin Campbell of Carwhin and the earl of Breadalbane's commissioners, 1727-29; GD 112/64/22/17, (5<sup>th</sup> November 1729).

<sup>104</sup> NAS, GD 112/9/52 – Book (from 1772) of the accoutts of rents in the earl of Breadalbane's estates of Breadalbane, Glenorchy and Nether Lorn.

<sup>105</sup> NAS, GD 112/74/254-256 – Correspondence of John Campbell of Lochend, Chamberlain of Glenorchy and Netherlorn.

By c.1800, chamberlains, were no longer being employed in the Breadalbane estates, indicating that accounts, especially the landlord's personal finances, were thereafter managed externally. However, factors had a continued involvement in monetary affairs with the tenants 'on the ground'. They interacted with each other in a fashion resembling one where tenants had formerly communicated with the landlord via their respective tacksmen. Factors and other estate officials, working for the landlord, initiated several changes and improvements in the Argyllshire estates. Their correspondence shows problems faced by tenants with regard to rentals, through petitions and appeals. They also mention iron smelting and charcoal production carried out on Loch Etive, and slate in Nether Lorn later that century.<sup>106</sup>

Areas of the Campbell estates were formerly divided into baronies. Those in Perthshire included Lawers and Glendochart, whereas in the Argyllshire estates there was a barony for the Glenorchy district. They became known as officiaries by the eighteenth century, with each being X managed by a ground officer. William Marshall likened their role to that of an English bailiff in that they distributed orders from a landlord and his factor to the tenants. They also saw that roads were kept in repair, could settle disputes, and evict tenants if necessary. Birleymen assisted ground officers in disputes between landlords and tenants, or between tenants themselves, with the use of burlaw courts.<sup>107</sup> Having summarised how the estate was managed at this time we shall now highlight the stages of its development, and local affairs leading up to 1815.

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<sup>106</sup> Numerous examples of this are seen in contemporary estate factors' correspondence.

<sup>107</sup> Marshall, *Agriculture, Central Highlands*, 25.

The Forest of Corrie Ba fell into disuse by the later eighteenth century due to phases of regional re-organisation, brought on by wider political and economic trends in Scotland and the rest of Britain. Firstly, after the final Jacobite rising of 1745-6, the British army intervened to pacify disaffected areas, with patrols being placed throughout the west and central Highlands. The Campbells of Breadalbane controlled routes through their estates, and were already improving them earlier that century.<sup>108</sup> Major Edward Caulfeild co-ordinated the construction a new road and bridges from Stirling to Fort William, c.1750, thus allowing better accessibility through the Blackmount area.<sup>109</sup> This route was a particularly important one since many drovers from the north and west Highlands used it to travel south to cattle markets at Falkirk and Crieff. William Marshall's survey of the agricultural state of the Central Highlands, in 1794, stated that roads there were originally formed to transport artillery and equipment between the military stations alongside them. Marshall saw them as having been originally poorly planned, traversing the landscape in straight lines, but better maintained in more recent years.<sup>110</sup> The fact that he mentioned roads implies that they were beneficial for the region's economy.

A second phase of improvement coincided with a profitable era for pastoral farming, especially sheep, in the Breadalbane estates. The third Earl commissioned a detailed survey of Lochtayside, in 1769 by John

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<sup>108</sup> Gillies, *In Famed Breadalbane*, 189; Dawson, 'Trade, Communications and Campbell power', 89-91.

<sup>109</sup> William Taylor, *The Military Roads in Scotland*, (1976; Argyll, 1996), 66-70.

<sup>110</sup> Marshall, *Agriculture, Central Highlands*, 14.

Macarthur and John Farquharson. The landlord's motives were to examine his estates to reorganise enclosures and to abolish anachronistic land use patterns. This predated a parliamentary act encouraging improvement on the entailed Scottish estates in 1770, dealing with duration of leases, improvement schemes to suit tenants and landlords, and the proprietors' obligations in financing these changes.<sup>111</sup> Although sheep farming had reached a peak at this time, it was mainly confined to upland areas, especially upper Glenorchy. Macinnes states that the 1769 surveys represented a phasing out of former tacksman based landholding practices in place of more productive land use, and to locate a suitable site for a new mansion seat for the Campbell of Breadalbane lairds.<sup>112</sup> However, they were aimed primarily towards maximising agricultural profitability, from sheep farming in the West and Central Highlands. Since Lochtayside was more agriculturally varied than Glenorchy, it was necessary to closely survey it to achieve this potential, but this did not make Glenorchy any less valuable for its grazing potential.

Wider economic forces were a major player resulting in many of the early forests receding in size, and eventually disappearing, as sheep farming areas were growing, and much of the west and central Highlands witnessed increased grazings during the later eighteenth century. The travellers Thomas Garnett, Pennant and others provide descriptions of this taking place.<sup>113</sup> Eric Richards's study of the 'quiet march of sheep'

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<sup>111</sup> MacArthur, *1769 Survey of Lochtayside*, SHS, ix.

<sup>112</sup> Macinnes, *Clanship, Commerce*, 221.

<sup>113</sup> Thomas Garnett, *Observations on a Tour through the Highlands and Part of the Western Isles of Scotland*, 2 vols, (London, 1811); Thomas Pennant, *A Tour of Scotland and Voyage to the Hebrides* (London, 1774).

emphasises the impact of sheep farming as a commercial venture from the 1770s, when the prices of wool rose sharply, only to deflate again for five years after 1818.<sup>114</sup> Estate policy in the Breadalbane estates was directed towards setting the highest rentals for profitability. This is seen in Argyllshire farms where rentals had been increased considerably by c.1800.<sup>115</sup> The pattern was by no means unique to this area, as in most Highland districts rentals had inflated from the 1790s to c.1820, due to competition amongst larger sheep farmers, known as the flockmasters.<sup>116</sup>

In 1783, the Argyllshire factor, John Campbell of Lochend, felt that improvements there were still in their infancy, 'and the spirit of feudal power, only declining by slow degrees', when he replied to Lord Breadalbane's legal agent on local affairs at some of the farms:

Whether it may not be proper to prohibit sub-setting on my estate, I may give my friends possessions at an easy rent, but that should only be for their accommodation, not to be put in their power to set the lands at a higher rate to poor wretches who never improve their lands.

The factor stated that 'sub-setting' should be avoided, with large areas of Lord Breadalbane's estates 'lying in a state of nature'. He was aware that since the landlord possessed large areas of mountainous land, it was difficult to divide these areas to several families for economic benefit, even with black cattle being reared for sale to southern markets:

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<sup>114</sup> Eric Richards, *The Highland Clearances: People, Landlords and Rural Turmoil*, (Edinburgh, 2000), 71-72. {Hereafter: Richards, '*Highland Clearances*'}.

<sup>115</sup> See appendices 1/2 and 1/3.

<sup>116</sup> Richards, *Highland Clearances*, 74-75, 81-82.

There are often two, four, six and even eight tenants upon one farm; their houses all huddled together, perhaps in one corner of the farm, and the arable land divided annually after sowing, with ridges or less proportions and lots cast for them...highly detrimental to every kind of improvement, productive of quarrels, loss of time, idleness, and many other evils...there is a want of a spirit of industry.<sup>117</sup>

Recruitment of estate tenantry in the British army, also affected social and economic developments in the next century. Recruitment was taking place since c.1760, but was being more actively encouraged by the fourth Earl 30 years later.<sup>118</sup> The Breadalbane Fencibles were raised during the 1780s to which many local tenantry were recruited from the 1790s. Andrew MacKillop identifies that a particularly large fighting force was available from the Breadalbane estates during the Napoleonic Wars, and tenants were being exploited as a military resource, whilst larger farms had emerged. A military census for Lord Breadalbane's Argyllshire estates noted that tenants in the farms of Barravurich and Blaraven were given responsibility to recruit some men for his regiment. As early as 1782, a tenant's land was lost locally due to recruitment; at Gualachulain in Glen Etive, a soldier had displaced tenants from their croft.<sup>119</sup> Military recruitment from tenants in and around Blackmount influenced settlement patterns and future estate policy over land use.

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<sup>117</sup> NAS, GD 112/14/12/7/8 – Campbell of Lochend's answer to Lord Breadalbane's queries, to John Campbell W.S. (28<sup>th</sup> June, 1783); (30<sup>th</sup> June, 1783).

<sup>118</sup> Andrew MacKillop covers this in: *'More Fruitful than the Soil': Army, Empire and the Scottish Highlands, 1715-1815*, (East Linton, 2000). {Hereafter: MacKillop, *'More Fruitful than the Soil'*}.

<sup>119</sup> MacKillop, 'Recruitment thesis', 258; *'More Fruitful than the Soil'*, 111.

This is seen in MacKillop's research showing that wider politics, and the Napoleonic Wars, resulted in many tenants from the Campbell of Breadalbane lands being recruited for military service in the period until 1815. However, the post-war period resulted in a recession, and a new phase of estate re-organisation in Argyllshire. This was one significant reason why Blackmount became adapted again as a deer forest in 1820, when its potential as a former hunting ground was re-exploited.<sup>120</sup> The changes took place without any large-scale evictions, as communities in Glen Etive and Upper Glenorchy were already declining, either due to recent political events, or socio-economic causes as discussed later.<sup>121</sup> Thus, the impact of military recruitment locally, combined with an estate policy discouraging further population increase in Argyllshire, allowed the landlord to begin amalgamating existing settlements at Blackmount so that a forest could be developed there.

Improvements and estate re-organisation continued, c.1790, due to increasing efforts of the Campbells of Breadalbane, to maximise profits from their estates, as identified by Michael Vance. The fourth Earl of Breadalbane, based at Taymouth Castle, was wholly responsible for many of <sup>the</sup> changes in land use in the later eighteenth century. This was initiated with the assistance of John Kennedy, his estate factor in Perthshire. Kennedy perceived that terminating certain established agrarian practices on tenant farms would enhance productivity, and justify rental increases, a policy involving increasing the number of sheep farms.<sup>122</sup> From 1789

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<sup>120</sup> Orr, *Deer Forests*; a more detailed examination of this is discussed in chapter 2.

<sup>121</sup> See chapter 2, p.107-109.

<sup>122</sup> Vance, 'Emigration thesis', 62.



onwards, there was a sustained period of petitioning to the landlord from tenants in the Breadalbane Estates to help with their improvements. The changes involved replacing former run-rig and transhumance practices with larger areas of land given to individual tenants for grazing purposes, especially in the Lochtayside area of the Perthshire estates.<sup>123</sup> Likewise, tenants from Argyllshire began regular petitioning at this time, probably on their factor's advice. This was due to an overspill in demand for land throughout the entire estate after improvements began in Perthshire.

In 1792, we see evidence of changes in land use on Ben Cruachan, when a traveller passing through Lorn in Argyllshire, had been informed, rather nostalgically, by a local doctor of its recent transformation:

Till lately, the Cruachan, and its environs, were a favourite haunt of the roebuck, and the mountain deer. But now, said he, not unpleasantly affecting the style of the old bards, of whom we had been talking, the hunter, with his sounding horn, and fleet dogs, roams no longer on the hill of the chase; the sheep browse undisturbed, on the heath of the forest, and the sons of the mountain have deserted the inheritance of their race for ages, to revisit its springs, and glades, and secret haunts no more.<sup>124</sup>

The concept of using the land for hunting activities had evidently ceased in much of Argyllshire and Perthshire by then, and deer numbers had reduced considerably due to using upland areas for grazing purposes.

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<sup>123</sup> Albert Bil, *The Shieling 1600-1840: The case of the central Scottish Highlands*, (Edinburgh, 1990), 84; John A. Atkinson, *Rural Settlement on North Lochtayside: understanding the landscapes of change*, BAR, series 293, (Oxford, 2000), 152.

<sup>124</sup> I.Lettuce, *Letters on a tour through various parts of Scotland*, (London, 1792), 268.

William Scrope was aware that pastoral farming, in place of the former forests had resulted in a significant fall in deer numbers in many areas, but by the 1880s this pattern had been completely reversed.<sup>125</sup> However, in the Duke of Atholl's lands in Perthshire, where 100,000 acres had been reserved for red and roe deer, numbers grazing during the 1790s were estimated at no less than 4,000.<sup>126</sup> Numbers of deer were therefore dependant on the agricultural practices adopted by individual landlords. Parts of the Forest of Atholl functioned continuously since medieval times, and the Duke there appeared to be one of a few landlords to have retained specific areas for deer. In 1792, the minister James MacLagan stated on Atholl: 'In an extensive forest, and over many other parts of the hills, there are a great number of red deer; and in and near the woods, there are roe deer.'<sup>127</sup> Considering the size of his property, and its unproductive agricultural potential on higher ground, it is not surprising that the Duke still had large numbers of deer existing there.

Elsewhere, Highland landlords remained to focus their priorities on grazing. In 1793, the Board of Agriculture and Internal Improvement commissioned James Robson to examine existing farming practices in Argyllshire and Inverness-shire, and to suggest new ones there. He noted that much of the countryside between Tyndrum and Fort William was used for sheep pasture. Linton sheep had been introduced to these areas about twenty-five years previously. They were noted as a hardy breed, since they could graze on the hilltops and find food after snowfalls, and

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<sup>125</sup> Scrope, *Days of Deerstalking*, 307-8.

<sup>126</sup> A.J.Youngson, *After the Forty Five: The Economic Impact on the Scottish Highlands*, (Edinburgh, 1973), 169. {Hereafter: Youngson, *After the Forty Five*}

<sup>127</sup> Kerr, *The Living Wilderness*, 9.

the lambs had thick coats. Cattle were mainly for use by the tenant families themselves, and horses were used for ploughing, whereas some goats were kept in the more rugged areas.<sup>128</sup> This shows that most land was being exploited for its pastoral economic potential.

Improvements in local agricultural production were clearly aided by well-maintained roads. The Commissioners of Supply in Argyllshire and the Lorn District Road Committee submitted regular reports to the sheriff court at Inverary regarding their maintenance.<sup>129</sup> To fund this, both the landlord and his tenants paid a land tax, or 'cess'. Additionally, the Breadalbane laird was obliged to pay schoolmasters' and ministers' wages, termed as 'public burdens'. Estate revenue was also expended on building and maintaining schools and parish churches.<sup>130</sup> In the 1790s a schoolmaster, Hugh Fletcher resided at Achallader in upper Glenorchy, taking this role as employment from the Society for the Propagation of Christian Knowledge.<sup>131</sup> This shows that a relatively high population resided there, thus justifying the need for a teacher. The landlord was evidently obliged to fund local educational and ecclesiastical services, and this may have encouraged him to begin a policy of increasing rentals and avoid providing charity to over-populated townships. In the longer term, reducing the numbers of settlements around Blackmount would allow the landlord greater flexibility in future estate developments.

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<sup>128</sup> James Robson, *General View of the agriculture of the county of Argyll, and western parts of Inverness-shire with observations on the means of its improvement*, (London, 1794), 8.

<sup>129</sup> Taylor, *Military Roads*, 13-14; Argyll Archives: Records of the Lorn District Roads Committee.

<sup>130</sup> Examples for the Glenorchy district are provided on p.79.

<sup>131</sup> NAS, GD 112/74/254/4 – Copy, Report of Hugh Fletcher's petition, (26<sup>th</sup> November 1791).

It was necessary to conduct detailed surveys in Argyllshire, so the landlord could work with an economical means of estate management. An unidentified individual conducted a survey of the Glenorchy farms in September 1800, suggested possible modification of marches, increased sheep grazings and general agricultural improvements. John McNabb at Barravurich was taking his sheep stock twelve miles down Glen Orchy to Catnish for wintering. The surveyor said 'this mode of management is a most ruinous one for the country in general, particularly to the intervening farms'. Barravurich Farm was he stated 'awkwardly situated' as it divided the hill ground from Achallader. The tenement of Blaraven and Ardvrecknish had extensive hill grazings extending to Kingshouse, but more wintering grounds, north of Loch Tulla, were proposed for them.<sup>132</sup> This is clear evidence that tenants in the vicinity of Blackmount were being assessed on how they managed their stock, and indicates that the surveyor was advising the landlord on ways he could pressurise them to increase his income overall.

The ideology of improvement prevailing in the Highlands, from the later eighteenth century caused social displacement amongst Lord Breadalbane's numerous tenants in both Argyllshire and Perthshire, resulting in migration and emigration. Endeavours made to curtail this are clearly seen by both the local estate and government itself; likewise, factors' estate records and travellers' accounts provide evidence in this respect. Studies covering the causes of emigration show varying patterns throughout the Highlands by c.1800, but it is possible to identify similar

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<sup>132</sup> NAS, GD 112/12/1/2/6 – Remarks on Glenorchy farms, by Mr C.C., (September 1800).

trends in the Breadalbane estates. It has been stated that emigration patterns before 1815 are intermittent, but the numbers leaving Scotland were clearly on the increase thereafter.<sup>133</sup> This was seen in the Glenorchy district, and a close study of this area shows how the landlord, who originally discouraged emigration, later aided its momentum. With fewer rent paying tenants inhabiting Argyllshire farms, the landlord turned to other ways of maximising profitability from the land there.

In 1802, Thomas Telford, the engineer, was commissioned to improve communications and advise on economic conditions in the Highlands. He was concerned at the rising pattern of emigration and suggested one way of reducing this was to encourage crofting and fishing in place of sheep farming.<sup>134</sup> This would not however address problems existing in the central Highlands where sheep farming was then the main economy. Rental increases from c.1790 had put tenants under financial strain resulting in many of them leaving the Breadalbane area. After failed appeals to the landlord, emigration, mainly to Canada in search of a better life, was the action that many tenants took. To curtail this the government initiated the Passenger Vessels Act in 1803.

By the following year, John Campbell of Craignure, Argyllshire factor, reported that some emigrants from there were attracted to joining the new regiments in Canada. In Lochaweside the division of lands into smaller holdings, which was intended to curb emigration, actually

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<sup>133</sup> Malcolm Gray, 'The course of Scottish Emigration, 1750-1914: Enduring Influences and Changing Circumstances', Thomas Devine (ed), *Scottish Emigration and Scottish Society*, (Edinburgh, 1992), 17.

<sup>134</sup> From: *Reports of the commissioners for Highland Roads and Bridges, 1803-63*.

encouraged larger tenants to leave.<sup>135</sup> In 1807 he stated: 'some of the Nether Lorn people have lately shown a disposition to emigrate'.<sup>136</sup> By c.1810, referring to Glenorchy, Campbell had noted 'I find there is a good deal of private talk there about emigration to America from the example of a number of Perthshire emigrants'.<sup>137</sup> Also that year, a combination of poor economic and environmental conditions resulted in sheep farming tenants on Highland estates being significantly affected. Wool prices at markets had fallen whilst, due to poor weather, grain prices had increased and potato crops failed.<sup>138</sup> The Earl of Breadalbane's reaction to this was to grant abatements of rents for most farms in the Glenorchy, Lochetive, Lochaweside and Braes of Lorn districts. An unexpected depression in prices of cattle and sheep resulted in a 20 percent reduction to rentals for 1807 and 1808. Steelbow tenants and subtenants were told to agree on a proportionate rate of the abatements.

The landlord's general habit of absenteeism from the Breadalbane estates had possibly intensified the economic problems continuing in Glenorchy. The Earl claimed that he was genuinely concerned about his tenants' welfare, but stressed his actions aimed to help them recover from their recent misfortune, pay off arrears, and to inspire them to be more industrious afterwards. He had been absent from Scotland for some time, but on return took advice from officials knowledgeable with 'Highland

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<sup>135</sup> NAS, GD 112/41/5 – Extracts of letters by the earl of Breadalbane's factor, regarding his affairs in Argyllshire, to his lordship and others, by John Campbell of Craignure, (1798-1812).

{Hereafter: 'NAS: GD 112/41/5 – *Factor's correspondence, 1798-1812.*' }

<sup>136</sup> NAS, GD 112/16/4/6/14 – John Campbell, Argyllshire factor, to Breadalbane, (18<sup>th</sup> March 1807).

<sup>137</sup> NAS, GD 112/41/5 – *Factor's correspondence, 1798-1812*, 51, (12<sup>th</sup> April 1804); 111, (15<sup>th</sup> July 1807), 189.

<sup>138</sup> NAS, GD 112/16/13/5/8 – Instructions from the Earl of Breadalbane to his factor in Argyllshire, (November 1808). {Hereafter: *Instructions to Argyllshire factor*}

grazing estates'. The Earl denied that his Glenorchy farms were over-rented, even although three-year old wedders were averaging only twenty to twenty-one shillings at the markets.<sup>139</sup> Emigration may have been considered as a problem from the landlord's point of view, but not to the extent where he would reduce his rentals indefinitely.

Further abatements were being granted by the landlord throughout the Breadalbane estates between 1812-1814. In upper Glenorchy, abatements for up to four years duration had been given to the tenants at Barravurich, Ardmaddy, Drumliart, Clashgour, Achallader, Ardvrecknish and Glen Ceitlein farms.<sup>140</sup> Presumably, this was a reaction again to wider economic problems, but it may have been that tenants were simply unable to pay the higher rentals that had been set since c.1800. There is no apparent evidence of these abatements continuing on after 1814 indicating that the landlord no longer wished to aid Blackmount tenants, and thus encourage their departure from the area.

Despite the landlord's losses, some estate income was generated from woodlands, and tree felling in the district is one example of the commercial exploitation ethos regularly practised by the Campbells of Breadalbane. However since the eighteenth century, estate officials, called wood officers were employed to closely monitor and protect the forested areas from tenants who would possibly steal from them. In 1792, Campbell of Ardmaddy was concerned that woods in upper Glenorchy were not properly enclosed:

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<sup>139</sup> NAS, GD 112/16/13/5/6&7 – Instructions to Argyllshire factor, (November 1808).

<sup>140</sup> NAS, GD 112/14/8/1/12 – Argyllshire accounts by Robert Reid, factor, (1812-1813).

Derry Darroch, not far from the Bridge of Urchy, on the pendicle of Inveroran, is the only place where anything can be done, and this is very remote. By a good fence from the River Urchy to Loch Tullo, which is no great extent, and throwing the pendicle called Derrydarroch, about 5 guineas rent waste, I think there is little doubt but a number of young firrs would get up, as the ground is proper for them and a sufficient number of old trees to spread seed in it. At the same time observe, that the military road goes through the middle of it which hurts it much, and the lands all round being stocked with sheep, it will be difficult, if not impossible to prevent their destroying them in winter.<sup>141</sup>

Thus, woodland was exploited to the extent that trees in Upper Glenorchy were also being cut. By c.1804 it was stated that there was a scarcity of black wood for use by Glenorchy tenants ‘without going to the braes for it’.<sup>142</sup> This suggested that tenants were allowed to cut wood in certain circumstances, possibly from fallen trees, but supplies were clearly being exhausted in the district.

The nearby Lorn Furnace Company, based at Loch Etive, required much wood for its charcoal production activities, possibly accounting for depleted resources.<sup>143</sup> The balancing act between commercial gain and diminishing supplies is seen in 1808 when a quantitative assessment of woods in Glenorchy and Netherlorn was made with the view that some could be sold. This survey’s compiler may have been John Campbell, the factor at Inverary. It was suggested that the woods in Crannach, near

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<sup>141</sup> NAS: GD 112/74/254/19 – John Campbell of Ardmaddy to Earl of Breadalbane, (23<sup>rd</sup> March 1792).

<sup>142</sup> NAS: GD 112/74/258/7 – Correspondence on woods, c.1804.

<sup>143</sup> The furnaces at Bonawe and Glenkinglass, along the shores of Loch Etive, are discussed in: John H. Lewis, ‘The Charcoal-fired blast furnaces of Scotland: a review’, 433–479, *Proceedings of the Society of Antiquaries of Scotland*, vol 114, (1984).



Barravurich, amounting to 26,379 feet, should be sold; however, Doire Darach, composed of 22,378 feet was to be retained on the basis that since it was on the public road it was accessible for use by tenants, and was a 'general ornament to the country'.<sup>144</sup> This indicates aesthetical concern then existing to preserve some remaining woodland.<sup>145</sup>

Two years later, the Crannich woods had still not been cut, and a detailed report by James Malcolm mentions the problems in transporting the trees. One suggestion was that logs could be floated down the River Orchy, but this would only be possible during floods, and there were fears of the damage it could do to them. Another option would be to transport them over the Black Mount:

Perhaps it might be got cheaper to Loch Leven by the King's House, but as that was not suggested by any person I had no opportunity of making the enquiry, as however, the High Road is hard and firm, and the distance across the farms of Mr Smith, Mr McNicoll and Mr Fletcher, comparatively short, before it arrived at the Military Road, it may be worth further investigation.<sup>146</sup>

It appears that the trees from Crannich were never sold due to logistical problems of transporting them. However, during the 1720s some of the felled trees had been floated via Loch Tulla to the River Orchy.<sup>147</sup>

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<sup>144</sup> NAS, GD 112/16/11/5/2 – Survey of woods in Glenorchy and Netherlorn, Inverary, (26<sup>th</sup> April 1808).

<sup>145</sup> Whether this policy was then an environmental concern is unknown; however Doire Darach has been preserved until the present day, with a sign which reads: 'That which burns never returns'.

<sup>146</sup> NAS, GD 112/16/13/4/12 – Report, by James Malcolm, of the earl of Breadalbane's estates at Glenorchy, County of Argyll, (1<sup>st</sup> January 1810).

<sup>147</sup> NAS, GD 112/16/11/1 – Earl Breadalbane's memorial about the fir woods of Glenorchy, (1724).

The landlord was determined to maximise his sources of income wherever possible. Tenants' rentals were being raised, from 1800, when productivity was high; however, as discussed earlier, abatements had been granted later that decade because of an unexpected fall in prices of livestock. In 1801, the fourth Earl of Breadalbane commissioned a valuator, Joseph Robson, to inspect his Glenorchy farms and grazing lands with the intention of setting higher rentals. (Appendix 1/2) This was calculated from average prices of sheep, wool and black cattle in the previous eight years, and partially based on Robson's judgement and opinion; the total value for the district was £5895.<sup>148</sup> The farms to the east were given higher values thus indicating that they were either the most profitable ones in the district, or had the largest grazing areas. Auch and Breaklet farms possessed the largest grazing areas in the district, thus accounting for the higher valuations there.

From 1800, and over the next five years, there had been estate expenditure on a detailed survey, by Mr Robertson, of the districts of Glenorchy and Lochaweside. Mr Robertson produced a cartographic plan of the Glenorchy parish, showing details of agrarian land use in the lower and higher grounds, and tenants also made suggestions on possible improvements to the area.<sup>149</sup> The existence of such detailed surveys from this period indicates the landlord's willingness to outlay costs in the anticipation of maximising profitability in later years. Coupled with this, in 1803, proposals to increase Argyllshire rentals to former levels

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<sup>148</sup> NAS, GD 112/16/13/5/11- Valuation of Glenorchy farms by Joseph Robson, (14<sup>th</sup> September 1801).

<sup>149</sup> NAS, GD 112/16/13/2/27-40 – Mr Robertson's accounts of the survey of Breadalbane's Estate; Unfortunately, the whereabouts of this map is unknown, indicating that only a few copies were made.

indicates that farming practices in use had overall been economically successful, thus the landlord exploited his tenants' improved fortunes. The valuations included six farms in upper Glenorchy and one in Glen Etive. Most of the farms were valued approximately four times higher than the current rent, with Drumliart, then rented at £47, valued at £160 (Appendix 1/3).<sup>150</sup> Presumably, the recent higher productivity was due to the Napoleonic Wars having continued, thus allowing the landlord to justify the proposed changes.

Competitive bidding for tenancies had been taking place in some of the Glenorchy farms. Colin Campbell in Clashgour, writing to the factor in 1802, stated that his neighbour, Peter MacIntyre, had deceived him. Campbell was aggrieved that MacIntyre had apparently shown no interest in renting this farm for £300, and was content with the idea that Campbell would rent it for him. But since Peter MacIntyre made a higher offer, Colin Campbell was now willing to pay £10 more.<sup>151</sup> These situations were undoubtedly beneficial for the landlord, but resulted in many of his tenants having to migrate and emigrate. Over the next two decades, the formerly populous settled areas around Blackmount began to decrease. A policy of encouraging competitive bidding for tenancies, combined with continuing recruitment encouraged the trend. Although the landlord did not initially wish further depopulation amongst tenants in Argyllshire, it appears that he later changed his attitude in this respect after 1815. This paved the way towards developing Blackmount Forest

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<sup>150</sup> NAS, GD 112/16/5/1/7 – State of Argyllshire rents and Turner's valuation, (1803).

<sup>151</sup> NAS, GD 112/74/257/7 – Letter from Colin Campbell in Clashgour to John Campbell at Inverary, (15<sup>th</sup> August 1802).

from 1820.

From the 1800s the landlord aided improvements for tenants in the Glenorchy district, to discourage further population decline. In 1805, wood from the 'braes' was provided for the Glenorchy schoolhouse, and other expenses were made to the manse there.<sup>152</sup> A stipend of £190 was paid to the schoolmaster, Dr Joseph Macintyre. The church at 'braes of Glenurchy', of which the origins are unknown, was also funded for repairs.<sup>153</sup> Its maintenance however rapidly deteriorated. A traveller, John Anderson, said in 1818: 'Adjoining the bridge stands a miserable church, or rather hovel, without spire, or decoration of any kind whatever.' He stated that church services were infrequently held there, since the local pastor found it difficult to serve all areas in the district.<sup>154</sup> Nevertheless, the presence of a church at Bridge of Orchy shows how the landlord was obliged to provide funding for ecclesiastical services to this local community. However, the declining facilities reflected his shifting attitude towards his tenants at Blackmount and upper Glenorchy.

James Malcolm had also suggested some general improvements in the Glenorchy district, and some of these were of an agricultural nature. In 1809, he had visited Barravurich, Achallader and Ardvrecknish farms. Malcolm described Barravurich as being the highest inhabited farm in

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<sup>152</sup> NAS, GD 112/14/8/1/2 – Stated accounts between Lord Breadalbane and John Campbell of Craignure, Argyllshire estate factor, 1804-5. {Hereafter: 'NAS: GD 112/14/8/1/2 - Argyllshire accounts, 1804-5'}

<sup>153</sup> NAS, GD 112/14/8/1/12 – Account of charge and discharge between the earl of Breadalbane and Robert Reid, Argyllshire factor, (1812-1813).

<sup>154</sup> NLS, MS 2509 – John Anderson, *Sketch of a ramble through the Highlands of Scotland in the Summer of 1818*, 63-64.

Argyllshire, and Mr Smith, the tenant there, described the inclement weather as often proving fatal for his sheep stock. Improvements such as the erection of enclosures for livestock were necessary to curtail the spread of diseases such as foot rot in these farms.<sup>155</sup> Since pastoral farming in this area was exposed, expenditure on improvements to protect stock was required. Enquiries on agricultural practices at Blackmount suggest that the landlord wished to lessen expenditure, and he may have then considered alternative ways to increase estate revenue.

One particular letter may have influenced him in this respect. In 1806, Duncan Campbell, factor at Ardgour asked the Earl of Breadalbane for permission for his son to shoot in the Blackmount area:

My Lord, Having a good many cattle grazing in the Black Mount area this summer I shall have occasion to send my son there for two or three days this month; if your lordship will have the goodness to permit him to shoot there for two or three days he will be there.<sup>156</sup>

What Campbell was particularly requesting was not specified; this may have been deer or other game, but the area's potential as a sporting ground was not ignored after the Forest of Corrie Ba terminated and before Blackmount Forest originated. Likewise, we see that income had been generated from grazing arrangements at that time.

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<sup>155</sup> NAS, GD 112/16/13/4/12 – Report, by James Malcolm, of the Earl of Breadalbane's estates at Glenorchy, County of Argyll, (1<sup>st</sup> January 1810).

<sup>156</sup> NAS, GD 112/16/10/8/78 – Duncan Campbell, Factor of Ardgour to the Earl of Breadalbane, (2<sup>nd</sup> August 1806).

There is some evidence of forest activities taking place in the area eight years prior to actual forest formation at Blackmount in 1820. James Macintyre was employed as a forester in the Glenorchy district from 1812 and was paid £75 over the next year and a half. Donald Anderson was paid £3 for his services as gameherd there; such a small amount indicated that only seasonal employment was provided.<sup>157</sup> In the following year Anderson was given a half year wage of £18, and Donald McNicol was paid £1 4s for the same role.<sup>158</sup> It was the landlord's long-term intention that a gamekeeper would be employed for Glenorchy district.<sup>159</sup> Whether this was actually done appears unclear; gameherds employed in recent years possibly took this role. Mr Henderson, a foxhunter, was earlier paid to kill foxes in Glen Etive.<sup>160</sup> This was presumably to protect lambs, but there is no mention of foxhunters later being employed, indicating this later become part of the responsibilities of foresters at Blackmount. There was clearly a change in policy around 1812 in the Glenorchy district, possibly because of estate losses from abatements given to tenants. Foresters were by no means a novel creation, having been regularly employed in the area around seventy years prior to then. Their re-emergence represented the landlord's desire to eventually form a deer forest within his estates.

In 1812, the landlord was advised on management practices in his Argyllshire and Perthshire estates, especially in Breadalbane, but this

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<sup>157</sup> NAS, GD 112/14/8/1/12 – Account of charge and discharge between the Earl of Breadalbane and Robert Reid, Argyllshire factor, (1812-1813).

<sup>158</sup> NAS, GD 112/14/8/1/13 – Argyllshire account, Mr Reid's trustees for 1813 to 1814.

<sup>159</sup> NAS, GD 112/16/4/6/14 – John Campbell, Argyllshire factor, to the Earl of Breadalbane, (18<sup>th</sup> March 1807).

<sup>160</sup> NAS, GD 112/14/8/1/2 – 'Argyllshire accounts, 1804-5'.

author is unknown. Reports on all farms were to be detailed so that the Earl would fully understand every tenant's circumstances. He intended to employ a responsible individual to manage both his Perthshire and Argyllshire estates in order to avoid him 'much personal trouble'.<sup>161</sup> However, both were usually managed by two factors in later years. John Campbell of Craignure left his factorship in 1812, and was replaced by Robert Reid who managed the Argyllshire estates until 1814; from 1814 to 1815 Edward Hall took this role.<sup>162</sup> Since several factors managed it during this time suggests a period of estate instability in Argyllshire, and when Duncan Campbell of Rockhill took it over changes were made resulting in a large area being converted again to deer forest.

From c.1800 onwards there was a clear shift in emphasis in where the landlord's priorities lay with regard to his land resources. Until then, native woodlands in the Glenorchy district were being cut to an extent of near extinction. This raises the question of why concern with woodland management appears to have been replaced with a revived interest in the former hunting potential of Corrie Ba, which was mainly composed of mountains and moorland. The landlord may have been aware of how deer were retained in greater numbers in other estates, eg the Forest of Atholl c.1790, even although they were more naturally suited to areas covered in trees. Since much of Glenorchy was deforested the Earl had possibly shown concern to declining deer numbers there and thus saw it necessary to set up a carefully managed forest at Blackmount.

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<sup>161</sup> NAS, GD 112/16/13/5/14&15 – Outline, system of management for estate of Breadalbane, (1812).

<sup>162</sup> NAS, GD 112/14/8/1/12 – Account of charge and discharge between the Earl of Breadalbane and Robert Reid, Argyllshire factor, (1812-1813); NAS, GD 112/14/8/1/19 – Account between the Earl of Breadalbane and Edward Hall, Argyllshire factor, (1814-1815).

## Conclusion

This chapter has identified the area's social and political progress, within a Highland context from the later medieval period. The Campbells of Breadalbane bridged the English speaking Lowlands with the Gaelic Highlands in the way they managed their estates. Their emergence as one of the most powerful clans in the central highlands allowed them to exploit their political sway on a buffer zone peripheral to the central Lowlands of Scotland. They exploited every conceivable form of land use in the territories they possessed, including managing rural mountain areas as forests. This they did on approval from the crown, with their legal and heritable jurisdictions throughout Perthshire and northern Argyllshire. It has been essential to review why forests were formed in the region and reasons for their decline in the eighteenth century. Through this approach we can understand the landlord's choice to re-form anew a forest at Blackmount by 1820.

The Forest of Corrie Ba was a less-developed precursor to the commercial forest that emerged at Blackmount in the nineteenth century. Comparing them, and other local forests, shows that although they were managed in significantly different ways in earlier and later periods, the Campbells of Breadalbane exercised strict management practices within forests under their control. The former forest there came into existence as a designated area of hunting ground to be protected from poachers and theft. It is situated on the periphery of what was a politically unstable region of the Highlands, not pacified until the mid-eighteenth century.



Presumably, after this was achieved, the landlords may have not deemed it necessary to continue a policy of policing Corrie Ba, possibly due to the costs of doing so. A lack of evidence on the existence of foresters after then suggests that organised control of hunting had declined in the area for around seventy years, in a pattern similar to some other estates.

The Forest of Corrie Ba's decline was also brought on by an upturn in commercial exploitation of the Breadalbane estates by the later eighteenth century. Identification of the phases, c.1750, 1770 and 1790, enable a crystallised understanding of wider political and economic developments that were emerging in Britain and Europe. The first one, a social change, emerges from a period of pacification throughout Highland estates. Secondly, the economic upturn in grazing put pressure on land use twenty years later. Finally, the drive towards better production in estates through improvements, brought on by the political events emerging in Europe, represents a third phase. This boom period terminated around 1815, and some landlords thereafter developed 'sporting estates' in areas where hunting had formerly been conducted.

It is with these developments that we can begin to understand why many forests had declined but later re-emerged. There were exceptional cases, eg the Forest of Atholl, where deer continued to thrive in numbers, possibly due to it being a much larger and remoter area of the Highlands. Corrie Ba, however, was used by many grazers including shepherds and drovers. The economic demands on land for sheep farming alone from the later 1760s is accounted much in Breadalbane estate correspondence and from comments by travellers passing through it.

A particularly important theme is our attempts at understanding the landlord's commercial motivation in all or part of his estates, and this was clearly varied in Perthshire and Argyllshire. Improvements on Lochtayside spread westwards rapidly affecting how Argyllshire was managed. Combining existing research of the subject and period of study, with local estate correspondence, until now not examined, gives some insight as to why Highland landlords began to change the emphasis from viewing their estates primarily as feudal inheritances, towards maximising income from tenants. By c.1800, however, it appears that areas such as Blackmount reached a critical mass in population, resulting in a crisis that was to some extent dampened by an onset of the European wars, and local emigration patterns show a period of social decline.

This region was particularly vulnerable to wider economic forces, and decisions taken by the landlord resulted in major changes in local society from the early nineteenth century. Clearly, exploitation of land in Upper Glenorchy was related to maximising income for the landlord, at this time. Fluctuating sheep and cattle prices in southern markets prompted the Campbells of Breadalbane towards taking steps to diversify possible sources of income in their Argyllshire and Perthshire estates. Following the termination of the Napoleonic Wars many estates faced shifting economic priorities with significant social implications. As chapter 2 discusses, Lord Glenorchy was quite capable of turning the area into a forest as it had been formerly. Although Blackmount Forest later emerged in a more organised way, in a peaceful period, it faced similar logistical problems to that of its predecessor.



## Chapter 2

### Formation and development of Blackmount Forest, c.1820-1835

This chapter identifies the origins of Blackmount Forest from 1820, and its development until c.1835. The motives for its date of formation can be related to wider social, economic and political factors influencing the Breadalbane Estates in years before then. The Campbells of Breadalbane continued a policy of fundamental social and economic restructuring in their Argyllshire Estates during the early nineteenth century. This was a time when tenants' rentals were raised, resulting in sporadic periods of migration and emigration from the area. Local depopulation was also related to wider politics with the Napoleonic wars lasting until 1815. The termination of these European wars resulted in a post-war recession and widespread emigration from Highland estates. Landlords formerly opposed to local depopulation actively encouraged it by 1818; recent research has shown this took place in the Breadalbane estates then. Also, the ideology of the Campbell landlords there shifted towards providing entertainment for themselves and their aristocratic guests. This took the form of giving priority to the provision of lavish accommodation at Taymouth Castle and offering sporting pursuits within their extensive estates.<sup>1</sup> The second Marquis's life will thus require some detailed discussion in the following pages.

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<sup>1</sup> Vance, 'Emigration Thesis', 80.

The deer forest at Blackmount was formed towards 'sporting' purposes in the longer term. However, in assessing why it developed there, historical, geographical and environmental factors need to be considered. One of the motives may have been due to knowledge of its former existence as the Forest of Corrie Ba, and, similar to other forests such as the forest at Invercauld formed in 1819, it was re-formed anew.<sup>2</sup> The area was recognised then as ideally suited for sporting purposes because of natural features, especially the numerous corries Blackmount has. Another reason for forest formation there was because its surroundings were sparsely populated. After 1820, grazing competitors such as sheep were reduced in numbers so that deer could be provided with more food. Over the next twenty years, they were encouraged to proliferate in numbers, demonstrating environmental policy then.

The reason why Corrie Ba was chosen in particular to become a forest again in 1820 is unknown. When we consider that others such as Beinn Dorain and Mamlorne had existed formerly, it appears that there was a change in emphasis towards the needs of a 'sporting estate'. Corrie Ba was relatively small, but there is evidence suggesting that it had expanded significantly during the seventeenth century. Mamlorne and Beinn Dorain were in close proximity with one another, and since legal problems existed with neighbouring landlords, the Campbells of Breadalbane probably decided to avoid re-developing Mamlorne. The

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<sup>2</sup> Orr, *Deer Forests*, 28; Orr, *Deer Forests*, Appendix V, 168.

Forest of Beinn Dorain did not cover a large area and was composed of fewer corries and hills in comparison to Corrie Ba. This may explain why Blackmount was considered an ideal location rather than elsewhere in the Breadalbane Estates.

Highland proprietors who had existing forests, or others who were beginning to develop and manage new ones, presumably influenced the Breadalbane's likewise. Lord Breadalbane may have possibly decided to gift Blackmount to his son, Lord Glenorchy, because of Campbell of Monzie's activities at the Forest of Buachaille Etive in 1819, and there was possibly some co-operation with the Duke of Argyll. Elsewhere, from 1822, William Scrope began to lease Glen Bruar lodge, in the forest of Atholl. The Dukes there had, contrary to other landlords, adopted a policy where some lands were continuously reserved for deer since the later eighteenth century. Kerr states that some landlords saw the benefits of leasing their deer forests to a new emerging class of shooting tenant from the early 1800s.<sup>3</sup> The ability to let out grounds there in the 1820s was because deer were in plentiful numbers, but this was not initially the case at Blackmount. Thus, Lord Glenorchy followed an aristocratic pattern from other landlords, but developing Blackmount Forest into a reputable sporting estate required a commitment lasting most of his life.

Developing it in the way he did caused local social disharmony for those who had not already emigrated. The population in the Glenorchy

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<sup>3</sup> Davis, *Monarchs of the Glen*, 81; Kerr, *The Living Wilderness*, 9.

area had fallen significantly prior to 1820 and many had already abandoned settlements in upper Glenorchy and Glen Etive.<sup>4</sup> A detailed study of farms remaining within and on the periphery of the Forest shows that the landlord was often in careful negotiation with his factor in respect of their management. In his initial endeavours to manage a sheep-free forest, the landlord sustained economic losses whilst deer numbers increased. Lord Glenorchy's motive was that sufficient wintering ground was required for deer grazing. However, sheep were actually retained at some of the local farms and more were later re-introduced to Blackmount, showing that both they and deer co-existed with each other on the land.

Duncan Campbell of Rockhill, the Argyllshire factor, managed Blackmount Forest from 1820 to 1834. He took orders from the landlord and passed them on to his employees there, and advised Lord Glenorchy on management policies. The factor was involved in regulating the Forest's development during its three stages of expansion until the 1830s. Forest employees, and others temporarily employed and accommodated, aided this process. Numerous gamekeepers, shepherds, foresters and watchers lived there, and, as these titles suggest, they provided specific roles; however, several of them had interchangeable tasks. Poaching often posed a problem, so it was necessary to have several employees to tackle this. The local innkeepers were also involved in Forest activities, especially those who tenanted Kingshouse. Some rent-paying tenants

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<sup>4</sup> Although there are no detailed accounts of this phenomenon, a general decline throughout the Breadalbane estates is discussed from p.105.

remained on other surrounding farms that were not actually incorporated into the Forest.

The emergence of a head forester at Blackmount from the 1830s, demonstrates more emphasis was placed on direct forest management then because of the challenges faced by poaching. Peter Robertson was given this role and remained at Blackmount Forest until the 1870s. Consequently, he became an important point of contact with the estate factors by informing them of events on the ground. A significant amount of correspondence between the head forester and the factor exists from c.1835-1850, when deer were encouraged to increase in numbers.<sup>5</sup> The head forester's role was vital, particularly regarding communication with numerous other employees who were either directly or indirectly involved in protecting the forest from poachers and grazing competitors.

Tensions existed between what the landlord wished and what some of his tenants desired at Blackmount, and their relationships were often fragile. Restrictions were imposed on the type and numbers of stock they possessed in the Forest's periphery, showing that Lord Glenorchy was determined to give grazing deer priority over other land use, but it appears that this policy was not applied longer term. Some existing land practices continued anyway because of economic restraints faced by the landlord, and the losses he would have incurred had he not allowed them to continue. Indications of disagreement between the landlord and his

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<sup>5</sup> See chapter 3, p.181-185.



father exist as well, showing conflicting ideas regarding its management. This emerged from the economic risks in developing Blackmount as a sporting estate. Another compelling theme is the relationship between the landlord and his first factor there, one that broke down during the 1830s, partially brought on by tensions with some tenants at Blackmount, but mainly due to discrepancies in estate accounts.

Once the area was converted to a forest economic losses were sustained for several years. A need for employees to protect Blackmount from poachers was, in the shorter term, a constant drain on estate finances. Estate revenue was invested on improvements there, and although this is evident within the first decade after formation it was not significant until the 1840s. Wages were also disbursed to temporary employees involved in these works. Managing Forest improvements were the responsibility of a ground officer, a role given to Duncan Dewar whose involvement emerges from the 1830s.<sup>6</sup> Few improvements took place prior to then possibly because little or no commercial benefits were generated. Lord Glenorchy may have held it initially for his own pleasure, but it is likely that he desired to make a profit from it by some means. However, there is very little evidence of his direct motivations during the early years other than his determination that priority be given to set up an effectively functioning deer forest. There was a 'lodge' already in place at Blackmount, located at Ardvrecknish, from the 1820s, presumably functioning as a headquarters for personnel. But the present

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<sup>6</sup> Duncan Dewar's important participation is regularly discussed later in this chapter and in chapter 3.

lodge was not constructed until twenty years later.<sup>7</sup>

Blackmount was a successful venture in the long term as a result of rigorous policies implemented by the factor, and carried through by local employees; however, direct economic gains are not recognisable until later decades. Revenue from the Argyllshire estates was generated in other ways, with shootings and lets offered in various areas. Sales of sheep and local woodlands also generated estate revenue; woods gave sustained income for sixteen years.<sup>8</sup> The aim of the landlord may have been eventually to have a fully functioning sporting estate, but this is not initially clear from 1820. It is with this theme in mind that we can attempt to identify the reasons for the formation and development of Blackmount Forest and to discuss its origins and expansion. A description of local management practices and identification of the external challenges evident from its existence follows thereafter, leading us to identify the landlord's motives in the longer term.

Several stages are evident during Blackmount's early development. First, during the early 1820s, the landlord wished to clear grazed areas around Loch Tulla whilst the Forest was in its early stages of expansion. By 1829 we see significant developments in estate policy in reaction to the problems with poaching, involving plans to employ a head forester and aims to protect the area more effectively. The head forester's role

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<sup>7</sup> See below p.154-155.

<sup>8</sup> NAS, GD 112/14/8/1/25: Report, by Lawrence Davidson, on the factory account of the Marquis of Breadalbane's estates in Argyllshire, from 1815-1831, (December, 1832). {Hereafter: NAS, GD 112/14/8/1/25: '*Report on Argyllshire accounts, 1815-1831*'.}

would also be to count deer numbers, and would presumably include some amount of deer culling. He was accompanied by a team of under foresters who covered specifically designated portions. On reflection, by 1830, the idea of a 'ten year plan' having been carried through becomes more apparent. At that time it was stated that setting up the Forest ten years prior to then had involved much expense in employing foresters, but noticeable benefits were achieved since it later became much more populated with deer.<sup>9</sup>

The landlord of Blackmount Forest, from its inception until 1862, was Lord Glenorchy, and he became the second Marquis of Breadalbane in 1834. He was the son of the fourth Earl, whose estates, family ties and political connection resulted in his becoming the first Marquis of Breadalbane in 1831. In 1793, the fourth Earl had married Mary Turner, the daughter and co-heiress of David Gavin of Langton; thereafter the family's combined lands included Langton Estate in Berwickshire.<sup>10</sup> Hence, commitments of multiple estate management resulted in the fourth Earl's action of granting land to his heir; Lord Glenorchy had been gifted lands at Blackmount in 1819 and began converting it into a deer forest from the following year. However, there is little detailed evidence of his actually residing there. Much of the responsibility of managing it was delegated to Duncan Campbell of Rockhill, his factor.

It is appropriate at this stage to describe Lord Glenorchy and his

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<sup>9</sup> NAS, GD 112/16/11/5: Memorial for the Earl of Breadalbane, (5<sup>th</sup> June 1830).

<sup>10</sup> Scots Peerage, II, 'Campbell of Breadalbane', 210; Gillies, *In Famed Breadalbane*, 196.

motivation for taking an interest in deer forests. He was a well educated individual who took a keen interest in, and important role with, British politics. Lord Glenorchy's Whig and later Liberal party connections may have influenced his social life and the development of Blackmount, especially after he inherited the Breadalbane estates in 1834, and this is explored in later chapters. He and his father were keen to re-develop the former forest there after the economic decline post 1815. No details explain why Lord Glenorchy was keen in sporting pursuits, but it is likely that his aristocratic upbringing was a significant reason. Since the Breadalbane family had one of the largest estates in Scotland, they decided to carry on a hunting tradition by then pursuing its commercial potential. This possibly followed on the actions of the Farquharsons of Invercauld who developed a sporting estate there in 1819.

We shall now discuss at some length the second Marquis's life, and the many interests he held, before attempting to examine his motives for forming a deer forest in the western periphery of his estates. John Campbell, second Marquis of Breadalbane, was titled Lord Glenorchy since 1820, when his father gifted him Blackmount with the intention to develop a deer forest there. Lord Glenorchy inherited his father's entire Breadalbane estates after his death in 1834. His titles changed in tandem with various inheritances and political connections throughout his life, particularly those involving British politics; between 1820-1826 he served as a Whig M.P. for Oakhampton in England, thus he was regularly absentee from Blackmount. He was titled Earl of Ormelie between 1832-1834 when serving as M.P. for Perthshire, and was later styled Baron

Breadalbane of Taymouth Castle, Earl of Breadalbane and Holland.<sup>11</sup>

Lord Glenorchy was born in Dundee during 1796, but whether his early education was in Scotland is unknown since the details of his youth have not been studied. He was later educated at Eton in Berkshire, typical of an elite landed family who could pay for the best education.<sup>12</sup> Presumably, he boarded at Eton during most of his schooling whilst his father resided in the south. The strict education he received set young Glenorchy on a career with varied interests later in his life. He took further education at Glasgow University, the same academic institution where he later became rector.<sup>13</sup> In 1813, John Brown wrote to Lord Breadalbane advising him on a suitable companion for his son during his time at University where he would study English and Classics. Brown suggested that an individual called McNair would be an ideal candidate to accompany Glenorchy and should secretly enrol as one of his fellow students. On tutors, Brown stated that they 'must give themselves wholly to him; they must watch his every movement while he is at his studies'.<sup>14</sup> Lord Glenorchy started attending Glasgow University at seventeen years, but whether his father had actually followed Brown's advice on how the studies should proceed would require further research.

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<sup>11</sup> Scots Peerage, II, 'Campbell of Breadalbane', 211; George Edward Cokayne, (ed), *The Complete peerage of England, Scotland, Ireland, Great Britain and the United Kingdom*, (6 vols), I, (Gloucester, 2000), 296, Breadalbane. {Hereafter: 'Complete Peerage, 296, Breadalbane'}.

<sup>12</sup> *ibid.*

<sup>13</sup> David Murray, *Memories of the Old College of Glasgow*, (Glasgow, 1927), 522. {Hereafter: 'Murray, Memories.'}

<sup>14</sup> NAS, TD 80/84/1/31/17 (RH 4/196) - John Brown, Langton Estate, to Breadalbane, (27<sup>th</sup> September 1813).

Lord Glenorchy was only twenty four years old when he inherited Blackmount in 1820, and his passion for hunting was one mutual interest held amongst political and aristocratic circles during his lifetime. In November 1821 he married the eighteen year old Eliza, sister of George, tenth Earl of Haddington. She died in 1861, and he, by then the second Marquis of Breadalbane, died in 1862 at Lauzanne in Switzerland. From his twenties he became closely involved in the secretive Freemasons in Scotland, and became grand master of that organisation between 1824-26.<sup>15</sup> The landlord showed a very keen interest in antiquarianism during his later life, being president of the Society of Antiquaries of Scotland between 1852 and 1862.<sup>16</sup> The Marquis also popularised his estate's historical documents; the *Black Book of Taymouth* was published by the Bannatyne Club in 1855.<sup>17</sup> This was considered as an important account of the estate's formation and development from medieval times, drawing on ancient estate documents. However, it was his involvement in religion and politics that leads us to explore a possible impact on how he managed Blackmount and whom he invited to it. We shall now summarise these wider interests, although not directly relevant.

The Marquis's nomination as rector of Glasgow University in 1840 arose from his following of Whig/Liberal politics; he succeeded Sir Robert Peel, Conservative politician and former Prime Minister. Students there were accused of forming into two factions, the Peel Club

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<sup>15</sup> Scots Peerage, II, Campbell of Breadalbane, 211; Complete Peerage, 296, Breadalbane.

<sup>16</sup> *ibid.*

<sup>17</sup> See introduction, p.12.

who had dominated the rector elections for a few years, and the Liberals:

In 1840, a petition by sundry merchants, manufacturers, and other inhabitants of the city of Glasgow was presented to the House of Commons praying that steps should be taken for the suppression of both clubs on account of the great evil to the educational and other interests of the University by the organised association of the students into two political clubs against each other.

The second Marquis of Breadalbane was duly elected in 1841, and in the following year. However, shortly before departing from the position he gave the students advice on choosing a successor, stating that party politics should not influence their decision, and that candidates should be ideally Scottish with some interest in the affairs of Glasgow University.<sup>18</sup>

His position there in 1841-2 raises questions as to the Marquis's political and ecclesiastical ideology; likewise his political connections in England since the 1820s may have influenced his management of the Breadalbane estates thereafter. A peer in the House of Lords, the second Marquis was at the centre of British politics, and since he represented Glasgow University's students he developed a sound understanding of the Church of Scotland's affairs. After finishing his term there he became rector of Marischal College in Aberdeen, between 1843-45.<sup>19</sup> The Earl of Aberdeen also became involved in expressing views on the Scottish church's direction; thus, it is necessary to explore why certain landlords took an interest in this, and attempt to understand their

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<sup>18</sup> Murray, *Memories*, 522.

<sup>19</sup> Scots Peerage, II, Campbell of Breadalbane, 211; Complete Peerage, 296, Breadalbane.

involvement in the 1843 Disruption.

The second Marquis's religious views in the 1840s were particularly influential at the time, and is an un-researched area of Scottish religious history. The Disruption of 1843 affected most communities after many ministers and their congregations split away from the Church of Scotland, and followed the novel charitable ideas of Thomas Chalmers. Indeed, the spread of evangelical Christianity owed its success to certain areas, particularly the Highlands and Islands.<sup>20</sup> Most landlords remained with the established church; however, the second Marquis was amongst a minority of Highland landlords who followed, and openly promoted, the evangelical principles of the Free Church of Scotland. A letter by him had been endorsed in their records.<sup>21</sup> In October 1843, the Free Church held an assembly in Glasgow, chaired by the second Marquis. Those present discussed how the secession should be financed in a short space of time, but also the existing deficiencies in the 'Sustentation Fund' for individual ministers who had abandoned the established church.<sup>22</sup>

Until now, no study has explored the second Marquis's direct involvement in the Scottish Church, and no existing research on the Disruption highlights his prominent role in it. One researcher recently

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<sup>20</sup> Douglas Ansdell, 'Disruptions and controversies in the Highland Church', 89-113, in James Kirk (ed), *The Church in the Highlands*, (Edinburgh, 1998), 90.

<sup>21</sup> Andrew Drummond and James Bulloch, *The Church in Victorian Scotland: 1843-1874*, (Edinburgh, 1975), 7. {Hereafter: 'Drummond & Bulloch, *Victorian Church*'}.

<sup>22</sup> GUL: SP COLL T.C.L. 3859 (document 43) *Address by the elders and other members of the Free Church assembled at Glasgow to their brethren throughout Scotland*, (Glasgow, 1843).



indicates that the erection of Free Churches was beneficial for Highland communities because of the ways that donations were generated from many benefactors.<sup>23</sup> This raises questions as to why the second Marquis was particularly active in promoting a division from the established church in Scotland. He allowed tenants on Loch Etive to share a Free Church with tenants of his neighbouring landlord, Campbell of Monzie.<sup>24</sup> Although they both disputed ownership of land in Glen Etive, Monzie also took an unusual stance of supporting the secession.<sup>25</sup>

The second Marquis took an important role in stating the Disruption was inevitable because he believed it was his duty to do so. His position as a peer in the House of Lords opened English politicians to the realities of an emerging secession in the Church of Scotland due to interference in its affairs by the law courts. Lord Brougham was astonished at the second Marquis's suggestion that decisions made by the courts on ecclesiastical matters were wrong, but the Marquis highlighted an independent position claimed by the Church of Scotland after the Act of Union.<sup>26</sup> Other Scottish Landowners, including the Earl of Aberdeen, were also involved in the debates during 1843, but did not express their views so openly. This however was not the situation with the second Marquis who said: 'if their Lordships were aware of the great importance of the subject to the people of Scotland, they would only think he was

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<sup>23</sup> Marian Cowie, *The Free Church of Scotland, 1843-1880*, Master of Theology Thesis, GUL Thesis, 11866, (University of Glasgow, 2000). {Hereafter: 'Cowie, *Free Church*'}

<sup>24</sup> See chapter 4, p.260-261.

<sup>25</sup> In chapter 5, Professor Blackie discussed Monzie's religious beliefs in the 1860's; see p.311.

<sup>26</sup> Hansard's Parliamentary Debates in the House of Lords, 3<sup>rd</sup> Series, 67, (28<sup>th</sup> Feb 1843-24<sup>th</sup> March 1843), 1138. {Hereafter: 'Hansard's Parliamentary Debates'}.

doing his duty by bringing forward the question.'<sup>27</sup>

Although most of the Highland population, numbering 200,000, along the western seaboard from Kintyre to Assynt followed the Free Church by 1845, only thirteen ministers represented it. Also at that time the Presbytery of Inverary had no Free Church minister, but in Perthshire, two resided at Killin and Strathfillan. Clearly, there was urgent demand for new evangelical ministers, and there were still 100 vacancies in 1847. To counter the problem a Free Church report proposed transporting ministers by seafaring vessels to remote areas of the west Highlands and Islands. A yacht called *Breadalbane* was commissioned to transport several ministers throughout the region so that they could distribute Free Church literature. In 1846, after the outbreak of famine the *Breadalbane* also took a prominent part in attempting to alleviate the distress caused by potato crop failures in many Highland districts. A logbook for July and August that year shows areas that this vessel visited in the Hebrides.<sup>28</sup> The second Marquis was clearly a Free Church landlord in his promotion of Chalmersite poor aid, shown by the yacht named after him.

Why this landlord saw it necessary to aid Disruption ministers and congregations is unknown. In post-Disruption Victorian Scotland the Free Church debated over their curriculum within higher educational establishments, but the second Marquis asserted that they should only

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<sup>27</sup> Hansard's Parliamentary Debates, 69, (9<sup>th</sup> May 1843 - 15<sup>th</sup> June 1843), 235-238.

<sup>28</sup> Douglas Ansdell, *The People of the Great Faith: The Highland Church 1690-1900*, (Stornoway, 1998), 72-75

provide ecclesiastical teaching.<sup>29</sup> Presumably, he relished Chalmersite ideology in the provision of poor relief within his own estates, and since Free Church reform was ideally suited to poor Highland communities who formerly depended on their landlords' aid. Indeed, Marian Cowie's thesis on the Disruption stated that it was beneficial to the region, but no mention is made of the second Marquis's direct involvement.<sup>30</sup>

The Marquis was not only a prominent layman in ecclesiastical affairs, but also used his estates to display their hunting potential to leading members of the European royalty and aristocracy. He lavishly hosted, at great expense, Queen Victoria and Prince Albert at Taymouth Castle during their visit to Scotland in September 1842. Their route included Kenmore, Loch Tay, Auchmore House, Lochearnhead and Killin, vividly described in the *London Illustrated Newspaper*.<sup>31</sup> Victoria was impressed with the local scenery and the interior of Taymouth. The royal party was welcomed by many tartan clad Highlanders; deer and game was shot by Albert on 8<sup>th</sup> September. In their four day stay they were accompanied by leading members of the British aristocracy.<sup>32</sup>

This visit contributed to Victoria's interest in the Highlands, and subsequently popularised Scottish tourism. The royal visit inadvertently led to her decision to purchase Balmoral Estate from the Earl of Fife in 1852; Albert subsequently designed a new castle, built there between

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<sup>29</sup> Drummond & Bulloch, *Victorian Church*, 91-92.

<sup>30</sup> Cowie, *Free Church*.

<sup>31</sup> *London Illustrated Newspaper*, (24<sup>th</sup> September, 1842).

<sup>32</sup> David Duff, (ed), *Queen Victoria's Highland Journals*, 7<sup>th</sup> -10<sup>th</sup> September 1842, (London, 1997).

1853-5 in Scottish baronial style.<sup>33</sup> The second Marquis was appointed as Chamberlain of the Royal Household at various periods between 1848-58.<sup>34</sup> This possibly arose from the warm reception he gave the royal party in 1842. The second Marquis clearly had expensive tastes with the way in which he furnished Taymouth Castle with decorative artwork and objects of personal interest. The large amount of estate correspondence relating to its management and upkeep shows his lavish lifestyle there.

Whether or not it was the second Marquis's intention to eventually sell Taymouth, and part of his adjacent estate, to Victoria would require more research. Nevertheless, Victoria clearly showed a fondness with the area several years later, as in 1866, on a visit to Kenmore, she wrote poignant memories of Taymouth Castle:

I gazed, not without deep emotion, on the scene of our reception twenty four years ago, by dear Lord Breadalbane, in a princely style, not to be equalled in grandeur and poetic effect. Albert and I were then only twenty three, young and happy. How many are gone that were with us then. I was glad to have seen it again. It seemed unaltered.<sup>35</sup>

Even if she was not interested in purchasing Taymouth, her visits had presumably inspired the Queen in setting up a Highland estate of her own. On her return to Taymouth, the castle was unoccupied. This was

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<sup>33</sup> Donaldson and Morpeth, Dictionary, 15.

<sup>34</sup> Scots Peerage, II, 'Campbell of Breadalbane', 211; Complete Peerage, 296, Breadalbane.

<sup>35</sup> Queen Victoria, *More leaves from the journal of a life in the Highlands from 1862-1882*, (London, 1885).

during a succession crisis, as there was no direct heir to the estate, after the second Marquis's death in 1862, resulting in several claimants to the earldom.<sup>36</sup> This dispute, coupled with legal death duties, almost resulted in estate bankruptcy, showing how vulnerable its management had turned out without the personal co-ordination of its former owner.

The Breadalbane chiefs had carried out many estate improvements since the later eighteenth century; both the first and second Marquis adopted a policy 'to transform their lands from a feudal patrimony into a commercial enterprise aiming at profitability in a market economy'. They did this by ending the runrig practice of farming, encouraging drainage, crop rotation and potato cultivation. Since c.1800, clearances, particularly in Glenorchy, arose because former tenants had not adopted fifteen-year leases. After the second Marquis took over the estates, in 1834, the population decreased by more than half in the next ten years. He was accused of totally clearing Glen Etive, and the local minister of Ardchattan noted that farms were united for sheep farming whilst Blackmount Forest was enlarged. However, having reduced his estate's population he gave grants to those who remained to encourage better drainage, enclosures and consolidated dwellings. Between 1834 to 1848 the second Marquis spent £42,762 on improvements throughout the Breadalbane estates.<sup>37</sup> Many of these were conducted at Blackmount Forest, showing that economic priorities became directed towards it.

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<sup>36</sup> See chapter 5, p.295.

<sup>37</sup> Robertson, 'Scottish Grand Junction Railway', 190-191; Gillies, *In Famed Breadalbane*, 199-200; OSA, Glenorchy and Inshail, 339; NSA, vii., Ardchattan, 502; NAS, GD 112/12/5/3/25 - Davidson and Syme W.S. 'State of sums expended on improvements on entailed estates of Breadalbane, 1834 -1852'.

### The social and economic impact of post war depression on Blackmount

In assessing the formation of Blackmount Forest in 1820, some wider political, economic and social factors are initially considered here. There are various motives, both historical and geographical, for its establishment in this locality, and these have already been discussed. We can scale the environmental impact from existing land use and that arising from this forest's eventual development into a commercial estate. Historiographical interpretations of the emergence of nineteenth-century Highland deer forests, including those re-formed anew, have highlighted the scope for further research. Hereafter and in later chapters we shall examine specifically how Blackmount had emerged and expanded, with estate correspondence forming the main source here.

The Forest emerged primarily from economic conditions affecting the Breadalbane estates. The termination of the Napoleonic wars in 1815 had a profound economic impact on Highland society. Many estates were overpopulated, and with a sudden fall in livestock prices several landlords are known to have sold much of their property.<sup>38</sup> The wars had themselves reduced local populations, and landlords took advantage by amalgamating existing farms on their estates. Tied in with this was the consequent disappearance of a system whereby tacksmen leased

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<sup>38</sup> Campbell, *Scotland since 1707*; Orr, *Deer Forests, Landlords and Crofters*; T.M. Devine (ed), *Scottish Emigration and Scottish Society*, (Edinburgh, 1992); T.M. Devine & Rosalind Mitchison, *'People and Society in Scotland'*, (Edinburgh, 1988).

townships from landlords. Tom Devine states that landlords were in a more powerful position after c.1820, resulting from the redundancy and departure of their populations. Since many smaller tenants had no legal rights to land they were considered squatters when landlords reorganised their estates after the wars.<sup>39</sup> From 1815-1821, government assisted emigration schemes provided mixed reactions in elite circles, researched by Michael Vance.<sup>40</sup>

During the post-war recession period prices of sheep and cattle were on average reduced by half. A combination of this, and poor weather by 1816-17, causing failed harvests and near famine, resulted in great pressure on tenants and landlords alike. Philip Gaskell, who studied the impact on the Morvern estates, suggested that clearances at that time could not be blamed primarily on landlords: 'for they were really the result of impersonal forces beyond the control of either landlords or tenants'.<sup>41</sup> The Breadalbane estates remained intact and the fourth Earl there received rentals on an intermittent basis, coupled with an emerging class of numerous poor subtenants.<sup>42</sup> It is worth examining if re-organisation within the Breadalbane estates at that time could be attributed to 'impersonal' or 'personal' forces. Likewise, we can consider if local clearances, or social disharmony itself, caused emigration. Blackmount Forest had clearly emerged as a result of these complex

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<sup>39</sup> Tom Devine 'Landlordism and Highland Emigration', 89 –103, *Scottish Emigration and Scottish Society*, (Edinburgh 1992), 86. {Hereafter: Devine, 'Landlordism and Highland Emigration'}

<sup>40</sup> Vance, 'Emigration Thesis'.

<sup>41</sup> Gaskell, *Morvern Transformed*, 25-6.

<sup>42</sup> Malcolm Gray, 'The course of Scottish Emigration', 16-36, in T.M. Devine (ed), *Scottish Emigration and Scottish Society* (Edinburgh, 1992).

developments after many local tenants had moved elsewhere, thus allowing the landlord to set it up with no resistance or protest.

The broader interpretations of the post-Napoleonic era require to be studied in a regional context, particularly to assess if the formation of Blackmount Forest and others by c.1820 were associated. Trends in estate policy, land use and population in Breadalbane until c.1815 have already been examined. Michael Vance questioned whether aggrieved tenants in Breadalbane recognised the general economic recession as a cause of their decision to emigrate. The remodelling of Taymouth Castle from c.1800-1830 was possibly one such source of tension. Financed by estate rentals, this was to serve as a shooting retreat for the landlord's guests, one being Prince Leopold in 1819.<sup>43</sup> This suggests that possible plans to develop a suitable shooting base in the Argyllshire estates were yet to come to fruition, but would require many years of investment and management.

Tied in with estate re-organisation was a pattern of depopulation. Occasional references to emigration from Breadalbane prior to 1818 exist, but since movements were not officially recorded sources are lacking. In 1817, up to eighty families from the district stated their intention to depart to Upper Canada. Despite abatement of rentals many tenants emigrated, and several of them were skilled tradesmen. Lord Breadalbane claimed he had taken measures to protect his tenants'

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<sup>43</sup> Vance, 'Emigration Thesis', 48, 71.



welfare, and that no 'clearances' akin to those in Sutherland had taken place in his estate. However reports of extreme poverty and starvation from petitioners, forced the government to aid the emigration of 300 people from the Loch Tay area during the summer of 1818.<sup>44</sup> In the following year some of the remaining tenants were successfully resettled on a new part of the estate, with improved social conditions.<sup>45</sup> With a consideration of these events it is possible to identify similar trends developing in the landlord's Argyllshire estates.

The factor, Duncan Campbell of Rockhill, gave Lord Breadalbane a detailed report of depressed social and economic conditions prevailing in Argyllshire in October 1816. He was principally concerned with fallen livestock prices and their effect on tenants, in particular sheep, had reduced by more than one third of their value whereas cattle prices had fallen by half. Tenants found it very difficult to sell young black cattle, especially on Lochaweside, and the factor was concerned about their general well being; thus, aid was requested in the Argyllshire estates:

It is not only the fall in the value of cattle, which the tenants have to struggle against, but likewise the general depression of the times. It is however necessary for the factor to enlarge on this subject, as his lordship would have been fully informed through other channels of the present unprecedented depression of the country, and that an abatement of rent to the tenants is unavoidable to relieve them in part of the considerable losses which they have

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<sup>44</sup> Vance, 'Emigration Thesis', 10, 45-49.

<sup>45</sup> Eric Richards, *A History of the Highland Clearances*, First edition, I, (London, 1982), 216-17. (His source is from Thomas Southey). {Hereafter: Richards, *Highland Clearances*, First edition.}

sustained not only by the fall in the price of cattle but also from the deaths which have arisen in their sheep stocks from the uncommon severity of last winter and spring.<sup>46</sup>

The factor stated that some Glenorchy lands were then out of lease and suggested abatements, possibly one quarter, to their current rentals. An individual called Robert Robertson also wrote of his concern about the recent combination of poor weather and depressed prices, suggesting that abatements proportionate to recent losses were 'absolutely necessary' even for those tenants who possessed large sheep walks.<sup>47</sup>

The post-war impact on Upper Glenorchy indicates population decline there being attributed to similar factors. Eric Richards states that the major clearances taking place in Sutherland overshadowed events elsewhere.<sup>48</sup> The Campbells of Breadalbane managed to avoid significant criticisms, and depopulation in their estates was more of a gradual process, even although clearances took place there also. In 1792 the settled areas around Loch Tulla, on the 'braes', were populated with nearly two hundred people; both Barravurich and Achallader had the highest settlement.<sup>49</sup> These areas became overpopulated, but this was much reduced due to the post-war decline in productivity throughout the Breadalbane estates.

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<sup>46</sup> NAS, GD 112/18/23/6/7 – Report by his lordship's factor in Argyllshire to the Earl of Breadalbane relative to the present distressed state of the Argyllshire tenants, (October 1816).

<sup>47</sup> *ibid.*

<sup>48</sup> Richards, *Highland Clearances*, First edition, I, 212.

<sup>49</sup> NAS: GD 50/59 – John Fletcher, *The Fletchers of Achallader*, (1924), 93; population patterns thereafter in this locality is difficult to gauge without more research, but it is certain that numbers living there had declined by c.1820.

From 1821, management policies show that rules were being underwritten in tenants' leases, for example at Barravurich, in order that Lord Breadalbane could threaten eviction to those whom he considered were not rotating their crops and improving dykes.<sup>50</sup> Whether he actually carried out evictions in these circumstances is not clear, but it was certainly an inducement for tenants to emigrate thereafter. Evidently, improvements were being considered in parts of his estates, particularly in Argyllshire where increased rentals for tenancies were adopted. Local farms were becoming conjoined and increased in size, and improvements lessened the need for a numerous population to engage in agrarian activities.

Lord Breadalbane shifted his priorities at Blackmount by adopting former land practices there, but now there was more emphasis on the commercial benefits of developing a profitable 'sporting estate' rather than protecting it as a designated hunting area. We have established that the Forest of Corrie Ba existed from c.1600 until the mid-eighteenth century. The most pronounced historical and cultural recognition of Corrie Ba was the tradition of the enigmatic 'white hind', still recognised in nineteenth century folklore.<sup>51</sup> The entry of this story in the *Black Book of Taymouth*, demonstrates an early hunting tradition in the locality. Hence awareness of the Campbell family history may have been an

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<sup>50</sup> Vance 'Emigration Thesis', 79 (Source: NAS GD 112/41/9).

<sup>51</sup> Chapter 1 discusses the early forest of Penniemore and later Corrie Ba, the extent of this forest, management and cultural history from c.1600 to c.1800; see also chapter 3, p.209.

inspiration for the re-development of a deer forest there.<sup>52</sup> The Forest of Corrie Ba existed as a designated hunting area and Blackmount Forest, replacing it in 1820, was ideally suited for 'sporting purposes'. The landlord had the vision of reconstituting a former 'feudal' hunting tradition in the locality, but the former forest laws and courts did not re-emerge.

There are geographical and environmental motives for forest re-establishment at Blackmount; these are fundamental to our understanding of it developing into a successful commercial deer forest. By the mid-nineteenth century it had expanded to an extent representing the boundaries forming the present estate, situated in the Lorn district of northeast Argyllshire.<sup>53</sup> William Scrope's geographical description of the bounds by 1883 shows that Blackmount Forest had gained significant recognition from its size and prominence:

It extends on the north side from the western extremity of Loch Lydoch, by Kings House in Rannoch, to Dalness in Glen Etive; on the south from the confines of the county of Perth, by Loch Tulla and the Urchy, Corrie Vicar and Glenketland. The ground is particularly adapted for deer, being rocky and steep, and the hills are varied with numerous corries.<sup>54</sup>

The environmental context can be linked to recent research and

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<sup>52</sup> *Black Book*, 59.

<sup>53</sup> The Forest then expanded as far as Loch Etive and Glenkinglass, marching with the farms of Ardmaddy, Glenkinglass and Derrynasaor, see chapter 3, p.179.

<sup>54</sup> Scrope, *Days of Deerstalking*, 308.

contemporary accounts. John Smith's research indicates that deer numbers were low in the Highlands, by the early nineteenth century.<sup>55</sup> Measures had been taken locally to reverse this trend after 1820, and to provide plentiful food for the deer at Blackmount Forest. William Scrope was aware that an earlier forest existed there interrupted by the sheep-farming boom, which had generated significant economic gains for the landowner. He stated that it became a forest again in 1820, by which time deer numbers had decreased considerably over a wide expanse of country; Scrope also noted that when parts of Blackmount were cleared of sheep, more deer gathered in from other areas.<sup>56</sup> The reasons why it was re-formed anew are hence attributed to environmental factors and economic conditions of the period.

The motives towards forming a forest at 'Black Mount' later became clearer when it was described as: 'the large tract of country', overlooking Loch Tulla, in northern Argyllshire. Its size therefore rendered it as being ideally suited as a Highland deer forest for the Campbells of Breadalbane and their aristocratic guests. However, economic losses were sustained as during its first decade after formation no significant income was being generated from this forest, while deer numbers increased and sheep farming was curtailed. To compensate for this, revenue was being generated from other parts of the landlord's Argyllshire estate. Duncan Campbell of Rockhill was factor there between 1815-1834, and his role included managing Blackmount Forest

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<sup>55</sup> Smith, 'Changing deer numbers', 89-97.

<sup>56</sup> Scrope, *Days of Deerstalking*, 307-8.

after it was formed in 1820.<sup>57</sup>

Over the next decade, Lord Glenorchy frequently wrote to Campbell of Rockhill to instruct him on the re-organisation of lands and farms around Loch Tulla, for incorporation into this new deer forest. His letters covered matters such as obligations of foresters, stock numbers, marches, finances and problems with poachers. Correspondence on the Forest's development is detailed, but there appears to be a gap between 1824 and 1827. Forest expansion involved re-organising land use, conjoining existing farms, raising finances and increasing the deer population.<sup>58</sup> Ultimately, the landowner's initial aim was to develop a forest specifically for sport, regardless of its social implications on the locality and the economic losses that would be sustained by the landlord in developing it. In 1816 the factor reminded Lord Breadalbane that: 'the leases of the well known and extensive grazings in the Lordship of Glenorchy and several excellent farms lying along the banks of Lochawe expire at Whitsunday 1817'.<sup>59</sup> This suggests that the factor perceived an opportunity to develop parts of the Argyllshire estates for other purposes when tenancies had expired. We also see that the obvious candidate to inherit the 'Lordship of Glenorchy' was Lord Breadalbane's son.

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<sup>57</sup> NAS, GD 112/16/5/6/10 – Condescence for Duncan Campbell esq of Rockhill, Pursuer, in the action at his instance against the most noble John, Marquess of Breadalbane, Defender, (1840), Part IV, 3. {Hereafter: 'NAS, GD 112/16/5/6/10: Campbell of Rockhill condescence, 1840.'}

<sup>58</sup> NAS, GD 112/16/9/1/3: Letters from Lord Glenorchy, near the most Noble the Marquess of Breadalbane, to Duncan Campbell of Rockhill. In reference to: *The Formation and keeping of the Blackmount Forrest*.

{Hereafter: 'NAS, GD 112/16/9/1/3: *Blackmount Forest formation*'}.

<sup>59</sup> NAS, GD 112/14/12/8/22 – Memorandum for Lord Breadalbane by his lordship's factor in Argyllshire, (1817).

As early as September 1818, Campbell of Rockhill was aware of the area's potential as a hunting ground for sporting purposes:

The Black Mount is undoubtedly preferable for a large party, as there is great extent and the game plenty, but the ground is a good deal broken...Several of the red deer from the Forest of Buachaille Etive in Glenetive, frequent the hills of Glenketland, which is no great distance from the Kingshouse, there are also occasionally a few in the hills of the brae farms of Glenorchy.<sup>60</sup>

He appears to have been suggesting its development towards sporting purposes, but hinted that re-organisation of established agrarian practices would be required. Competition with other landlords over deer was also considered at this time, due to close proximity with the Forest of Buachaille Etive. The factor noticed that deer were straying from there into upper Glen Etive, which later became the northern portion of Blackmount Forest.

Rockhill also commented on availability of game in other areas of the Earl of Breadalbane's Argyllshire estates. Roe deer and heathfowl were abundant in the woods and lower grounds around Lochaweside. Some farms near Dalmally would ideally suit small parties of sportsmen wishing to hunt for game birds. In Glen Orchy grouse were in such large numbers that tenants there complained they destroyed their crops.<sup>61</sup> Here

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<sup>60</sup> NAS, GD 112/74/260/7: Correspondence from Campbell of Rockhill, Argyllshire Estate Factor, (8<sup>th</sup> September 1818).

<sup>61</sup> *ibid.*

he was considering environmental and economic issues, and it is evident that other forms of income could be generated in the Argyllshire estates. Rockhill apparently received no immediate response, but it is apparent that Lord Glenorchy and the Earl of Breadalbane eventually acted on his advice.

This is seen in December of the following year when the landlord gifted Blackmount to his son, Lord Glenorchy, to form a forest there:

Before I left Taymouth, my father was so good as to consent to give me the portion of hill which had been considered the best part adapted for the forrest; this and the Royal Forrest, I trust, will soon afford a sufficiency of deer. Might I request you to write to me what you think is the most expeditious plan for setting about the business, that is when the sheep can be got off without detriment to the present tenants. Old Rankine I understand is dead, therefore I must get his widow to give up her portion of the ground to be taken in. I have given Menzies the necessary directions concerning the Royal Forrest, and to communicate with you everything that happens.<sup>62</sup>

In this early correspondence we can see some clear challenges for the new forest to be established at Blackmount. The livelihood of existing tenants had to be taken into consideration, indicating that tensions were likely to be generated between tenant and landlord.

The 'Royal' Forest of Buachaille Etive, situated at the north side of upper Glen Etive, was not under the ownership of the Breadalbane

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<sup>62</sup> NAS, GD 112/16/9/1/3: *Blackmount Forest formation* - Letter I, (21<sup>st</sup> December 1819).



Campbells.<sup>63</sup> The timing of forest re-formation at Blackmount in 1820 suggests that close intelligence on activities to the north in the previous year had inspired this action. In November 1819, the Duke of Argyll appointed General Alexander Campbell of Monzie as deputy heritable forester of the 'Royal Forest of Buachaletive'. His assistant Donald Menzies was given the role of protecting the deer there from poachers and grazing competitors such as horses, cattle and sheep.<sup>64</sup> Thereafter, until the 1840s, lands and deer were disputed between Blackmount and this adjacent forest, later held by Campbell of Monzie.<sup>65</sup> Lord Glenorchy's awareness of numerous deer in the neighbouring estate possibly inspired a plan to eventually incorporate the Royal Forest into Blackmount Forest, by negotiating with Monzie. Clearly the two forests could not co-exist so closely without some degree of contention between the proprietors.

From 1820, the Blackmount Forest began to evolve and take shape. The bounds evolved around settled portions of land to the north, east and west of Loch Tulla, and over the next few decades they expanded outwards in those directions. The farmed settlements there in 1818 were: Clashgour and Drumliart in the west; Ardvrecknish on the north shore of Loch Tulla; Barravurich and Achallader to the east; and

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<sup>63</sup> The 'Royal Forest' is depicted on modern Ordnance Survey maps as an area of mountainous land at the head of Glencoe and Glen Etive. (NN208535) The peaks are connected by a ridge named: 'Buachaille Etive Mor'; the name 'Royal Forest' suggests that royal hunting privileges had formerly existed there.

<sup>64</sup> NAS, GD 112/16/11/5/13: Warrant and Authority by W.H. Davidson as commissioner for General Campbell of Monzie, respecting the Forest of Buachaletive in Argyllshire, (20th November 1819).

<sup>65</sup> Chapter 4, from p.248, identifies problems existing between these two landlords.

Inveroran Inn, south west of the loch. Kingshouse Inn, at the north of Blackmount, and Kinlochetive, Guallachuline and Glenceitlein farms in Glen Etive, were also Lord Breadalbane's lands, but only Glenceitlein marched the Forest by the later 1820s.<sup>66</sup> The Forest's creation was initially focussed to the south before expansion was achieved further north from 1827 onwards.

The first stage of Forest evolution depended on the landlord's ability to develop it in conjunction with existing land use around Loch Tulla. Some farms were being considered for incorporation when their leases terminated; others remained as tenanted stock farms, but had restrictions imposed on them. We see the first actual evidence of expansion, in October 1823, when the factor was instructed to extend the Forest to the Braes of Ardvrecknish.<sup>67</sup> From 1822-1823 both Barravurich and Ardvrecknish farms 'came into his lordship's hands', but Barravurich was let out again from 1824. Ardvrecknish Farm had directly become part of Blackmount Forest and no longer appeared in rentals.<sup>68</sup> The following spring Lord Glenorchy arranged to examine and discuss the Blackmount marches with Campbell of Rockhill, perhaps implying that further expansion was planned at that time.<sup>69</sup>

By 1827, there were plans to extend the Forest further towards Glen Etive, and the marches between it and local farms were being

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<sup>66</sup> NAS, GD 112/9/3/4/8: List of the present rent of Glenorchy farms, (November 1818).

<sup>67</sup> NAS, GD 112/16/9/1/3: *Blackmount Forest formation* - letter V, (29<sup>th</sup> October 1823).

<sup>68</sup> NAS, GD 112/14/8/1/25: '*Report on Argyllshire accounts, 1815-1831*'.

<sup>69</sup> NAS, GD 112/16/9/1/3: *Blackmount Forest formation* - letter VII, (27<sup>th</sup> March 1824).

closely defined. Lord Glenorchy insisted that Blackmount be properly bounded, 'for the pleasure and amusement of shooting the deer', otherwise additional costs and efforts in management would render it useless. Thus, his motives were clearly related to purposes of leisure and commercial exploitation. He also desired: 'an immense forest', supplied with plenty of wintering ground for deer at Barravurich, Clashgour and Glenceitlein. Lord Glenorchy told the factor that he wanted the changes, including possession of Kingshouse, to be completed by the next season.<sup>70</sup> Clearly the landowner intended to develop a substantial 'sporting' forest and attempted to keep deer within its bounds by encouraging them to graze on adjacent farms during winter.

That October, he suggested that Kingshouse should become part of the Forest, and for the tenant there to give it up; however his father, who, although agreeing it should be incorporated, believed it could only be done so as long as this inn continued to provide accommodation to the public. Presumably, Lord Breadalbane knew that land adjacent to Kingshouse was required for drovers to rest their livestock. Two months later, Lord Glenorchy again mentioned the desirability of possessing Kingshouse in order to curb the activities of poachers from Glencoe and Rannoch, and having a forester or keeper there, as it was 'the most dangerous quarter in the Forest'. Also in December 1827 he talked of extending the Glenceitlein march in Glen Etive, to contain nearby poachers, following the ridge of hill extending to the burn of Allt a'

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<sup>70</sup> NAS, GD 112/16/9/1/3: *Blackmount Forest formation* - letter XIII, (14<sup>th</sup> December 1827); letter XIV, (27<sup>th</sup> December 1827).

Chaoruinn.<sup>71</sup> This was the only indication at that time of Forest expansion with the Glen Etive marches. Evidently, recent incidences of poaching influenced this second phase of expansion, especially on the north side of Blackmount Forest.

We know that the Clashgour march completed the Forest's west side, by 1827. Lord Glenorchy suggested including the whole of Stob Ghabhar for this march; but that the tops could be left optional, or undecided until they found which part was the easiest kept. He suggested that Clashgour and Drumliart be joined, so that Donald Campbell, the tenant at Drumliart, could reside at Clashgour farm with the intention that the deer would be undisturbed.<sup>72</sup> He presumably aimed to have Drumliart abandoned so that more deer would gather there. More specifically, Lord Glenorchy planned to have Barravurich Farm included in the bounds by 1827, and to extend the Forest further up to the Rannoch march. In 1829, he proposed that Barravurich should be abandoned, thus amalgamating this farm with Achallader.<sup>73</sup> These detailed discussions regarding forest marches, and proposals to amalgamate farms, shows that careful considerations were being made in that locality.

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<sup>71</sup> NAS, GD 112/16/9/1/3: *Blackmount Forest formation* – letter XII, (16<sup>th</sup> October 1827); letter XIII, (14<sup>th</sup> December 1827); letter XIV, (27<sup>th</sup> December 1827). The 'ridge of hill' referred to on the Glen Etive side were the hills of Stob Dubh (NN167488) and Beinn Ceitlein (NN178493).

<sup>72</sup> NAS, GD 112/16/9/1/3: *Blackmount Forest formation* – letter XII, (16<sup>th</sup> October 1827); letter XIII, (14<sup>th</sup> December 1827).

<sup>73</sup> NAS, GD 112/16/9/1/3: *Blackmount Forest formation* - letter XIV, (27<sup>th</sup> December 1827); NAS, GD 112/16/9/1/3: *Blackmount Forest formation* - letter XVII, (25<sup>th</sup> February 1829).

Lord Glenorchy regarded the Barravurich march, on the east of the Forest, as being narrow and of little value, but realised that it provided the only wintering for deer there. He also suggested separating the woods from this farm's marches, as they gave shelter for the deer. They lay in a difficult position, and, other than enclosing them this march would have to be separated. The landlord aimed to provide plenty of wintering food supplies for deer there, in order to prevent their wandering into Rannoch and possibly being shot. Campbell of Rockhill stated his views on the Forest's status shortly afterwards, hinting that he objected to the landlord's plans for Barravurich, but his suggestions are unknown. Lord Glenorchy restated his motives for making it part of the Forest, to provide wintering ground there for the deer, thus preventing their moving out of west-Rannoch.<sup>74</sup> Evidently, the eastern portion of Blackmount Forest required careful management to contain deer within the marches, and to avoid them being claimed by other estates in the Central Highlands.

It appears that part of the Barravurich march was then included in the Forest, as Lord Glenorchy persuaded his father to lose an estimated rent of £80. The march here already bounded the Water of Tulla, and if this were extended to include all of the north side, then more rent would be lost. The landlord was determined that this became part of the Forest

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<sup>74</sup> NAS, GD 112/16/9/1/3: *Blackmount Forest formation* – letter XIII, (14<sup>th</sup> December 1827); letter XIV, (27<sup>th</sup> December 1827). The area of West-Rannoch Moor was known as 'Padentoad', indicated by contemporary local correspondence; this area is composed of the many Lochans east of the military road. In 1801, George Langland's Argyllshire map names this large area of flat land as 'Baadnhashoag'. From: NLS Map Room, Argyll and Dumbarton county folder.

as without it 'Padentoad' (west-Rannoch Moor) was of little value, being disturbed by the shepherds on both sides.<sup>75</sup> There is some indication that he disagreed with his father regarding Forest expansion at this time. Additionally, there had been problems with the activities of local tenants. Thomas Walters had rented Barravurich from 1825-1834, and frequent mention of him during these years indicates that he posed a significant internal challenge to the landowner.<sup>76</sup> In 1833, the losses estimated for extending the Forest on its Barravurich side were estimated at £100 per annum.<sup>77</sup> We can see that plans relating to expansion of Blackmount Forest were made carefully as this came at a cost when rented lands were proposed for curtailment.

An estate official, James McVean, mentioned the marches extended as far as Cruach, north of Loch Laidon, in 1829, where a shepherd then resided.<sup>78</sup> In the same year, Lord Glenorchy showed interest in purchasing the Rannoch quarter of Struan Estate, which was then for sale.<sup>79</sup> An individual, whose identity is not specified, noted concern over proposals to extend the marches north from Barravurich, directly to Loch Ba in October 1833. Alternatively, a planned rearrangement for both the Forest and Barravurich Farm could incorporate the east end of Crannach woods to Dubh Loch. The marches

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<sup>75</sup> NAS, GD 112/16/9/1/3: *Blackmount Forest formation* - letter XVII, (25<sup>th</sup> February 1829).

<sup>76</sup> The affairs of Thomas Walters at Barravurich and his disputes with the factor are discussed from, p129-130 and in chapter 4.

<sup>77</sup> NAS, GD 112/16/10/4/1: Memorandum about the Forest, (October 1833). {Hereafter: 'NAS, GD 112/16/10/4/1: *Forest memorandum*, 1833'}

<sup>78</sup> NAS, GD 112/16/12/2: Report on the Forest since 10<sup>th</sup> June 1829: The dwelling occupied by shepherd of Cruach was Tigh na Cruaiche at the north side of Loch Laidon, NN371546.

<sup>79</sup> NAS, GD 112/16/9/1/3: *Blackmount Forest formation* - letter XIX, (8<sup>th</sup> November 1829).

would extend along the burn flowing out of this Loch, near the commencement of Loch Laidon.<sup>80</sup> Blackmount Forest had been extended eastwards by at least 1836 representing a final stage of expansion during its early years.<sup>81</sup> Peter Robertson, head forester, wrote that Loch Laidon then bounded its easternmost extremity, where he observed the deer. He also noted their numbers at Larigs, adjacent to Larig Hill in Glen Orchy, and Inverveigh at the head of Glen Orchy, indicating that the bounds had also moved southwards by that time.<sup>82</sup>

It was suggested in 1833 that grazing grounds in the Forest's eastern periphery could hold a permanent stock of 500 sheep, with the existing wintering at Barravurich, but if this farm and Achallader were conjoined, then the latter farm's wintering ground could be given to this stock.<sup>83</sup> The presence of livestock in Blackmount did not hinder the growth in deer population there. In fact, the recent expansion of sheep farming in the eastern marches, and to the north, influenced deer movement patterns by keeping most of them within the Forest's bounds. Careful management from Peter Robertson resulted in successful co-habitation. From the 1830s, he was head forester at Lochtulla Lodge, and took detailed notes on deer numbers within the marches, resulting in Blackmount becoming a thriving deer forest.<sup>84</sup>

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<sup>80</sup> NAS, GD 112/16/10/4/1: *Forest memorandum*, 1833.

<sup>81</sup> The Forest was not extended to Loch Etive and Glen Kinglass until the mid-nineteenth century, see chapter 3.

<sup>82</sup> NAS, GD 112/16/10/4/2: Report by Peter Robertson, forester to Mr Wyllie, (2<sup>nd</sup> February 1836); Peter Robertson was a key player in the Forest becoming a success, discussed in section II, p97-98.

<sup>83</sup> NAS, GD 112/16/10/4/1: *Forest memorandum*, 1833.

<sup>84</sup> This is discussed from chapter 3, p.180-184, where details of deer numbers are given by Peter Robertson between 1836-1845.

Clearly, Forest establishment required long term investment before economic gains were eventually made. Lord Glenorchy generated income by retaining rent-paying tenants at various farms around Loch Tulla. Rentals, ranging from £230-£350 were drawn from Achallader, Barravurich and Clashgour in 1825-6. These were evidently the most productive farms at Blackmount then. Only half of Glenceitlein was rented, for £150, indicating that the other half had become incorporated into the Forest.<sup>85</sup> Tree felling was also taking place in the locality, presumably to fund Lord Glenorchy's schemes. In 1824, wood from Blackmount was cut to pay off an Austrian loan, and the landlord talked of his relief at making enough to lessen Forest expenditure.<sup>86</sup> By 1830, he claimed that great expenses were incurred in forming the Forest in the previous decade; this he attributed to the large extent of land set aside for deer, and costs of employing foresters in protecting it.<sup>87</sup> For some years therefore, its development was essentially an economic liability and required investment from various other sources.

One means of generating revenue was from game lets elsewhere in the Argyllshire estates. In 1818, Campbell of Rockhill had recommended the farms of Succoth and Duilichy, near Dalmally, as suitable hunting grounds, both described as accessible and plentiful with game. He said the nearby moors were not very extensive, but a few sportsmen would

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<sup>85</sup> NAS, GD 112/9/3/4/9: Rental, (1825-6).

<sup>86</sup> NAS, GD 112/16/9/1/3: *Blackmount Forest formation* - letter VII, (27<sup>th</sup> March 1824).

<sup>87</sup> NAS, GD 112/16/11/5: Memoir for the Right Honorable Earl of Breadalbane, (5<sup>th</sup> June 1830).



find 'ample amusement' there for several days. Plentiful roes and heathfowl were in the woods and the low grounds of Lochaweside, but there were not as many grouse in the hills.<sup>88</sup> In 1821, other neighbouring areas were to be let for sport shooting, presumably to finance the Forest's development. A friend of Glenorchy, Mr William Russell, was to go shooting on the Mid-Muir in Brae Lorn, and advised of suitable accommodation near to it.<sup>89</sup> Grounds available for let were to be advertised in several Scottish and English newspapers, to attract sportsmen for the forthcoming season, in 1828.<sup>90</sup> The landowner drew income from these other areas in Argyllshire, and this is one indication as to how Blackmount developed successfully at a stage comparatively early in comparison with other Highland deer forests.

There is not much indication of the Forest itself being let out in early correspondence. Perhaps Lord Glenorchy did not encourage commercial sport shooting there while he waited for the deer population to increase. However interesting comments were made some years later, showing that game rents had featured in other areas of the Argyllshire estates:

In the year 1820, the late Marquis of Breadalbane resolved to give up to his son, the present noble defender when Viscount Glenorchy, the large tract of

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<sup>88</sup> NAS, GD 112/74/260/7: Campbell of Rockhill, Argyllshire Factor, to Earl of Breadalbane (8<sup>th</sup> September, 1818).

<sup>89</sup> NAS, GD 112/16/9/1/3: *Blackmount Forest formation* - letter III, (3<sup>rd</sup> August 1821); A map of Argyll by John Thomson in 1824, defines the 'Mid Muir' as an area of hilly ground, west of Loch Awe. This map was attested by various official individuals, including Duncan Campbell of Rockhill. From: NLS, Map of Northern Part of Argyllshire, by John Thomson, (1824), Argyll and Dumbarton county folder.

<sup>90</sup> NAS, GD 112/16/9/1/3: *Blackmount Forest formation* - letter XV, (26<sup>th</sup> April 1828).

country known by the name of the Black Mount...the object of that noble defender was to turn it into a deer forest. The late Marquis also at the same time made over to his son, the noble defender, the whole game on the rest of the estate, which the noble defender let from time to time for a game rent, a description of rent which had never hitherto been drawn from the property.<sup>91</sup>

Revenue from game rents at Blackmount is seen in accounts between the years 1831 to 1834, but they were certainly not significant, ranging from £20 to £80 annually.<sup>92</sup> On the basis of this evidence this appears to be the first time that Blackmount was being let for sport since it originated in 1820, so during its first decade no lets were being offered.

At this stage we have considered various historical, geographical and economic reasons for Forest formation at Blackmount. Both its development and expansion depended on assessment and re-organisation of existing farm marches as well as facing challenges from poachers. Lord Glenorchy was determined to keep settled portions of the Forest to a minimum by amalgamating existing farms thus reducing overgrazing to provide food for the deer, especially during the winter. The farm of Drumliart was abandoned and its tenant moved to Clashgour; however, despite endeavours by the landlord to conjoin farming activities at Achallader and Barravurich, both farms remained separate. During the first decade it was an economic balancing act for the landlord and Forest expansion was carried out in conjunction with existing land use in the Blackmount locality.

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<sup>91</sup> NAS, GD 112/16/5/6/10: Campbell of Rockhill condescendence, 1840, Part IV, 3.

<sup>92</sup> *ibid.*

### Managing Blackmount I: Employees

Blackmount's location and date of formation was influenced by economics and management decisions, and several local tenants were involved in running the Forest. It is appropriate therefore to introduce the key players existing there from c.1820, and to examine where possible, how their roles developed over time. Understanding the landowner's motives relating to his tenants and stock within the Forest is a compelling theme. Its complex management was, in part, a consequence of the varying status of the resident population. Some were tenants, holding a lease, possibly with Forest employment, but others had no tenure or labour rights. Tom Devine has emphasised that lesser tenants in Highland estates had no legal rights to land after c.1820.<sup>93</sup> Thus, this may explain the landlord's justification for population decline in the Breadalbane estates. For those who stayed in the Blackmount locality, the extent of control they had over their affairs can be considered.

We have ascertained that a factor was given the principal role in estate management for a landlord, including rental collection, dealing with employees, and handling significant local affairs.<sup>94</sup> During the early nineteenth century, several factors managed business in Perthshire and

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<sup>93</sup> Devine, 'Landlordism and Highland Emigration', 86.

<sup>94</sup> See, chapter 1, p.61-62.

Argyllshire for the Campbells of Breadalbane.<sup>95</sup> These landlords also employed ground officers in districts of their estates to work as resource managers and organisers of building projects and improvements. After its formation, various foresters, gamekeepers, watchers, and game herds were required at Blackmount. Likewise, after the Forest house was constructed in the 1840s it became occupied by servants, kennel boys and dairymaids.<sup>96</sup> The role played by these staff, and how their livelihood was maintained, can be identified along with shepherds at the surrounding farms.

In 1830, the fourth Earl of Breadalbane stated that Lord Glenorchy, his son, had ten years previously 'set aside' Blackmount, with the intention of forming it into a forest for deer and other game. To do this, the landlord was put to great trouble and cost, because of the large area of ground, and the employment of numerous foresters whose role was to protect and preserve the deer within it. A considerable degree of success had been achieved, and Blackmount became plentiful with roe and red deer.<sup>97</sup> Forest formation over these years did not develop without problems, nor did the landowner escape from several external challenges.<sup>98</sup> Lord Glenorchy held political commitments in England during the 1820s.<sup>99</sup> This and his other appointments required reliable

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<sup>95</sup> NAS, GD 112/16/5/6/9: Letter, Lord Ormelie to Duncan Campbell of Rockhill, (November 1833); GD 112/74/260/17: Letter, Duncan Campbell of Rockhill to Lord Ormelie, (November 1833).

<sup>96</sup> Appendices 3/1-3/3 & 5 show samples of employees present from the 1840s to 1860s at Blackmount.

<sup>97</sup> NAS, GD 112/16/11/5: Memorial for the Earl of Breadalbane, (5<sup>th</sup> June 1830).

<sup>98</sup> We shall identify these challenges in chapter 4, especially the poaching problems in the Forest.

<sup>99</sup> Scots Peerage, II, 'Campbell of Breadalbane'; Lord Glenorchy was MP for Okehampton from 1820-26.

employees to manage his local affairs, and give regular reports on Blackmount Forest whilst he was absent. However, this was not necessarily a new problem as his predecessors were also frequently elsewhere. The challenges increased when the landlord decided to engage in his scheme of developing the Forest in between his periods of absenteeism.

A particularly important point of contact from its formation was via the factor, Duncan Campbell of Rockhill, who managed the Argyllshire portion of the Breadalbane Estates between 1815-1834.<sup>100</sup> From 1820 the factor was given instructions from Lord Glenorchy on the Forest's formation. He claimed he had to make frequent journeys to Blackmount, the nearest part of which was about twenty miles from his residence near Inverary. His commitments involved disbursing wages for labourers and other employees; he was to keep regular Forest accounts and requested the assistance of a clerk. Campbell of Rockhill also advertised lets for game shooting, and drew the rents for them; he was especially involved in managing the sporting lets already mentioned, from 1821, in Brae Lorn.<sup>101</sup> The factor was thus given much responsibility in running the Argyllshire estates for an absentee landlord.

By the 1830s, the element of trust and understanding between Lord Glenorchy, then Lord Ormelie, and Campbell of Rockhill had

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<sup>100</sup> NAS, GD 112/74/260-262: Correspondence from Duncan Campbell of Rockhill, Argyllshire Factor.

<sup>101</sup> NAS, GD 112/16/5/6/10: *Campbell of Rockhill condescendence*, 1840; NAS, GD 112/16/9/1/3: *Blackmount Forest formation* – letter III, (3<sup>rd</sup> August, 1821).

deteriorated. In 1833, Rockhill was displeased with the recent appointment of a new factor at Easdale, giving him no choice but to accept the Glenorchy factorship at lower wages; his annual salary, which had been £300, was reduced to £150. He appealed on the grounds that he had set up the Forest from its inception, and was involved with improvements there.<sup>102</sup> In the previous year, Lawrence Davidson the landlord's Edinburgh legal agent, was asked by the Marquis to produce a detailed report on the factor's Argyllshire accounts between 1815-1831. Generally, these were thought to be correct for the first ten years, but Davidson stated: 'The accounts subsequent to 1825 are much less accurate. Considerable sums of arrears have been withdrawn from the factor's debit in a way that is inconsistent with the ordinary practice of factors'. The reporter was concerned that the estate's expenses and losses had been augmented above eight per cent in comparison to previous years.<sup>103</sup>

Lord Glenorchy had written to Campbell of Rockhill, hinting that he had disagreed with his father who proposed to alter Rockhill's terms of employment. This inevitably caused tension within the Breadalbane family, which spilled over to Rockhill who had spent nearly twenty years as Argyllshire factor. An unfortunate series of circumstances led to his eventual suspension of employment in 1834. There were two reasons for his removal; one was related to the difficulties both he and the landlord

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<sup>102</sup> NAS, GD 112/16/5/6/9 - Copy letter Lord Ormelie to Duncan Campbell Esquire of Rockhill, (16<sup>th</sup> November 1833); GD 112/74/262/17- Campbell of Rockhill to Lord Ormelie.

<sup>103</sup> NAS, GD 112/14/8/1/25 - *Report on Argyllshire accounts, 1815-1831.*

faced with Thomas Walters of Barravurich, and the other was due to the way in which Rockhill managed finances in the Argyllshire estates. This led to legal action, lasting until 1840, over sums of money Rockhill was said to have laundered from the estate accounts, and certain unusual practices over management of estate finances.<sup>104</sup>

The Campbells of Breadalbane employed various ground officers to oversee improvements within districts of both their Perthshire and Argyllshire lands, but no particular one was involved in the Forest during its first two decades. Foresters, game herds and gamekeepers there were all directly involved with wild animals, but had distinguishing roles to play in this respect. The foresters were to protect the area from poachers, and to carefully observe deer patterns; the head forester had additional responsibilities involving correspondence with the factor, and sometimes the landlord. Game herds had a role similar to foresters, being stationed at various portions of Blackmount, to keep deer from wandering out of it. Gamekeepers were more involved with general management of game, not just deer. Other personnel, especially foresters and watchers, became involved with running Blackmount from 1820-1850.<sup>105</sup>

When exactly a head forester was initially employed at Blackmount is unknown, but this was an important role if the Forest were to become a success. In 1829, Lord Glenorchy suggested that a forester

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<sup>104</sup> NAS, GD 112/16/5/6/10: *Campbell of Rockhill condescendence, 1840.*

<sup>105</sup> Later in this section we will identify their working conditions, wages and terms of employment, but at this stage we shall examine the roles of Forest employees.

from Braemar called MacDougall could be a suitable candidate as the head forester for Blackmount; he was originally from Glenlyon, and had become second forester to Lord Fife. The plan was that MacDougall could use Inveroran Inn as a base for taking charge of the Forest, but first Donald Campbell would have to give up this inn.<sup>106</sup> However, Campbell was still innkeeper there in 1833/4 and paid a rental of £40.<sup>107</sup> Thus it appears that MacDougall did not take the post as forester, and there is likewise little evidence of who may have been employed with this role at that time.

Peter Robertson appeared at Blackmount by around 1829, and was presumably employed then as an under forester. A report that year shows he kept a journal of trespass at the lodge particularly concerned with trespassing cattle and sheep.<sup>108</sup> His main responsibility then was to regulate the Forest's marches, by keeping areas inhabited by deer separate from domesticated stock. In 1829, Lord Glenorchy noted his confidence towards Robertson, stating that this forester was both 'active' and 'careful' in his duties. He predicted that if Robertson were to stay for the next two or three years, then this would lead to his promotion as head forester. The landlord placed much trust in him and encouraged Robertson to gain as much knowledge as possible on the nature of the deer.<sup>109</sup> This was a wise decision as he became a very experienced

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<sup>106</sup> NAS, GD 112/16/9/1/3: *Blackmount Forest formation* – letter XIX, (8<sup>th</sup> November, 1829).

<sup>107</sup> NAS, GD 112/9/3/4/12: Rental 1833/4.

<sup>108</sup> NAS: GD 112/16/12/2: Report on the Forest since 10<sup>th</sup> June 1829.

<sup>109</sup> NAS, GD 112/16/9/1/3: *Blackmount Forest formation* - Letter XIX, (8<sup>th</sup> November, 1829)



forester and remained at Blackmount until the 1870s.<sup>110</sup>

It is uncertain when Robertson was actually appointed head forester, but he certainly had taken this role by 1836, and his letters thereafter give detailed insight into how the Forest was managed on the ground.<sup>111</sup> His obligations involved examining the location, numbers and health of deer, and regulating marches. He was a dedicated forester there for many years, and he could be credited with its developing into a particularly notable deer forest during the nineteenth century. He maintained a careful winter watch on them indicating determination by the proprietor to have a productive forest. In addition to observing deer numbers, Robertson and other tenants kept watch on their movement patterns. Whilst in Europe during 1830, Lord Glenorchy was keen that Robertson would remain at one of the estate cottages with Mr Dewar, the ground officer. However Campbell of Rockhill suggested that Robertson would be usefully placed at the Kingshouse, to continue trapping there.<sup>112</sup> Presumably, Robertson was involved with catching hares there, showing the various additional roles he had.

Lord Glenorchy was concerned that Robertson could be badly influenced by Archibald Fletcher. The role of this individual is unknown, but he was described as conceited with a drinking problem, but

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<sup>110</sup> Refer to George Cupples, *Scotch Deer Hounds and their Masters*, (See chapter 5, p.327-329.)

<sup>111</sup> NAS: GD112/16/10/4: This collection, and others, deal with general estate correspondence from the 1830s to 1850s, most of these letters are from Peter Robertson, forester at Blackmount. GD 112/16/9/1 also has some details on forest matters from 1855 to 1860.

<sup>112</sup> NAS, GD 112/16/9/1/3: *Blackmount Forest formation* - Letter XIX, (8<sup>th</sup> November 1829); this cottage was presumably the one at or near Ardvrecknish on the north shores of Loch Tulla.

nevertheless an industrious youth.<sup>113</sup> It is clear that the landlord was being kept well informed of his employees' activities and habits, and it appears that he considered this to be particularly important in order for his 'ten year plan' at Blackmount to succeed. Fletcher's specific remit is unclear, but it seems that this tenant employee worked alongside Peter Robertson in the early years, possibly as an assistant forester. Fletcher was to keep himself busy on thatching duties, seeking and destroying illegal fishing rods, and keeping the road to the houses in good repair. Lord Glenorchy judged that Archibald Fletcher was an unsteady character, but gave him another chance to become more orderly and careful. It appears that the landowner had sympathy for Fletcher's alcohol problem, and was willing to see how he progressed in the future.<sup>114</sup> It is uncertain how long Fletcher resided in the Forest, but it is known that an Archibald Fletcher resided at the drove stance of Clifton, near Tyndrum by 1843.<sup>115</sup>

The role of game herds in the Forest was simply to herd game, whilst deterring poachers, and grazing livestock away from its marches. After Blackmount had been subjected to periodic poaching during 1830, Lord Glenorchy gave various instructions to his game herds in order to protect it. One of the McNicols was to be given charge of the march from Blaraven to Alltchaorunn, and he was to meet another employee, McNaughton, daily on the tops. Donald Duff and D. Campbell were to

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<sup>113</sup> NAS, GD 112/16/9/1/3: *Blackmount Forest formation* - Letter XIX, (8<sup>th</sup> November 1829).

<sup>114</sup> NAS, GD 112/16/9/1/3: *Blackmount Forest formation* - letter XIX, (8<sup>th</sup> November 1829); Letter XX (17<sup>th</sup> June, 1830).

<sup>115</sup> NAS, GD 112/14/5/1: Perthshire factory accounts, 1843-44.

likewise report to each other to keep out poachers and trespassers on the Glen Etive side.<sup>116</sup> Some of these game herds did not just herd game but were allowed to keep a limited number of livestock.<sup>117</sup> These four employees were obliged to police the Forest's marches in the light of recent events. It is possible that the extensive measures taken to curb poaching were actually uncovering more incidences of this activity.

We have already mentioned the presence of a gamekeeper at Ardvrecknish; James Kerrs is known to have resided there by at least 1827. He was then mentioned in local accounts relating to improvements and purchases at Blackmount, with one relating to the repair of a gun barrel. In 1828, he was reported as having made a reasonable bargain in purchasing three greyhounds from Glengarry.<sup>118</sup> Gamekeepers therefore had some additional responsibilities apart from just managing game itself, but it seems that the head forester there took a more prominent role with deer. The term shepherd requires little explanation, but there is evidence to suggest that some shepherds had the role of keeping deer within the Forest. Archibald Clark, shepherd at Goistean of Barravurich, claimed in 1832 that he made considerable efforts at keeping the deer within the boundaries of Blackmount.<sup>119</sup> Thus employees, depending on their situation, had interchangeable tasks in the locality.

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<sup>116</sup> NAS, GD 112/16/9/1/3: *Blackmount Forest formation* - letter XX, (17<sup>th</sup> June 1830).

<sup>117</sup> This theme is examined in the next section on the landlord's attitudes towards his tenants and stock.

<sup>118</sup> NAS, GD 112/16/6/13/25: Letter to Mr James Kerrs, Gamekeeper, Ardvrecknish, Glenorchy, (20<sup>th</sup> February 1827); GD 112/16/9/1/3: *Blackmount Forest formation* - Letter XVI, (28<sup>th</sup> May, 1828).

<sup>119</sup> NAS, GD 112/16/10/5/33: Representation by Archibald Clark, Barravurich, (24<sup>th</sup> February, 1832).

Local innkeepers also had an important part to play in the running of the Forest with numerous obligations; those at Inveroran and Kingshouse were involved guarding it from poachers, particularly at the latter location. In April 1826, Donald Campbell desired to quit his appointment there in place of Dalmally Inn, and the factor agreed that he would be a very suitable tenant for it.<sup>120</sup> Campbell remained at Kingshouse, and was reimbursed £6 10s, in 1827, for providing six months lodgings there to Donald Duff, a forester.<sup>121</sup> In 1829, he was still obliged to set aside a room for some of the Blackmount foresters; Lord Glenorchy wanted to change this arrangement and suggested providing suitable accommodation for one that was: 'trustworthy...without being bound to the tenant'.<sup>122</sup> Whether improvements were made there at this time is unclear, but Kingshouse Inn certainly had a significant function in the Forest's northern periphery.

Donald Campbell was still there in early 1829, and he had rented Kingshouse for £30 that year. Lord Glenorchy was then informed of Campbell being 'in league' with poachers from Glencoe. These allegations may have been made by one of the Fletchers, possibly either Archibald Fletcher, or John Fletcher the Inveroran innkeeper.<sup>123</sup> There were clear tensions existing between these local tenants, brought on by problems related to poaching and possibly financial difficulties. The

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<sup>120</sup> NAS, GD 112/74/261/8: Correspondence of Campbell of Rockhill, Argyllshire Factor, (1826).

<sup>121</sup> NAS, GD 112/16/6/13/9: Forest receipt to Donald Campbell, Kingshouse, (12<sup>th</sup> October, 1827).

<sup>122</sup> NAS, GD 112/16/9/1/3: *Blackmount Forest formation* – letter XVII, (25<sup>th</sup> February, 1829).

<sup>123</sup> NAS, GD 112/9/3/4/10: Rental for Glenorchy farms, 1828; GD 112/16/9/1/3: *Blackmount Forest formation* – letter XVII, (25<sup>th</sup> February, 1829).

factor reported that John Fletcher was always in arrears; he had 'struggled on' for some time, but had little stock.<sup>124</sup> He was in arrears of £53 2 6 at Inveroran in January 1829, had pledged a tenancy agreement for Kingshouse two months later, but was declared bankrupt at Inveroran by December 1830 when his debts had increased by a further £40.<sup>125</sup>

Donald Campbell, presumably the one who had been accused of poaching at Kingshouse, had replaced Fletcher as the Inveroran innkeeper by November 1829. He remained there until at least 1834, by which time arable and pasture grounds were adjacent to Inveroran.<sup>126</sup> Therefore, the landlord appeared to allow farming activities here following John Fletcher's bankruptcy after leasing it. By June 1830 Duncan Campbell was noted as the new innkeeper at Kingshouse. Lord Glenorchy instructed the factor that this tenant would only be retained there if he remained 'active' in the Forest, and kept the inn in good order.<sup>127</sup> He had taken on much responsibility, amongst maintaining obligations of hospitality and gaining an element of trust with the landlord.

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<sup>124</sup> NAS, GD 112/74/261/13: Correspondence from Campbell of Rockhill, Argyllshire Estate Factor.

<sup>125</sup> NAS, GD 112/14/12/8/32: Report on arrears to the Earl of Breadalbane, (6<sup>th</sup> January 1829); NAS GD 112/14/12/42: Glenorchy arrears in the course of recovery from proceeds of sales under sequestration, (December 1830); NAS, GD 112/14/3/9/21: Copy offer for Kingshouse, (19<sup>th</sup> March 1829): His obligations, had he taken it are highlighted in the forthcoming discussion on the landowner's attitude towards his tenants.

<sup>126</sup> NAS, GD 112/9/3/4/12: Glenorchy rental 1833-1834.

<sup>127</sup> NAS, GD 112/16/9/1/3: *Blackmount Forest formation* - letter XIX, (8<sup>th</sup> November 1829); Letter XX (17<sup>th</sup> June 1830).

## Managing Blackmount II: Tenants and Stock

A striking theme in the early stages of Blackmount's development is seen in the landowner's endeavours to eliminate grazing competitors, and the relationship with his tenants, and how they managed their livestock. The 'grazings of Corricheba' indicated pastoral activity within the former forest there during the eighteenth century.<sup>128</sup> Frequent mention of Forest livestock, and the landowner's policy of reducing grazing numbers within the various marches, is indication that land around Blackmount was overhauled extensively from c.1820, thus changing the local environment. This is an early example of land being cleared for a deer forest, and research by Orr shows this continued throughout the Highlands during the nineteenth century. In particular, Blackmount Forest, along with its predecessor at Invercauld, may have collectively set trends for those that followed later, and proprietors elsewhere reacted to wider social, economic and political scenarios that faced them.

After having been gifted it from his father Lord Glenorchy swiftly redeveloped Blackmount during the post Napoleonic recession period after prices of livestock had fallen. He stated concern about clearing sheep from the lands without loss to existing tenants there, but was quite determined to have them removed as soon as possible. In 1821 Lord Glenorchy wrote '...I trust some of the sheep are off the forrest by this time, and that the ground will be clear of them altogether in another year,

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<sup>128</sup> See chapter 1, p.55.

the sooner the better.' In the following year he stated '...I should think this the best time to dispose of the Black Mount stock, I am very anxious to have it entirely cleared of sheep this year.'<sup>129</sup> This may be seen as a rather draconian measure at the time, but it seems likely that Lord Glenorchy desired that plenty wintering food would be available to attract deer from other areas.

Although Lord Glenorchy wanted to remove all the sheep from Blackmount during early Forest formation, it appears that this only partially took place at Blaraven, Ardvrecknish and Barravurich between 1822-3. Leases had recently expired at these and other local farms, allowing the landlord to choose which ones to incorporate into the Forest. However, valuation of the Ardvrecknish stock became the subject of litigation in the local sheriff court; this farm, which had been rented at £395, had its stock valued at £841. The sheep stocks at Barravurich, formerly rented at £400, were valued at £2436. Between 1824-5 the combined stock at Barravurich and Derrybeg was sold to Thomas Walters for £3032, but particular numbers of sheep were not specified.<sup>130</sup> It may have been the landlord's intention to develop a forest devoid of grazing stock, but this was a policy that was reversed shortly after its formation due to economic constraints. Likewise, the commercial benefits associated with sheep farming had recovered.

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<sup>129</sup> NAS, GD 112/16/9/1/3: *Blackmount Forest formation* - letter I, (21<sup>st</sup> December, 1819); letter III (3<sup>rd</sup> August, 1821); letter IV (16<sup>th</sup> August, 1822).

<sup>130</sup> NAS, GD 112/14/8/1 - 'Report on Argyllshire accounts, 1815-1831'.

By 1833, Lord Glenorchy had suggested that Barravurich Farm could be permanently stocked with up to 500 sheep.<sup>131</sup> It may be that by this time it was realised that fewer sheep in this forest was causing substantial losses; since deer stalking was a seasonal venture, much better use of the land could be made at other times of the year. One environmental historian has noted that the term 'deer forest' implies habitation by deer alone, whereas in reality, he states, there were very few forests without at least one other grazing competitor.<sup>132</sup> Sheep numbers had evidently increased around Blackmount from c.1830, and by the later nineteenth century they dominated its southeast and eastern boundaries.<sup>133</sup> The increase in livestock numbers locally indicates better management practices and more profitable marketability for the 'flock masters'.

Lord Glenorchy had complete control on the types and quantities of stock kept on settled portions of the Forest. He made persistent orders to remove sheep, but he also adopted a rigorous policy to keep a check on other livestock. In 1824 the game herds, Campbell and McNicol, were allowed to keep cows for milking during the summer months, but only one during the winter. Another tenant, Rankine, was told he ought to have accounted for the numbers of sheep, horses and horned livestock in the Forest according to the arrangements they had made.<sup>134</sup> As earlier stated, the motives for such a strict watch on tenants' stock during the

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<sup>131</sup> NAS, GD 112/16/10/4/1: Memorandum about the Forest, (October 1833).

<sup>132</sup> Smith, 'Changing deer numbers', 89.

<sup>133</sup> Grimble, *Deer Forests of Scotland*, 13.

<sup>134</sup> NAS, GD 112/16/9/1/3: *Blackmount Forest formation* – letter VII, (27<sup>th</sup> March, 1824).



1820s was related to the landowner's determination to reduce grazing grounds in order that plenty of wintering food was available for the deer.

In 1827, Donald Duff was ordered not to have more than one mare in his possession, and he was not to remain in the landowner's service if he were to take a wife. It was expected that Duff was to be a 'single active man', without any other distractions. Presumably the landlord was concerned that if this tenant had children the situation he held may have caused difficulties, possibly due to working in a remote forest. Lord Glenorchy appeared unwilling to accept another family at Blackmount.<sup>135</sup> However in 1844, he granted £2 to Donald Duff to enable purchase of a present, in assisting the education of his children.<sup>136</sup> Lord Glenorchy had since then inherited his father's estates, becoming the second Marquis of Breadalbane in 1834. This shows that he may have been initially adopting shrewd measures, in his aims to develop the Forest, but later withdrawing them when he faced challenges from his tenants.

Lord Glenorchy brought some Highland cows and ponies to the Forest in 1827, presumably for one or a number of his tenants residing on its fringes. One of the McNicolls in Glen Etive was allowed to take in up to twelve cattle for summering only. McNicoll was instructed to keep these on the Beinn Ceitlein side, in lower Glen Etive; the landlord was concerned that if they crossed the water they might do 'considerable

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<sup>135</sup> NAS, GD 112/16/9/1/3: *Blackmount Forest formation* - Letter X, (9<sup>th</sup> May, 1827).

<sup>136</sup> NAS, GD 112/14/5/1: Factory Account between the Marquis of Breadalbane and James F. Wyllie, From Martinmas 1843 to Martinmas 1844.

harm' to the wintering of Beinn Mhic Chasgaig, above Alltchaorunn. By end of August 1827, Lord Glenorchy would not guarantee that this stock could remain there until he saw how things progressed.<sup>137</sup> From this evidence it is clear that careful decisions were then being taken on stock movements and their numbers, particularly in Glen Etive. The landlord was facing reality, as his tenants required at least some animal produce for their consumption.

Also in 1827, Duncan Buchanan of Clashgour was told to keep his march better than it had been done in the previous year, and was instructed to sell off all of his trespassing sheep. Lord Glenorchy was particularly concerned with grazing horses, continually eating the best grass and wintering supplies of food there. Buchanan had three mares but was allowed only two in future, and he had five cows in his possession. The landlord said that with Buchanan's sufficient wages and houses, including Blaraven, he could not expect 'better profit', as he was also a forester.<sup>138</sup> Lord Glenorchy appeared to be unhappy with Duncan Buchanan, and suggested that Donald Campbell from Drumliart should take Clashgour farm.<sup>139</sup> During that winter the corries above Clashgour were not to be disturbed by the sheep there; hence, at this end of the Forest the strategy was that sheep would be turned back.<sup>140</sup>

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<sup>137</sup> NAS, GD 112/16/9/1/3: *Blackmount Forest formation* - letter X, (9<sup>th</sup> May, 1827); Beinn Mhic Chasgaig, 'MacCaskill's Peak', is situated at NN 221503.

<sup>138</sup> NAS, GD 112/16/9/1/3: *Blackmount Forest formation* - letter X, (9<sup>th</sup> May, 1827).

<sup>139</sup> NAS, GD 112/16/9/1/3: *Blackmount Forest formation* - letter XII, (16<sup>th</sup> October, 1827).

<sup>140</sup> NAS, GD 112/16/9/1/3: *Blackmount Forest formation* - letter XIII, (14<sup>th</sup> December, 1827).

It appears that an element of contention had existed for some time between Duncan Buchanan and Lord Glenorchy. Buchanan had tenanted Kingshouse Inn from c.1810, and made considerable profits from salt smuggling over ten years; by 1819 he invested much of this into stocking a large farm adjacent to it, and hams were made from goats reared there.<sup>141</sup> The landlord was aware of significant challenges from Duncan Buchanan, and the tenant who replaced him at Kingshouse Inn, Donald Campbell, appeared to pick up Buchanan's capitalising habits. Since Kingshouse was not part of Blackmount Forest when it came into formation in 1820 few grazing restrictions were initially being imposed, but this changed with the landlord's plans to incorporate it from 1827. Lord Glenorchy may have regarded enterprising activities from tenants on the Forest's periphery as potentially damaging to his expansionist policy, and possible interference to deer numbers due to competition amongst livestock for food.

This is in fact what took place as Lord Glenorchy observed that Donald Campbell's goats had been straying around the Forest in 1824 and 1827. The landlord was particularly concerned that no deer were seen in early October in the north side of Blackmount, but that one day a herd of goats was spotted on top of Meall a' Bhuiridh.<sup>142</sup> Campbell's goats were still at Kingshouse in 1829, and Lord Glenorchy stated if he were to remain there Campbell had to get rid of them. If they or any

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<sup>141</sup> Robert Southey, *Journal of a tour in Scotland in 1819*, (London), 234; Glenorchy and Inshail parish register records his name at Kingshouse in 1809.

<sup>142</sup> NAS, GD 112/16/9/1/3: *Blackmount Forest formation* – letter VI, (21<sup>st</sup> November, 1823); letter XII, (16<sup>th</sup> October, 1827).

other of his livestock trespassed in the Forest, he was liable to the payment of a penalty.<sup>143</sup> Thus, restrictions were being imposed on trespassing stock even in remote areas of Blackmount. Also, the recent accusations of his poaching deer ensured that Donald Campbell did not stay much longer at Kingshouse Inn and moved to Inveroran. Why he was allowed to move there, or what the arrangements of his lease were thereafter, is unknown but Campbell's activities could become more closely observed in his new situation.

Lord Glenorchy's attitudes towards his tenants and stock is clearly seen in a declaration pledged by John Fletcher, who wished to take Kingshouse in 1829:

To come under the regulations of the Estate... I engage to do all that I possibly can to protect the Forest from poachers, and on no account whatever harbour any suspicious persons under the penalty of twenty pounds sterling; likewise I will keep no goats, and only two cows, and that I will board if required one or more of the foresters at the rate of Fifteen pounds per annum for each including washing and the keep of a dog. I also agree to perform the carriage of leading two tons of coal to Lochtolla Cottage, and to assist in carrying home deer.<sup>144</sup>

The obligations show the role Kingshouse innkeepers were to take as Blackmount tenants. Recent events had resulted in Forest management practices being adapted in order that the landowner could cope with difficulties he faced with some of his tenants and local poachers.

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<sup>143</sup> NAS, GD 112/16/9/1/3: *Blackmount Forest formation* – letter XVII, (25<sup>th</sup> February, 1829).

<sup>144</sup> NAS, GD 112/14/3/9/21: Copy offer for Kingshouse, (19<sup>th</sup> March 1829).

These problems were not aided by Lord Glenorchy's intermittent periods of absence, especially between 1824-1827. He attempted to rectify this in 1830 by updating regulations for the foresters' houses and livestock, but these varied according to individual circumstances. To avoid any misunderstanding arising from tenants, the factor was to write out these new regulations, and have them hung up in the kitchen of the lodge, while each forester was to have a copy. Lord Glenorchy also made a request that notices should be displayed at Kingshouse and Inveroran inns, instructing travellers and sportsmen not to go off the road; nor were they to fish in the lochs or rivers, as this could disturb the deer. All regulations with regard to cattle droving were also to be publicised at these inns.<sup>145</sup> However, there is no apparent evidence of droving activities interfering with Blackmount's development at that time.

Clearly, Forest developments were to be given precedence over all other activities taking place in the locality. The effectiveness of imposing regulations on employees, tenants and those passing through the area comes into question. The landlord could create numerous rules with the intention that his plans to increase deer numbers, by curbing their interference, would be ultimately successful, but he probably encountered some problems both internal and external. One way of achieving his aims was by receiving reports from employees and acting on them. In 1829 a detailed report by James McVean indicated how

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<sup>145</sup> NAS, GD 112/16/9/1/3: *Blackmount Forest formation* - letter XX, (17<sup>th</sup> June 1830).

tenants managed their stock, and the impact this had on Blackmount Forest:

I went round the marches of Cruach and Barravurich, and on examination I find that there has been very little trespass of either black cattle or sheep this season, in comparison to the last. This owing partly to the wet season, I suppose ever since this time, the Clashgour march has been better kept, but before this time, the above in particular was shamefully kept, and this to the certain knowledge of some of the foresters. But now things is brought more to light, as there is a journal of trespass kept by Peter Robertson at the lodge.<sup>146</sup>

Evidently, an ultimate priority was to maintain a careful watch on the effectiveness of observations by foresters and estate officials. Some of the employees had been lax in fulfilling their roles with regard to preventing livestock encroaching the Forest's marches, resulting thereafter in regulated reports on trespass. The landowner's policy towards his tenants and the stock management practices being adopted, as seen in communication with his factor, shows that although Lord Glenorchy was often absent he was directly involved in local decisions.

Some of Lord Glenorchy's tenants appeared to have a significant influence in his local affairs. Thomas Walters, presumably a flockmaster from the south, paid £350 for renting Barravurich in 1826.<sup>147</sup> That year, Campbell of Rockhill attempted negotiations with Walters relating to claims made by the latter for houses, enclosures and other matters. They

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<sup>146</sup> NAS, GD 112/16/12/2: Report by James McVean on the Forest since 10<sup>th</sup> June 1829.

<sup>147</sup> NAS, GD 112/9/3/4/9: Glenorchy rental 1825-1826.

disagreed, and according to the factor, this tenant was the most unreasonable man he had ever met. Walters appeared to make deliberate attempts to be 'quit' from Barravurich if he could, and the factor said:

I did not hesitate to cause diligence to be used for recovery of the arrears of rents he retains, which will bring matters to a speedy issue, and at the same time, our looking out for an other tenant that would come into Walters place; should a suitable one be provided, I am humbly of opinion that it would be as well to let Walters go, for he never will be a pleasant tenant though detained.<sup>148</sup>

Although it was the factor's wish that Thomas Walters be removed, it seems as though he stayed for another eight years.<sup>149</sup> It is evident that he was regarded as a problem to Lord Glenorchy's management in the eastern marches of the Forest.

Some friends of Thomas Walters also posed a challenge to Lord Glenorchy when they were illegally fishing in a local loch, presumably Loch Tulla. The landlord had reluctantly put pike in it to deter Walters's friends, and the factor had prosecuted them for fishing there. Walters was warned that if he did not become a 'good neighbour' to the Forest then he could not remain as an estate tenant, and he was instructed to give his shepherds orders not to disturb the deer in any way.<sup>150</sup> Whether or not Walters was regarded as a nuisance, he was essentially a rent-

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<sup>148</sup> NAS, GD 112/74/261/8: Correspondence, Campbell of Rockhill, Argyllshire Estate Factor.

<sup>149</sup> NAS, GD 112/9/3/4/12: Glenorchy rental, 1834.

<sup>150</sup> NAS, GD 112/16/9/1/3: *Blackmount Forest formation* – letter XIX, (8<sup>th</sup> November 1829); Letter XX (17<sup>th</sup> June 1830).

paying tenant, and was generating income for the landlord on the periphery of a forest, which was not raising much revenue during its early years. Evidently, a complex balancing act then existed between the economic necessities of maintaining tenancies on Blackmount and Lord Glenorchy's aspirations to continue developing the area primarily as a forest. In fact, he decided that retaining some existing landholding practices alongside new developments could allow him to continue maintaining both without making significant losses.

In 1825-6, money was being made for Lord Glenorchy through rentals from other farms around Blackmount, indicating that tenants must have retained some stock in order to survive. For Clashgour and the grazings of Letterdochart Donald Campbell paid £315.<sup>151</sup> Rental arrears are evident in the closing years of the 1820s, in various adjacent Forest farms. By early 1829, Archibald McDiarmid, the tenant at Achallader, claimed the greatest part of £220 arrears there; he appealed for a rental reduction 'more agreeable' with the original terms of his lease, or to be released entirely of it. This indicates that the landlord may have been deliberately inflating McDiarmid's rental to encourage his eviction. Campbell of Rockhill suggested modifying the present rental of £230 to £200, and to backdate this adjustment to Whitsunday 1825; McDiarmid could also be given the option of keeping that farm, with this reduced rent, after Whitsunday 1830.<sup>152</sup>

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<sup>151</sup> NAS, GD 112/9/3/4/9: Glenorchy rental 1825-1826.

<sup>152</sup> NAS, GD 112/74/261/13: Correspondence from Campbell of Rockhill, Argyllshire Estate Factor.



Estate income evidently came from tenants' rentals, and leasing out nearby shooting grounds, but Forest workers had to be paid amongst other expenses. There are detailed notes on wages paid to Blackmount staff in the early years; for example the two game herds, Campbell and McNicoll, were paid £25 each money wages and meal for the year 1823. The forester D. Campbell was to be paid £50 for the year ending Whitsunday in 1824; but his services were no longer required thereafter.<sup>153</sup> In 1833 we see some examples of Forest employees' wages; Peter Robertson received expenses, and John McGibbon and his wife were paid £24 for 12 months wages for managing the lodge. There are also details of day labourers who had been involved in Forest improvements, with contracts lasting up to six months.<sup>154</sup> By the 1830s, it is evident that the landlord had already employed several personnel at Blackmount.

A compelling theme was that of how the landlord generated income from local tenants. Lord Breadalbane had instructed his ground officers to evict tenants who failed to make up deficiencies in their duties after their lease terminated in 1820.<sup>155</sup> It is interesting to see this developing during the first year of Forest formation in the Blackmount area of his Argyllshire estates, after it had been given to his son, Lord Glenorchy. However, there were plans to adopt former landholding practices, when he suggested that Duncan Campbell would take

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<sup>153</sup> NAS, GD 112/16/9/1/3: *Blackmount Forest formation* - letter VI, (21<sup>st</sup> November, 1823).

<sup>154</sup> NAS, GD 112/16/5/2: Letter, Mr Davidson W.S. to The Right Honourable the Earl of Ormelie, (17<sup>th</sup> September 1833).

<sup>155</sup> NAS, GD 112/41/9/1: Lord Breadalbane, Letter book from 1820, (29<sup>th</sup> March 1820).

Barravurich farm on a steelbow arrangement in 1824. He considered this to be a very good plan but feared that his father would not agree to it.<sup>156</sup> It appears that the landlord intended to invest Barravurich for future profit returns, and the disagreement he had with his father was presumably financially related. Since a steelbow lease formerly consisted of either pastoral or arable farming the landlord had the option of suggesting arable production to avoid problems with neighbouring stock, but his exact motives for suggesting this traditional practice is unknown.

Lord Glenorchy adopted a new strategy by using declarations when new tenants took a lease, using it exclusively for the Forest's development. In October 1827, several local farms were out of lease, and the landlord saw this as a golden opportunity to insert a clause in future leases to protect the deer. Tenants were not to disturb them, even if they came to the farms of Glenketland, Clashgour, Auch, Achallader, Drumliart, Barravurich, and those on the south side of the Orchy. He also desired restrictions on burning of wood, detection from employees of shooting on the tenant farms, and protecting the Forest's game as much as possible.<sup>157</sup> All these rules and regulations were undoubtedly unpopular, but in the end Lord Glenorchy got his way, and developed a successful Forest. This does not seem so apparent at this stage, as most of our discussion has focussed on the problems in setting it up. We can see elements of success from the landlord's perspective in 1830 when it

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<sup>156</sup> NAS, GD 112/16/9/1/3: *Blackmount Forest formation* - letter IX, (25<sup>th</sup> December 1824).

<sup>157</sup> NAS, GD 112/16/9/1/3: *Blackmount Forest formation* - letter XII, (16<sup>th</sup> October 1827).

was stated that although employing foresters proved costly deer numbers had significantly increased.<sup>158</sup>

A fragile relationship clearly existed between the landlord towards his tenants and employees at Blackmount during the early nineteenth century. Lord Glenorchy was sceptical about trusting them, a challenge put to the test when he went travelling in Europe with his wife during the summer of 1829. Before departing he issued various instructions to the factor concerning letting, and Forest management; Campbell of Rockhill was told to observe the character of the foresters, and to assess which ones were to be retained in future seasons. There are indications that the Forest might be leased out during Lord Glenorchy's absence, as contingency plans in this event were made. Campbell of Rockhill was obliged to issue potential leaseholders with clear guidelines, and was told to provide Forest instructions on request for travellers passing through it.<sup>159</sup> At this stage there were no clear indications of Blackmount being let out, but the above evidence serves to show that it was a possibility during the landlord's absence should any sportsman have wished to lease it.

Lord Glenorchy would only warrant the killing of Forest deer when his father requested, and nobody was allowed to kill deer without showing written permission. One of the foresters called McVane, presumably James McVean, could go out and shoot for Lord

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<sup>158</sup> NAS, GD 112/16/11/5: Memorial for the Earl of Breadalbane, (5<sup>th</sup> June 1830); see p7.

<sup>159</sup> NAS, GD 112/16/9/1/3: *Blackmount Forest formation* - letter XVIII, (13<sup>th</sup> July, 1829).

Breadalbane, but not for more than four harts.<sup>160</sup> Things did not go quite as he expected, as McVane was reported to have been distracting deer by 'shooting in all directions'; thus Lord Glenorchy lost trust in him. He suggested that McNicoll and 'Duncan' would be more reliable, and that they should have guns. By November 1829, most changes made during the past year had been reported as advantageous for Blackmount Forest.<sup>161</sup> This benefited the landowner, but not necessarily his tenants' social welfare.<sup>162</sup> It seems as though he was attempting to reshape what remained of the local community to suit his own wishes and acting in a manner oblivious to his tenants.

Lord Glenorchy placed particular emphasis on tenancies in and around the Forest farms. He wished for only a careful and accommodating man to reside at Barravurich in 1827, indicating his intentions to terminate Thomas Walters' lease, and new candidates were being considered to replace him. A future 'trusting tenant' would not be allowed to disturb deer on any part of the farm, especially in the wood, or to have any livestock on the hill part; but was to continue with grazing them on hay and grass alongside the river.<sup>163</sup> Evidently, tensions had existed between the existing tenant and the landlord, over their differences in opinion regarding grazing practices surrounding Barravurich. Walters continued to prove a challenge to Lord Glenorchy

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<sup>160</sup> *ibid.*

<sup>161</sup> NAS, GD 112/16/9/1/3: *Blackmount Forest formation* - letter XIX, (8<sup>th</sup> November 1829).

<sup>162</sup> Tenants' living conditions only began to improve from the 1830s-1840s with the construction of new dwellings, described below and chapter 3, p.193-198.

<sup>163</sup> NAS, GD 112/16/9/1/3: *Blackmount Forest formation* - letter XIII, (14<sup>th</sup> December 1827).

and his factor until 1834 as discussed later.<sup>164</sup> Problems generally arose with tenants because of the landlord's expansionist policy in re-developing Blackmount for sporting purposes.

The landlord was sometimes compelled to reconsider his draconian policies; this is seen 1833 from a memorandum which indicated some proposed concessions with regard to tenants' pasturage. Wintering supplies of hay were plentiful at Achallader, and Derrybeg on the northeast shores of Loch Tulla also provided a surplus enabling a forester to winter cattle there. The high grounds of Derrybeg could also be used for summering cattle on the hay grounds, which, could be worked by a keeper based at Barravurich who would also herd the marches.<sup>165</sup> This shows that there were improved grazing practices then in place to alleviate the problems of farmed livestock in competing for grazing territory with deer.

The landlord sometimes attempted to avoid confrontations with tenants, when he was making proposed alterations, by waiting for them to leave their farms so that he could re-develop them. In 1829, after learning that Archibald MacDiarmid at Achallader wished to leave, Lord Glenorchy proposed having Barravurich abandoned and to conjoin it with Achallader where a new tenant would live. He said that this was bad sheep pasture ground, and of no great value to the farm; thus he saw

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<sup>164</sup> See chapter 4, p.239.

<sup>165</sup> NAS, GD 112/16/10/4/1: Memorandum about the Forest, (October 1833).

it more useful that it became part of Blackmount.<sup>166</sup> This is further evidence of this landlord's intentions to set up a substantial deer forest, but to impose restrictions on activities on its periphery. Proposals to join these farms were again made in 1833 when it was stated that Barravurich and Achallader would both combined form an 'excellent tenement'. Alternatively, they could remain let separately by the existing marches, making more of a variation.<sup>167</sup> Here, the landowner planned to amalgamate his Forest farms, but this would depreciate his rentals unless he increased them by collective values.

### Managing Blackmount III: Infrastructure and Improvements

There were improvements on existing and new Forest dwellings, and the land itself at Blackmount from the 1820s, but these were not significant until two or three decades later. Periods of improvement can be linked with the expansion stages described previously, but it was not until the Forest was complete can it be said that projects were conducted on a sustained basis. Before then, the landlord usually made the best of what already existed, rather than investing his resources towards expensive schemes. Again, we see differences in opinion between the landlord and his father regarding the policies he adopted with improvements, since they required financial outlay. Not much had been

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<sup>166</sup> NAS, GD 112/16/9/1/3: *Blackmount Forest formation* - letter XVII, (25<sup>th</sup> February 1829). However we have earlier references indicating that these were very suitable grounds for sheep pasture.

<sup>167</sup> NAS, GD 112/16/10/4/1: Memorandum about the Forest, (October 1833).

spent on dwellings between 1820-1834 indicating that Blackmount Forest existed in an experimental phase during its early years.

An essential part of any nineteenth-century deer forest was the provision of adequate accommodation for sportsmen. A base for hunting and Forest employees existed at Blackmount from the 1820s; this was on or near the site of Ardvrecknish Farm, on the north shores of Loch Tulla, where the present lodge was later constructed in the 1840s. Blackmount Forest had expanded from Ardvrecknish, situated in its centre, and as early as 1824 the landlord's father suggested building a lodge there. Lord Glenorchy claimed that he was accused of destroying this settlement, situated by the plantation. The accuser's name was not given, but the landlord denied this and blamed its demise on a local by the name of MacIntyre.<sup>168</sup> Evidently, the site was regarded as an ideal location for organising activities related to the Forest, but this resulted in problems with a local tenant resulting in a destruction of the farm there.

Lord Glenorchy was aware that Ardvrecknish was essential to keeping the Forest running effectively, and he had desired to take it for himself. He was concerned that his father, Lord Breadalbane, wished to let Ardvrecknish separately from Barravurich; Lord Glenorchy feared that this would have destroyed the plantation there. His father's stated intentions on the Forest at this time were clearly related to developing a base for it:

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<sup>168</sup> NAS, GD 112/16/9/1/3: *Blackmount Forest formation* - letter IX, (25<sup>th</sup> December 1824).

Since you consider to letting the farm of Ardvrecknish separately would occasion so much inconvenience to your arrangements, I will consent to you possessing that part you consider most natural, and what remains, may be annexed to one of the ordinary farms. I shall make no demands of rents for this piece, only I trust you will build a Forrest lodge as your friends and myself will approve of.<sup>169</sup>

Lord Glenorchy was being given Ardvrecknish rent-free from his father on condition that a hunting lodge was eventually built there. This, in the short term, would result in losses being sustained with no income generated. He was evidently dependant on his father with regard to their financial relationship even although he was the Blackmount landlord.

The evidence relating to Ardvrecknish becomes rather sketchy in the later 1820s, but it was no longer used as a farm. Correspondence then mentions 'Loch Tulla Cottage', possibly the same dwelling referred to as 'the lodge'; this may have been the reconstruction of Ardvrecknish. From 1827-8, a series of receipts show that Ardvrecknish Cottage was being improved for use as a shooting base. This structure was still maintained in a traditional manner, with thatching being used to roof the dwelling.<sup>170</sup> During Lord Glenorchy's absence in 1829, he instructed his factor to remind leasers of their responsibility for maintaining the cottage, thatch and barn.<sup>171</sup> Ultimately, an investment in the dwelling was

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<sup>169</sup> NAS, GD 112/16/9/1/3: *Blackmount Forest formation* - letter IX, (25<sup>th</sup> December 1824).

<sup>170</sup> NAS, GD 112/16/6/13; GD 112/16/6/15 – Forest receipts, (1827-8).

<sup>171</sup> NAS, GD 112/16/9/1/3 – *Blackmount Forest formation*, letter XVIII, (13<sup>th</sup> July 1829).



made with the intention that it would be leased out to shooting tenants, but there is little evidence of sportsmen having taken it.

Improvements were undoubtedly linked with later phases of expansion. The dwelling house of Alltchaorunn in Glen Etive was also under construction in the early 1830s, showing that the Forest's extension on that side was a permanent arrangement. Accounts show that building materials were brought up from Loch Etive; costs show that the lime, timber and slates, including transportation, amounted to £53 13 4.<sup>172</sup> Its function was to provide accommodation for a forester, and to protect the north side of Blackmount Forest from poachers and drivers of deer from Campbell of Monzie's lands on the other side of Glen Etive. In some instances, improvements were proposed with an intention to attract suitable farming tenants to the locality. In 1833, a memorandum stated: 'A slated dwelling house at Achallader would look well besides being a great inducement for candidates to compete with the farm'.<sup>173</sup>

Forest dwellings were constantly changing status during the early years, either being occupied or abandoned for various reasons, but in most cases the adaptations were landowner-motivated. We have already discussed the landowner's policy of conjoining existing farms, so that fewer settlements would lessen disturbance to the deer. In 1827, Lord Glenorchy was concerned about disused Forest buildings, and ordered a

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<sup>172</sup> NAS, GD 112/16/5/2 – Copy letter Mr Davidson to the right honourable the Earl of Ormelie, (17<sup>th</sup> September 1833); Alltchaorunn is situated at NN196509 in upper Glen Etive.

<sup>173</sup> NAS, GD 112/16/10/4/1: *Forest memorandum, 1833.*

recently occupied one to be boarded up; he was mainly worried that vagrants travelling on the road would otherwise obtain lodgement in it and possibly set it on fire.<sup>174</sup> The highway, passing over the Black Mount, was the only north-south inland route in the west Highlands, frequented by drovers, pedlars and other travellers. Squatting was a temptation when they saw abandoned buildings in the Forest, and the inclement climate often gave travellers no choice but to seek refuge.

Other Forest improvements during the early years included tree planting schemes at north Loch Tulla, and Corrie Ba. In October 1823, Lord Glenorchy had mentioned that the plantation at Ardvrecknish was successful, and these enclosed grounds were to be planted with more trees as the season permitted.<sup>175</sup> However in the following year his father expressed disagreement on the project, probably due to costs involved:

Although I cannot agree with you with regard to planting to any great extent in that wild and distant country, still it is not my intention to interrupt what you have already done.<sup>176</sup>

The reasons for planting here are typical of modifying the landscape to suit a landlord's tastes, and this is an early example of Lord Glenorchy's aims to improve the surroundings of Ardvrecknish in anticipation that a larger shooting lodge would eventually be built there. The plantation

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<sup>174</sup> NAS, GD 112/16/9/1/3: *Blackmount Forest formation* - letter X, (9<sup>th</sup> May 1827).

<sup>175</sup> NAS, GD 112/16/9/1/3: *Blackmount Forest formation* - letter V, (29<sup>th</sup> October 1823); letter VI, (21<sup>st</sup> November 1823).

<sup>176</sup> NAS, GD 112/16/9/1/3: *Blackmount Forest formation* - letter IX, (25<sup>th</sup> December 1824).

would presumably also exist for practical reasons, to easier facilitate the hunting of game and deer by providing cover for foresters and sportsmen.

Since numerous deer were present in Corrie Ba, in an exposed and open area, the landlord thought of ways to maximise its potential by lining part of it with trees. In late 1829, a tree-planting scheme generated employment, and local foresters were to assist in this if required; the River Ba, near the Bridge of Ba, was to be thickly lined with alder and willow trees about six or seven deep, one or two yards wide, along the banks. Planting was to be made as local topography permitted, the sheltered high banks needing no trees; the purpose was that a person might stalk unobserved up the course of the stream. The following summer, Lord Glenorchy wanted the alder and willow plants ready for planting in October and November. The trees were to be placed along the burn's banks, from within 400 yards of the road towards the hills, so that a stalker could be camouflaged along there.<sup>177</sup> This development is indicative of at least some deer culling being planned in the future.

### Conclusion

What was required to form a Highland deer forest during the early nineteenth century has been demonstrated here in three stages: origins,

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<sup>177</sup> NAS, GD 112/16/9/1/3: *Blackmount Forest formation* - letter XIX, (8<sup>th</sup> November 1829); Letter XX, (17<sup>th</sup> June 1830).

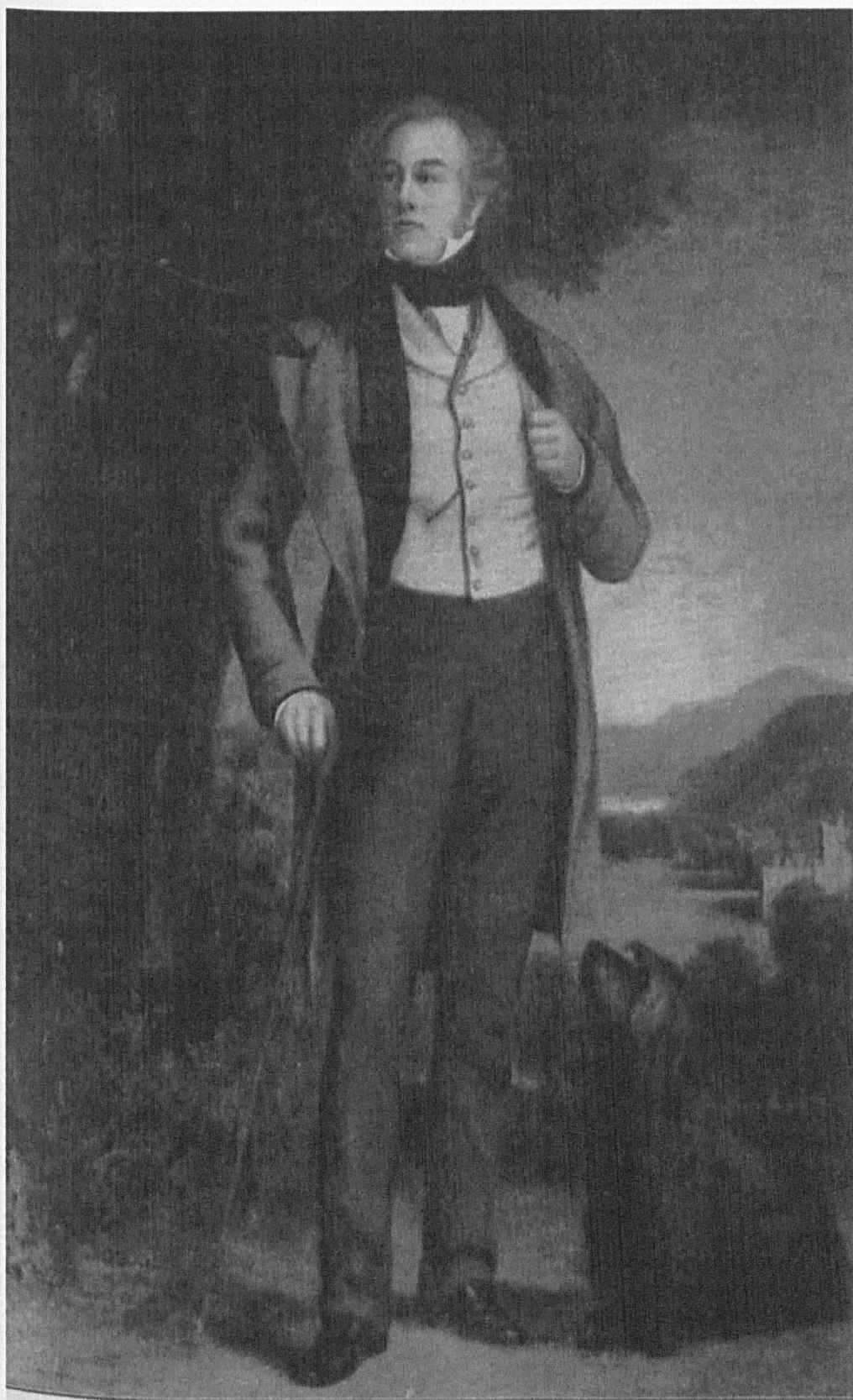
development and management. This type of land use became more common elsewhere in the Highlands from the 1830s, indicating that Blackmount Forest, in conjunction with Invercauld and Mar, may have influenced others that developed elsewhere. It is certain that Blackmount was an ideal setting for what developed into a commercial estate in its present shape. Social dislocation is evident, but had been taking place already; thus, the creation of this Forest itself was not wholly responsible for local depopulation and emigration. Due to the several improvements made there and a need for foresters, the landlord had given both temporary and permanent types of employment to numerous individuals.

We have identified the roles of local employees during the early years of Forest formation, showing the complex nature of Blackmount's early development with respect to employees. Clearly those involved had numerous obligations, and restrictions were imposed on their management of stock. There are numerous examples of tensions existing between Lord Glenorchy, his tenants, and his father, regarding the Forest's development; but clearly, both father and son wished for a deer forest to succeed there in any case. An increasing number of personnel by c.1830, confirms that the landowner intended to develop a successfully large deer forest, with long-term commercial gains. However, expansion here did not follow specific pre-set rules, but decisions were made from past experiences. Although Blackmount Forest did not initially appear to benefit local populations, gainful employment was had from it over time.

The Factor, Duncan Campbell, had suggested Blackmount's sporting potential from 1818, and was actively involved in overseeing its development on instructions from Lord Glenorchy. The landlord had been adopting rather draconian measures towards his tenants in order to allow the Forest to successfully expand. He had a long-term vision, by perceiving Blackmount to have future potential for commercial leasing; his investment of it over ten years, until 1830, began to show increased deer numbers. This was Lord Breadalbane's ultimate aim, by granting his son Blackmount to create a deer forest, possibly styled on the estates of Invercauld and Mar. It is likely that Lord Glenorchy, being relatively young when he was gifted the area from his father, wanted to use Blackmount Forest as a means by which he could display aristocratic prestige, to impress his social and political friends and acquaintances. The next chapter indeed shows this to have been the case, and Lord Glenorchy, after inheriting the Breadalbane estates, built a shooting base on Loch Tulla as an outlying extension to the one that already existed at Taymouth.

Here we have considered Blackmount as an example of a Highland deer forest developing from the early nineteenth century. Many resources were put into setting up the Forest involving careful economic planning. Success was wholly dependant on reliable employees in their giving detailed reports on its marches. Lord Glenorchy was not willing to incur financial losses, hence imposing strict policies towards his tenants at Blackmount. Ultimately, this forest gained significant recognition in wider society by the mid-nineteenth century, aided by its

early development and other factors. The themes described here, and in the following chapter, provide pivotal evidence leading to the question of whether Blackmount was typical or atypical of a nineteenth century deer forest, a phenomenon examined in the concluding section.



THE SECOND MARQUIS OF BREADALBANE.

### Chapter 3

#### Maturity and established reputation of Blackmount c.1835-1860

This chapter identifies how Blackmount developed into one of Scotland's most renowned and productive Highland forests during the mid-nineteenth century. Its development from c.1835 is recognisable in detailed correspondence by estate officials and employees who discussed improvements, increased deer numbers and expansion of Forest marches. This stage in its evolution was clearly necessary, resulting in Blackmount having matured and gained an established fame. In order to understand this, it is necessary to consider how it was managed by identifying the key players and their roles in local affairs then showing examples of its impact on wider society. Blackmount was of considerable size by the 1850s; consequently, the reputation that it had achieved is seen from several external sources. The Forest became well stocked with deer and other game, thereby attracting a broad aristocratic clientele.

There were major changes in the way that Blackmount was managed after Campbell of Rockhill's suspension in 1834. Thereafter, there was no factor employed exclusively for Argyllshire. James Wyllie, factor for Breadalbane's Perthshire estates, partially filled this role from the 1830s to 1850s. Sir Alexander Campbell of Barcaldine administered the Argyllshire estates on the Marquis of Breadalbane's behalf from 1843 to 1855 since the Marquis was often involved with affairs elsewhere. Both families were closely related historically; thus, Barcaldine was



entrusted with major responsibilities, and his role involved making senior decisions, even in the Perthshire estates. He and the Marquis were involved with proposals to construct railways through the west and central Highlands during the 1850s, but they never came to fruition.<sup>1</sup> Barcaldine's relationship with the Marquis deteriorated in 1855, resulting in his eventual resignation from employment in the estates. Similar to Duncan Campbell of Rockhill, Barcaldine left his job after disputing with the landlord, but he was compelled to do so for personal reasons.

Most of our evidence showing how Blackmount was managed 'on the ground' is seen in correspondence from Peter Robertson who was head forester from the early 1830s. His letters show that significant numbers of deer were sustained, and he made careful observation of their whereabouts and nature both within Blackmount Forest and in surrounding areas. He also gives details of other estate game, much of which was gifted to friends of the landlord, including Queen Victoria. Robertson kept James Wyllie and Sir Alexander Campbell up to date with local developments, and took instructions from them on local deer management and sheep farming activities. Correspondence by Alan McNicol and Robert MacNaughton, both shepherds at Blackmount, likewise highlighted a relationship between sheep farming and deer forest activities. Both deer and sheep co-existed relatively healthily on the land without excessive competition for food due to the careful management

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<sup>1</sup> Robertson, 'Railway Mania in the Highlands'; NAS, GD 112/170/3000: Correspondence between the Marquis of Breadalbane and Alexander Campbell of Barcaldine, (1843-1856).

practices that were adopted since the 1820s.<sup>2</sup>

A striking contrast to management practices described in the previous chapter is seen in the absence of a factor employed primarily in Argyllshire. The landlord saw no need for one after c.1835, as James Wyllie did so whilst managing the Perthshire estates, and Duncan Dewar, the local ground officer, occasionally took some factorial responsibilities at Blackmount.<sup>3</sup> This was the reason for the landlord having not employed an Argyllshire factor at that time thus saving him the expense of employing one. It appears that James Wyllie was good at his job and he was pleased with his factorial responsibilities in Argyllshire along with his existing management of the Perthshire estates.

Duncan Dewar was ground officer for Glenorchy from the later 1830s to c.1850; he was involved with organising several improvements, particularly by reporting on the construction stages of a new lodge in the 1840s, at Blackmount. He was not primarily involved in actual forest activities, this being the head forester's responsibility, but Dewar often commented on local affairs requiring immediate attention. He played a key position in Forest improvements, made estimates for the costs of building projects, and oversaw the provision of materials for new and existing dwellings surrounding the Forest. He also dealt with observing fish stocks in the River Orchy, and was involved in monitoring and

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<sup>2</sup> See below, p.190-191.

<sup>3</sup> NAS, GD 170/3000/39/3: The Marquess of Breadalbane to Alexander Campbell of Barcaldine (2<sup>nd</sup> August 1856).

reporting on tenants' welfare.<sup>4</sup> Regular correspondence highlights many numerous roles held by Dewar from the 1830s. He had worked in the Blackmount area prior to then, but there is little evidence of his position.

A detailed study of the impact Blackmount Forest had on local society is made in this chapter. One feature evident from c.1830 relates to population decline, a pattern that had continued since 1815. Between 1831 and 1841 the Glenorchy district's population reduced from 1806 to 831, and the local minister noted in the *Statistical Account for Scotland* that sheep had replaced its 'aboriginal' population.<sup>5</sup> Clearly, many families had already left this area, and in Perthshire, explaining why the Highland famine during the 1840s did not significantly affect the Breadalbane estates. By mid-century, employment generated from local improvement projects, and the appointment of numerous personnel at Blackmount, represent major changes in local society; former tenants with tenurial rights were being replaced by Forest employees who were obliged to rigorously follow the estate's policy on grazing. Population decline there is particularly difficult to trace; rather employees tended to frequently move around the Forest when required by the landlord.

It was during the mid-nineteenth century that Blackmount became relatively well known within wider society as an established deer forest. It began to develop a more commercial face with the new lodge, to

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<sup>4</sup> See below, from p.195.

<sup>5</sup> Richards, *Highland Clearances*, 186-7; Rev. Duncan MacLean, Minister of Glenorchy and Inishail, Presbytery of Lorn, Synod of Argyle, *The New Statistical Account of Scotland*, VII, (1845), 82-103.

entertain those coming to shoot there. This was a time during which the area gained fame within aristocratic circles, a reputation aided by paintings made there by Sir Edwin Landseer, giving the Forest a particularly vivid iconic status. Not only did it become recognised amongst aristocratic and artistic circles, as some contemporary travellers' accounts provide evidence of its having achieved a famed reputation. Willie Orr and others have discussed the popularisation of 'sporting estates' from the 1840s, particularly their fashionable association with Prince Albert, which inevitably led to their growth in numbers.<sup>6</sup> Thus, Blackmount achieved significant status during this time, and may have inspired the development of other forests thereafter. Although direct evidence of this is difficult to trace, it is likely that other Highland landlords were keen to exploit the commercial benefits of increased deer numbers in their estates by managing them in a fashion similar to Blackmount for 'sporting' purposes.

Management and commercial developments in the Breadalbane  
estates from c.1835-1860

We have already identified some ways in which Argyllshire lands held by the Campbells of Breadalbane had been exploited to generate income during the eighteenth century.<sup>7</sup> Significant revenues came from

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<sup>6</sup> Orr, *Deer Forests*, 29.

<sup>7</sup> See chapter 1.

commercial deforestation of woodland in places such as Glen Orchy, especially since the 1720s. Successive Breadalbane landlords used the natural potential of their estates in other ways, for example with mineral exploitation, and its economic potential had been examined in several locations. The lead mines near Tyndrum, (Clifton), originally worked in the eighteenth century by Sir Robert Clifton, were re-opened in the 1830s. A significant amount of geological exploitation took place in the area, but mineral extraction in the Breadalbane Estates proved costly; presumably, returns were expected to finance other estate expenses, including the upkeep of Blackmount Forest.

Research into nineteenth-century mineral trials on the Breadalbane Estates shows that the landlord invested much money in his scheme, with often little return gained for several of the years between 1837-1856. Income from the mining trials peaked at around £2,000 in 1845, with smaller peaks during 1840, 1850 and 1856, in each of these producing about £1000. Expenditure however far outweighed income, with amounts of around £4,000 being expended by c.1840; much of this was in the Tyndrum area where the highest concentrations of lead ores were found. A geological report was compiled in 1853 in anticipation of discovering other significantly viable ores. Thomas Rowlandson then noted the presence of numerous minerals, even gold and silver, but none of these were considered economically viable.<sup>8</sup> This may have been due to poor extractive techniques available at that time.

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<sup>8</sup> Robertson, 'Scottish Grand Junction Railway', 193.

Minerals did not make much money as Robertson's research shows. The Marquis had taken a personal interest in mineralogy and was curious to explore its potential commercial benefits of exploitation. As Gillies states: 'The second Marquis had the belief that there was great wealth hidden in the rocks of Breadalbane'.<sup>9</sup> He continued in his quest, as geologists were employed in the Breadalbane Estate during the later nineteenth century, with experimental trials conducted at Blackmount as described below. The landlord may have been confident that mineral exploitation would not significantly interfere with Forest activities in certain designated locations.

One geologist stated in 1860 that the Highlands had been 'a sealed book to mining adventure', until recent years, predicting they could soon become exploited in a fashion similar to Cornwall and Devon in southern England. His particular interest was in the Blackmount area, and stated that eventually this 'lair of the deer may become the scene of busy industry'.<sup>10</sup> A report gives details of sulphur and copper being mined in Blackmount Forest at two locations; one was near Clashgour, and the other at Corriehoich.<sup>11</sup> Around Clashgour, 'lodes' containing chlorite and traces of copper were located by the banks of a large burn. A wide miners' track was constructed to allow carriage of minerals in carts from

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<sup>9</sup> Gillies, *In Famed Breadalbane*, 212.

<sup>10</sup> NAS, GD 112/18/1/5-7: Reports of the Clashgour and Corriehoich sulphur and Copper mines, Black Forest, Argyllshire, (September 1860).

<sup>11</sup> *ibid*; This is probably 'Corrie na Muic', or 'Corrie of the pig' below Stob Ghabhar; On Thomson's map of 1824 the burn there is spelt as 'Corrynamuch' similarly in pronunciation to Corriehoich, or Corriehoilich.

these sites. Evidently various options were considered to generate revenue for the estate, but mining did not succeed at Blackmount.

The landlord also took interest towards improving communications in the west-central Highlands from the 1840s, by investing in railways. His aim was that they would be financed partially from revenue generated by the mineral extraction schemes described above. The second Marquis and Sir Alexander Campbell of Barcaldine were involved in a scheme known as 'The Scottish Grand Junction Railway'. This plan for a railway infrastructure in the Central Highlands was later shelved partially due to a failure in gathering enough money, and poorer than expected returns from minerals in the Breadalbane Estates.<sup>12</sup> The landowner discussed with Sir Alexander of Barcaldine the potential benefits gained from railways in the region, including possibly employing poor people in the Highlands during the famine period.<sup>13</sup> This shows his willingness to provide aid to the existing population but it is more likely that he encouraged improvement schemes to provide better access to his estates for future sporting tenants.

It is evident that the second Marquis had multiple commercial interests, possibly connected to marketing Blackmount, and although insufficient funds were generated by the Breadalbane estate from mining, income was still generated from rentals. Improvements there from

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<sup>12</sup> NAS, GD 112/41/12 – Wet letter books on Lord Breadalbane's affairs by Sir Alexander Campbell of Barcaldine; Robertson, 'Scottish Grand Junction Railway'

<sup>13</sup> NAS, GD 170/3000/12/2 – The Marquis of Breadalbane to Sir Alexander Campbell, (17<sup>th</sup> April, 1847).

c.1830-1850 show that estate policies were geared towards maintaining a fully functioning forest at Blackmount and entertaining guests. Investment on this scale suggests that it would function on a commercial basis in the long-term. This was a feature continuing after c.1850, and research by Orr shows details of improvements for 1855, 1857 and 1886, with a range of expenses including the repair and maintenance of roads and fences. Expenditure on items and improvements in and around the Forest House in 1855-6 amounted to over £182.<sup>14</sup> By the autumn of 1857, there were numerous aristocratic guests engaging in sport at Blackmount, showing that it generated interest amongst the rich, leading to wholesale leasing later emerging there.<sup>15</sup>

The death of the first Marquis of Breadalbane in 1834 had a significant impact on how the extensive Perthshire and Argyllshire estates were being managed thereafter. This event coincided with the termination of employment for the Argyllshire factor, Duncan Campbell of Rockhill. Thereafter, the second Marquis placed more emphasis on developing Blackmount, rather than focussing on Taymouth as his father had done. Like his forebears the second Marquis had many external commitments and titles. However, his popular recognition from Liberal Glasgow academics, as Lord Rector of Glasgow University in 1840-2, and direct involvement in the Scottish ecclesiastical disruption of 1843 are examples of the considerable influences he had in mid-nineteenth century society. He was directly involved in politics and close to the

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<sup>14</sup> Orr, *Deer Forests*, 98-99.

<sup>15</sup> See p.221-222.



centre of the British establishment, hosting Queen Victoria at Taymouth, typical of a landowner with extensive properties.<sup>16</sup>

These religious and political connections prompted him to continue developing and display Blackmount Forest as a 'sporting estate'; thus, in the long term he aimed to modify it to serve the demands of his aristocratic peers. At the same time he retained a local community to allow the Forest continue running effectively from experienced employees. It is difficult to discern what the second Marquis's exact intentions were regarding future policy on Blackmount, but the evidence emerging from the mid-nineteenth century clearly shows that he began opening it up to aristocratic circles for sporting purposes, but not necessarily for commercial gain. The Marquis only took an occasional interest in the Forest, during the Autumn shooting season, where he would be host to exclusive guests. Frequently, Peter Robertson would accompany high-profile visitors in the hills.

The landlord was often absent from his estates, being involved in other affairs. Therefore, he delegated major management decisions to a relative, Sir Alexander Campbell of Barcaldine, who managed estate business for the Marquis from 1843, particularly at Blackmount in the later 1840s. He made arrangements, on the landlord's instructions, for visits there by high profile individuals, and often resided at Blackmount to carry out his duties. However, Barcaldine was also a landowner of

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<sup>16</sup> Scots Peerage, II, 'Campbell of Breadalbane', 211; see chapter 2 p.94-104.

estates in Lorn, and he mirrored the Breadalbane landlord in a fashion similar to his ancestor during the eighteenth century. Sir Alexander Campbell was also connected with Queen Victoria's royal household, residing at her Scottish headquarters of Holyrood Palace in Edinburgh during 1845.<sup>17</sup> These close associations with Victoria emerge throughout this period, and may have relevance with the Marquis's desire that she would eventually lease Taymouth, or possibly even Blackmount.

The dependence and trust placed by the second Marquis on Sir Alexander was significant, especially during royal visits to his estates, highlighting frequent absenteeism by the landlord. However, Campbell of Barcaldine found it difficult to communicate with the Marquis in 1855 and resigned from employment due to his wife's ill health:

the contingencies of my wife's position in matter of health, might require my absence with her for protracted periods near good medical advice, and this alone would render it impossible for me to continue to serve your lordship.

Her deteriorating state resulted in a misunderstanding emerging with the Marchioness of Breadalbane who believed that she was accused of causing Lady Campbell's illness. Sir Alexander had wished to leave on good terms, but correspondence suggests that the Marquis and his wife were embittered by the situation.<sup>18</sup> These tensions show that it was difficult for most individuals, including Lord and Lady Campbell of

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<sup>17</sup> NAS, GD 112/74/80 – Letters from James Wyllie to Sir Alexander Campbell at Holyrood, Edinburgh.

<sup>18</sup> NAS, GD 112/16/5/3/20 - Letters, Marquis of Breadalbane and Sir Alexander Campbell, (1856); GD 112/16/5/3/21- Sir Alexander Campbell to Lawrence Davidson, (August, 1856).

Barcaldine, to become close to the Breadalbane household, and clarifying possible misunderstandings when they arose.

It was essential that the Marquis communicated on amicable and frequent terms with his factor. This was clearly not possible with Duncan Campbell, and his termination of employment, coinciding with the first Marquis's death, indicates that his son did not get along with this factor prior to then. As previously mentioned, the Glenorchy portion of Breadalbane's Argyllshire estates were managed from 1834 by James F. Wyllie, the Perthshire factor, whose correspondence, particularly on Blackmount in the 1840s, was extensive. James Wyllie communicated with both the Marquis of Breadalbane and Sir Alexander Campbell on progress of work at the new lodge at Blackmount; he likewise negotiated with drovers on the placement of stances near Kingshouse and Bridge of Orchy. Giving updates of and dealing with local social affairs, especially of those in the Braes of Glenorchy and Glen Etive, were also part of Wyllie's responsibilities.<sup>19</sup> The evidence suggests that he stood as estate manager there when Sir Alexander Campbell was absent.

Originally, Wyllie found managing both estates rather challenging, due to a lack of information, papers and plans provided by Duncan Campbell of Rockhill. Also, when Wyllie took up his job he was faced with finding suitable tenants for several unlet Forest farms when prices of

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<sup>19</sup> NAS, GD 112/74/78; GD 112/74/80 & GD 112/74/82 – Estate correspondence by Mr Wyllie (1843-1847).

stock were particularly low during the mid-1830s.<sup>20</sup> His situation eventually improved as stated in 1843:

Since then however it has not been the least pleasant part of my duty, the details being comparatively light, the tenantry respectable, peaceable and good rent payers, indeed I freely say it is the easiest managed part of my extensive charge.<sup>21</sup>

One of the main reasons for this was evidently a good relationship with tenants who leased farms in the Glenorchy district, which was by then less populated. Tenants at that time in particular were probably relieved to know that they had a well organised factor in comparison to Campbell of Rockhill, whilst being apprehensive about the possibly ways in which the emerging potato blight may have affected them.

Detailed records of population decline in the area prior to then are particularly difficult to trace, but there is some evidence of economic stagnation and poverty existing during the 1830s. The factor noted that 'poverty and distress' prevailed in Clifton (Tyndrum) and in the Glenorchy district, such that some tenants required more aid from the landlord, as collections in parish churches were very small. He was aware of the individuals who really required help: 'I believe there are very few cases of very abject poverty in that district not sufficiently

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<sup>20</sup> NAS, GD 112/74/76/26 – James Wyllie to the Marquis of Breadalbane, (13<sup>th</sup> March 1834).

<sup>21</sup> NAS, GD 112/74/78/3 – James Wyllie to Barcaldine, (28<sup>th</sup> March 1843).

provided...last year £5 were sent from Lady Breadalbane.’<sup>22</sup> Again, particular areas affected are not known; tenants at Blackmount were probably protected from poverty since many of them were Forest employees in receipt of wages.

Duncan Dewar, ground officer of Glenorchy, frequently examined tenants’ conditions, and searched for employees when required.<sup>23</sup> Dewar became actively involved with improvements to Forest roads and fences, by his making estimates and calculating costs for local projects. Scaling these priorities with the effects they had on the tenants and employees at Blackmount, can only be made on a fragmentary basis. But his frequent involvement in the affairs of Forest employees, and construction schemes shows that Duncan Dewar had an important position as a local organiser, and communicator of affairs with senior personnel. Peter Robertson, head forester, continued to be directly involved with the day to day management of Blackmount on the ground by communicating on behalf of the numerous foresters that resided and worked there.

Accounts by James Wyllie show vast financial obligations within the Marquis of Breadalbane’s Perthshire and Argyllshire estates in 1844. The Blackmount lands were termed as ‘The Forest farms’ where details of servants’ wages, information on the individuals employed, and their places of residence are traceable. Peter Robertson, receiving an annual salary of £39, was the highest paid employee at Blackmount; not far

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<sup>22</sup> NAS, GD 112/74/77/1 – James Wyllie to the Marquis of Breadalbane, (29<sup>th</sup> December 1835).

<sup>23</sup> See below from p.195.

behind in rank of importance were John McGibbon and his wife at Lochtulla lodge, who were paid £35. In all there were 14 employees on the Forest in the season 1843/44, and an additional two servants for half the year.<sup>24</sup> Other individuals were temporarily employed and paid for various duties and improvements, which are also detailed. The total expenditure that year was £513 for the Forest farms alone, not including local sheep farms. In 1849, 15 foresters and 14 shepherds resided at Blackmount, but the foresters were paid more wages.<sup>25</sup>

In 1855, Peter Robertson informed Sir Alexander that three employees were leaving the Forest for employment elsewhere. John Cameron, employed at the kennels, was resigning, and a replacement was sought for Larigs Farm, as Allan MacIntyre was departing to Australia. Likewise, Donald Duff, forester at Alltchaorunn, would leave for Australia unless his wages were increased, and Robertson was hopeful that Mr Wyllie, and the landlord, could be able to replace Duff with a 'fit person'. Two days later, Robertson suggested that Hugh Campbell from Glendochart would replace Duff at Alltchaorunn at the same wage, but with no provision of meal.<sup>26</sup> Thus, certain employees were not willing to remain at Blackmount when better prospects could be offered abroad, but it appears that no significant problems were encountered in finding replacement foresters. The only downside of the landlord's paying low

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<sup>24</sup> See Appendix 3/1.

<sup>25</sup> See Appendix 5; NAS, GD 112/74/207 – List, by Duncan Dewar, of foresters and shepherds at Blackmount, (2<sup>nd</sup> July 1849).

<sup>26</sup> NAS, GD 170/3022/1 – Peter Robertson to Sir Alexander Campbell of Barcaldine, (19<sup>th</sup> February 1855); GD 170/3022/2 (21<sup>st</sup> February 1855).

wages, then he may not have been attracting the most suitable candidates for employability.

He was even in danger of losing Peter Robertson who stated his unhappiness with his wages, since they barely supported his large family. After helping to transform Blackmount into one of the most productive forests in Scotland during the mid-nineteenth century, Robertson was keen to receive more recognition for this by suggesting to Sir Alexander Campbell that a rise in his wages was due in 1854:

I know that there is not another forester in Scotland that has so much to do as I have...but my present wage is very little considering the number of family I have, and to give them education, which is all I can do for them.<sup>27</sup>

Whether Robertson received the conditions he proposed is uncertain, but he still faithfully remained at Blackmount until the 1870s. In 1863, his wage for half the year had been £26; thus, when comparing this with Robertson's yearly allowance in 1843/4, at £39, it appears to have eventually increased.<sup>28</sup> Orr's research shows that foresters, including Robertson, had been relatively well paid in comparison to other rural livelihoods during the mid-nineteenth century. The American tenant Walter Winans is known to have offered good rates to his employees during the 1880s at his Inverness-shire forests.<sup>29</sup>

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<sup>27</sup> NAS, GD 112/74/195/20-1 – Peter Robertson, Forest Lodge, to Sir Alexander Campbell, (14<sup>th</sup> December 1854).

<sup>28</sup> See appendix 3/1 and 3/3.

<sup>29</sup> Orr, *Deer Forests*, 42, 127.

Forest development, local society and economy from 1835

There is clear evidence that Blackmount had expanded further west, reaching Loch Etive during the 1840s, when the farms of Ardmaddy, Inverkinglass and Derrynasoir marched with the Forest. This phase of expansion can be corroborated with detailed reports on deer numbers provided by Peter Robertson between 1836 and 1845, showing the inclusion of new areas where deer were observed, in Glen Etive and Glen Kinglass.<sup>30</sup> As anticipated, the youthful Lord Glenorchy's plans for 'an immense forest' in the 1820s had been achieved within two decades, and this was a contributory factor towards its maturation and established reputation. Details on the location of foresters between 1844 and 1849 also show that Blackmount was further expanding. Although this was not necessarily a sign of success, a gesture of optimism was clearly evident despite the losses to other land use. The Marquis possibly felt that this was a necessary step in order to compete with the policies of neighbouring landlords, especially Campbell of Monzie in Glen Etive.<sup>31</sup> It may well have been possible that he was intending to create one of the largest deer forests in the Scottish Highlands.

The Marquis arranged for Kinlochetive Farm to become part of Blackmount Forest by the end of the 1843 season, but this involved removing the Smith family. Wyllie appeared to show genuine concern for

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<sup>30</sup> See appendices 2/1-2/4.

<sup>31</sup> Problems existing between the second Marquis and Campbell of Monzie are discussed in chapter 4 from p.248.



their welfare, describing them as 'poor tenants', who wished to continue residing there at their present rent. The landlord intended moving Duncan McIntyre, forester at Kingshouse, to Kinlocheteive as a watcher. To replace him, Duncan MacGregor would thus look after the Forest's marches at Kingshouse, residing at McIntyre's former house.<sup>32</sup> James Wyllie had acted on advice provided by Peter Robertson, who was concerned about threats of poaching around the northeast marches of Blackmount, between Kingshouse and Loch Laidon. The factor also saw the advantages in employing an additional watcher, for the shooting season, to keep the corries between Clashgour and the Forest quiet.<sup>33</sup>

James Wyllie informed Sir Alexander that after Duncan MacGregor had become a watcher at Kingshouse, he faced problems with the Sinclairs at Achallader who accused him of: 'keeping a bad dog and hunting their cattle'. Wyllie believed that MacGregor was sensible enough to carry out his duties, and, whist acting firmly, knew how stock should be kept within delineated areas. The Sinclairs felt that MacGregor had treated them unfairly when their stock came feeding near his march.<sup>34</sup> Thus, it is clear that employees were being frequently moved around the Forest, but MacGregor appears to have encountered problems with his neighbour.

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<sup>32</sup> NAS, GD 112/74/78/17 – Correspondence by James Wyllie, (19<sup>th</sup> May 1843); GD 112/74/78/20 – Correspondence by James Wyllie, (22<sup>nd</sup> May 1843).

<sup>33</sup> NAS, GD 112/74/78/42 – Peter Robertson to James Wyllie, (22<sup>nd</sup> July, 1843); NAS, GD 112/74/78/43 – James Wyllie to the Marquis of Breadalbane, (27<sup>th</sup> July, 1843).

<sup>34</sup> NAS, GD 112/74/78/46 – James Wyllie to Sir Alexander Campbell, (4<sup>th</sup> August 1843).

After the second Marquis inherited the Breadalbane estates, and suspended his previous factor, detailed correspondence emerged from the head forester in communication with the new factor, indicating a change in policy with the way that Blackmount was managed thereafter. Reports by Peter Robertson on Forest deer show that numbers increased considerably in the ten years from 1835 to 1845. His first report during February 1836 counted 1040 deer, and Robertson informed the factor that this was 243 more compared to the same time in the previous year. The Marquis must have been very pleased with their quantity within Blackmount, despite severe weather during that winter.<sup>35</sup> Between January 1843, and January 1845, Robertson gave estimates of over 2600 deer.<sup>36</sup> He made meticulous observations of their movements and showed concern for their welfare during winter months. They often came down off the high tops during cold periods, thereby allowing counts of their numbers to be made by the head forester and other employees.

In early 1836, the snow had been more severe in comparison to the previous eight years. The shepherd at Drumliart saw many deer head west down towards Glen Kinglass that winter, passing his farm on a daily basis. Several deer were likewise going south down Glen Orchy, by Inverveagh and Larigs, but very few had moved north towards the braes of Lochaber. During the winter of 1835-6 they were spotted every night

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<sup>35</sup> NAS, GD 112/16/10/4/2 - Report by Peter Robertson, forester, Lochtulla Lodge, to Mr Wyllie, (2<sup>nd</sup> February 1836); See appendix 2/1.

<sup>36</sup> NAS, GD 112/74/182/1 - Report by Peter Robertson, Drumliart, to Mr Wyllie, (19<sup>th</sup> January 1843) - See appendix 2/2; NAS, GD 112/74/182/5 - Report by Peter Robertson, Drumliart, (27<sup>th</sup> January 1845) - See appendix 2/4.

down on the shores of Loch Tulla, by the shepherd's house at Derrybeg, coming near to Lochtulla Cottage, and eating long grass along a fence by the roadside. They were also seen as far up as the Clashgour march close to the river. The snow's depth was significant enough for deer to avoid grazing in Coireach a Ba; none were seen between Lochan Mhic Pheadair Ruaidh, or at the height above Ba Cottage. However, many dwelt below the road; 250 deer were counted in the localities of Beinn Chaorach, Loch Ba, Meall Beag and the east side of Loch Laidon.<sup>37</sup>

These were the first detailed studies of deer numbers enabling the landlord to maximise the Forest's productivity. By understanding deer patterns and numbers he could make future decisions on the marches, culling and land use by his tenants. Deer were encouraged to graze at specifically assigned areas, and pregnant hinds had been protected so that they would give birth to enable increased numbers. Wintering supplies had evidently attracted the deer; thus strict management policies imposed originally by Lord Glenorchy had paid off by the time he became the second Marquis. Expansion of marches, and increased deer numbers resulted in a successfully managed deer forest within the first twenty years. This involved careful monitoring by local tenant employees working in conjunction with Peter Robertson. These measures may not have necessarily been new, for example with regard to protecting hinds, and the costs associated with managing and sustaining more deer may have been considered irrelevant to the landlord who appeared to initially

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<sup>37</sup> NAS, GD 112/16/10/4/2 - Report by Peter Robertson, forester, Lochtulla Lodge, to Mr Wyllie, (2<sup>nd</sup> February 1836); See appendix 2/1.

manage the forest for pleasure rather than commercial gain.

In his report of 1843, Robertson stated that he had not yet received the numbers of deer in the Coileitir march, presumably because of the weather at that time. He informed James Wyllie that a very heavy fall of snow had taken place over the previous ten days, but rain was since clearing the grounds enabling deer to obtain food.<sup>38</sup> During early 1844, intermittent weather, with heavy falls of snow and periods of thaw, temporarily affected deer movements. In February they were coming down to settled areas of the Forest. Some had crossed over to Dalness after the northern corries were submerged in snow, but later returned to their usual 'quarters' after the cold spell.<sup>39</sup> In his report of January 1845, Robertson said they had successfully stayed within the Forest's bounds, but he predicted a heavy snowfall to take place, which would likely scatter the deer.<sup>40</sup> Thus, he was particularly knowledgeable of their patterns during winter months.

By spring 1845, his reports suggest that despite deer having been temporarily displaced, their well being remained relatively stable. In April, Robertson observed deer on the high tops at Meall a Bhuridh and Clachlet where they had lain on patches of snow, during warm weather, to cool themselves. He was aware of locations where hinds would give birth, and predicted: 'I think there will be a good crop of calves on

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<sup>38</sup> NAS, GD 112/74/182/1 – Report by Peter Robertson, Drumliart, to Mr Wyllie, (19<sup>th</sup> January 1843).

<sup>39</sup> NAS, GD 112/18/3/8/5 – Report by Peter Robertson, Drumliart, to Sir Alexander Campbell, (19<sup>th</sup> February 1844).

<sup>40</sup> NAS, GD 112/74/182/5 – Report by Peter Robertson, Drumliart, (27<sup>th</sup> January 1845).

Drumliart and Inverveach this summer'.<sup>41</sup> Clearly, deer were being protected and encouraged to proliferate at this time. In the *Statistical Account for Scotland* that year the local minister, Duncan MacLean, estimated between 2000-3000 red deer then inhabited Blackmount Forest. Likewise, the rest of Glenorchy parish 'abounded' in deer, roe, hares and other game. The minister noted that efforts had been made to eradicate vermin such as the polecat, marten, weasel and wildcat.<sup>42</sup> Who was actually involved in trapping the wildlife is unknown, but the head forester is likely to have been actively employed in this duty.

Efforts were being made to increase Forest game; Peter Robertson experimented with interbreeding birds so that their numbers would increase and thus diversify the range of local sporting activities. He was involved in introducing capercaillies to Blackmount as early as 1847, and was keen to gain knowledge on them, hoping they would thrive in this environment. On one occasion Robertson had attempted to cross breed offspring from capercaillies' eggs by placing them under a greyhen.<sup>43</sup> His role as head forester also involved breeding and giving regular reports on the condition of dogs at Blackmount, assisted by a kennel boy.<sup>44</sup> He was successful at breeding hunting dogs, especially foxhounds and deerhounds, and became well known for this. In December 1849, Robertson noted that there were 35 dogs in the kennel, and several others

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<sup>41</sup> NAS, GD 112/74/182/4 – Report by Peter Robertson, Drumliart, (22<sup>nd</sup> April 1845).

<sup>42</sup> Rev. Duncan MacLean, Minister of Glenorchy and Inishail, Presbytery of Lorn, Synod of Argyle, *The New Statistical Account of Scotland*, VII, (1845), 82-103.

<sup>43</sup> NAS, GD 112/74/185/24 – Peter Robertson (undated document).

<sup>44</sup> NAS, GD 112/74/182/2 – Peter Robertson, Forest Lodge, (29<sup>th</sup> December 1849).

kept by the tenants; some of them however were, in his opinion, unfit for hunting deer.<sup>45</sup>

Other estate employees also made occasional references to the welfare of the deer at Blackmount. In April 1844, Robert MacNaughton, shepherd at Ardmaddy, noted that several had suffered from recent storms with some deaths.<sup>46</sup> In January 1853, Duncan Dewar reported that many deer had moved from the Forest to the Strath of Glenorchy after a snowstorm; he had spotted around 50 of them in the wood at Inverlochry and would carefully drive them back to the Forest after the snow had cleared away.<sup>47</sup> This shows that that Dewar, as ground officer, took some of the foresters' responsibilities when it was deemed necessary. Evidently, it was the duty of all employees, associated with Blackmount, to report on the well-being of deer and on their movement patterns around the area. It appears that these observations were being given a high priority in order that the second Marquis could assess the level of success or failure towards maintaining the Forest within varying seasons.

### Sheep farming at Blackmount during the mid-nineteenth century

Large-scale sheep farming became widely adopted again in the Highlands during the mid-nineteenth century. In particular, Blackmount

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<sup>45</sup> NAS, GD 112/74/182/2 – Peter Robertson, Forest Lodge, (29<sup>th</sup> December 1849).

<sup>46</sup> NAS, GD 112/74/180, Robert MacNaughton, Forest reports, (8<sup>th</sup> April 1844).

<sup>47</sup> NAS, GD 112/74/208 – Duncan Dewar, Ground Officer for Glenorchy, (14<sup>th</sup> January 1853).

was intensively grazed with sheep, which became highly sought after in southern markets. Detailed correspondence, relating to the period 1843-54, deals with communication between Blackmount Forest shepherds and Sir Alexander Campbell of Barcaldine. Both Alan McNicol and Robert MacNaughton, Forest shepherds, gave detailed reports on sheep stocks, indicating a period in which estate policy sought to fully exploit the land. Their letters show that a thriving industry depended on availability of suitable shepherds, reasonable weather, adequate access to markets and fair competition with others. These reports give an insight into local management priorities with regard to other stock including deer within the Forest, and drovers who passed through it.<sup>48</sup> We shall consider this in relation to deer management practices within Blackmount.

Some correspondence was concerned with the damage deer had done to crops on nearby tenants' farms. In July 1845, there were reports of their destroying tenants' corn and potato crops at the western side of the Forest, at Inverkinglass. The McColls requested birleymen to come and assess damage done by the deer there; Andrew McLaren was called in to watch the intruders and informed Mr Wyllie, the factor, of what was happening. Mr Wyllie stated that he had no doubt of Lord Breadalbane's liability for damage done by deer to the crops on farms in the vicinity:

the crops at Inverkinlass belonging to the McColls and the tenants at Inverliver, if allowed to be destroyed by the deer, will amount to £70. And if a careful

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<sup>48</sup> NAS, GD 112/74/178, 180 & 181, Forest reports by Alan MacNicol and Robert MacNaughton.

person is not placed to take care of it the whole will be destroyed in one week.

He recommended that one of the shepherds should sleep there along with his dogs to keep off the deer and prevent a need for compensation.<sup>49</sup> This shows that tenants, in certain instances, had the ability to claim damages in an event of their grazing activities being interrupted. It is interesting to see that certain legal rights were upheld on Loch Etive after the Forest had recently expanded westward.

Although some tenants' livelihoods were now considered, Forest policy still involved keeping a watch kept on numbers of cattle, and attempting to keep the deer within its marches. In 1850, Robert MacNaughton made suggestions as to the numbers of livestock grazing during the summer at Glenceitlein, Inverghuisachan, Kinlochetive, and Glenkinglass farms. At Gorton, shepherds were still given a role of keeping deer within the Forest, as in 1849 MacNaughton suggested that an experienced shepherd be placed there in order to turn back deer from the Rannoch march. Peter Robertson intended moving Duncan MacGregor from Kingshouse to Gorton, since he was unhappy with the existing shepherd there described as being noisy with his dogs.<sup>50</sup> Clearly there were tensions existing between pastoral agriculture, and using the land as a place where deer would roam for sport hunting.

There is evidence hinting a considerable degree of environmental

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<sup>49</sup> NAS, GD 112/74/180, Robert MacNaughton, Forest reports, (19<sup>th</sup> July 1845).

<sup>50</sup> NAS, GD 112/74/180, Robert MacNaughton, reports at Ardmaddy, (8<sup>th</sup> March 1849).



pressure from passing drovers on the Blackmount Forest sheep farms. The 1840s was a period in which the Marquis of Breadalbane was involved in a lengthy dispute with drovers, from the north and west Highlands and Islands, over their use of a drove stance at Inveroran. After a brief period when the drovers had rested their cattle at Inverveigh, it was decided that they were to move to an allotted area of ground within the marches of Achallader farm.<sup>51</sup> The Marquis was not alone in voicing grievances against their passing through the Forest, as in 1849 Robert MacNaughton told Sir Alexander Campbell that he was unhappy with this new arrangement:

The drove stance which is marked off the Achallader Farm are to be a great hurt to it, and are very troublesome to the servants at that place... I would willingly accept my first agreement when I came to Ardmaddy for a shepherd than go back again to the Braes of Glenorchy, and be under the charge of keeping my sheep and grass from the hungry droves and the ill threatened tongues of drovers and drivers.<sup>52</sup>

Considering the exposed nature of the landscape at Blackmount, it comes as no surprise that many Forest reports accounted mortality rates of sheep in the winter and spring months. Both McNicol and MacNaughton talked of heavy snows affecting both sheep and deer. One report by Robert MacNaughton in spring 1853, referred to the sheep stock at the farm of Gorton, in the eastern part of the Forest: 'During the whole

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<sup>51</sup> In Chapter 4 we shall examine the legal papers regarding this dispute between 1842 and 1848.

<sup>52</sup> NAS, GD 112/74/180, Robert MacNaughton, reports at Ardmaddy, (21<sup>st</sup> April 1849).

winter I have gone to my uttermost as to giving every attendance as to the herding of stock on this farm, and I am very much afraid that I can have but little credit for my sore labour.' He mentioned that ewes were moved from Achallader to Drumliart after fearing that many had perished, as very severe weather continued until May that year.

MacNaughton stated a generally depressed state of affairs at that time: 'Indeed it is very disagreeable trade to be a shepherd this year at high farms and moreso to have the charge of stocks'. Thus, to avoid future losses plans were made to have sheep taken elsewhere. By October, plans were put in place to send the Achallader hogs to Fife for wintering, as MacNaughton was keen to get them off the 'cold high hills', and sought advice on the cheapest route possible for driving them.<sup>53</sup> Therefore the economics of shepherding comes into question here and whether it was worthwhile depending on such an industry in the Forest's periphery during seasons when the weather was particularly harsh. Faltering profits from sheep farming may have inspired the landlord to encourage increased deer numbers. Both forms of land use had co-existed in tandem, and their success depended on the local climate which occasionally changed in extremity. However, the recent spells of poor weather were taking their toll more on sheep stocks, thus vindicating the area's suitability as a deer forest, and not exclusively for sheep grazing.

By November 1854, Sir Alexander told Robert MacNaughton to

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<sup>53</sup> NAS, GD 112/74/181, Robert MacNaughton, reports at Achallader, 1852-54; (1<sup>st</sup> March 1853); (8<sup>th</sup> March 1853); (27<sup>th</sup> April 1853); (18<sup>th</sup> October 1853).

conjoin the stock from Achallader and Barravurich. MacNaughton, who had desired this arrangement since coming to Achallader, agreed it was a good strategy both for the deer and the sheep. He commented that he would provide the Marquis, or 'any gentleman' sent up there, with the best sport in the Forest during the stalking season.<sup>54</sup> This shows that a shepherd's role there could also involve being a ghillie to assist hunting sportsmen. Also at this time Peter Robertson wished to be included as a shepherd, but MacNaughton was of the opinion that if he took this role: 'he must work as a shepherd'.<sup>55</sup> Thus, when foresters wished to work as shepherds on the Forest farms they had to be committed with this role. It may have been Robertson's motive to continue working as a forester after becoming a shepherd, possibly for increased wages.

Sheep farming was a common livelihood within and around Blackmount, as shown with the tenancies of Alan MacNicol at Clashgour and Robert MacNaughton at Barravurich. Malcolm Christie, tenant at Kingshouse Inn, in the northern periphery of Blackmount, also rented a substantial sheep farm there during the 1850s.<sup>56</sup> Therefore, the estate catered for, and profited from, other land use presumably to subsidise the deer forest itself. Evidently, the Forest had been developed, over three decades, in a fashion allowing both deer and sheep to co-exist with each other. This was exercised by closely delineating areas where sheep could graze, and by encouraging deer to inhabit lower grounds for wintering.

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<sup>54</sup> NAS, GD 112/74/181, Robert MacNaughton, reports at Achallader, 1852-54, (2<sup>nd</sup> April 1853).

<sup>55</sup> NAS, GD 112/74/181, Robert MacNaughton, reports at Achallader, (9<sup>th</sup> November 1854).

<sup>56</sup> *Dugald Christie of Manchuria: Pioneer and Medical Missionary*, (London, 1932), 9.

Strict Forest policies implemented from the 1820s resulted in thriving numbers and quality of deer there by the later 1850s.<sup>57</sup> Sheep farming, rather than interfering with the Forest, actually helped fund its existence.

Clearly, the landlord had been exploiting the Forest's grazing potential to generate income, shown in some of the rentals from 1840-1. At Achallader and Barravurich, David and Donald Sinclair paid a rental of £420. From Auch and the Black Park of Ardtettle the tenants paid a rent of £713.<sup>58</sup> These farms, situated in upper Glenorchy, are only a few examples of the landlord's Argyllshire rentals. The extent to which increased income from sheep grazing rentals allowed the second Marquis flexibility to finance improvements at Blackmount has not been researched in detail. Likewise, ways that income, generated from other parts of the Breadalbane estates, may have funded the Forest has not been examined closely due to the numerous and complex accounts then existing.

Willie Orr's research shows that sheep farming profits and losses throughout the Highlands had fluctuated since the mid-nineteenth century, and when tenants were making losses the landlords were converting parts of their estates to deer forests.<sup>59</sup> They were presumably inspired by the commercial benefits gained from a popularisation of sport amongst the aristocracy when sheep farming became unprofitable.

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<sup>57</sup> See p.221-222 on list of deer numbers during 1857; (appendix 4).

<sup>58</sup> NAS, GD 112/9/3/4/13 - Rentals for Glenorchy and Glenetive, (1840-1841).

<sup>59</sup> Orr, *Deer Forests*.

Blackmount was a unique example from the fact that it had appeared to serve the second Marquis as a non profit making forest since 1820, and it was not let out until after his death. In considering this we can see that he intended that it served the family for pleasure, whilst being financed from rentals both locally, and from other parts of his extensive estates.

### Forest improvements

Possible links between Forest improvements and the trend in rental increases exercised by the landlord are difficult to establish without further research. However, after Lord Glenorchy had become the second Marquis of Breadalbane in 1834, he was determined to invest much of the estate's finances on improvements at Blackmount in order that it would become a fully functioning deer forest with a suitable headquarters as his father suggested in 1824. This may have been related to his policy of continuing more improvements at Taymouth Castle in anticipation of Queen Victoria eventually buying it; thereafter, his motive may have been to move the family headquarters to Blackmount. This theory seems unlikely however, due to a lack of evidence on his visits there, suggesting that he preferred the more lavish accommodation, at Taymouth, in the centre of his estates. Nevertheless, it is clear by the 1840s that Forest improvements were becoming more sustained, and that Blackmount existed to serve the second Marquis, and his guests for seasonal sporting pursuits.

From c.1835-1850 numerous individuals were employed in repairing existing buildings and building new ones to accommodate foresters, watchers and shepherds; likewise, the present Black Mount Lodge was built in the 1840s, as the Forest's headquarters, giving it a more effective functioning role. Other projects, continuing into later decades, included bridle roads and wire fences. From 1843 to 1862 details of expenditure on these works is seen in estate accounts.<sup>60</sup> Economic benefit may have been anticipated from Blackmount Forest longer term, but improvements required substantial financial investment and were a constant strain on estate income. This leads us again to ask if Blackmount existed primarily for the landlord's pleasure, economic gain, or a combination of both. The local building projects can be categorised into two distinct types; one to accommodate Forest employees, and the other to comfort and entertain both the landlord and his guests.

Some Forest dwellings were falling into disrepair and were never resettled. One example was Blaraven Farm, still inhabited in 1837 by Ann MacIntyre, a local pensioner, who requested better accommodation:

Humbly shewith that the petitioner hath been permitted to reside for many years in a small cottage situated in the Forest, and that in consequence of its age it is now so ruinous that every blast that blows threatens to endanger the life of the petitioner. That the said cottage being far away from any other human habitation, and that she resides there entirely by herself, any accident happening during the winter, assistance would be very long of arriving. And that in

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<sup>60</sup> NAS, GD 112/14/5/1 – Perthshire Factory Accounts (1843-44); GD 112/14/5/15 – Perthshire Factory Accounts (1863); See Appendices 3/1 – 3/3

consequence of the deer coming down from the Forest and devouring her small crop of potatoes, the only means of subsistence during the winter. The petitioner is constrained to throw herself entirely on your lordship's benevolence, and begs that with your lordship's usual liberality you will cause the ground officer to allow the petitioner a small cottage in the Strath of Glenorchy to pass the remainder of her days sheltered from the inclemency of the weather.<sup>61</sup>

Blaraven Farm had been inhabited by generations of families since the seventeenth century, but was finally abandoned during period of sustained improvement. Evidently, some older tenants still appealed to the ground officer anticipating that the landlord would give some consideration for their plight. Abandoning old dwellings such as Blaraven benefited the Forest's development, with more grazing land available for deer during winter, but giving them less opportunity to eat tenants' crops. There is no evidence of Blaraven actually being rented at this time, and improving it was out of the question due to its deteriorating condition.

In 1839, concern over the structural state of a forester's house in the north part of the Forest, then occupied by Archibald McIntyre, prompted Duncan Dewar to write to Mr Wylie with plans for altering the dwelling. The existing building was situated adjacent to Kingshouse Inn and was regarded as being too close to the public road on its north side. There were suggestions for a new building to be constructed about one mile above Kingshouse, within 200 yards of the public road on the south

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<sup>61</sup> NAS, GD 112/11/10/5/9: The petition of Anne MacIntyre residing at Blairavon, (9<sup>th</sup> September 1837).

side. Stone was readily obtainable on the new site, and wood was to be supplied from Barravurich. McIntyre was to carry out the work himself and preferably finish its construction early in the forthcoming season.<sup>62</sup> In this case, the landlord was probably not willing to employ labourers externally or purchase materials elsewhere.

It had been originally McIntyre's proposal to abandon his cottage and build the new dwelling, and other foresters likewise saw it as the best plan for the Forest's future development. James Wyllie made further comments to the Marquis concerning McIntyre's cottage, and managing the northern marches. Repairs and alterations to this existing building, consented to by the landlord in the last season, had not been carried out as authorised since the factor considered this dwelling to have limited potential for enlargement. James Wyllie and McIntyre both agreed on the proposal to move to the new site, as it was more suitable for attending both the drove stance and road. It was also considered that the future Blackrock Cottage would serve as an outpost of protection, presumably from poachers encroaching on the northern marches.<sup>63</sup> Local initiatives had been taken to improve this portion of Blackmount and projects emerged on employees' advice. Several improvements were linked with

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<sup>62</sup> NAS, GD 112/16/9/1/1: Excerpt of letter from Duncan Dewar, Ground Officer, Glenorchy to Mr Wyllie, with enclosed factor's note, (10<sup>th</sup> June 1839). It seems very likely that the existing dwelling was what is known today as the Queenshouse (OS NN257549), a ruined settlement at the head of Glen Etive and Glencoe. The new dwelling is Blackrock Cottage (OS NN268530). The dimensions of the house were to be 32 feet in length within, and 14 feet broad; the expense was estimated at £14-£16, £4 of which was earmarked for carpentry, partitions and windows. Archibald MacIntyre was described as a watcher on the north east march of the Forest in 1843/44 (Appendix 3/1)

<sup>63</sup> NAS, GD 112/16/9/1/1: Excerpt of letter from Duncan Dewar, Ground Officer, Glenorchy to Mr Wyllie (with enclosed factor's note), (10<sup>th</sup> June 1839).



the landlord's aim to protect the Forest from poachers and the activities of adjacent proprietors, especially on the northern marches. Alltchaorunn was built with this purpose in mind, as it was deemed necessary to accommodate a forester there from the early 1830s after incidences of local poaching.<sup>64</sup>

In 1840, further improvements were proposed in the vicinity when Peter Robertson requested the construction of another cottage, after recent events relating to disputes with Campbell of Monzie.<sup>65</sup> Robertson suggested that a good site existed for a forester's house on the eastern side of Fionn Gleann Burn, above Glen Etive. The strategy here was that an inhabited dwelling would deter deer from wandering down to Dalness, but nothing further came of this plan.<sup>66</sup> Another way of tackling this problem was to erect a wire fence, extending five miles, from Kingshouse to Alltachorine in Upper Glen Etive. In April 1842, Duncan Dewar made such plans with advice from local foresters after reports that deer often crossed this way to Dalness in October and November. Dewar also suggested that locked gates could be erected in places where deer passed so that foresters would be enabled to drive them back from the Dalness side.<sup>67</sup> These examples show that improvements were often linked to tackling challenges with neighbouring landlords and poachers.

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<sup>64</sup> We have already discussed the origins of Alltchaorunn; see chapter 2, p.156.

<sup>65</sup> The disputes with Campbell of Monzie are discussed in chapter 4.

<sup>66</sup> NAS, GD 112/16/10/5/36: Forest report, Peter Robertson, to J.F. Wyllie Esq, (3<sup>rd</sup> November 1840).

<sup>67</sup> NAS, GD 112/74/206: Report of Duncan Dewar, Ground Officer for Glenorchy, on wire fence, north side of Forest, (20<sup>th</sup> April 1842).

At this time Duncan Dewar also inspected the condition of a forester's house at Kinlocheteive, estimating that £10-£12 would cover repairs for the existing dwelling, but he commented that rebuilding it would double costs.<sup>68</sup> In December 1845, Archibald MacIntyre appealed to the factor for a dwelling to accommodate him and his parents, since he was unable to continue paying their rent at Edindonich; the particular cottage he sought was Aultsuilnacurra, near Clashgour Farm:

I was promised that the house opposite Clashgour would be fitted up for me, but I see no prospect, and unless your good offices interfere I must still remain in the same unhappy way. Should any situation occur where I might take my parents along with me, it would bestow me the greatest happiness. I have been the most part of my life amongst sheep, and those of the finest quality in Scotland, I am well acquainted with deer and my testimonials from all those with whom I hired previous to coming here are at hand.

His wishes were granted, and by June 1846 workmen were involved in repairing MacIntyre's new house; in return he herded the Drumliart march, but the ground officer said that the bridge near the foot of Loch Dochard would need to be repaired.<sup>69</sup>

About the same time, Alan McNicol at Clashgour reminded Sir Alexander that his house was in need of repairing.<sup>70</sup> In the previous month, Duncan Dewar had approved of the estimates for mason and

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<sup>68</sup> NAS, GD 112/74/206: Report of Duncan Dewar, Ground Officer for Glenorchy, (27<sup>th</sup> June 1844).

<sup>69</sup> NAS, GD 112/74/80/2: Archibald MacIntyre to James Wyllie, (11<sup>th</sup> December 1845); GD 112/74/80/47: Copy, letter Duncan Dewar to James Wyllie, (14<sup>th</sup> March 1846).

<sup>70</sup> NAS, GD 112/74/178: Alan McNicol, Forest reports, 1843-49, (29<sup>th</sup> June 1846).

joiner work at Clashgour, provided by Donald McKenzie and Donald Sinclair at £25 10s and £9 15s respectively.<sup>71</sup> It appears that this plan to rebuild the house was temporarily shelved. After examining McNicol's dwelling, Dewar stated that the kitchen walls needed immediate repair, amounting to £5, but that the whole house would have to be rebuilt in a few years.<sup>72</sup> By January 1849, the ground officer provided Sir Alexander a sketch of a new semi-detached building at Clashgour to accommodate Alan McNicol and Duncan McColl, the shepherds there.<sup>73</sup> Expenditure on improvements was thus not confined to Forest activities alone, as sheep farming rentals were presumably generating estate income.

In 1846, when Dewar heard that Archibald MacIntyre intended to take his parents with him to the small dwelling near Clashgour Farm, he enquired if Sir Alexander had been asked, and if the Marquis would approve. MacIntyre's father had lived at Edindonich, but could not continue paying for this small dwelling.<sup>74</sup> Six years later, the ground officer reported that a retiring employee, Archibald MacDonald, had brought his daughter to the cottage at Bridge of Orchy:

It is quite clear that the old man cannot continue long as herd, therefore we should be on the look for a suitable person for this duty towards Martinmas next. Then the poor man must just apply to the parochial boards for aid and the daughter can look out for herself.<sup>75</sup>

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<sup>71</sup> NAS, GD 112/74/206: Report of Duncan Dewar, Ground Officer for Glenorchy, (4<sup>th</sup> April 1846).

<sup>72</sup> NAS, GD 112/74/206: Duncan Dewar, Ground Officer for Glenorchy, (23<sup>rd</sup> July 1846).

<sup>73</sup> NAS, GD 112/74/207: Duncan Dewar, Ground Officer for Glenorchy, (25<sup>th</sup> January 1849).

<sup>74</sup> NAS, GD 112/74/206, Duncan Dewar, Ground Officer for Glenorchy, (4<sup>th</sup> April 1846).

<sup>75</sup> NAS, GD 112/74/208, Duncan Dewar, Ground Officer for Glenorchy, (17<sup>th</sup> June 1853).

Thus, in certain instances the landlord was not willing to provide charity for retiring employees, or to accommodate their relatives. Expenditure was only to be minimal and non-rent payers had to move elsewhere.

Repairs were proposed to the buildings at Derrynasoir during 1843 when the factor stated: 'I believe that nothing has been done to these houses since they came into Lord Breadalbane's hands'. Wyllie was of the opinion that since Derrynasoir was a permanent 'station' for a shepherd, adequate accommodation should be provided; likewise, he suggested that some repairs were necessary at Ardmaddy.<sup>76</sup> The particular function of Ardmaddy during that decade is unclear; however, it was occasionally resided at by Sir Alexander Campbell, indicating that it may have served as a lodge, or headquarters, on the western fringes of Blackmount Forest.

Although it is not known how often he visited Blackmount, the second Marquis of Breadalbane made a three-day visit to Ardmaddy in November 1850, accompanied by only one servant, Peter Robertson. Sir Alexander Campbell made arrangements and ordered Mr McPherson at Taymouth to send provisions:

He wishes half a dozen of the long loaves to be sent baked fresh and sent here on Monday morning, also some mutton and beef, tea, coffee, sugar, candles and a few of such stores as you may judge necessary...A few brace of grouse or

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<sup>76</sup> NAS, GD 112/74/78/32: James Wyllie to Sir Alexander Campbell, (19<sup>th</sup> June, 1843).

other game bird may also be sent.

Sir Alexander also arranged for a sheep and some fish to be killed there; the other food was to be transported with boxes in carts; wine was already at Ardmaddy.<sup>77</sup> This therefore indicates that it served an important function in comparison to other Forest dwellings. Ardmaddy is likely to have been repaired in recent years given that the landlord resided there overnight in 1850, and Sir Alexander was using it occasionally before then. Recent improvements in Forest paths had also made the western fringes of Blackmount more readily accessible for sporting parties and transportation of provisions.

The present 'Forest Lodge' at Blackmount was under construction between 1840-1850, and estate accounts clearly show significant expenditure on it. The timing of this project is related to a general increase in interest towards 'sporting estates' from the 1840s, when there was a demand for 'sporting' lodges to accommodate guests. In July 1841, Charles Dickens, on a visit to Inveroran Inn, described that a group of workmen dwelling there were involved in constructing a 'hunting lodge' in the area.<sup>78</sup> In early 1842, Peter Skeen the foreman, arranged for materials to be brought to the site, and suggested the chimney parts could be made from a type of red granite. He was concerned that the building's windows required careful consideration, or would not be watertight. By then the upper storey of the Forest Lodge was nearing completion, and

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<sup>77</sup> NAS, GD 112/16/9/2/14: Sir Alexander Campbell to Mr McPherson, (8<sup>th</sup> November 1850).

<sup>78</sup> Madeline House & Graham Storey (eds), *The Letters of Charles Dickens*, II, (Oxford, 1969), 328.

pavement had been laid in the kitchen, hall and larders.<sup>79</sup>

In 1843, Duncan Dewar was instructed to go up twice a week from Dalmally to inspect progress of work around the new building, and Wyllie wrote that much had been achieved by June. He stated: 'The dressing at the Forest building has been commenced and I have taken measures when up for having the work pressed on more vigorously'. Skeen was informed that one of the external walls above the kitchen suffered from damp. Proposals on wallpapering and varnishing were also discussed then, and James Wyllie awaited particular instructions from the landlord on the interior decorations.<sup>80</sup> Evidently, there had been close scrutiny on the progress of Black Mount Lodge, and discussion on detail, as it approached structural completion.

The next phase of the project involved focussing on improvements to nearby buildings and surroundings. By 1844, estate accounts show several discharges on Blackmount when 'decorations' were made to 'The Forest House' and the new gardens. (Appendix 3/2)<sup>81</sup> Willie Orr gives some detailed expenses incurred for the new lodge and dog kennels there between 1847-8, amounting to £3270.<sup>82</sup> During these last two years alterations were made to the approach of the lodge, in anticipation of the

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<sup>79</sup> NAS, GD 112/74/77/30: Letter from Peter Skeen, Kenmore, (13<sup>th</sup> January 1842).

<sup>80</sup> NAS, GD 112/74/78/20: Correspondence by James Wyllie, (22<sup>nd</sup> May 1843); GD 112/74/78/24, (10<sup>th</sup> June, 1843); GD 112/74/78/44, (28<sup>th</sup> July 1843).

<sup>81</sup> NAS, GD 112/14/5/1: Factory Account between the Marquis of Breadalbane and James F. Wyllie, From Martinmas 1843 to Martinmas 1844.

<sup>82</sup> Willie Orr, 'The economic impact of deer forests in the Scottish Highlands, 1850-1914' in *Scottish Economic and Social History Review*, II, (1982), 52.

expected visits of Queen Victoria, and the Grand Duke Constantine of Russia.<sup>83</sup> In 1849, plans of the completed Forest House show that it was a large dwelling on three levels, and consisted of numerous rooms for both guests and employees.<sup>84</sup> Much time and expenditure had been focussed on building the lodge, and it presumably inspired the building of similarly designed shooting bases in other Highland estates by the later nineteenth century, for example Mar Lodge built in 1895, near Braemar.

Workmen employed at Blackmount complained about the poor accommodation, and suggested to the factor they would put down their tools and go elsewhere unless conditions improved. Wyllie contacted Barcaldine on this matter in February 1846:

In weather like this the poor fellows are drenched every day and the only bothy they have is one of the old peat houses, the roof of which Ferrier describes as quite gone and unfit for a sleeping place at this season. The only fireplace in it is a corner, where only two or three of the men can get the benefit of it at a time. They have all caught cold and will not continue at the work unless some more comfortable sleeping bothy is provided.

Mr Ferrier suggested that all the men could be accommodated at Forest Lodge, or at McGibbon's cottage. The landlord was compelled to treat these employees with respect, as, by July 1847 it was difficult to find

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<sup>83</sup> NAS, GD 112/170/3000: Correspondence between the Marquis of Breadalbane and Alexander Campbell of Barcaldine, (1843-1856); plans for visits by Queen Victoria and the Grand Duke are discussed on p.214-216.

<sup>84</sup> NAS, RHP 970/1 – Glenorchy and Inshail: Plan of Forest House in 1849.

builders, and some were being paid up to 26 shillings per week.<sup>85</sup> This indicates a boom period throughout the Highlands for building projects, and some skilled tradesmen may have emigrated.

Most improvements taking place during this time were for the benefit of the Forest's development; with the exception of expenses on sheep farms, they were not generally directed at agricultural activities. Evidence of neglect, by the estate, in this respect is evident from 1844 when Duncan McGregor at Kingshouse requested £1 10s for assistance in improving some ground there for potato cultivation. McGregor pledged to pay one third of the expenses himself, including distribution of lime on the ground there. He said that even the factor wished a potato ground at 'this backward place' to avoid much carting of loads from elsewhere. In the following year, this tenant complained to Sir Alexander Campbell of Barcaldine that he still had no aid; he was £5 out of pocket after outlaying expenditure on lime and trenching improvements, but still had a poor crop.<sup>86</sup> It is unclear whether McGregor actually received any help for his efforts, to provide basic sustenance for himself and his family. This indicates that estate finances were prioritised on Forest developments, and less on the provision of aid for tenant farmers. Likewise, estate accounts that year show no expenditure on agricultural improvements.<sup>87</sup>

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<sup>85</sup> NAS, GD 11274/80/17 – James Wyllie to Sir Alexander Campbell of Barcaldine, (3<sup>rd</sup> February 1846); GD 112/74/80/26 – James Wyllie to the Marquis of Breadalbane, (21<sup>st</sup> July 1847).

<sup>86</sup> NAS, GD 112/74/123/24: Petition from Duncan McGrigor to Mr Wyllie, (2<sup>nd</sup> December 1844); GD 112/74/124/12: Petition from Duncan McGrigor to Sir Alexander Campbell of Barcaldine, (15<sup>th</sup> November 1845).

<sup>87</sup> NAS, GD 112/14/5/1 - Perthshire Factory Accounts, 1844, Ordinary and Extraordinary discharges on the Breadalbane Estates, Game Forest and the Forest House.; see appendix 3/2.



Correspondence by Duncan Dewar shows improvements in bridle paths and fences in Blackmount Forest during the mid-nineteenth century. Fences were erected alongside the road at Loch Tulla to deter drovers stopping, and to avoid deer wandering towards Doire Darach. In June 1846, a 'road' was constructed in Corrie Ba from Ba Bridge, along the north side of the river to the foot of Meall Tionail.<sup>88</sup> From 1852, Dewar gave several reports on Forest bridle paths under construction including work at Black Rock, Blaraven and a road to Loch Dochart. Also that year, new wire fences had been erected and existing ones were repaired. Dewar stated that the old line of fence at Larig Dochart would cost £40 to replace, but Alan McNicol was concerned that sending workmen there would disturb the deer during that season.<sup>89</sup> In 1853, a bridle road from Ba Cottage to Loch Ba was commenced, and plans of a road from Loch Ba to Loch Lydon were also made; Dewar sent a sketch of this to Mr Wyllie. Repairs to the Glen Etive road during 1854 involved employing several men and constructing a bridge over the River Coupall.<sup>90</sup> The focus on improved roads and new paths at that time shows that better access was desired to make the Forest more productive, since culled deer required transportation. The new routes could also be used by forest watchers and shepherds so that they could perform their duties more effectively.

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<sup>88</sup> NAS, GD 112/74/206 – Duncan Dewar, Ground Officer for Glenorchy, (3<sup>rd</sup> June 1846).

<sup>89</sup> NAS, GD 112/74/208 – Duncan Dewar, Forest Reports, 1852-54, (31<sup>st</sup> May 1852), (29<sup>th</sup> July 1852).

<sup>90</sup> NAS, GD 112/74/208 – Duncan Dewar, Forest Reports, 1852-54, (23<sup>rd</sup> May 1853), (17<sup>th</sup> June 1853), (16<sup>th</sup> November 1853), (15<sup>th</sup> June 1854).

Other projects taking place in the Forest included the construction of ice houses to preserve deer carcasses, and kennels for the dogs. Blackmount became renowned for its association with breeding dogs for hunting deer. Peter Robertson gave regular reports on their training; in 1836 he said that they were in good condition. However, he faced problems in keeping his dogs away from deer whilst exercising them in open ground, and requested kennels:

I must shut them up every day and night for both deer and roe...I cannot take them with me every day...but there will be either deer or roe and I am not able to hold four couples of dogs if a deer start before me and if his lordship would see proper to let the breadth of the kennel be taken off the garden for to let them run about it would do them much good.<sup>91</sup>

It is unclear whether kennels were provided at this time, but some were constructed in the following decade. The use of dogs to assist in stalking deer was part of Robertson's role as the following section shows.

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<sup>91</sup> NAS, GD 112/16/10/4 – Peter Robertson to James Wyllie, (February 1836).



The established reputation of Blackmount during the mid-nineteenth century

Investment on Blackmount Forest made by the second Marquis of Breadalbane since the 1820s gave it wider recognition over the next two decades. This coincided with a period when the British aristocracy were particularly influenced by Prince Albert's fondness of 'sporting estates'. Since a forest infrastructure was already in place at Blackmount, it was one of the first to reap the benefits of a wider audience drawn from aristocratic, artistic and English upper-class circles. It effectively became a magnet for the 'Victorianisation' of the Scottish Highlands, and was instrumental in generating modern perceptions towards the region's natural beauty. This phase, evolving in the 1840s, represented a shift away from former notions of the region.

This is clearly seen in 1848 when Herbert Byng Hall passed through the Forest with friends, and visited both inns on either side of the Black Mount road. His writing style suggests a very romanticised view of the Highlands, not for its history but as part of the Victorian dominion, typical of the period. He described Blackmount as: 'the celebrated deer forest...the property of the Marquess of Breadalbane...the jewel of greatest value in estimation of a sportsman, his very extensive shooting grounds'. During his travels some detailed notes were made on the numerous deer that Hall and his companions spotted on the route.<sup>92</sup> He

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<sup>92</sup> Herbert Byng Hall, *Highland Sports and Highland Quarters*, (London, 1848), 179-186.

was not alone in emphasising the area's significance. In 1866 a brochure of routes through the west Highlands recognised this area as 'the earl of Breadalbane's famed deer forest of the Black Mount'.<sup>93</sup> The reasons for its established reputation being recognised by both local and external observers now requires discussion.

In 1845, Duncan MacLean, Minister for Glenorchy, described how the new lodge's setting blended in with the surroundings and Loch Tulla:

It is but a small, yet lovely sheet of water. It is about four miles in length, and its average breadth is a mile. On the north side at Ardvrecknish, the Marquis of Breadalbane, sole proprietor of Glenurchy, has a shooting-lodge set down in his vast deer forest of Corichbad. The lodge, with its young thriving plantations, contrasts beautifully with the pine wood of Derridarroch on the opposite shore of the lake, and lends with its exiting associations of deer and hounds, and huntsmen, a high degree of interest to this lone and solitary mountain tarn.<sup>94</sup>

Clearly, he recognised the area as a unique part of the Breadalbane estates, and saw its qualities for sporting purposes. MacLean was writing this account during a period of significant change in his local parish. Although he was critical of the decline in population, he did not appear to comment on the social implications relating to the emergence of this deer forest or to criticise Blackmount for the size it had become.

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<sup>93</sup> This is a description of coach and steam conveyance through the Highlands, extracted from the '*Oban Times*', (1<sup>st</sup> September 1866), 4.

<sup>94</sup> Rev. Duncan MacLean, Minister of Glenorchy and Inishail, Presbytery of Lorn, Synod of Argyle, *The New Statistical Account of Scotland*, VII, (1845), 82-103.

A recurring theme in this research regards the phenomenon of white deer being spotted in the Forest.<sup>95</sup> In 1849, correspondence from Peter Robertson to Sir Alexander mentions that he had recently come across one:

The white deer is about Bontoig all this winter; you will know him by a sheep at a distance with the naked eye. There was not such a white deer as this one in the Forest since it was put up. The old white hind had nothing in whiteness to this one; it is a pretty beast and seems to be in very good condition. I thought at first that he was a year old by being so large, until I saw him sucking his mother. I would like very well that Mr Landseer would see him; he would make a fine picture.<sup>96</sup>

Presumably, Robertson's intention was that if a painting were made, then the Forest would gain further significance. The evidence also suggests that Robertson was well aware of the historical connections with white deer in the former Forest of Corrie Ba, and the interest this would generate from wider society, thus explaining why 'Mr Landseer' was mentioned.

Sir Edwin Landseer, became especially known for producing engravings and paintings of animal scenes in the Scottish Highlands during the Victorian period. He appears to have been official painter of hunting scenes in the Forest for the Marquis during the mid-nineteenth

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<sup>95</sup> Refer to the story of the white hind during 1617, described in chapter 1, p.47.

<sup>96</sup> NAS, GD 112/74/182/7, Peter Robertson at Forest Lodge to Sir Alexander Campbell of Barcaldine, (3<sup>rd</sup> January 1849).

century, being commissioned to produce some works after personally witnessing hunting events that had taken place in the area. In 1847, Landseer exhibited his '*Deer Drive: Glen Orchy*', showing a drive through the Larig Dochart. This picture was one of his largest paintings, later bought by Queen Victoria. It was likely that this work had caught the eye of Prince Albert who is known to have relished the idea of deer being driven rather than stalked. Consequently, Blackmount Forest became particularly well known as a Highland 'sporting estate', amongst the aristocracy, from Landseer's artwork.

This is seen especially from his better known painting '*The Stag at Bay*' which was produced in 1844 after Landseer witnessed an incident when a deer was wounded on Beinn Toaig. It ran down to Loch Tulla, and killed two deerhounds before it was slain. The hunted stag had taken his last stand in the reedy water of the loch; the scene shows one dead hound whilst the stag awaits attack from the other.<sup>97</sup> The picture was later repainted to show those present at the scene. One of the bearded individuals depicted at the bottom was apparently Peter Robertson, and this seems more convincing when compared with a surviving photograph of him.<sup>98</sup> Evidently, Landseer's artistic works contributed to the acclaim gained by Blackmount, thereby attracting many aristocratic audiences. Guidebooks and travellers accounts, highlight the recognition towards

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<sup>97</sup> Duff-Hart Davis, *Monarchs of the Glen*, (London, 1978), 130; Campbell Lennie, *Landseer: The Victorian Paragon*, (London, 1976), 144. The '*Deer Drive: Glen Orchy*' is now displayed in Balmoral Castle.

<sup>98</sup> The present landlord of Blackmount, Mr Robin Fleming, kindly provided this evidence amongst others relating to Peter Robertson and Sir Edwin Landseer.

Blackmount after Landseer produced his works there.<sup>99</sup>

Local correspondence defines more clearly the dates when Landseer produced his paintings relating to Blackmount. In 1846, Sir Alexander Campbell wrote to the Marquis of Breadalbane concerning the price of *'The Stag at Bay'* painting, as Sir Edwin requested a forward payment amounting to £500 for his work. Landseer had sent it to the printers who would retain it until the next year, but in the meantime he wanted payment in order for him to sustain his finances and start another painting. He stated: 'The Stag will break his Bay from the engraver next October when I hope to turn him in a second time at Taymouth.'<sup>100</sup> By June 1847, Landseer still had not received a forward payment, and requested this again as a matter of urgency.<sup>101</sup> It is not known if he was granted his wishes at this time, but it seems unlikely that the second Marquis would have turned him down. Generally, the Breadalbane estate finances were closely focussed towards Blackmount at that time, suggesting that the landlord considered Landseer's paintings amongst other personal interests in the area.

Before then, correspondence with Jacob Bell, Landseer's business manager, shows the hospitality he had received during his visits to the Breadalbane family's estates, a relationship known to have existed from

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<sup>99</sup> As well as the printed accounts of the Forest, previously mentioned, we have further evidence of how Blackmount was advertised in ch 5, p.316-319.

<sup>100</sup> NAS, GD 170/3000/45/1 – Alexander Campbell of Barcaldine to the Marquis of Breadalbane, (28<sup>th</sup> November 1846).

<sup>101</sup> NAS, GD 170/3000/52/1 – Alexander Campbell of Barcaldine to the Marquis of Breadalbane, (11<sup>th</sup> June 1847).



autumn 1844. Landseer appeared particularly impressed at the setting of Blackmount and the comfort he experienced at Forest House.<sup>102</sup> In another undated letter, Landseer told Bell that he needed to receive '*The Stag at Bay*' immediately, as he was nervous about re-painting it:

Lord Breadalbane has been very kind, and is expecting me to begin immediately the 2<sup>nd</sup> large picture in which he and Lady Breadalbane may appear. Now if I had the picture to send home and outlined the second subject it would be but proper, he is kind in the extreme and has indulged me more in the Highlands than any friend I ever had. In the meantime I eat his mutton, drink his wine, get his money, rob him of his picture and laugh at him, all to please my own selfish ends; my nights are bad.<sup>103</sup>

It seems therefore that although Landseer enjoyed 'living the life of a lord', his artistic skills were put under strain when he was parted from his original paintings. Proposed alterations to '*The Stag at Bay*', shows the lengths to which Marquis Breadalbane would go in order to bolster Blackmount's prominence by use of Sir Edwin Landseer's work. Landseer meanwhile received significant attention from his association with this family, and their sporting estates.

Landseer's subject of *The Stag at Bay* was inspired from dogs within the Forest holding deer at bay during the 1840s, and this had become possible by their rigorous training sessions from foresters. In

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<sup>102</sup> Mr Robin Fleming, the present landowner at Blackmount provided a copy of this letter. This was from Sir Edwin Landseer to his friend Bell dating to 19<sup>th</sup> September 1844.

<sup>103</sup> As above, undated letter. Campbell Lennie, *Landseer: The Victorian Paragon*, (London, 1976), 75.

1843, Peter Robertson described how he set Forest dogs at deer, a practice known as blooding the hounds, showing that they were being specially trained for 'blood sport' at Blackmount. The Marquis had instructed Robertson to blood the dogs, and one day in March that year his dogs killed five deer without a shot being necessary. The head forester described in vivid detail how the dogs held deer at bay for several hours in various locations within the southern periphery of the Forest, including Drumliart. Robertson allowed some dogs chase two deer at the top of Glenkinglass:

I loose three dogs at them and two happened to follow one of the deer and the other dog followed the other one. The deer that the two dogs were after came very close to me and I slipped two pairs of the young dogs at him before he went two hundred yards before me. The deer that the single dog followed when he was passing over a rock, the dog got hold of the deer about the haunch and made the deer turn round, and the next attempt that the dog made he turned the deer over a rock, and when the deer got up the dog got hold of him again and by the help of another young dog they killed him on the spot.

His descriptions shows assessment on dogs' performances at hunting deer, and how they managed to 'keep their bay'. Those from the Forest of Atholl were good at this, but the Marquis's dogs were said to be 'savage', and although not keeping their bay as well, were improving daily.<sup>104</sup>

The interest generated amongst aristocracy and the British

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<sup>104</sup> NAS, GD 112/16/10/4 – Peter Robertson to James Wyllie, (21<sup>st</sup> February 1843).

monarchy from Blackmount's sporting potential was significant. Although Queen Victoria had never actually visited Blackmount, it was certainly planned. The naming of 'Victoria Bridge', near Loch Tulla, does indeed suggest connections in this respect, as other Scottish locations were named after her visits.<sup>105</sup> This bridge, on the Loch Tulla section of the road already had that name from 1844, so it may have simply been dedicated to Queen Victoria even if she never visited it.<sup>106</sup> Lord Breadalbane stated that she would be unlikely to visit Taymouth in 1847, but that a visit to Blackmount that year was possible. He therefore urgently desired that works at the Forest House would render: 'the whole place in the best possible order by the beginning of August'.<sup>107</sup> Evidently, the building's completion was accelerated by rumours of a particularly important royal visit.

Sir Alexander Campbell made plans in case she passed there, during her tour of the West Highlands that year. In this event, horses would be arranged at various stages along a route from the head of Loch Lomond to Fort William; alternatively she would come by sea on the west coast:

Immediately on ascertaining her intentions, I will return; if she means to go by the Forest, on passing Crianlarich send an express down to Taymouth for the rest of the servants and proceed on to the Forest House. If on the contrary she

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<sup>105</sup> Several locations have been named after Queen Victoria. Some of these are called the 'Queen's View'; one was of her first view at Loch Lomond north of Glasgow.

<sup>106</sup> NAS, GD 112/18/3/8/5 – Peter Robertson to Sir Alexander Campbell, (19<sup>th</sup> February, 1844).

<sup>107</sup> NAS, GD 170/3000/14/1 – Lord Breadalbane to Sir Alexander Campbell of Barcaldine, (7<sup>th</sup> July 1847).

goes by Easdale and Oban, I proceed by Dalmally where a cart with a hart, salmon and grouse will be waiting to Easdale, but if I go to the Forest they return there. I propose to have six of the horses up to take the Queen from Forest House to King's House, from riding and driving, and two outsiders.<sup>108</sup>

Five days later, Sir Alexander informed Lord Breadalbane that the Queen would not be coming via the Forest, but on the sea route. He arranged for two red deer to be sent to her majesty, on her arrival by boat, at Fort William.<sup>109</sup> Although Queen Victoria never visited Blackmount during her life, had she done so it would have changed the area's history as she was recognised as the most powerful monarch in the world at that time.<sup>110</sup>

Even if Her Majesty never made this visit, it certainly became a place of interest amongst aristocratic circles, as the Grand Duke Constantine of Russia visited Blackmount Forest during 1847. Colonel Grey, the Queen's enquery, attended the Grand Duke and after learning that he would arrive by boat at Ballachulish, was concerned that there was no decent inn existing between there and Kenmore. He wrote to Sir Alexander, suggesting the possibility that Lord Breadalbane might put the Grand Duke up for a night at Forest House.<sup>111</sup> Sir Alexander hastily agreed to escort the Grand Duke to Blackmount, for this

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<sup>108</sup> NAS, GD 170/3000/55 – Sir Alexander Campbell at Forest House to Lord Breadalbane, (12<sup>th</sup> August 1847).

<sup>109</sup> NAS, GD 170/3000/56 – Sir Alexander Campbell at Dalmally to Lord Breadalbane, (17<sup>th</sup> August 1847); GD 170/3000/57 – Sir Alexander Campbell at 'The Dream' off Kerrera, (19<sup>th</sup> August 1847).

<sup>110</sup> Queen Victoria was actually escorted through Glencoe by John Brown, her servant during the 1860s.

<sup>111</sup> NAS, GD 170/3000/54/2 – Letter from Maule at the War Office to Barcaldine, (22<sup>nd</sup> June 1847), with enclosed letter from Colonel Grey to Maule, (19<sup>th</sup> June 1847).

accommodation.<sup>112</sup> The Marquis was determined such a visit would be successful:

I am anxious to show every possible attention to the Grand Duke and to make his tour through my part of the Highlands as agreeable as possible, and that both the Forest House and Taymouth are placed entirely at his disposal. You should strongly advise Colonel Grey to come on to the Forest House the same night from Ballachulish and that day or next to organise a show of deer and some sport in CorrichBah as may be thought but in order to give him a good idea of our own Highland sports.<sup>113</sup>

During the following month the Marquis of Breadalbane stated that he was pleased at all of the arrangements concerning the Grand Duke's visit.<sup>114</sup> This was evidently a high profile visit with major social implications for the landlord, since the Grand Duke was particularly influential in the wider European political sphere. It was also essential that the event was properly arranged with the view that Blackmount Forest could be let in the future, in a fashion similar other areas of the Breadalbane estates.

Some evidence exists on areas in Argyllshire that had been marketed for sporting purposes during the 1850s; however we do not have the details of what was actually shot. An individual called James Kennedy paid £50, between 1850-1855, for shooting within 700 acres of

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<sup>112</sup> NAS, GD 170/3000/54/1 – Sir Alexander Campbell at Edinburgh to Lord Breadalbane, (26<sup>th</sup> June 1847).

<sup>113</sup> NAS, GD 170/3000/13/1 – Lord Breadalbane to Sir Alexander Campbell, (2<sup>nd</sup> July 1847).

<sup>114</sup> NAS, GD 170/3000/16/1 – Lord Breadalbane to Sir Alexander Campbell, (3<sup>rd</sup> August 1847).

land at Tyndrum. Likewise, J.B. Lawes paid £260, from 1851-1856, for 14,779 acres at Dalmally. Earl Spencer had paid £100 from year to year for fishing on the River Awe.<sup>115</sup> There also exists missives of a nine-year lease between the second Marquis and A. Holland of Gask for the shootings of the moor of Dalmally, including local fishing rights. One of the agreed terms was that:

The Marquess reserves all Red deer and Roe, but with this exception that the tenant shall have permission to kill not more than six deer in each year of the lease, provided they are found within the bounds of the shooting hereby let.<sup>116</sup>

This shows that the landlord was careful with letting arrangements for sporting tenants in his Argyllshire estates, and since very little evidence exists for letting arrangements in Blackmount this suggests that other areas subsidised it along with rental income from tenant grazers. The Forest remained predominantly as a non-commercial shooting retreat for an exclusive until the landlord's death in 1862.

In August 1852, Landseer asked the Marquis if he could again visit Blackmount, as he was 'in need of a healthy holiday', and he was planning to visit Dunrobin Estate afterwards. By early September he was pleased to learn that an invitation was offered. He would reside for three days at Drumliart with Peter Robertson: 'I am highly flattered by your

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<sup>115</sup> NAS, GD 112/74/216/6 - Details of shootings in the Breadalbane Estates during the 1850s; see below p.219 for more details on Earl Spencer's fishing activities in the Argyllshire estates.

<sup>116</sup> NAS, GD112/74/79/48 - Missives of a lease between the Marquess of Breadalbane and A. Holland of Gask; unfortunately this document is undated, but it was likely between the 1830s and 1850s.

friendly confidence which I shall not abuse under my friend Robertson's orders as I trust to his laying down your law.'<sup>117</sup> We can presume that his intentions on this visit were to find new ideas for a future painting featuring the area. The Marquis was evidently comfortable with the proposals suggested by Landseer, but there is no evidence of more works produced there.

As with other forests, Blackmount gained acclaim during the nineteenth century by using deer for display purposes. In 1852, Peter Robertson sent two stags' heads to William Smith, a taxidermist at Dumbarton, for stuffing and preservation. After finishing the job, Smith wished to know how and when they were to be sent. Smith had been anxious to dispatch them since many specimens of natural history in his possession were already taking up his space.<sup>118</sup> Using parts of deer for display was not confined to their heads, as evidence suggests skins from those in the Blackmount could be used to make sporrans. In February 1860, James Wyllie requested that some hinds be killed for this purpose, but Peter Robertson suggested that this was not a good time of year since the hair would fall off the skins. Wyllie was informed that better sporrans would only come from hinds that were in good condition.<sup>119</sup> Thus, Robertson also held an unusual role as an expert adviser as to the best use of the landlord's deerskins, during a time when Highland dress was

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<sup>117</sup> NAS, NRAS 2238: (TD 80/84/46/2 - 12<sup>th</sup> August 1852; TD 80/84/46/3 - 2<sup>nd</sup> September 1852), Letters of correspondence between Sir Edwin Landseer and the second Marquis of Breadalbane.

<sup>118</sup> NAS, GD 112/74/132/14 – William Smith at Dumbarton, to Peter Robertson at Forest Lodge, Blackmount, (29<sup>th</sup> December 1852). He charged 15 shillings for each head and 1s 6d for their carriage.

<sup>119</sup> NAS, GD 112/16/9/1/14 – Peter Robertson at Forest Lodge to James Wyllie, (23<sup>rd</sup> February 1860).

particularly popular.

The vicinity was not only renowned for its association with deer, as during this period salmon are known to have attracted angling sportsmen to the Glenorchy and Dalmally areas, possibly as a source of estate income. Numbers of salmon taken from the River Awe near Taynuilt were 6000 in 1843 and 3500 in 1845. Duncan Dewar reported that an estimated one third of these were taken with nets, that salmon averaged 14lb each, and the grilse averaged five to six pounds. The River Orchy produced good catches in September 1846, when it was noted that seven salmon were taken from the foot of the river, with one fish weighing 25lb.<sup>120</sup> An individual called G.K. Wathen, residing at Inveroran Inn, wrote to Lord Breadalbane also that year on his 'wishes to amuse himself by fishing in the Orchy'.<sup>121</sup> This evidence suggests that other forms of sport may have contributed to the acclaim that Blackmount enjoyed from the 1840s.

Fishing was often a matter of dependability on available stock. In 1852, Lord Spencer wrote to the Marquis of Breadalbane complaining of poor catches of salmon on the River Awe. He was consequently invited up to the Forest to try some fishing on the River Orchy. A few days later he fished the pools between the Bridge of Orchy and Loch Tulla before

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<sup>120</sup> NAS, GD 112/74/206 – Duncan Dewar, Ground Officer for Glenorchy, (30<sup>th</sup> September 1845; 10<sup>th</sup> September 1846).

<sup>121</sup> NAS, GD 112/74/50 – G.K. Wathen at Inveroran, Black Mount, to Lord Breadalbane, (1846).



reaching the Forest House for dinner with Lord and Lady Breadalbane.<sup>122</sup> During the following year Dewar reported that many salmon were seen going up the Awe, and an account of the numbers including grilse killed there amounted to 60. This figure would have been much higher had the river been in better condition in July 1853.<sup>123</sup> Dewar reported that good numbers of salmon were spotted on River Orchy during the season of 1854; approximately 40-50 of the fish were killed by sportsmen residing at Dalmally Inn. He also made arrangements for Sir Alexander to fish on the pools above Bridge of Orchy.<sup>124</sup>

Sports such as fishing, and others in the area may have attracted individuals to hunt for deer. Lord Spencer had certainly done so when he returned to Blackmount Forest in 1856 during which time he shot nine harts there. Other individuals who visited that year included Lord Cardigan, the Marquis of Londonderry, and the Duke of Manchester.<sup>125</sup> Coincidentally, Blackmount was being advertised to the British aristocracy after Sir Alexander Campbell of Barcaldine had resigned; thus, it may have been the landlord's policy to encourage their visits with the expectation that one of them would eventually lease it wholesale. This is indeed what happened in 1863 when Lord Dudley took Blackmount into his management.

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<sup>122</sup> Correspondence from Lord Spencer to Lord and Lady Breadalbane, (25<sup>th</sup> July 1852, 28<sup>th</sup> July 1852).

<sup>123</sup> NAS, GD 112/74/208 – Duncan Dewar, Ground Officer for Glenorchy, (19<sup>th</sup> July 1853, 3<sup>rd</sup> October 1853).

<sup>124</sup> NAS, GD 112/74/209 – Duncan Dewar, Ground Officer for Glenorchy, (15<sup>th</sup> June 1854).

<sup>125</sup> NAS, GD 170/3022/3/1 – Peter Robertson at Forest Lodge, to Sir Alexander Campbell, (29<sup>th</sup> September 1856).

The Marquis of Breadalbane attracted his circle of aristocratic friends to Blackmount by gifting them game from there. In December 1852, Peter Robertson had informed Sir Alexander Campbell: 'I have forwarded a splendid harrier to the Queen and seven brace of ptarmigan, I have also sent a good hind to Mr Currie and one to Mr Davidson'.<sup>126</sup> Presumably the game was gifted on the Marquis's instructions. He had given gifts of deer, grouse and capercaillies to Queen Victoria for Christmas presents in 1855.<sup>127</sup> For the second Marquis, giving produce in this way to Her Majesty was obviously a means of displaying his prestige, as a large Scottish landowner, possibly in return for retaining political power. These actions also indicated his ability to dispose of game without complaining about losses incurred, and suggest that the Forest continued to be particularly productive in deer numbers. In December 1854, over 5000 deer were counted in the Forest's vicinity; this shows a significant rise from January 1845 when 2661 were observed.<sup>128</sup>

Peter Robertson provided details on numbers of harts shot at Blackmount during the 1857 season, showing that recent high numbers of deer had allowed a mass cull of 85 of them.<sup>129</sup> The period commenced from 12<sup>th</sup> September and lasted until 14<sup>th</sup> October; however a few deer were shot on August 12<sup>th</sup> and September 4<sup>th</sup> that year. The Marquis of Breadalbane himself shot 37 harts, indicating his continual presence in

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<sup>126</sup> NAS, GD 112/74/183/2 – Peter Robertson, Forest Lodge to Sir Alexander Campbell, (28<sup>th</sup> December 1852).

<sup>127</sup> NAS, GD 170/3000/37 – Lord Breadalbane to Sir Alexander Campbell, (5<sup>th</sup> December, 1855).

<sup>128</sup> See Appendices 2/4 and 2/5; NAS, GD 112/74/188 – Lists of counting deer at Blackmount (28<sup>th</sup> December 1854).

<sup>129</sup> See Appendix 4.

hosting several guests on the hills. Robertson felt that this season was better in terms of deer weight, averaging 13 stones and 5lbs, since in the previous year they averaged 3lb. lighter. He also considered them to have been in a better condition in 1857 and was surprised to learn that only a few of the best harts had been killed that season. Robertson believed that some deer in the Forest weighed over 20 stones. None that size were actually shot during this period, the nearest being a few weighing over 18 stones shot by the Marquis himself and Lord Gifford.<sup>130</sup> The list gives details of locations where deer were shot and individuals involved, many of who were aristocrats. During that year rental was also generated from Lord Elcho, Lord Loughborough, Lord Ward, Lord Opulston, Lord Cork, Lord Powerscourt and Earl Spencer.<sup>131</sup> That particular year provides clear evidence of the Marquis's standing as host at Blackmount to entertain his friends.

The 1857 list shows that deer had been carefully monitored, so that those shot did not upset the quality and quantity of remaining stocks. This policy reaped long-term productive dividends and perpetuated the area's acclaim. Hence, by 1860, Peter Robertson suggested his awareness of an achievement over many years at making Blackmount famous as a sporting estate: 'I think there is not a forest in Scotland that has such a stock of harts as we have at present'.<sup>132</sup> How Robertson knew this is unknown, but he must have been in communication with employees in

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<sup>130</sup> NAS, GD 112/14/12/9/27- List, by Peter Robertson, of harts shot at Blackmount, (17<sup>th</sup> October 1857).

<sup>131</sup> Orr, *Deer Forests*, 31: Source NAS, GD 112/14/12.

<sup>132</sup> NAS, GD 112/16/9/1/14 – Peter Robertson at Forest Lodge, to James Wyllie, (23<sup>rd</sup> February 1860).

other forests to be confident in making such a statement. This represents a zenith in the Forest's history in terms of its recognition as a suitable habitat for deer, and it was a stage that had been achieved by the influences of human activity. In 1854, Robertson compared the weather conditions in the Forest with the rest of the country: 'I suppose that it is not so bad in any other part of Scotland as the Black Mount'.<sup>133</sup> His assumption on the extremes of inclement climate throughout the country was again presumably based on information given from foresters in other estates. This statement also vindicated the area's suitability as a deer forest for sportsmen.

Peter Robertson was described by John Colquhoun as a 'model Highland deer-stalker', but that it had affected his health and contributed to his death in 1877. In 1845, Colquhoun was hosted by Robertson who provided anecdotal stories on hunting in the area, and on to natural history. The writer particularly regarded Robertson with admiration:

'Many a happy day I have passed with him, wandering over the rugged hills and wild corries, or by the lonely lochans of the Black Mount Forest'.<sup>134</sup>

Robertson was a keen representative in giving Blackmount an established reputation amongst sporting correspondents as shown throughout his career. He regularly hosted visitors to the Forest during his time there.

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<sup>133</sup> NAS, GD 112/74/195/20-1 – Peter Robertson, Forest Lodge, to Sir Alexander Campbell, (14<sup>th</sup> December 1854).

<sup>134</sup> John Colquhoun, *The Moor and the Loch*, II, (Edinburgh & London, 1878), 10-11.

### Conclusion

Two stages, maturity and established reputation headline the importance of Blackmount Forest in becoming a particularly well-known Highland 'sporting estate' by the mid-nineteenth century. Its period of maturity, emerging when the second Marquis inherited his title and estates, witnessed fundamental restructuring of local management practices. A striking feature evident within the Forest was the ability to maintain sheep stocks there whilst deer numbers increased considerably. This was made possible by the diligence of numerous employees and estate officials. The Marquis provided necessary finances on projects of improvement, administered by Sir Alexander Campbell and James Wyllie, the Perthshire factor. Both of these individuals were directly involved in managing Blackmount, and it appears that Wyllie took some of Barcaldine's responsibilities when he was absent.

Both Peter Robertson and Duncan Dewar were particularly important players for their knowledge and ability to manage local affairs, both modifying the land and improving it. However, there were evident tensions with tenants in the area, unless they were actively involved at Blackmount. The Forest employees were being moved around frequently depending on local circumstances, or when problems arose. Their performance in achieving the Forest's maturity was directly monitored by the factor and Sir Alexander Campbell, who frequently communicated with the second Marquis on local developments 'on the ground'. The landlord may have been unaware of the significant input by those who

made the Forest succeed, especially Robertson. But even the head forester may have been taking credit from those below him, as he rarely mentioned their achievements.

Nevertheless, Blackmount's established reputation as a model for other forests emerged from the interest it generated among the British aristocracy, enhanced by Sir Edwin Landseer. It became the embodiment of a sportsman's domain and an artist's subject. Even local employees appear to have been relatively contented with their working environment, and would have been aware of the area's rising fame. Although, there are no apparent references evident of other forests attempting to mirror developments at Blackmount, its reputation was perpetuated by the paintings of Landseer and books by Scrope.<sup>135</sup> This phase was undoubtedly important and beneficial for the second Marquis of Breadalbane, but in achieving it he was faced with a range of external challenges that form the basis of discussion hereafter.

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<sup>135</sup> Chapter 5 provides several examples of the 'fame' that Blackmount developed from the 1850s.

## Chapter 4

### Consequences of Forest Formation at Blackmount, c.1820 - 1850

In previous chapters we have discussed the origination, formation and development of Blackmount Forest, along with an assessment of its resulting maturity and established reputation. Here we shall consider the challenges it faced, and how external social, economic and legal issues affected it during the first half of the nineteenth century. Its very existence from 1820, resulted in several court cases emerging over the next thirty years, the documentation of which is extensive.<sup>1</sup> We shall question reasons for emerging contention between various parties. Several types of challenge are seen in estate correspondence relating to Blackmount, but these outside influences may have inadvertently benefited the Forest in the long term. Three main themes are considered here. First there was the problem of poaching in and around Blackmount Forest. Thereafter we consider its relationship with neighbouring estates, especially disputes over land use. Finally, we shall examine challenges with wider economic activities, particularly the landlord's dispute with those involved in the drovers' trade.

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<sup>1</sup> The Breadalbane Collection in the National Archives of Scotland holds significant collections of correspondence and legal papers with regard to the external challenges concerning Blackmount Forest. NAS, GD 112/16/11/5, dating to 1830, contains notes on the activities of poachers from Glencoe. NAS, GD 112/13/1/3 contains legal documentation on the dispute between the Earl of Breadalbane and the trustees of the late Campbell of Monzie regarding the marches of the hill called Stob Coir' an Albannaich above Glen Etive.

From 1845, there are Court of Session and local estate records dealing with the drovers' dispute against the Marquis of Breadalbane, on the drove road passing through Blackmount Forest.

The poaching challenge clearly highlights tensions existing between what landlords saw as legal ownership of game within estates, against tenants and neighbours who saw the practice as being morally acceptable. The problems with poaching in and around the Blackmount Forest, was a phenomenon similarly faced by other estates during the nineteenth century. Research has shown that landowners, in efforts to reform their old forests, were faced with deer poaching by nearby resident populations.<sup>2</sup> Generally, it was the responsibility of individual landowners to reduce the problem. However, localised early experiences of this problem at Blackmount ensured that organised measures were taken to curb it. The landlord appeared to be reactive rather than proactive in his methods of dealing with poaching in the Forest, but in the longer term the problem was significantly reduced.

The second Marquis also encountered several confrontations with neighbouring landlords, regarding incidents of trespass and ownership of land, resulting in the emergence of complex legal cases. These by no means affected Blackmount alone, as during the nineteenth century other landowners used the courts by attempting to defend their policies on land use and access. For example in 1847, employees working on behalf of the Duke of Atholl attempted to prevent a group of scientists from entering Glen Tilt Forest; this led to a court case over access which the Duke lost.<sup>3</sup> The period was one in which landlords could use exclusive legal institutions, especially the House of Lords, to protect their interests,

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<sup>2</sup> Smith: 'Changing deer numbers', 91.

<sup>3</sup> Orr, *Deer Forests*, 58; W. McCombie Smith, *Men or Deer in the Scottish Glens*, 33.



especially those that affected them economically.

Disputes, and litigation in the courts often proved costly to contending parties; however they served as means of re-establishing old laws and creating new ones. There were frequent disputes between the second Marquis of Breadalbane and Archibald Campbell of Monzie. Both landlords were distantly related, but their common interests in using land as deer forests resulted in tension between the two from c.1820. Blackmount Forest marched on the north in Glen Etive with Monzie's estate, which included the Forest of Buachaille Etive. Neither landlord had complete control on deer movement between these forests. After General Alexander Campbell of Monzie's death the Marquis entered into a dispute with Monzie's trustees over the marches of Stob Coir' an Albannaich, situated south of Glen Etive, within Blackmount Forest.<sup>4</sup> Evidence of tensions existing between both estates during this period is significant, a phenomenon that had emerged due to pressures of land use.

In order to analyse these problems it shall be necessary to explore detailed evidence from court proceedings. As we shall see, the dispute between Breadalbane and Monzie's trustees, despite detailed evidence collected from tenants working for both landlords, resulted in them having to accept that they had uncovered a complex and poorly defined march line between their respective estates. Likewise, they were required to concede that deer were not their 'property' once they had

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<sup>4</sup> NAS, GD 112/13/1/3 – 'Papers relating to dispute between Breadalbane and trustees of Campbell of Monzie over marches of hill, Stob Coir' an Albannaich'.

{Hereafter: 'NAS, GD 112/13/1/3: *Marches dispute, Breadalbane versus Monzie*'.}

entered into one or the other's land, and no law existed to clarify either's argument. The second Marquis rigorously manipulated the evidence by arranging for detailed precognitions from both his tenants, and those who worked for his opponent. Unfortunately, little evidence appears to exist from from the reaction of Monzie's trustees as the case developed.

Contention over land use is seen from the drovers' dispute, developing during the mid-nineteenth century, which also proved to be a significant challenge to the second Marquis of Breadalbane. Drovers appear to have had 'stance rights' up to the 1840s. However the landlord took legal measures to curb this practice because of the pressure it imposed upon his deer forest activities. Cattle dealers from Scotland and England challenged him in the Court of Session, and he responded by appealing to the House of Lords. The extent to which drovers' customary rights existed before then, and the landlord's reaction thereafter, will be discussed. Their dispute is one that emerged over pressures of land use since Blackmount was heavily stocked with sheep and developed into one of the largest Forests in the region. Willie Orr shows trends in deer forest development and sheep farming after 1850, thus it is difficult to draw parallels with his research.<sup>5</sup> Discovering these challenges with those emerging in other estates is complex, and requires further research. However, the second Marquis of Breadalbane had himself created the dispute with Highland drovers.

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<sup>5</sup> Orr, *Deer Forests*.

### The Poaching Challenge

Laws relating to forests and poaching of game within them, prior to the nineteenth century, have already been discussed. During the mid-eighteenth century it appears that several old game laws were updated to serve the needs of landlords and gamekeepers, but they were involved primarily in protecting game birds, not deer.<sup>6</sup> The lull in forest activities in Highland estates during the later eighteenth century may account for a lack of specifically defined laws against poaching within deer forests when they re-emerged during the nineteenth century; landlords made prosecutions, notwithstanding the ambiguities in law regarding hunting deer. Willie Orr mentions some incidents leading to the Day Trespass Act of 1832. Individuals found to be in pursuit of game could thereafter be prosecuted; but other parliamentary acts, including the Night Poaching Act of 1828, and the Poaching Prevention Act of 1862, did not specify deer within the definition of game poaching.<sup>7</sup>

Poaching of deer appeared to be traditionally a normal occurrence in and around Blackmount before measures were taken to curb it. John Colquhoun noted that one method the poachers adopted involved fastening spears pointed upwards in mossy holes. Stags used these as baths during the summer and autumn at Blackmount; they would roll around in them to cool themselves, but in the poachers' holes the stags

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<sup>6</sup> NAS, R.H.2/5/11, 'Abstracts of the Scots Game Laws, 1750 & Act for the better preservation of the game in that part of Great Britain called Scotland', 44, 45-48.

<sup>7</sup> Orr, *Deer Forests*, 55.

would become impaled by hidden spears.<sup>8</sup> This poaching method was accounted some 50 years after Forest formation. We cannot rule out the possibility that the practice had taken place during its early years; it was an advantageous technique, to avoid the noise of guns being fired. Other ways of hunting during the first decade of the nineteenth century involved chasing deer from islands on the numerous lochs on Rannoch Moor, or pursuing them across ice in winter.<sup>9</sup> However, evidence of these methods being applied by poachers is difficult to find.

Assessing poaching incidents requires identification of the motives and ideologies of those involved. The northern marches of Blackmount Forest were particularly vulnerable to poachers, indicating an awareness of the foresters' difficulties in protecting it. Furthermore, the estate's response to this problem is seen in policies and strategies that employees adopted over time. Several instances, when employees and tenants in Blackmount were themselves also accused of poaching deer, raises further questions about the attitudes towards the landlord there and his ability to curtail it. Economics also come into the question as the landlord took rather draconian measures to contain poaching activities resulting in significant estate expenditure on employing foresters and watchers within the Forest and around its marches.

Estate correspondence exists on poaching in the bounds of Blackmount Forest after it was reformed in 1820. It appeared that Lord

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<sup>8</sup> John Colquhoun, *The Moor and The Loch containing minute instructions in all Highland sports* Fourth edition enlarged (2 vols), I, (1878), 57.

<sup>9</sup> James Robson, *General View of the Agriculture in the County of Inverness*, (London, 1808), 29.

Glenorchy's apparent lack of involvement with local affairs during three years of absence, between 1824-27, resulted in the Forest being affected by this. Problems with wandering goats in the northern marches have already been discussed; however, the area was since being affected by poachers encroaching upon it. Lord Glenorchy had been particularly concerned at the lack of watch against them, after little game had been observed there in autumn 1827. He then demanded a much stricter watch on the northern marches, or otherwise: 'it was not worthwhile as a forest at all'. The factor, Campbell of Rockhill, was advised that two watchers should reside at Kingshouse, and the innkeeper there was to be on the alert for any trespassers.<sup>10</sup> This inn was therefore used also as a lookout against poachers entering upon the Forest's northern approaches.

Poachers from Glencoe had been in the area several times during 1827, resulting in the landlord's desire to employ more effective ways of stopping them. Neighbouring estates similarly endured local poaching; for example D. Campbell of Dalness also received reports of shooting having been heard by his shepherds. Lord Glenorchy intended that Kingshouse Inn should become part of the Forest and a forester or keeper be stationed there, as it was, he considered, 'the most dangerous quarter'. He believed that the Glencoe poachers were determined to drive deer out; thus, it could only be protected by a vigilant watcher or keeper based at the inn.<sup>11</sup> The landlord noted however that Forest expansion itself was a

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<sup>10</sup> NAS, GD 112/16/9/1/3: *Blackmount Forest formation* - letter XII, (16<sup>th</sup> October 1827).

<sup>11</sup> NAS, GD 112/16/9/1/3: *Blackmount Forest formation* - letter XII, (16<sup>th</sup> October 1827); letter XIII, (14<sup>th</sup> December 1827).

factor in attracting ‘defiant’ poachers from Glencoe and Rannoch.<sup>12</sup> To curb this involved employing more men, thus increasing costs. In 1829, a lease for Kingshouse involved obligations by the tenant to keep a lookout for ‘suspicious’ people in the area.<sup>13</sup> Presumably, the landlord saw this inn as place where intelligence on poaching activities could be gathered; however, he also depended on the trust of his tenants.

In June 1830, a memorandum noted recent events of poaching by some Glencoe men, and the Blackmount keepers suspected that they had made occasional depredations by entering the Forest to kill deer. Despite endeavours to prevent this, detection of anyone actually killing deer or other game there was particularly difficult. Incidents occurred however where the foresters had discovered trespassers carrying guns without reasonable excuses for being there. In the previous September three poachers had been spotted entering the Forest with guns, and they later admitted to a forester their intention of shooting deer. Even after an interdict was issued by the county sheriff, they could not be prosecuted since they were not actually seen shooting deer, or with dogs.<sup>14</sup> These problems were eventually tackled after more watchers were employed to make regular patrols around Blackmount.

In March 1830 one of this trio, John Stewart of Achtriochtan in Glencoe, returned to the Forest with two other accomplices. One of his companions, McIntyre, in pursuit of a deer, was killed after falling down

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<sup>12</sup> NAS, GD 112/16/9/1/3: *Blackmount Forest formation* - letter XIV, (27<sup>th</sup> December 1827).

<sup>13</sup> NAS, GD 112/14/13/9: Copy offer by John Fletcher, for Kingshouse Inn, (19<sup>th</sup> March 1829).

<sup>14</sup> NAS, GD 112/16/11/5: Memoir for the Right Honorable Earl of Breadalbane, (5<sup>th</sup> June 1830).

a precipice in Fionn Ghleann.<sup>15</sup> On the following morning the remaining two poachers returned with a number of other Glencoe men, and they carried the body away from the foot of the precipice.<sup>16</sup> This however was not the end of the matter, as Peter Young was aware of suspicious events having occurred:

Please inform his Lordships that a poacher from Glencoe was killed in the Forest about a fortnight ago by falling over a rock in Finglen near Fletcher's place. He and some others had got into the Forest for the purpose of killing deer, I suppose and his companions say that he slid upon a wrath of snow and was precipitated over the rock, but there are some suspicions that he was shot by one of his companions whether by accident or design it is not certain as it is only from themselves that the truth can be got. Campbell of Rockhill will be inquiring into this matter I suppose, but I have not heard anything from the Forest since the accident happened.<sup>17</sup>

The poacher may have been shot in an attempt to make it look as though this had been done by one of the foresters. Several years later William Scrope mentioned the incident as having taken place in the centre of the Forest, in winter, when the unfortunate individual lost his footing after falling over a rock.<sup>18</sup> This indicates that the event was significant, being still remembered over 50 years later. Peter Robertson, who was head forester during much of this time, is likely to have passed such information on to Scrope.

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<sup>15</sup> The placename 'Fionn Ghleann' is located at NN228509, but the incident's exact location is unknown.

<sup>16</sup> NAS, GD 112/16/11/5: Memoir for the Right Honorable Earl of Breadalbane, (5<sup>th</sup> June 1830).

<sup>17</sup> NAS, GD 112/14/13/6/31: Peter Young to Mr Davidson W.S., (22<sup>nd</sup> March 1830).

<sup>18</sup> Scrope, *Days of Deer Stalking*, 309.

Another incident was reported a few months after the poacher's death. One of the foresters spotted two men crossing the River Etive from Dalness. He immediately pursued them and on getting closer was threatened at gunpoint.<sup>19</sup> After these events, Lord Glenorchy instructed his factor that Forest trespassers were to be prosecuted 'as rigorously as the law permits'. Lord Glenorchy saw these threats as justification for imposing severe penalties upon those caught; trespassers who carried guns through Blackmount without a licence would be liable to prosecution. One of the tenants, (Alan?) McNicol was awarded £1 for his contribution during 1830, presumably for catching intruders. The other foresters were to receive similar rewards on detection of any future poachers.<sup>20</sup> Essentially, the landlord often depended on genuine information from his tenants and employees, and it appears that he could only achieve this by offering such payments.

During June 1830, a memoir for the landlord stated that heavy damages could not be made, after more incidences of trespassing in Blackmount. Thus, questions were raised about the legality of certain seventeenth-century Acts of Parliament regarding game preservation, and may have motivated changes in legislation for other Scottish estates. It was then believed that old acts relating to shooting and hunting 'in their natural state' were 'entirely desolate'.<sup>21</sup> Laws relating to poaching and trespass were being reformed in the courts. The Night Poaching Act,

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<sup>19</sup> NAS, GD 112/16/11/5: Memoir for the Right Honourable Earl of Breadalbane, (5<sup>th</sup> June 1830).

<sup>20</sup> NAS, GD 112/16/9/1/3: *Blackmount Forest formation* - letter XX, (June 17<sup>th</sup> 1830).

<sup>21</sup> NAS, GD 112/16/11/5: Memoir for the Right Honourable Earl of Breadalbane, (5<sup>th</sup> June 1830).



which had been recently implemented by 1828, could not always be used as a means of prosecuting trespassers. Only by 1832 did the Day Trespass Act allow more power to landlords in this respect, but this law did not guarantee that deer would not be disturbed on an estate. It stated that if an individual were in pursuit of game, a witness would have to provide evidence for a successful prosecution; a fine of £2 was expected in such a case.<sup>22</sup> The legal position with poaching was essentially a reactive response to incidents that had emerged, and possibly even those at Blackmount.

Also in 1830, Lord Glenorchy adopted various strategies on the ground to detect poachers, and one means of containing them was by instructing Forest employees to perform daily watches on the Blackmount marches. Alan McNicol was to be given charge of the march from Blaraven to Alltchaorunn, and he would meet Robert McNaughton daily on the tops. Donald Duff and D. Campbell were to likewise report with each other in order to deter poachers and trespassers on the Glen Etive side. These two did not however get on together, so the landowner suggested that changes be made if their watch of the Forest did not work. Each was to take turns on moonlit nights, when there was the least danger of poachers.<sup>23</sup> Presumably, the ‘danger’ element was related to recent incidents surrounding the Glencoe poacher’s death or the threats others made with guns towards foresters.

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<sup>22</sup> Orr, *Deer Forests*, 55-56.

<sup>23</sup> NAS, GD 112/16/9/1/3: *Blackmount Forest formation* - letter XX, (June 17<sup>th</sup> 1830).

Another strategy involved the adoption of a flag signalling system on the hills, but it is unclear if this was actually implemented. A signal in the shape of a cross or flag, placed on one of the highest hills during times of trouble, was seen as a quick way of attracting the attention of other foresters. This would be erected on one of the prominent tops, perhaps Clach Leathad or its ridge to the east, Sron nam Forsair, to alert those on the south side, and Creise above Fionn Ghleann for the north. It was only to be raised when there were poachers or other suspicious happenings in the Forest. Lord Glenorchy predicted this signal would be of much service, but he was open to alternative suggestions from his foresters at Blackmount.<sup>24</sup> Thus, the landlord had relied on the experiences of his employees, in using an effective communication system, to catch poachers.

One compelling challenge was that involving poaching being suspected amongst tenants. In February 1832 there were allegations of this having taken place in the eastern part of the Forest. Archibald Clark, shepherd in Goisten of Barravurich, was accused of poaching, but claimed his innocence. Peter Robertson had seen Clark with an old gun that the shepherd claimed was used for lighting fires at his house, as there was no other dwelling within three miles. He asserted that he had never purchased any lead, but kept powder in his house. Clark also stated that he took considerable care in turning and keeping deer within the Forest bounds. A few months later, Donald Campbell, tenant of

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<sup>24</sup> *ibid*; Clach Leathad is situated at OSGR - NN240493; Creise is situated at OSGR - NN240509.

Drumliart, declared he had neither seen nor heard of any ‘molestation of game’ in Glenorchy district during the last six months, other than one shot he heard to the south of Drumliart at Gleann Fuar.<sup>25</sup> This evidence shows that poaching activities may have existed in the southern part of the Forest, but gathering information on it was difficult.

In March 1847, Peter Robertson suspected local poaching after hearing some shots on Arichastlich Hill above Glenorchy, and spied on an individual whom he believed to be Alexander McNicol, a shepherd at Arichastlich:

As he was going with his plaid very low and loose about him, I imagined he had a gun under it...I saw him in the act of crawling on his knees in order to get a shot at something he had in sight, leaving his plaid and dog behind him some distance, but being disappointed with his shot. By the time I saw his gun visible enough and knew himself to be the person I suspected and also his dog.

The shepherd concealed his gun when Robertson came closer, and quickly made his way to Arichastlich House, by which time the gun had been hidden, but on being confronted by Robertson he denied having one. Robertson was convinced that McNicol was guilty of poaching, and suggested he be removed from the neighbourhood of the Forest.<sup>26</sup> Thus, not all poaching incidents were by individuals from elsewhere, as the landlord also faced problems with trusting some of his tenants.

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<sup>25</sup> NAS, GD 112/16/10/5/33: Representation by Archibald Clark, (24<sup>th</sup> February 1832).

<sup>26</sup> NAS, GD 112/74/182/6: Peter Robertson to Sir Alexander Campbell of Barcaldine, (1<sup>st</sup> March 1847).

The landlord also faced difficulties from some tenants who rented land adjacent to the Forest, particularly Thomas Walters, the tenant of Barravurich Farm between 1825 and 1834.<sup>27</sup> The factor, Duncan Campbell, prosecuted friends of Walters who had been poaching fish from a loch, presumably Loch Tulla, and Lord Glenorchy had put pike in it to deter them. Walters was to be warned that if he did not become a 'good neighbour' to the Forest, then he could not remain as an estate tenant.<sup>28</sup> This was just one of the challenges faced by Lord Glenorchy; tenants such as Walters were influential when the landowner depended on income from them.

There were few accounts of poaching occurring locally during the next 15 years at Blackmount, but it still existed within the northern marches. In 1843, Peter Robertson reported his opinions on the area after Archibald MacIntyre, a forester formerly at Kingshouse, was moved elsewhere:

It is my opinion that one man will never be able to watch it properly, and protect it from poachers, particularly that part between Loch Lydeon and Kingshouse. All those grounds that march with the Marquess' Forest are much exposed to poachers, also when the drovers will be coming through the Forest they will take a man constantly to look after them, while another should be on the alert against trespassing both on the east and west of Kingshouse, I mean towards Finglen and Cruach of Rannoch.

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<sup>27</sup> NAS, GD 112/9/3/4/9; GD 112/9/3/4/10; GD 112/9/3/4/12: rentals (1825 to 1834).

<sup>28</sup> NAS, GD 112/16/9/1/3: *Blackmount Forest formation* - letter XIX, (November 8<sup>th</sup> 1829); letter XX (June 17<sup>th</sup> 1830); see also chapter 2, p.121, 146-147.

Robertson suggested that an additional forester should be placed in the area before the 12<sup>th</sup> August. Likewise, James Wyllie stated the need for another forester ‘to attend the droves’ for the next two or three months.<sup>29</sup> The factor was seemingly reacting to Robertson’s advice and knowledge of the area. Concern about activities of drovers may have been purely due to their cattle possibly transgressing and grazing in the Forest, but it may also have arisen from the fear that some of the drovers were also poachers.

In 1848, several of the foresters, including Peter Robertson, were to be given a ‘stirring up’ for their lack of watch against poachers. Alexander Campbell of Barcaldine admitted that no number of foresters could entirely prevent poaching at Blackmount, but in the majority of cases they ought to be able to apprehend suspects. The foresters and shepherds were regularly out on the watch, and Barcaldine did not believe that much improvement could be made to the existing watch system. However, he had the Forest partitioned into smaller beats so that each of the foresters could carefully observe their respective portions.<sup>30</sup> This evidence suggests that poaching still caused difficulties even 30 years after Blackmount Forest came into formation, and that the landlord was being specifically targeted for his rather large deer forest scheme.

In some respects, poaching was a way of life for individuals in the

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<sup>29</sup> NAS: GD 112/74/78/42 - Copy, Report Peter Robertson to James Wyllie, Drumliart, (22<sup>nd</sup> July 1843); GD 112/74/78/43 - James Wyllie to Marquis of Breadalbane, (27<sup>th</sup> July 1843).

<sup>30</sup> NAS, GD 170/3000/61/2: Sir Alexander Campbell of Barcaldine to the Earl of Breadalbane, (10<sup>th</sup> January 1848).

locality and completely eradicating it would have posed a significant challenge for the Campbells of Breadalbane. Presumably many locals may have seen the practice as a moral right and not as a criminal activity; this attitude was presumably related to wider politics and historical tensions. The upward trend in the formation of commercial forests in the later nineteenth century led to continuing problems with poaching. General criticism of deer forests by individuals such as Alexander Robertson, especially his encouragement of poaching, later exacerbated the challenges for landlords.<sup>31</sup> However, according to Horatio Ross, poaching was almost eradicated by the 1870s with an extensive use of watchers on estates.<sup>32</sup> Whether this scenario then still existed at Blackmount, forms the basis of later discussion.<sup>33</sup>

### Challenges with other landlords

Lord Glenorchy appears to have tackled poaching challenges relatively well during earlier periods, but after becoming the Marquis of Breadalbane he encountered problems with proprietors who owned lands which marched with the north of Blackmount Forest. A principal source of contention arose when forests existed alongside one another, as deer could often move freely from one to the other, and landlords could not stop healthy deer being shot after they crossed their marches. Campbell of Monzie, who held the adjacent estate at Dalness in Glen Etive,

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<sup>31</sup> Alexander Robertson, *Our Deer Forests: Lecture to the Highland Economic Society*, (London 1867).

<sup>32</sup> Orr, *Deer Forests*, 56-57; Game Law Commission, Q5, 147; see also chapter 5.

<sup>33</sup> See chapter 5.

particularly benefited when deer moved north from Blackmount during cold periods.<sup>34</sup> MacDougall of Lunga likewise posed a problem when rumours of his plans to form a deer forest at Blackcorries, in West Rannoch, were being circulated in the 1840s.<sup>35</sup> The dispute between the Marquis of Breadalbane and Campbell of Monzie over the marches of Stob Coir' an Albannaich originated as a petty affair, but evolved into intense litigation over landownership, with tenants from both sides being drawn into the debate.

It has already been observed that Monzie had legal claim to the Royal Forest of Buachaille Etive, on the north side of upper Glen Etive.<sup>36</sup> When plans for setting up Blackmount Forest were being made from 1819, Lord Glenorchy appointed an individual called Menzies to inform him of any events taking place in the Royal Forest, presumably to gain intelligence on Lord Monzie. The following summer Menzies was told to observe Monzie's actions at Dalness.<sup>37</sup> However, between 1820-40 there is little mention of Campbell of Monzie directly interfering with activities at Blackmount. By c.1830, as we have seen, poaching from some Glencoe men posed problems for both landlords who worked towards defeating it.

By 1834, Monzie intended to form a forest at Coileitir; the fact that

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<sup>34</sup> See p.245; However in 1832 the proprietor of Dalness was Coll McDonald.

<sup>35</sup> NAS, GD 112/18/3: Peter Robertson to Sir Alexander Campbell; his correspondence between February and May in 1844 shows that MacDougall of Lunga's proposals were being closely monitored.

<sup>36</sup> See chapter 2, p.116.

<sup>37</sup> NAS, GD 112/16/9/1/3: *Blackmount Forest Formation* – Letter I, (21<sup>st</sup> December 1819); Letter II, (1<sup>st</sup> August 1820).

the second Marquis inherited the Breadalbane estates that year may be purely coincidental. James Wyllie, on probably his first visit to Blackmount, then told the Marquis that a dyke was necessary between Coileitir and Glenceitlein up to the ridge above these farms. He was sceptical about extending a fence for nine miles along the ridge itself, since it was exposed. The factor also felt that Monzie's plans to convert a portion of land there to a forest were foolish:

I think a very short time will convince how ill chosen Coiletter is for a deer forest, indeed hope he will yet be dissuaded from the project. Coiletter is very narrow at the only part where deer are likely to haunt, so that a shot fired, or the least noise, upon the marches, would prevent them ever resting upon it.<sup>38</sup>

This was the first indication of possible contention between both landlords. Both the factor and the Marquis were clearly aware of numerous implications this posed for Blackmount Forest, which nearly surrounded Monzie's lands at Coileitir. Wyllie, who appeared to propose constructing the dyke as a matter of urgency, presumably knew that Lord Monzie was going to go ahead with his plans in any case.

The actual beginning of the marches dispute can be traced to November 1840 when Peter Robertson told James Wyllie that Campbell of Monzie's men and their dogs had recently encroached upon Blackmount. Donald Duff, the tenant at Alltchaorunn, spotted Lord Monzie's dogs crossing the River Etive in pursuit of deer, and he

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<sup>38</sup> NAS, GD 112/74/76/32: James Wyllie at Bolfracks to the Marquis of Breadalbane, (14<sup>th</sup> July 1834).



reported that they chased a hart and a hind up Fionn Ghleann. Duff was unable to stop the dogs on their return to Glen Etive where Monzie's men waited. In order to prevent this incident from recurring, Robertson suggested the construction of a forester's dwelling at the foot of Fionn Ghleann where it met with Glen Etive.<sup>39</sup> Knowledge of physical encroachment by Monzie's foresters, whether or not it was happening already, resulted in a breakdown in amicable relations between the two landlords thereafter.

Peter Robertson, as head forester, also spent much of his time observing Lord Monzie's policy of deer culling and management. In November 1840, he told Sir Alexander Campbell that Monzie had reportedly shot seven deer, both young and old, on his own lands at Dalness and Coileitir.<sup>40</sup> Again in November 1841, Robertson reported that the north side of the Forest was being closely watched, since Lord Monzie was lately shooting many deer in Dalness. He had also spotted some of Monzie's men and their dogs killing some deer in the locality of Coileitir.<sup>41</sup> In February 1843, Robertson was informed that Monzie's servant was sent from Dalness to Coileitir to kill deer for the other servants and tenants.<sup>42</sup> Clearly, Robertson was particularly concerned about movements of deer into the adjacent forest, as he had no control over what happened to them there. The evidence also suggests that Dalness was being used as a base for Lord Monzie's activities.

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<sup>39</sup> NAS, GD 112/16/10/5/36: Peter Robertson, Forest report – (3<sup>rd</sup> November 1840); see ch 3, p.146.

<sup>40</sup> NAS, GD 112/16/10/5/36: Peter Robertson, Forest report – (3<sup>rd</sup> November 1840).

<sup>41</sup> NAS, GD 112/16/9/1/2: Copy, Report from Peter Robertson, Drumliart (18<sup>th</sup> November 1841).

<sup>42</sup> NAS, GD 112/16/10/4/22: Copy, Report from Peter Robertson, Drumliart, (13<sup>th</sup> February 1843).

Robertson noted periods when the weather played a key role in Monzie's favour, as, in November 1841, snowstorms had driven deer towards Glen Etive, and many crossed the river to Dalness. Robertson was concerned about the numbers that Monzie had recently shot, but few harts of any size were lost. After Monzie had scared all the deer away, Robertson's men took advantage of the situation by driving them over the pass towards Corrie Ba and Beinn Toaig.<sup>43</sup> In February 1843, Robertson reported that the snow was favourable again for Monzie and he believed his men had killed some deer a week previously. Robertson described the practice as 'legal robbery'.<sup>44</sup> This shows that if deer entered an adjacent forest, then Breadalbane had no legal standing or ownership of them, even if he considered them to have been his prized harts. It also shows that claims of 'ownership' of deer worked both ways when they traversed across the land.

In the following December Robertson reported his knowledge of affairs in another neighbouring estate in Glen Etive, indicating that it also posed a challenge, and again referring to Lord Monzie:

McDougall of Lunga has a man constantly watching all the deer that goes across his ground to get them shot. All the deer they shot since 12<sup>th</sup> August was four: two hinds, one calf and a hart; he gives no runs to his dogs. I suppose he is afraid they will come to his lordship's forest. Mr Campbell, Monzie shot 8 hinds in Dalness this winter and I believe he is not to kill any

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<sup>43</sup> NAS, GD 112/16/9/1/2: Copy, Report by Peter Robertson, Drumliart (18<sup>th</sup> November 1841).

<sup>44</sup> NAS, GD 112/16/10/4/22: Copy, Report by Peter Robertson, Drumliart, (13<sup>th</sup> February 1843).

more as he went away about ten days ago.<sup>45</sup>

MacDougall of Lunga held lands in lower Glen Etive, and attempted to set up a forest at Blackcorries during the 1840s, as discussed below.

The correspondence suggests that action and reaction towards deer movements was determined by environmental conditions in the Glen Etive and Blackmount areas. During the 1840s tensions crystallised between both Campbell of Monzie and the Marquis of Breadalbane as a result of incessant disputes over deer. Both landlords had a shared interest in using their lands as forests but they adopted different policies with regard to management of them. Clearly, Blackmount Forest was not enclosed sufficiently enough to avoid deer moving into other estates by its north side, this being of particular concern to the head forester. Evidence on Monzie's view is difficult to find; since his deer forest was smaller he was probably jealous of the neighbouring landlord's extensive property, and saw justification in this for killing deer that occasionally left Blackmount Forest. However, there are problems in that our evidence is biased towards the Breadalbane estate archives, and we cannot assume that Monzie was wrong in the actions he had taken.

Peter Robertson provided Sir Alexander Campbell with regular reports concerning the activities of MacDougall of Lunga in 1844. MacDougall had been frequently hunting for deer on land, northeast and east of Blackmount. In February that year Robertson was aware that

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<sup>45</sup> NAS, GD 112/16/10/4/17: Copy, report by Peter Robertson, Drumliart, (29<sup>th</sup> December 1844).

MacDougall, accompanied by other men and dogs, visited the Black Water vicinity at Black Corries.<sup>46</sup> In April, Robertson ordered McGregor and McIntyre to turn deer away from the north eastern marches since MacDougall of Lunga was with his dogs, on adjacent land at west Rannoch, 'for to get blood'.<sup>47</sup> Three weeks later, Sir Alexander was told that MacDougall's dogs did not get their desired kill during his week long stay at Blackcorries, but planned to move on to Queenshouse.<sup>48</sup> By June, MacDougall's plans to establish a hunting base there is clearly seen:

McDougall of Lunga was up last week looking at the Queen's House for his shooting lodge. I suppose he is to get it repaired, I hope that he will be much deceived with his new forest.<sup>49</sup>

The proposals by MacDougall to pursue in developing a forest there posed a significant challenge to the Marquis of Breadalbane. However, it is unlikely that this transpired, as no other mention was made of MacDougall's activities thereafter.

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<sup>46</sup> NAS, GD 112/18/3/8: Peter Robertson to Sir Alexander Campbell, (19<sup>th</sup> February 1844).

<sup>47</sup> NAS, GD 112/18/3/13: Peter Robertson to Sir Alexander Campbell, (12<sup>th</sup> April 1844).

<sup>48</sup> NAS, GD 112/18/3/15: Peter Robertson to Sir Alexander Campbell, (2<sup>nd</sup> May 1844).

<sup>49</sup> NAS, GD 112/18/3/25: Peter Robertson to Sir Alexander Campbell, (21<sup>st</sup> June 1844).

### The marches' dispute

Tensions between the Marquis of Breadalbane and Campbell of Monzie were deepened by the legal case, developing in 1842, over disputed lands near Glen Etive. The Marquis took legal action against trustees of the late General Alexander Campbell of Monzie, over ownership of a mountain in the area. He claimed that Monzie's tenants were forcing cattle, horses and sheep off part of Stob Coir' an Albannaich above Glen Etive. This mountain was marched on its north side by both estates on either sides of a ridge on Beinn Chaorach.<sup>50</sup> The existence of numerous letters and evidence from 1841-1847 indicates that the second Marquis was determined to win this case, no matter the cost. He went as far as retrieving ancient titles to land there, when this part of Blackmount was the Forest of Corrie Ba. Evidence of land use from the previous century was also collected from surviving tenants.<sup>51</sup> Apparently the dispute over this hill, known today as the 'peak of the Scotsman', otherwise meaning 'peak of the Highlander', was never settled.<sup>52</sup>

At this stage we shall consider the key events surrounding this dispute, as it was clearly a significant contest between the landed interests of Marquis Breadalbane and Campbell of Monzie's trustees. Presumably, the pressures of land use after Blackmount Forest had grown was the reason for the dispute emerging. Alexander Campbell, was heir

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<sup>50</sup> Stob Coir' an Albannaich is located at NN169443; Beinn Chaorach is located at NN158455.

<sup>51</sup> NAS, GD 112/13/1/3: *Marches dispute, Breadalbane versus Monzie*.

<sup>52</sup> The present proprietor, Mr Robin Fleming, attests that a friendly dispute still exists over the marches of this mountain. Correspondence shows that settlement of the case was attempted in 1847, see below, p.259.

to Monzie's Glen Etive estate, but a delay in his inheriting it may have caused the litigation, emerging from his father's trustees, against his neighbour. Both landlords had farms on either side of the disputed ridge, and their situations were a principal source of contention. The Marquis of Breadalbane owned the farm of Glenceitlein, whereas Campbell of Monzie had tenants at Coileitir farm.<sup>53</sup> During 1841-2 the court was presented with evidence from representatives of both parties.

The Marquis of Breadalbane lodged a 'Summons of Declarator and Molestation' against Monzie's trustees in November 1841. The summons was actually drafted in July of that year, followed by an amended version in March 1842. Here it was stated that he was heritable proprietor of 'a third part of the lands of the ancient Lordship of Lorn', a title claimed by his ancestors since 1470. Specific details of these lands were not listed, but included an archaic description of the disputed region: 'the half merkland of Glenketland, with the Forests of Penimoir otherwise called Corichybaa'. The summons included a detailed description of the march-line as originating at a point to the north of Stob Coir' an Albannaich; however three corries to the north of the line, on the Glenceitlein side, were also named.<sup>54</sup> Representatives of both parties appear to have been providing conflicting evidence in their definitions of the marches between the respective estates as discussed below.

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<sup>53</sup> Glenceitlein Farm is situated at NN149479; Coileitir Farm is situated at NN140465.

<sup>54</sup> NAS, GD 112/13/1/4 – Amended summons of Declarator and Molestation, The Marquess of Breadalbane against the trustees of the late General Alexander Campbell of Monzie Esq, (22<sup>nd</sup> March 1842).

It is necessary to analyse the following litigation, as Blackmount's future depended on its outcome. In an amended version of 1842, the Marquis of Breadalbane, as pursuer in condescendence, claimed that Monzie's trustees Lord Abercrombie, Sir George Murray, and Alexander Campbell Esq., (Monzie's heir), with their tenants had:

molested and troubled the pursuer and his tenants and servants, in the peaceable possession and enjoyment of the said lands, particularly in that part thereof called Upper Corryglass or Corryglasbeg or Corrycruin-glas, and also in another portion thereof, lying to the north of the said Corry, and to the north-east of the ridge of the said mountain of Beinchoarach, where wind and water sheers, by violently and forcibly driving off, or threatening to drive off, the cattle, horse, sheep, and other bestial belonging to the pursuer, his tenants and servants, and by threatening to drive their own cattle thereon.

Monzie's servants were also accused of 'violent molestation and oppression, in their forcibly driving or threatening to drive their said cattle into the pursuer's lands'. The summons further indicated that around £200 in damages had been incurred against Monzie and his representatives.<sup>55</sup> In considering these accusations it is necessary to analyse evidence presented before then.

Information collected for the Marquis of Breadalbane in 1841 stated that the former deer forest of Corrie Ba was turned into sheep grazing grounds about 65 years previously. The lands of Glenceitlein had been leased to various individuals over time, and they were made

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<sup>55</sup> *ibid.*

aware of the marches there. One of his former tenants, John MacDougall, stated no knowledge of any disputed marches when the boundary between Glenceitlein and Coileitir was pointed out to him. At some stage Campbell of Monzie incorporated Coileitir into his deer forest, presumably from 1835, and saw to it that livestock were removed from the area.<sup>56</sup> In 1840, Monzie's forester, Hugh McColl was ordered to lay claim to Corryglass Beg on the north side of Beinn Chaorach.<sup>57</sup> As already seen, both landlords reached a point of conflict by November 1840 after Peter Robertson observed Monzie's dogs pursuing deer within the north eastern marches of Blackmount.<sup>58</sup> This was the first incident leading to the marches dispute in lower Glen Etive between both landlords.

James Wyllie ordered Duncan Dewar, the Glenorchy ground officer, to inspect the disputed area. He was to be accompanied by Archibald Stewart, watcher and forester at Glenceitlein, and Hugh McColl. The Marquis of Breadalbane hoped that this meeting would resolve the problem, but when it took place McColl reiterated claims over the disputed grounds on Monzie's behalf. Mr Wyllie's next step involved contacting the Marquis' legal agent at Inverary and collecting more details on the specific area of land then claimed by Monzie. Breadalbane's agent, Mr L. Cameron, contacted Monzie's agent, Mr Alex MacArthur, in March 1841, with the intended purpose of averting actual

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<sup>56</sup> It is likely that Coileitir was converted to a forest in 1834 as seen from NAS, GD 112/74/76/32: James Wyllie at Bolfracks to the Marquis of Breadalbane, (14<sup>th</sup> July 1834).

<sup>57</sup> NAS, GD 112/13/1/3/7- Information for the most noble, the Marquis of Breadalbane, Inverary, (10<sup>th</sup> May 1841).

<sup>58</sup> NAS, GD 112/16/10/5/36: Peter Robertson, Forest report, (3<sup>rd</sup> November 1840).



court action. He was asked if Monzie wished to continue pursuance of his claim, but MacArthur was accused of ignoring communications thereafter.<sup>59</sup> This appeared to indicate that Monzie was willing to accept a legal challenge, and this is what took place.

Information presented to the Marquis shows that the disputed ground, grazed by grazing cattle and sheep, was of no great size to either landlord. The reason for its becoming contested territory was due to its close vicinity to Blackmount Forest, and the lands of Glenceitlein. If the Marquis was to win the case, some of his elderly tenants were required to give evidence of former agricultural practices, and present knowledge of local marches. John MacDougall and others were to give evidence as soon as possible, as their deaths could deprive the Marquis of successful litigation. Barrie Campbell, presumably intervening to settle the dispute, would decide if a recently erected march dyke, built at the mutual consent of both parties, was held as part of the lands of Glenceitlein. This dyke, it was stated, hindered the Marquis's reclamation of the disputed lands.<sup>60</sup> Thus, he depended on local knowledge of those who formerly resided on his property.

In May 1841, details of precognition given by former tenants holding leases at Glenceitlein Farm were made. Alexander McDougall was born there in 1787, and was employed in the area for 18 years working as a shepherd. From his youth he was a goat herder on Beinn

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<sup>59</sup> NAS, GD 112/13/1/3/7- Information for the most noble, the Marquis of Breadalbane, Inverary, (10<sup>th</sup> May 1841). With enclosed letter by Mr Cameron to Mr Alex MacArthur, Inverary, (24th March 1841).

<sup>60</sup> *ibid.*

Chaorach, so he had a good knowledge of its marches. He stated that whenever cattle from Coileitir transgressed Glenceitlein he would turn them back. His brother, John McDougall, declared that he had leased the farm of Glenceitlein for 29 years. His obligations included gathering sheep, and maintaining the march-line around Beinn Chaorach. James McIntyre and Donald McIntyre provided similar evidence regarding their knowledge of the area. Donald McIntyre, a herdsman, had worked on both farms around Beinn Chaorach, and was later employed by the tenants of Drumachoish.<sup>61</sup>

Most of these witnesses declared non-awareness of any dispute over boundaries between both farms. James McIntyre noted knowledge of several cairns on the march line, and in his words he was, ‘convinced that such has always been the line of march kept by all those who were his predecessors as herds or tenants in the farm of Glenketland’.<sup>62</sup> But earlier, McDougall said a place called ‘Lurgan na Coistri’, or ‘the disputed ridge’ signified a piece of ground between two burns on the hillside.<sup>63</sup> However, it is unclear as to which party he was representing. Archibald Stewart, watcher at Coileitir, told James Wyllie about certain individuals he considered should be examined, and made the factor aware of some inconsistencies in evidence they had already provided.<sup>64</sup>

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<sup>61</sup> NAS, GD 112/13/1/3/40 – Copy, Precognition by A. Stewart as to marches at Glenketland and Coinletter. {Hereafter: NAS, GD 112/13/1/3/40 - *Precognition by Stewart, 1841*} (This also deals with evidence presented by former tenants at Glenceitlein Farm on 27<sup>th</sup> May 1841)

<sup>62</sup> *ibid.*

<sup>63</sup> NAS, GD 112/13/1/3/7- Information for the most noble, the Marquis of Breadalbane, Inverary, (10<sup>th</sup> May 1841). With enclosed letter by Mr Cameron to Mr Alex MacArthur, Inverary, (24<sup>th</sup> March 1841).

<sup>64</sup> NAS, GD 112/13/1/3/40 - *Precognition by Stewart, 1841.*

In October 1841, knowledge of the marches from tenants of both lands was again presented to the court. Alexander MacDougall, John MacDougall, James MacIntyre and Donald MacIntyre gave evidence on behalf of the Marquis of Breadalbane. Those representing Monzie's trustees were Paul McColl, John McColl and Peter MacIntyre who also gave precognitions. Peter MacIntyre was born in Drumliart, upper Glenorchy, during the 1770s and was formerly a tenant to the Earl of Breadalbane. However he spent most of his years in Glen Etive as a tenant of Monzie, living at Drumnachoish.<sup>65</sup> Further evidence on Peter MacIntyre is lacking and possible reasons for his shifting employment to the neighbouring landlord are also undetermined.

Unfortunately, no letters from Monzie relating to this dispute have been found but his intentions can be traced from those in the Breadalbane papers. Correspondence in 1841 suggests attempted fabrication of evidence in Monzie's favour. Archibald Stewart informed the factor that Alexander MacArthur, Monzie's agent at Inverary, had pursued and examined some of Lord Breadalbane's witnesses, and given them money. Those he interviewed were John MacDougall at Leidaig and James MacIntyre at Dunbeg. Stewart was particularly concerned about the means by which Monzie's lawyer had collected information:

I am not aware that he had any conversation with the rest of the witnesses, but finding that he was tampering with the principal witnesses, I think proper to

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<sup>65</sup> NAS, GD 112/13/1/3/41 – Notes of precognition of witnesses relative to the march between the farms of Glenketland and Coinletter, (October 1841).

inform you of it, and let you know the means used, and the nature of those people Monzie thinks proper to employ to gain what I believe to be his unlawful ends.

Stewart also suggested that Paul McColl, considered to be Monzie's principal witness, should be cross-examined again on his inconsistent descriptions of the march-line.<sup>66</sup> Evidently, Stewart was aware that McColl's evidence could result in the Marquis winning the dispute.

In November 1841, Archibald Stewart wrote to John MacKenzie W.S., another legal agent dealing with the dispute, stating his knowledge of affairs. Recently Stewart had attempted to get the watcher at Coinletter to delineate the march he claimed on his landlord's behalf, but this was frustrated by the presence of Campbell of Monzie. At an earlier period employees of both Monzie and Breadalbane agreed on a march-line representing 'wind and water sheer'. Stewart stated that no dispute existed until late autumn 1840 when the watcher at Coileitir persuaded him not to traverse a certain piece of ground on the slopes of Stob Coir' an Albannaich. On hearing this, Stewart contacted Duncan Dewar and Peter Robertson, requesting that the matter be reported to Mr Wyllie. In May 1841, Hugh McColl claimed in his presence that Allt Corrie nan Each was the boundary, but in the company of other witnesses he claimed a different march-line.<sup>67</sup>

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<sup>66</sup> NAS, GD 112/13/1/3/32 – Copy, Report by Archibald Stewart to Mr Wyllie, (14<sup>th</sup> September 1841).

<sup>67</sup> NAS, GD 112/13/1/3/17 – Copy, letter regarding Glenketland marches from Mr Archibald Stewart to John Mackenzie W.S., (7<sup>th</sup> November 1841).

During 1842, Mr Wyllie was in frequent communication with John MacKenzie W.S. as the dispute reached its climax. That January, he reacted to recent claims over descriptions of topography used by Monzie's tenants, and the use of the term 'Crioich'; they referred to a feature called 'Fedan Crioich' which the factor believed was 'Ault na Crioich'. Campbell of Monzie had apparently used 'March Cairn' and 'March Knoll' as earlier given locations, but the factor argued that no such places existed in the disputed area. He denied Monzie's claims of the march starting at the summit of Stob a' Coir Albannaich, stating that it was on a point further north. However, Mr Wyllie was aware that the march-line claimed by them was a distinguishable ridge on Beinn Chaorach.<sup>68</sup> After local enquiries regarding Monzie's description of the march-line, several Glenorchy tenants who had known the ground for up to 40 years, denied knowledge of certain features he claimed.<sup>69</sup> Information collected by the factor was very detailed thus showing the considerable problems faced by the Marquis of Breadalbane.

Mr Wyllie was aware that Paul McColl was an important witness in Monzie's favour. In early 1840, Archibald Stewart had informed the factor of McColl's role in pointing out marches between the two farms, to the watcher at Coileitir. They followed 'the wind and weather sheer', acceptable to both landlords, and these marches were adhered to by both watchers during summer and autumn that year. The dispute itself, according to the factor, was initiated after a 'quarrel with Monzie' over

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<sup>68</sup> NAS, GD 112/13/1/3/17, Letter, Mr Wyllie to Mr McKenzie, W.S., (21<sup>st</sup> January 1842).

<sup>69</sup> NAS, GD 112/13/1/3/17, Letter, Mr Wyllie to Mr McKenzie, W.S., (28<sup>th</sup> January 1842).

accusations of trespassing in Blackmount Forest; thereafter Stewart was accordingly ‘challenged’ for not adhering to the march-line on Beinn Chaorach.<sup>70</sup> This clearly shows that the dispute over marches and pastures emerged from events originating in the Forest itself.

The factor also corresponded with Mr McKenzie W.S. during May and June of 1842, to give sufficient information on behalf of Marquis Breadalbane, and thus avert a crown writ being issued by McKenzie. These letters indicate awareness of a potentially threatening situation for Breadalbane’s ownership of the northwest portion in Blackmount Forest. This problem was exacerbated by conflicting descriptions of local place-names and apparent inconsistent statements given by witnesses and representatives of both landlords. That May, Monzie persisted in claiming that the summit of Stob Coir’ an Albannaich formed the start of the march. Also by then a hill called Stob Coir Leachaich, was named by Monzie as forming part of the march-line. John McDougall, presenting a differing statement to an earlier one over the southernmost extremity of the march-line, likewise mentioned Stob Coir Leachaich. This raised the possibility of Marquis Breadalbane losing a part of the lands of Glenceitlein. The factor was convinced that McDougall did not clearly understand some questions presented to him during precognition.<sup>71</sup>

Mr Wyllie insisted that it was common practice to delineate mountain march-lines, on ridges and summits, above watercourses.

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<sup>70</sup> *ibid.*

<sup>71</sup> NAS, GD 112/13/1/3/18 – Copies of letters from James F. Wyllie to John McKenzie, (9<sup>th</sup> May 1842). & (21<sup>st</sup> May 1842).

Wyllie investigated alternative forms of evidence in order to avert losing part of the Blackmount Forest. He suggested to Mr McKenzie that a land surveyor, Mr Henderson, could be contacted to give evidence:

He made a survey of all Monzie's Argyllshire property a good many years since, and it seems to me, that if alive, he may be found very willing to give information as to the line of march then pointed out to him, and something useful may come out of this. I know that Monzie and he had a quarrel about his charges, and he went to court before the matter was settled. If alive, it is very probable that Henderson still has his scroll plan or some memoranda preserved that would bring to remembrance the march by which he surveyed Coinletter.<sup>72</sup>

Monzie's Glen Etive lands had been surveyed, and a plan drawn, in 1832, showing boundaries with other landlords. This was compiled to give Monzie advice for agricultural improvements at three of his farms there, but this did not delineate the extent of Coileitir.<sup>73</sup> Several plans, showing a detailed topography of Stob Coir' an Albannaich were compiled, during the 1840s, to facilitate a better understanding of the contested area and its surroundings.<sup>74</sup> It was not uncommon for detailed estate plans to be commissioned during the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries, often to clarify disputed boundaries. This was particularly so during the 1730s, with a legal case, arising over the Forest of Mamlorn, between the Earl of Breadalbane and neighbouring landlords to the east.<sup>75</sup> The employment of legal representatives and surveyors of estate plans

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<sup>72</sup> NAS, GD 112/13/1/3/18 – Copy of letter from James F. Wyllie to John McKenzie, (13<sup>th</sup> June 1842).

<sup>73</sup> NAS, RHP 44712 – Plan of the lands of Invereolan, Inverharnan and Drimchouhes, 1832.

<sup>74</sup> NAS, RHP 92901 – Sketch plan of ground between Glas Bheinn Mor and Meall Dubh; RHP 92902 – Sketch of ground between Ben Starav and Derrynasoir.

<sup>75</sup> See chapter 1, p.56-57.

were costly additions to disputes over land, thus prompting investigation into the 1832 survey. It is uncertain whether this plan was of much use to the Marquis, or if his representatives had access to it.

It appears that the dispute was not legally settled until 1847. Then Mr Mackenzie told the factor that the disputed grounds could be divided to both landlords, after a Mr Robertson changed his views on the affair:

Glenketland - I have heard nothing from Robertson at all about this matter, and really his conduct has altogether been strange, that I cannot help thinking it would be for Lord Breadalbane's interest to get quit of him as a referee altogether, and go on to have the matter decided in court. This I think he could easily do and I shall be glad to have your views on the matter as soon as possible. From the views Mr Robertson has thrown out, it appears to me that if the referee goes on before him, he is very likely to make a sort of compromise of the matter by giving part of the disputed ground at one end to Lord Breadalbane and at the other to Monzie.<sup>76</sup>

Afterwards, James Wyllie wrote to Sir Alexander Campbell, desiring to have the marches adjusted finally, depending on Mr Robertson's cooperation with providing references on the disputed marches at Glenceitlein.<sup>77</sup> Therefore, the case had reached a legal stalemate, with both landlords compelled to back down on their respective claims.

Litigation over marches between the two main landlords in Glen Etive emerged out of physical encroachment upon Blackmount Forest by

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<sup>76</sup> NAS, GD 112/74/82/40 Copy, letter J.N. McKenzie Esq to Mr Wyllie, (24<sup>th</sup> September 1847).

<sup>77</sup> NAS, GD 112/74/82/42 - James Wyllie to Campbell of Barcaldine, (30<sup>th</sup> September 1847).



Campbell of Monzie and his employees, whose interests in land use, similar to that employed at Blackmount, resulted in court action. Evidence provided by representatives of both landlords resulted in detailed cross-examinations from legal agents in Edinburgh. Had the Marquis of Breadalbane lost the case, it might have resulted in similar disputes with other landlords whose estates adjoined the Forest. The contested ground was not large or agriculturally rich, but this challenge was particularly significant for Blackmount's future. Breadalbane and Monzie respectively desired victory, on the basis of accurate information provided from their tenants, as they were unsure of what exactly they owned, thus showing an unusual legal case. However, boundary disputes between estates were an ancient and common legal problem.

Despite the Marches dispute, both landlords had similar interests in ecclesiastical affairs. David Murray, minister of the Free Church in Muckairn, negotiated with James Wyllie, the Breadalbane estate's factor, in 1844, requesting shared Free Church accommodation for Glen Etive:

Sir, I presume you are aware that there is in Glen Etive a mission house or chapel, the exclusive property of your constituent the Marquis of Breadalbane and Mr Campbell of Monzie. There has been no regular divine service, since the disruption held there, and hitherto the chapel has been regarded as a sort of common property. As I happen to be the nearest to the locality of the free church minister a considerable number of the Glen people attend upon my ministry and I understand the charge of all the free people there must chiefly devolve on me. My object in sending you these lines is to request that you will have the goodness to inform me if Lord Breadalbane will give as (the free church) his share of the right to the said chapel. Monzie has given to us

sometime ago his share exclusively. Knowing well as I do what the Marquis' principles are, in reference to the church, I entertain no doubt whatever as to his wishes. Still it will be satisfactory to me and to others to have his permission formally granted us, and this we shall consider a great favour.<sup>78</sup>

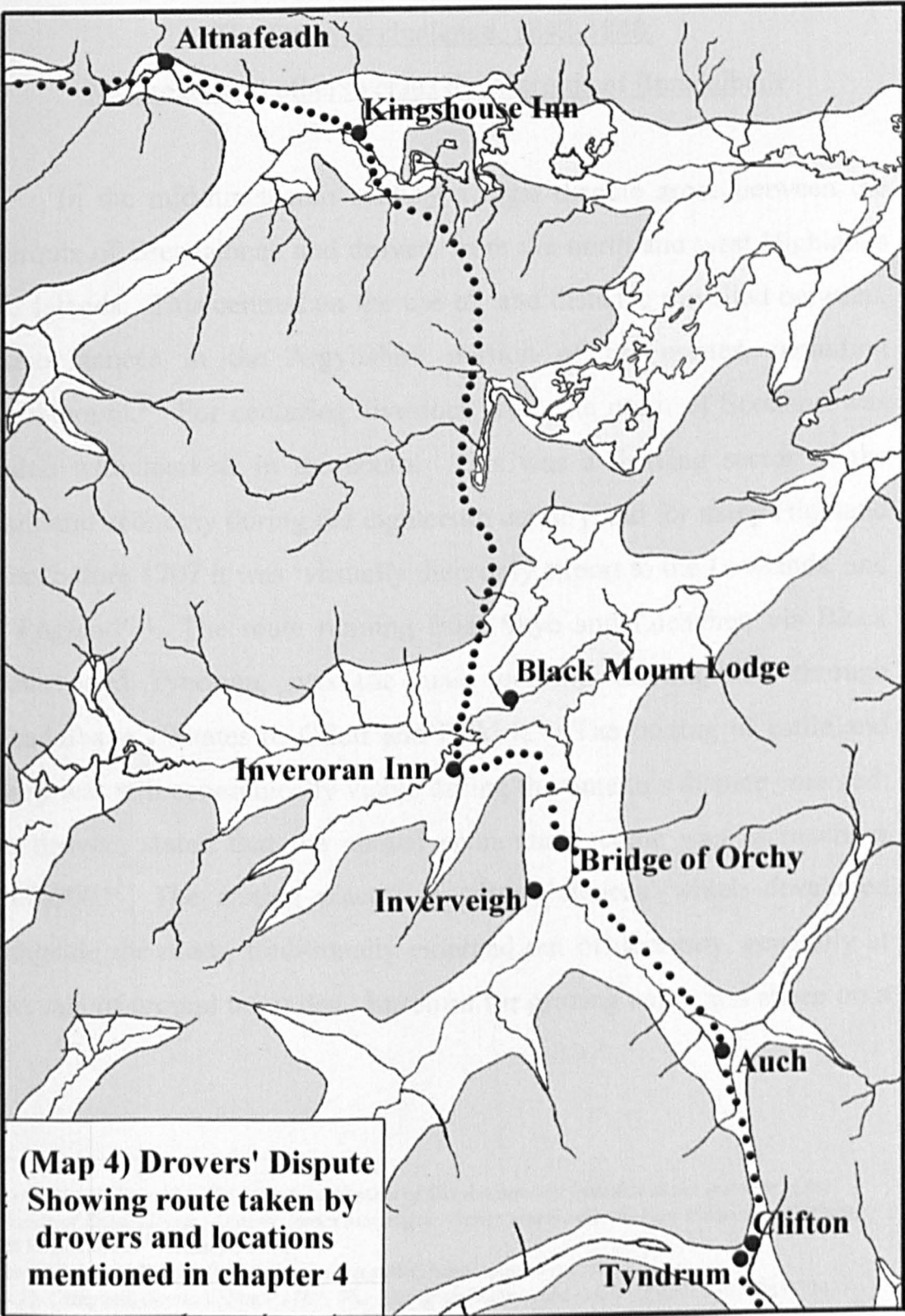
The factor forwarded this letter to Sir Alexander Campbell at Forest House: ‘..Chapel at Inveryusachan – I daresay Lord B. will consider this building entirely at his disposal, and I have no doubt will be ready to meet Mr Murray's wishes by placing it at the service of the free church..’.<sup>79</sup> Whether permission was granted is unknown, but it seems likely that Breadalbane, despite his disputes over landownership with Campbell of Monzie, allowed it to function as a Free Church.

This dispute shows the Blackmount landlord's determination in justifying the actions of his tenants, and their grazing practices on land adjacent to the Forest; this was on the basis of information he had received, whether or not he was actively present on that part of his extensive estates. However, the second Marquis continued to focus on problems existing within Blackmount Forest when he lodged another litigation case during the 1840s, which we shall now discuss. Both these disputes combined appear to show that his efforts in maintaining Blackmount were costly, but no evidence suggests this was considered to have been a burden to the extent that it possibly disrupted the normal functioning of his Breadalbane estates from an economic perspective.

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<sup>78</sup> NAS, GD 112/74/79/50: David N.K. Murray, Minister of Free church at Muckairn to J.F. Wyllie, (16<sup>th</sup> July 1844).

<sup>79</sup> NAS, GD 112/74/79/49: James Wyllie to Sir Alexander Campbell, (20<sup>th</sup> July 1844).



The Droving challenge, 1842-1848:

McGregor and others versus the Marquis of Breadalbane

In the mid-nineteenth century a legal dispute arose between the Marquis of Breadalbane and drovers from the north and west Highlands and Islands. This centred on the use of, and distance travelled between, drove stances in the Argyllshire portion of his estates, including Blackmount.<sup>80</sup> For centuries, livestock from the north of Scotland was traded with markets in the south. This was a thriving sector of the Highland economy during the eighteenth century and for many Highland areas before 1707 it was 'virtually their only export to the Lowlands, and to England'.<sup>81</sup> The route running from Skye and Lochaber, via Black Mount and Tyndrum, was the main droving thoroughfare through Breadalbane's estates to Crieff and Falkirk.<sup>82</sup> The trading of cattle and sheep was still economically viable during the time this dispute emerged; the drovers stated that the annual economic income was as much as £100,000.<sup>83</sup> The resting places, or 'drove stances' which developed alongside the roads, traditionally emerged out of necessity, generally at intervals of around ten miles. In return for grazing cattle and sheep on a

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<sup>80</sup> Lord Wood, *Record in the conjoined process of Suspension and Interdict at the instance of the Marquis of Breadalbane; Against James McGregor, Writer and Banker in Fort William, and others*; First Division, (29<sup>th</sup> January 1845).

(Hereafter: 'Lord Wood, *Breadalbane versus McGregor and others*.')

<sup>81</sup> R.H. Campbell, *Scotland Since 1707: The Rise of an Industrial Society*, (Edinburgh, 1985), 34. (Hereafter: 'Campbell, *Scotland Since 1707*.')

<sup>82</sup> A.R.B. Haldane, *The Drove Roads of Scotland*, (Edinburgh 1952; 1968 edition), 211-213. (Hereafter: 'Haldane, *Drove Roads*.')

<sup>83</sup> NAS, GD 112/47/4/1: Reports by the committee appointed by the general meeting of proprietors, farmers and others.

tenant's land, drovers would pay a 'grass mail' fee.<sup>84</sup> During the 1840s, the Marquis of Breadalbane attempted to curtail these customary stance arrangements in the Blackmount area of his estates if he could get his way in the courts.

At this stage we should examine some evidence relating to the Highland drove trade and the existence of stances in the eighteenth century. In 1773-4, dealers of black cattle from Argyllshire and western Inverness-shire petitioned the Commissioners for Annexed Estates on matters relating to the pasturage of their stock. Grievances were raised concerning resting and feeding places for the cattle, as before then the drovers were not obliged to pay for this on their journey south:

That from various causes, till of late years, the hill grass, especially in the centre of the Highlands was of much less value than now, by which means drovers were allowed to pass and pasture near the road where most convenient for them, without payment. And this no doubt was the reason that hitherto no regular plan has been laid before the different proprietors for the proper accommodation of droves.<sup>85</sup>

This evidence shows that drove stance issues were regarded as a matter for concern some 60 years before the dispute emerged in the Breadalbane estate when it was deemed necessary to clarify them. After their petition some stance payments were verbally arranged with landowners, but the details of these instances and who was involved is unknown.

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<sup>84</sup> Haldane, *Drove Roads*, 211; Lord Wood, *Breadalbane versus McGregor and others*, 11.

<sup>85</sup> NAS, E 728/59 – Petition from cattle dealers, (1773-1774).

Drovers during the 1770s were particularly concerned that they could not find grazing areas for their cattle, 'neither for payment nor favour', and complained that despite the money they had brought into the country they were now treated on the roads as 'enemies'. The list of petitioners included some tenants in the Blackmount area; these being Donald Campbell of Blaraven and Duncan Campbell of Inverveach. These, and other drovers from elsewhere stated their willingness to pay for using stances and maintaining fences. They proposed that grounds could be enclosed at the head of Lochearn, at Tombea in the Annexed Estate of Perth, and at a site near Fort William on the Locheil and Callart Estate. By then, payments for grazing cattle were already made in southern Scotland and in England.<sup>86</sup> Presumably the petitioners did not have problems with stances in the Breadalbane estates, suggesting that droving was accepted there during the 1770s; however these were not annexed estates.

The attempted clarification of designated drovers' stances in the later eighteenth century was not the only issue possibly related to the dispute emerging during the mid-nineteenth century. In 1810, the engineer, Thomas Telford, planned a new drove road through the west Highlands from Kyle Rhea in Inverness-shire to Killin in Perthshire. The new route, had it emerged, would have come from Glen Spean and traversed Rannoch Moor near Loch Laidon towards Glen Lyon via

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<sup>86</sup> *ibid.*

Gleann Meran. Telford perceived that existing routes nearby were 'impracticable', especially the section over the Devil's Staircase. The Commissioners for Highland Roads and Bridges were informed that a new route would have cost an estimated £12,000.<sup>87</sup> The fourth Earl of Breadalbane, and other landlords, had not been in favour of this idea, and to Telford's disappointment the plans were shelved.<sup>88</sup> Had he endorsed it, the existing route through the Black Mount would have become devoid of drove traffic but the costs of droving cattle could have been reduced by around £12,000.

If Telford's road had come into being then no dispute would have existed at Blackmount during the 1840s. Three main phases can be identified in this complex legal debate between the second Marquis of Breadalbane and the drovers and cattle dealers. Firstly, the landlord's action in prohibiting drovers in using the Inveroran stance resulted in their moving on to Inverveigh. But by the early 1840s, he took further action resulting in this stance being replaced by one at Clifton, and since it was too far from Kingshouse, the drovers negotiated for another intermediate stance in the Bridge of Orchy vicinity. This second phase was followed by the litigation reaching the House of Lords, resulting in a final settlement to accommodate both parties. The whole affair raised legal questions of land ownership and drovers' rights not hitherto dealt with.

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<sup>87</sup> Thomas Telford, *Report and estimates relative to a proposed road in Scotland*, Commissioners For Highland Roads and Bridges, (1810).

<sup>88</sup> Haldane, *Drove Roads*, 81. Haldane notes that Telford, in a report to the *Commissioners for Highland Roads and Bridges* in 1811, stated the project's failure was because: 'the personal convenience of the proprietors is not immediately concerned'.

Possibly one explanation for a contentious debate, emerging from the 1830s, over the Inveroran drove stance was the extent of marches adjacent to this inn. The Court of Session proceedings give a detailed description of these boundaries, and indeed indicate that drovers had, until that time, grazed their resting cattle over an extensive area of ground between Inveroran and Bridge of Orchy. This problem was exacerbated by the re-introduction of sheep in Blackmount Forest in the 1840s, putting more pressure on the availability of grazing areas, and could further explain the landlord's motives for terminating the Inveroran stance. Tenants on his estate also complained about drovers, at a time when many sheep were kept in the Forest periphery.<sup>89</sup> Therefore the landowner was not alone in his dislike of drove stances in this area.

Why the landlord took action over the Inveroran stance during 1835 leads us to address his motives. Possibly the numbers of livestock passing through Blackmount had increased in recent years with the result that it may have put pressure on existing land use there. The Forest had been expanding in size between 1820 and 1840, showing that a dispute with the drovers was likely. The reason for stances being shifted further in 1842 is clearer, as there is ample evidence of an increase in grazing at surrounding Forest farms. A complex scenario had emerged whereby Blackmount's status as a deer forest, with increasing grazing on its periphery by tenants, conflicted with drovers, whose passing livestock

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<sup>89</sup> Chapter 2 has already covered the correspondence regarding the construction of Forest Lodge and the issue of tenant/drover tensions during the 1840s.



was rested and fed there. It seems likely that since the area had been allocated for 'sporting' purposes, which for several years generated no financial gains for the landlord, resulted in his need to draw higher rents from tenant grazers. This may have accounted for the emergence of the drovers' dispute from an economic perspective.

In 1835, the Marquis of Breadalbane instructed the tenant at Inveroran Inn to discontinue accepting sheep and cattle at its adjacent stance, situated east of the inn, which extended over the hillside south of Loch Tulla.<sup>90</sup> At this time drovers had agreed to move to Inverveigh, just south of Bridge of Orchy, but they were forced to retrieve the former Inveroran stance after the Marquis took legal action over the Inverveigh stance in 1842. This created further problems since the Marquis did not want grazing livestock within Blackmount, desiring the former stance to be incorporated into his 'Forest Range' as shown in the following year.<sup>91</sup> He also presumably desired less distraction at the new shooting lodge then being constructed, opposite the old Inveroran stance, on the north shore of Loch Tulla.

The drovers originally accepted Marquis Breadalbane's removal of the old Inveroran stance, but his attempt in 1842 to move the Inverveigh stance in favour of a new site at Clifton, near Tyndrum, resulted in a legal battle in the Court of Session. By terminating the Inverveigh stance

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<sup>90</sup> Lord Wood, *Breadalbane versus McGregor and others*, 21.

<sup>91</sup> NAS, GD 112/74/215/8 – Report, 30<sup>th</sup> June 1843, of a deputation appointed by the drovers' committee on meeting with Mr Wyllie, factor for Marquis Breadalbane, at Inveroran, 9<sup>th</sup> June 1843. {Hereafter: Drovers' Committee, *Report on meeting at Inveroran, June 1843.*}

drovers would have endured great difficulty in carrying on their trade from the north, via the Blackmount, to Crieff and Falkirk in the south. The drovers felt they had no choice but to return to Inveroran; consequently the Marquis took further legal action attempting to remove the stance at Inveroran in 1844.<sup>92</sup> The drovers won this case in the Court of Session, in 1845, but three years later the Marquis then appealed to the House of Lords. The House of Lords ruling resulted in an alternative stance being provided adjacent to Bridge of Orchy. The litigation had raised questions on landownership in Scotland, and on pasture rights, hitherto unknown in Scottish law.<sup>93</sup> The case reached the London courts because the landlord presumably believed that his political opinions would be backed up from fellow peers who likewise held extensive estates. Although he did not completely win, the second Marquis had achieved the permanent removal of the old Inveroran stance.

Clearly, the Marquis of Breadalbane did not want drovers, or their stances, to interfere with his Forest activities. However, the retention of a drove stance on the north side of the Black Mount road, at or near Kingshouse, was obligatory. This remote inn had been built around 80 years earlier with the purpose of providing rest to soldiers, drovers and travellers. Research by Haldane indicates that Altnafeadh, at the head of Glencoe near Kingshouse, was also a stance in the nineteenth century; records of the legal dispute show that this was only a recent location. In 1842, the landowner saw to it that the Kingshouse stance was moved

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<sup>92</sup> Lord Wood, *Breadalbane versus McGregor and others*, 6.

<sup>93</sup> Haldane, *Drove Roads*, 212-213.

south by half a mile, and a portion of the farm of Clifton was let; thus the Marquis asserted that no overnight stop was required in between.<sup>94</sup> Considering the presence of an earlier stance at Altnafeadh, this new arrangement south of Kingshouse would have reduced the Black Mount stretch by three miles.

This may indicate the landlord's motives for moving the Inverveigh stance further south, in favour of Clifton, but does not wholly explain why this intermediate stopping point was considered a problem. He may have felt that his action was justified because of possible interference with deer inhabiting the area. Deer sometimes inhabited the Inverveigh area during winter for grazing when cold weather had forced them down from the high tops and corries. What the landowner considered to be his rights, in extending Blackmount Forest, may have conflicted with what drovers had taken for granted for centuries. The unclarified issue of grazing rights were the main cause of this dispute, and it is for this reason that the following pages focus on the course of events in some detail in our attempt to discern the litigation emerging. The fact that much evidence survives on this dispute shows that it was of fundamental importance to events within and around the Forest.

In February 1842, Peter Robertson, Blackmount head forester, wrote to Mr Wyllie, the Breadalbane factor, on the drovers' proposals. Robertson believed that most of the drovers were not against moving the

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<sup>94</sup> Haldane, *Drove Roads*, 211; Lord Wood, *Breadalbane versus McGregor and others*, 11,13; Altnafeadh is situated approximately two and a half miles west of Kingshouse Inn.

stance to Clifton, providing the tenant at Auch would allow livestock to rest a night upon his farm near Bridge of Orchy.” If the landlord had considered this, with the similar negotiations following in 1843, litigation would have been avoided. Before legal action ensued, a committee was appointed by a general meeting of proprietors and farmers at Inverness market on 4<sup>th</sup> July 1842. They discussed the Inveroran drove stance, but a report on this was not complete until 6<sup>th</sup> September 1843.<sup>95</sup>

On the 30<sup>th</sup> September 1842, in the Court of Session, the appellant, (John, fifth Earl, and second Marquis of Breadalbane) made his first note of ‘Suspension and Interdict’ to the drovers, and litigated against their using Inverveigh Farm as a drove stance. James McGregor, a writer and banker at Fort William, represented the respondents; these 15 others were mainly drovers from Inverness-shire, some from Argyll, and two cattle agents from England.<sup>97</sup> Lord Wood announced the landlord’s litigation as follows:

May it therefore please your Lordships to suspend the proceedings complained of, and to interdict, prohibit, and discharge the said respondents, and all drovers, servants, or others employed by them, or any of them, and also all other persons whomsoever, from using the lands and farm of Inverveach in the parish of Glenorchy and county of Argyle, or any part thereof, for the purpose of resting or feeding cattle or sheep belonging to them, or for any other

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<sup>95</sup> NAS, GD 112/16/10/4/13: Report of Peter Robertson to Mr Wyllie, (19<sup>th</sup> February 1842).

<sup>96</sup> NAS GD 112/47/4/1: Report by the committee appointed by the general meeting of proprietors, farmers and others, 6<sup>th</sup> September 1843.

<sup>97</sup> Lord Wood, *Breadalbane versus McGregor and others*, 3-4.

purpose, and from trespassing in any way whatever upon the said lands and farms of Inverveach, or any part thereof; or, to do otherwise in the premises, as to your lordships seem proper.<sup>98</sup>

After he stated his objection to cattle being rested and fed at Inverveigh, the Marquis suggested another new stance at Clifton, near Tyndrum.

James MacGregor, representing the drovers, later stated: ‘we were driven into the necessity of defending ourselves’.<sup>99</sup> They argued that the Marquis had taken things too far as his proposals, possibly resulting in no resting place within 17 miles of Kingshouse, were not practicable. They believed that retrieving the old stance at Inveroran was the only option; however time was running out for the drovers. In the summer of 1843 a deputation was appointed by the committee to meet Marquis Breadalbane’s factor, Mr Wyllie, at Inveroran and negotiate the site of a new stance around the Bridge of Orchy area. A report on this meeting, during June, shows that the deputation consisted of John Cameron of Corrychoillie, John Mitchell of Inverscadle and Thomas MacDonald of Fort William.<sup>100</sup> This trio represented a broad range of those involved in the cattle trade from the north. John Cameron was a sheep and cattle dealer, John Mitchell a tacksman, and Thomas MacDonald a banker.<sup>101</sup> Bankers were very much involved with drovers, offering cash credit

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<sup>98</sup> Lord Wood, *Breadalbane versus McGregor and others*, 4.; spelt in the records as ‘Inverveach’

<sup>99</sup> NAS, GD 112/74/150/32 – Copy letter from Edward Ellice, Glenquaich, to Lord Breadalbane (September 4<sup>th</sup> 1843), with copy letter from Mr MacGregor, Fort William, (August 29<sup>th</sup> 1843).

<sup>100</sup> Drovers’ Committee, *Report on meeting at Inveroran, June 1843*.

<sup>101</sup> Lord Wood, *Breadalbane versus McGregor and others*, 3-5.

since the eighteenth century.<sup>102</sup>

The deputation at Inveroran faced problems in negotiating directly with Mr Wyllie who admitted his lack of authority regarding siting a new stance, and stated that he could only hear what they could propose in place of the Inveroran stance. The deputation suggested that an area of ground adjacent to the road between Bridge of Orchy and Auch could serve in place of the stance, but they estimated that the proposed area was only half the size of the existing one. However, the factor was concerned that this new location, had it been allowed, would interfere with wintering ground at Auch. He suggested instead a site nearer Bridge of Orchy; this area, a ridge of high ground on which a large black stone lies, was described by the deputation as ‘almost a morass and much broken with little or no pasture’, and they believed it would hardly hold even one third of a market’s stock.<sup>103</sup>

The drovers negotiated for two other possible sites; one of these was part of Achallader Farm, and another, which would have incorporated part of the existing stance on the Inverveigh side of the River Orchy.<sup>104</sup> James Wyllie presented the landlord with a detailed sketch delineating the three proposed sites for a stance. He objected strongly to the Auch grounds since much of its wintering ground would be lost. Another proposed site on either side of the road near Auch

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<sup>102</sup> Campbell, *Scotland Since 1707*, 34.

<sup>103</sup> Drovers’ Committee, *Report on meeting at Inveroran, June 1843*. The large black stone described in the report is depicted on the modern Ordnance Survey Pathfinder map as ‘Clach a’ Bhein’, OSGR - NN302385.

<sup>104</sup> Drovers’ Committee, *Report on meeting at Inveroran, June 1843*.

would have required construction of dykes. Wyllie seemed to prefer a third option, incorporating ground between Inverveigh and Bridge of Orchy: 'If it were not to cause disturbance to the deer, this in my opinion be less injurious to the property than either of the other plans'.<sup>105</sup> His description of the meeting seems to have differed slightly from the deputation's version.

These proposed sites in place of the Inveroran stance were submitted to the Marquis of Breadalbane who, it was stated, would take the final choice. However the deputation declared that if he chose either of the first two options, this agreement should include the new stance at Clifton. But if in the unlikely event of his agreeing to the third option, a stance between the old one at Inveroran and Inverveach, then this would include the old stance at Tyndrum. The Marquis, and two other landlords further north, Colonel MacLean of Ardgour and Mr Grant of Glenmoriston, had already met at Taymouth Castle to negotiate a settlement with the drovers. It seems likely that both MacLean and Grant were representing the interests of cattle traders from the north, and presumably all parties wished to avoid further legal proceedings. The June 1843 meeting just described was the fieldwork required to negotiate such a settlement.<sup>106</sup>

That the negotiations had failed was indicated in a rather stern letter from Colonel Alexander MacLean of Ardgour to the Marquis in

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<sup>105</sup> NAS, GD 112/74/78/3/26 – James Wyllie to the Marquis of Breadalbane, (13<sup>th</sup> June 1843).

<sup>106</sup> Drovers' Committee, *Report on meeting at Inveroran, June 1843*.

August 1843. Colonel MacLean appears to have disagreed with him, regarding an approval on a memorial the Marquis had made, following the Fort William deputation's meeting with the factor. MacLean said that the June meeting 'has proved so unfortunate', despite its 'conciliatory spirit'. He wished to clarify some misunderstandings emerging since their last meeting at Taymouth with Mr Grant of Glenmoriston. MacLean then referred to a recent 'public advertisement', intended for tenants and proprietors, which the Marquis believed was intending to raise an outcry against his legal challenges. Colonel MacLean was particularly annoyed after learning that the outcome of the June deputation with Mr Wyllie did not result in any progress other than more litigation. He acknowledged that the Marquis had a right to raise further legal proceedings, but informed him that he was foolish to disregard any definition of the drovers' rights.<sup>107</sup>

Colonel MacLean reminded the Marquis of the two recent meetings, held at Inverness and Fort William, to discuss the means by which cattle and sheep could be safely taken to markets in the south. He was of the opinion that it would be unjust for the drovers to defend their rights without help, as events now emerging were likely to 'prove a very extensive combat'. In this, he was stating his willingness to back up their plight if needed, as they had not much chance of achieving their aims alone. In his conclusion the Colonel stated that he hoped an, 'amicable arrangement' could be made and that he regretted recent

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<sup>107</sup> NAS, GD 112/74/215/9 - August 1843, Letter From Colonel Alexander MacLean of Ardgour to the Marquis of Breadalbane.



misunderstandings that had emerged.<sup>108</sup> Although the Marquis's reaction is not known, he presumably communicated via his legal agent and factor with Highland landlords involved in the dispute. The correspondence nevertheless shows that other influential landlords from the north were willing to stand up and defend the drovers against the Marquis.

James MacGregor, although not a landlord, was appointed to defend the drovers' case. He criticised Edward Ellice of Invergarry for not acting likewise in supporting their case regarding the Inveroran stance. Although Ellice failed openly to defend them, he told the landlord that the drovers 'have some reason to be alarmed'. Ellice passed on an earlier letter by MacGregor to the Marquis, in September 4<sup>th</sup> 1843, which showed opinions on the next stage of litigation:

No doubt Lord Breadalbane is quite entitled to 'try the question of right of property' in the Court of Session. We, on the other hand, while we do not dispute his lordship's 'right of property' maintain that we have a 'right of servitude' over it, to the effect of resting and feeding our stocks on their way to market at certain convenient stages of which Inveroran is one, and upon paying the sum per score that has hitherto been expected

MacGregor knew that the landlord was obliged to provide a compromise, but was concerned that if he pledged, 'absolute' right of landownership, rather than to 'try the question of right of property' then the drovers could lose their claim. He also stated that their case should be pursued

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<sup>108</sup> NAS, GD 112/74/215/9 - August 1843, Letter From Colonel Alexander MacLean of Ardgour to the Marquis of Breadalbane.

since maintaining possession of their claim was important to avoid future stance disputes.<sup>109</sup> Although the issue concerning the drovers' stances was a new one, the debate regarding servitudes and rights of property had been an ongoing feature within other Highland estates.

The drovers' committee held their next general meeting during the evening of 13<sup>th</sup> September 1843 at the Red Lion Inn in Falkirk. An enquiry of all related matters, including the distance of stances and economics of droving, were made. The drovers talked of their stock numbers passing through each year; the committee stated that the Black Mount route conveyed 70,000 sheep, and from 8,000 to 10,000 cattle annually. Another subject of discussion was Marquis Breadalbane's attempted change to the existing stances at Inveroran and Tyndrum, for Clifton, within a mile of Tyndrum.<sup>110</sup> As discussed earlier, the drovers would have been satisfied to see a new stance at Clifton if another intermediate stance was arranged in the Bridge of Orchy area, in place of the old Inveroran Stance.<sup>111</sup> The meeting was held in the expectation that their case could be strengthened in preparation for the next stage of court proceedings.

The landlord presented a second note of suspension and interdict on 1<sup>st</sup> December 1843. During this time, a further 20 respondents became involved in the dispute, among them more drovers from the west

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<sup>109</sup> NAS, GD 112/74/150/32 – Copy letter from Edward Ellice, Glenquaich, to Lord Breadalbane (September 4<sup>th</sup> 1843), with copy letter from Mr MacGregor, Fort William, (August 29<sup>th</sup> 1843).

<sup>110</sup> NAS, GD 112/47/4/1: Report by the committee appointed by the general meeting of proprietors, farmers and others, (6<sup>th</sup> September 1843).

<sup>111</sup> NAS, GD 112/16/10/4/13: Report of Peter Robertson to Mr Wyllie, (19<sup>th</sup> February 1842).

Highlands, a doctor from Fort William, and a distiller. The Inveroran stance's marches were extensive, covering the hillside south of the inn there, and the ancient woods of Doire Darach.<sup>112</sup> It appears that the landlord temporarily won victory over the drovers, by 1844, as a new stance emerged at Clifton occupied by Archibald Fletcher.<sup>113</sup> This however is unlikely to have stopped all of the drovers from continuing to use the Inveroran stance whilst legal justification for stances was debated in the courts. On 29<sup>th</sup> January 1845, the facts from both parties were again presented to the court, and published in a 'Record of Interdict'.

The Marquis of Breadalbane, as complainer, made 16 statements of fact. His main concern was that he was the owner of the land, and the respondents had no title for right of access. He also complained that the distance from Kingshouse to Inveroran was too short, and cattle grazing between these inns overburdened the land.<sup>114</sup> The respondents, reading eight statements of facts, declared their traditional rights for the use of drove roads. They had paid a fixed fee or 'grass mail' for using stances, thus giving further legitimacy to their claims. At every stance, fixed rates of charge were paid, generally at 1/6 (1 shilling and 6 pence) per night for every 'score' of cattle, and for 100 sheep. Their main concern was based on the landlord's attempts to move the stance at Inveroran thus rendering droving through the district virtually impossible. Another significant grievance was over accommodation at the drove stance at

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<sup>112</sup> NAS, GD 112/47/4/3: Notes in the House of Lords from the Court of Session in Scotland; Lord Wood, *Breadalbane versus McGregor and others*, 6.

<sup>113</sup> NAS, GD 112/14/5/1: Factory Account between the Marquis of Breadalbane and James F. Wyllie, From Martinmas 1843 to Martinmas 1844.

<sup>114</sup> Lord Wood, *Breadalbane versus McGregor and others*, 8-16.

Clifton, regarded as inferior to that at Inveroran. They further contended that no inn existed at Clifton for accommodating drovers or their horses.<sup>115</sup>

In considering a drove road passing through the centre of Blackmount Forest it was little wonder that Marquis Breadalbane was raising such a legal challenge. However making the stances further apart gave the cattle dealers no choice but to contest his wishes. This dispute avoided media attention, which then focussed on criticism of Highlanders' lifestyle, and the famine affecting many estates further north and west during 1846-7.<sup>116</sup> The debate did however reach national newspapers in 1848, after parliamentary peers considered the case in the House of Lords. In the intervening years, between 1843 and 1846, it remained as a Scottish issue debated in Edinburgh. In 1845, the drovers were successful in retrieving the Inveroran stance, but this was only the beginning of a second phase in the case.

The Marquis initially appealed to the Scottish courts, before taking matters further. In 3<sup>rd</sup> December 1846, the *Court of Session* attempted to deal with the drovers' dispute, initially reviewing the earlier records of suspension and interdict from 1842 and 1843. A plea by the suspender, the Marquis of Breadalbane, was made on the basis that although a 'public highway' existed through his lands, there was no right for travellers to encroach on them. The respondents pled that stances, on

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<sup>115</sup> Lord Wood, *Breadalbane versus McGregor and others*, 16-21; a 'score' of cattle consists of twenty.

<sup>116</sup> Recent research by Fenyo, in: *Contempt, sympathy and romance* shows a period of intense media attention towards the Highland famine during the 1840s.

which fixed rates were paid, were vital accessories to drove roads, and that the suspender's 'waste grounds' had been untouched from 'time immemorial'. Four judges, the Lord President, Lord MacKenzie, Lord Fullerton, and Lord Jeffrey expressed their legal opinions on the definition of drove roads, stances and cattle grazing.<sup>117</sup> In all respects this litigation was a test case that would determine 'stance rights' in the future.

The Lord President reviewed the respondents' statement of facts; for example, their claim that an ancient drove road had preceded the public road existing by then. With this he commented on the respondents' claims that the stances were part of the drove road. Lord MacKenzie followed by stating that a drove road could not be so described without cattle consuming pastures as they travelled alongside it. This judge also saw that pasturage was necessary on the drove roads, as well as stopping and drinking water. Lord Fullerton regarded both drove roads and public highways as the same thing, giving nothing more than a right of passage. He was concerned that the drovers based their rights to stances, with payment of fees, on a customary basis alone.<sup>118</sup> The legal opinions then being expressed show that a case of this nature had not been experienced before.

Finally, Lord Jeffrey provided the most effective argument in favour of the drovers during the 1846 stage of this stances' dispute:

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<sup>117</sup> Cases decided in The Court of Session, 1846-1847, (London, 1847), No.33, December 3<sup>rd</sup> 1846, 210-221. {Hereafter: 'Session Cases, 1846-1847, No.33'}

<sup>118</sup> Session Cases, 1846-1847, No.33, 215-217.

It appears to me, that the stances on a drove-road are truly to be considered as mere expansions of the road itself; and of the same general rights of travelling and feeding, which were exercised along its whole course. I cannot therefore, but think it a strong proposition to say, that if you can acquire a right of drove road by occupancy, the relative stances, being not merely accessories, but really part and parcel of that occupancy, (since sheep and cattle travelling all day over an unenclosed country, must both eat and rest as they go, though not to the same extent as at night), you cannot acquire the stances in the same way.<sup>119</sup>

He recognised a need to clarify the ambiguous method of payment at stances existing until then. However Lord Jeffrey clearly felt that drove roads and stances arose out of necessity, and in this situation they passed ‘through the vast, open, and mostly uninhabited domains of a great highland proprietor’. <sup>120</sup> His observation of this final point shows recognition of a unique situation with two opposing interests. From the Marquis of Breadalbane’s view he had to accept busy traffic in his estates, but their size was the cause of the problem.

After these legal views were presented to the court no definite decisions on ‘stance rights’ were made, until the respondents provided an amended draft of their case for consideration.<sup>121</sup> Thus the landlord’s intended termination of the old Inveroran drove stance was delayed giving it a temporary reprieve. It appears however, that the Court of

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<sup>119</sup> Session Cases, 1846-1847, No.33, 218-219.

<sup>120</sup> Session Cases, 1846-1847, No.33, 219-221.

<sup>121</sup> Session Cases, 1846-1847, No.33, 221.

Session was either unwilling or unable to come to a decision regarding the stance debate, even after the reviewed case in 1846. According to Haldane, the Court of Session favoured the drovers' claims to stance usage, resulting in Marquis Breadalbane appealing to the House of Lords, in 1848. Here it was ruled that there was no legal foundation for the 'stance rights' claimed by the drovers.<sup>122</sup> We shall examine this legal settlement before summarising events regarding the dispute.

On 14<sup>th</sup> July 1848 the drovers' dispute was considered by three senior judges in the House of Lords comprising the Lord Chancellor, Lord Brougham and Lord Campbell. Representing the appellant, Marquis Breadalbane, were the Lord Advocate and Mr. Bethell. Sir F. Kelly, Mr Rolt and Mr Anderson stood on behalf of the Respondents. The Lord Chancellor initially stated difficulties in granting legal justification for the drovers' claims to 'stance rights'. Lord Brougham similarly questioned the usual practice of pasturage alongside drove roads. He disagreed with Lord Jeffrey's earlier view that stances were a necessary extension to the route, and said: 'I think it is a very curious extension of the right of way that you should have a right of eating and feeding'. Lord Brougham further argued that the right to drive livestock over countryside did not include a right to de-pasture them as well.<sup>123</sup>

The choice of Lord Campbell, as a judge in the case, may have been purely coincidental, but he did seem to show favourable support

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<sup>122</sup> Haldane, *Drove Roads*, 212.

<sup>123</sup> Cases decided in the House of Lords, 1850, (London, 1852), Bell's Reports, VII, 46-58. {Hereafter: '*Bell's Reports*'}.

towards the appellant. The Marquis of Breadalbane, Lord Campbell reminded the House, did not lodge an appeal against the drove road but against the stances alone. This judge saw no legal justification for pasture rights every ten miles alongside a drove road, and he noted the non-existence of such an arrangement in England. He also criticised Lord Jeffrey's legal judgement regarding the necessity of drove stances, and the comparisons he made with nature:

Surely if this stance and drove-way were a case of the same nature as a river after being contracted between mountains, and dashing along over rocks, expands into a lake, that might be so. But, with great deference to that most learned and able Judge, whom I infinitely respect as well as esteem, there is no resemblance between a drove road and a river; because the drove-road is simply that right of passage, and between stance and stance there is no right of pasture.<sup>124</sup>

None of these judges took into consideration that drovers had paid for grazing their cattle on tenants' lands. Thus their ruling appeared to make the existence of stances, if a landlord did not wish them, a form of trespass.

At the time the *London Daily News* stated that many of the English rights of way had disappeared because of enclosure, predicting that Highland proprietors were endorsing the same policy. It also stated that the Marquis of Breadabane's particularly strong case for appeal was more of a match for those who challenged him:

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<sup>124</sup> *Bell's Reports*, 60.



Now this right [of stance] which has existed for centuries is not displaced to make way for cultivation or improvement of any kind but to foster the barbarous and puerile passion for artificial wild sports; and the feudal spirit of the House of Lords assists the purblind owners of Highland estates to push their proprietary right to this mischievous extreme.<sup>125</sup>

The *London Daily News* was clearly hostile to Breadalbane; the statements it made appeared to link political control with deer forests, and Blackmount especially came under such examination. Such a comment sought to emphasise a dichotomy between landlordism and other interests on land use. Interestingly, this newspaper's comment regarding agricultural improvement suggests that a landowner would have been justified had his actions involved displacing stance rights for cultivation. The House of Lords was regarded with suspicion because most political decisions affecting landlords were decided in their favour.

On 31<sup>st</sup> August, the same newspaper published a letter by a Mr Mill who agreed that agricultural developments would have legitimised the movement of stances. But he said that if there was no intention of cultivating the land, then there was no basis to the claim of its being private property. He argued that if proprietors claimed lands as theirs, they did so 'in sufferance of the community'. Mr Mill acknowledged that the Marquis of Breadalbane owned the lands, but this was an unfortunate situation for the drovers who desired using his 'appropriated

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<sup>125</sup> Haldane, *Drove Roads*, 212: *London Daily News*, (30<sup>th</sup> August 1848).

lands'.<sup>126</sup> It was only a matter of time before Highland drovers had their customary rights limited, but these were vital to their survival. By the middle of the nineteenth century, in more cultivated areas nearer the trysts, stance privileges were becoming more costly and were consequently restricted. Haldane notes that droving had been tolerated until then in the Highland districts, but other landowners were becoming increasingly desirous of terminating drove routes.<sup>127</sup>

By curtailing stances on this busy route, the whole legal affair gained the Marquis of Breadalbane and the House of Lords a degree of unpopularity. He claimed that he had always desired to accommodate the drovers, and hoped that an amicable arrangement would eventually be effected.<sup>128</sup> Other than this, there is little evidence of what the landlord believed would be the proper solution to the dispute he had created. His motivation, rather than being wholly an excuse to show his control, likely arose from the interference the Marquis believed drovers would cause to his forest activities had a stance remained at Inveroran, Blackmount. The Inveroran litigation resulted in an alternative stance being provided a mile to the south of Bridge of Orchy.<sup>129</sup> The drovers, and representatives negotiating on their behalf, had suggested a similar arrangement earlier in that decade.

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<sup>126</sup> NAS, GD 112/47/4/2: From the *London Daily News*, (31<sup>st</sup> August 1848).

<sup>127</sup> Haldane, *Drove Roads*, 211, 213.

<sup>128</sup> Lord Wood, *Breadalbane versus McGregor and others*, 21.

<sup>129</sup> Haldane, *Drove Roads*, 213: (Haldane mentioned that the tenant of Achallader farm, on whose land the new stance was situated, was bound by his lease to keep open the stance ground, with levy rights. His research indicated that this arrangement still existed until the 1950s.)

Why so much legal turmoil had taken place during the 1840s, and why the drovers' grievances had originally been ignored, poses further questions and the need for more research. The motives for interrupting Highland droving during this time can be linked to a general expansion of the deer forest at Blackmount, and the interests of tenants who grazed their stocks there.<sup>130</sup> Marquis Breadalbane asserted his legal right to terminate any of the drove stances in his estates, and claimed exclusive ownership rights, regardless of other activities.<sup>131</sup> The drovers based their claims on traditional rights, and although the Inveroran dispute was not a new debate on Highland land law, by the time it had reached the House of Lords ruling in 1848, it was one that Haldane described:

The extensive but undefined stance and pasture rights then claimed, though based on the custom and unchallenged usage of centuries, constituted a limitation on the ownership of land unknown to the law of Scotland.<sup>132</sup>

Details of livestock numbers passing through Blackmount Forest and the places from where they were transported show the continuing importance of a stance at Bridge of Orchy in 1860. From May to October that year, a total of £30 11s was paid in 'grass mail' by 77 drovers, carrying 16,675 sheep, and 3537 cattle (Appendix 6), showing a clear predominance of the former. Many of the drovers were from Lochaber, and some regularly passed through this part of Argyllshire.<sup>133</sup>

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<sup>130</sup> Chapter 3 provides details of the activities of tenants at the Forest Farms, and incidences of tensions with drovers, for example on p.188.

<sup>131</sup> Lord Wood, *Breadalbane versus McGregor and others*, 21.

<sup>132</sup> Haldane, *Drove Roads*, 212-213.

<sup>133</sup> NAS: GD 112/74/216/11- Grass Mail of the Bridge of Orchy, (May to October, 1860).

Comparisons between these seasonal numbers and estimates of those annually passing through Blackmount previously are difficult to assess, but there appears to have been a reduction in numbers.<sup>134</sup> Additionally, the introduction of the railway there, three decades later, caused a significant decline in the passage of drovers thereafter.

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<sup>134</sup> Note earlier evidence showing 70,000 sheep and up to 10,000 cattle during the 1840s; see p.277.

## Conclusion

Challenges faced by the landlord in managing Blackmount Forest during the nineteenth century were clearly varied, and many of them were with external situations. There is ample evidence relating to poaching in the early years after the Forest was re-formed anew, indicating that its existence was being targeted by local protest. This landlord also depended on honesty from his employees, showing the fragility of estate management. This was quite a different problem to the legal ones developing during the 1840s when the landowner pursued litigation against Highland drovers and towards his neighbouring landlord, Campbell of Monzie, in Glen Etive. The Marquis, and his employees, spent a great deal of time and effort in tackling adversaries. They were convinced that drovers could interfere with the management of his extensive sporting estate in Argyllshire. Changes to traditional land use practices were a feature developing since the eighteenth century, and the drovers' long established customary practices in the Highlands came to an end from the mid-nineteenth century.

During these years, the landlord was faced with wider social, economic and political concerns. His policies on forming and managing a forest in the Blackmount area may have been seen as unpopular at the time, mainly due to recent demographic decline in the Breadalbane Estates generally. Coupled with this the landlord faced criticism and active challenges from those representing other interests. This might even have led to his reversing existing land use at Blackmount, but as the

following chapter shows it eventually turned out to be a commercially viable forest. However, this led to further challenges, as its similarity with other estates in generating large incomes for their landlords by the 1880s led to changes in government legislation and taxation. Clearly, the use of lands as commercial sporting estates required careful strategies to be fulfilled by proprietors and their employees.

The consequences of the second Marquis of Breadalbane's maintenance of a forest at Blackmount were to tackle a variety of conflicting interests both social and economic. Though these challenges were potentially destabilising for him, there is no doubt that he was in a significant position of power to resist defeat across-the-board. This phenomenon has further highlighted the political balance of power existing during the Victorian period, and its historical relevance in relation to areas set aside for sporting purposes. Hence, Blackmount Forest's existence was, in essence, a contentious one to certain individuals and groups both locally and further afield. However, it is difficult to judge their deeper opinions and tensions unless more research is conducted. This chapter has shown that the landlord was determined to see that his Forest would function regardless of the protests it generated by its continuation.

## Chapter 5

### Commercial leasing, Competition and Land agitation c.1860-1890

This chapter examines Blackmount Forest as a commercial sporting estate, and how it became affected by changing economy and society in the Highlands during the later nineteenth century. Problems such as famine, depopulation and clearance had already made the region a focus of concern for the British government. Here, where possible, we shall consider the impact on Blackmount of the general rise in, and criticism of, Highland deer forests. Critics perceived 'sporting estates', collectively, as detrimental to Highland society, economy and population, since many became leased out by wealthy tenants, both aristocrats and entrepreneurs, on a wholesale basis. This policy was also adopted by the Campbells of Breadalbane from the 1860s, with Blackmount following a trend in the commercial marketability.<sup>1</sup> A review of the social and economic climate prior to this period is necessary to understand why landlords later converted their properties to deer forests.

The Highland famine during the 1840s, resulting in a significant fall in population due to mortality and emigration, has been researched by several historians who have closely assessed its aftermath and landlords'

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<sup>1</sup> We describe the leases by Lord Dudley, and others from p.323-336.

reactions.<sup>2</sup> The Breadalbane estate had already witnessed extensive emigration by the 1830s, thus not following an established pattern seen in estates further north. Most areas of the Highlands, including this one, had a rural economy based on sheep farming, but when it became unprofitable in the 1870s, many parts of their estates were transformed into deer forests. Blackmount's development, and some others, at a comparatively early stage that century, took place under much different social, political and economic scenarios from those emerging in later decades, especially from c.1860 onwards. By mid-century, sheep farming as a means of land use became more widespread, and this itself was targeted as a cause of depopulation. However, after a slump in the sheep farming industry more forests were emerging and appeared to have accelerated the trend.

The proliferation of deer forests in the Highlands had an impact on this forest later that century. Since most Highland landlords desired to make the best profits by letting out their lands for sporting purposes, those who opposed forests then criticised them in favour of alternative forms of land use that were arguably beneficial to Highland communities as a whole. The Napier Commission of 1884 argued that both sheep farming and deer forests created the same numbers for employment, but critics of forests were not

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<sup>2</sup> Devine, *Clanship to Crofters War*; K. Fenyo, *Contempt, Sympathy and Romance: Lowland perceptions of the Highlands and the Clearances during the Famine Years, 1845-55*, (East Linton, 1999). {Hereafter: Fenyo, *Contempt, Sympathy and Romance*} James Hunter, *The Making of the Crofting Community*, (Edinburgh, 1976), 172-3. {Hereafter: Hunter, *Crofting Community*} Richards, *Highland Clearances*. John MacCaffery, *Scotland in the Nineteenth Century*, (1998).



convinced.<sup>3</sup> Blackmount was not directly brought into this debate, but one of a more general nature, despite its having existed as a forest for much longer. Widespread rental increases took place during the 1870s since there was more of a demand for forest lets by the rich, resulting in competitive leasing among landlords. Consequently, in the 1880s, the Breadalbane family faced economic challenges with new legislation giving government officials powers to tax proprietors. Local assessors imposed high valuations on forests, also resulting in high dues levied for Blackmount. The landlord lodged an appeal, in 1888-89, and in the following year. Taxation on it was partially reduced after its calculated value was compared with other sporting estates on the basis that the Forest was no longer let.<sup>4</sup>

Debates on the rights of landlordism brought deer forests, as a form of land use, into question. Two types of dispute on them are evident from the mid-nineteenth century: one in which there was protest regarding their specific presence, and the other stemming from proposed action on land reform. Individuals debated about the advantages and disadvantages of 'sporting estates'. William Scrope wrote about them in a positive sense, thus implying their marketability. But the general increase of Highland

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<sup>3</sup> British Parliamentary Papers, 21: Agriculture, *Report of the Commissioners of Inquiry into the condition of Crofters and Cottars in the Highlands and Islands of Scotland*, (1884). {Hereafter: *Napier Commission*}.

<sup>4</sup> NAS, GD 112/16/9/4/17 – Notes of Proceedings and Evidence in the Appeal of the Most Honourable the Marquis of Breadalbane against the Assessor's Valuation of Blackmount Deer Forest for the year 1888-89. {Hereafter: '*Blackmount valuation appeal, 1888-89*'} NAS, GD 112/16/9/4/5 – Notes of Proceedings and Evidence in the Appeal of the Most Honourable the Marquis of Breadalbane against the Assessor's Valuation of Blackmount Deer Forest for the year 1889-90. {Hereafter: '*Blackmount valuation appeal, 1889-90*'}

forests by the later nineteenth century attracted protest from influential Scots, including Alexander Robertson and Professor John Stuart Blackie who both mentioned the Blackmount area in their criticisms.<sup>5</sup> The matter had become a British political one by the 1880s, and policies implemented by successive governments directly affected the deer forests; land agitation then resulted in crofters' rights being taken into consideration.<sup>6</sup> The extent to which these broader debates and action affected Blackmount Forest needs explanation through closer analysis of what was happening in that locality. Likewise, the legacy of the second Marquis's Liberal political affiliations, and how it affected these debates, requires discussion.

Political agitation emerging from the 1870s, led to several changes in Highland legislation being implemented over the next fifty years. The Napier Commission's proposed reforms, however, dealt primarily with crofting in rural northwest communities, and the presence of deer forests was only debated in locations where their recent emergence had directly interfered with existing land use and local economy. Blackmount, formerly the Forest of Corrie Ba, had been a forest for centuries since it was in a mountainous landscape. After its re-formation in 1820, previously highly populated settlements, in upper Glen Orchy and Glen Etive, were converted into single sheep farms, and some of these remained until 1873. The Forest

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<sup>5</sup> Alexander Robertson, *Our Deer Forests: An inaugural lecture delivered to members of the Highland Economic Society*, (London, 1867). {Hereafter, 'Robertson, *Our Deer Forests*'}; John Stuart Blackie, *The Scottish Highlanders and the Land Laws*, (London, 1885) {Hereafter: 'Blackie, *Land Laws*'}

<sup>6</sup> Ewen A. Cameron, 'The political influence of Highland Landowners: a reassessment' 27-45, in *Northern Scotland*, 14, (Aberdeen, 1994). {Hereafter: Cameron, 'Highland Landowners'}

was composed mainly of upland grazings, making it difficult for individuals to criticise it in the way that several more recently emerging ones had been done. Concessions were made regarding its situation in an upland area of the Highlands, holding little profitable purpose other than being a deer forest, during the economic conditions then existing, and since Blackmount was situated comparatively near to the lowlands it was not directly affected.

Before c.1850 there is little evidence that Blackmount was being commercially let out to sporting tenants; if it were done so, it was certainly not on a wholesale basis. The second Marquis of Breadalbane still held this forest mainly for personal enjoyment and sport, for him and his guests, with motives of economic gain being a second consideration. Some income was generated from local sheep farming rentals, but it is unlikely that this covered the costs of managing Blackmount and paying employees. Thus, projects geared towards maximising profitability within other parts of the Breadalbane Estate were also financing its upkeep. The landlord's ideology at that time is seen from proposals to improve communications in the central Highlands with schemes such as the Scottish Grand Junction Railway, and mineral extraction in the Tyndrum area, but these strategies for increasing estate revenue were not successful in the long term. As already discussed, rentals from shootings in Argyllshire provide some evidence of the income-generating activities that served to subsidise Blackmount.<sup>7</sup>

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<sup>7</sup> See chapter 1, p.123-125 and chapter 3, p.216-217.

After Blackmount Forest reached maturity by the 1850s, the landlord implemented a policy of letting it wholesale from c.1860-1880. We may postulate that he desired to make significant returns after investing much money on it from c.1840. There is little doubt that the family had eventually intended to lease it out, considering significant sums previously spent on improvements, but they were presumably reluctant to do so on a wholesale basis. Its potential as a commercial 'sporting estate' was not exploited until after the second Marquis of Breadalbane's death in 1862, and Blackmount was let out from the following year.<sup>8</sup> Thus, its transfer to Lord Dudley possibly resulted from financial problems in the Breadalbane Estate after the second Marquis died, and the succession dispute not resolved until 1867, when the sixth Earl of Breadalbane was appointed.<sup>9</sup> Forest leases continued until 1885, and in those latter years it was also sub-let.

The marketability of Blackmount as a commercial 'sporting estate', from 1863, may have encouraged other nearby landlords to develop deer forests. Orr has suggested that reductions of deer numbers there during the late 1880s were attributed to the recent formation of adjacent forests at Rannoch, Glenetive and Blackcorries.<sup>10</sup> Although this may have contributed towards the trend it is likely that sporting methods such as deer driving were the root of the problem. Once deer had been scared off into the surrounding forests they were easily shot.

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<sup>8</sup> NAS, GD 112/16/14/8 – Arrangements of lease to Lord Dudley, (1863-4).

<sup>9</sup> Gillies, *In Famed Breadalbane*, 221-228.

<sup>10</sup> Orr, *Deerforests*, 106.

### Deer forest development during the later nineteenth century

Interest amongst the rich towards Highland deer forests and sporting estates increased from c.1840. Orr has argued how a combination of new railway communication, Landseer's paintings, books by Scrope, and Prince Albert's involvement in deer stalking had been attractions towards forests for sportsmen. Orr particularly associates their emergence with the upper classes who had an ability to spend lavishly: 'the accumulation of wealth and the social status attached to the expenditure on deer stalking seem to be the most satisfactory explanations of the development.'<sup>11</sup> Since Blackmount had developed from a comparatively early stage, it had, in many respects, advantages for its marketability later that century. However, there were also pitfalls and disadvantages in letting out the Forest, and from the way it had been managed, as the landlord had little control over what long-term tenants did to it.<sup>12</sup> The relevance of these issues, in comparison with other estates, and debates on them, become more apparent as the chapter progresses.

The rise in the number of deer forests during the nineteenth century is one reason why they became criticised. E. Bell estimated that no more than twenty forests existed prior to then. By 1872 their numbers had risen to seventy, and just over ten years later they had increased to one hundred.

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<sup>11</sup> Orr, *Deer Forests*, 40-41.

<sup>12</sup> See below, p.333-337.

Bell estimated that by 1892 over two million acres of land in Scotland had become forested, but that only on tenth of the landmass, comprising agricultural land, was below 700 feet. By 1892 over 150 forests existed in Scotland, with 40 of these in Ross and Cromarty, increasing their coverage to over 2.5 million acres. Collectively, the income for landlords amounted to upwards of £1,170,000, and the highest rental then was the Forest of Mar, at £4000.<sup>13</sup> Criticism of the deer forest system arose due to the increased landmass they had covered in the period c.1870-1890, and the reasons for this phenomenon requires detailed analysis.

As already discussed, Blackmount Forest was let out on a wholesale basis to aristocrats and entrepreneurs from the 1860s. Generally, deer forests were by this time already attracting new types of sporting tenants, and one contemporary sportsman observed two phases existing. In the first, smaller English landlords often eliminated poorer Scottish ones from bidding; subsequently they were also competing with millionaires from London, Manchester and America.<sup>14</sup> Presumably, these 'landlords' were large tenants within estates; we have seen an example of this with Mr Greaves on the periphery of Blackmount during the 1860s.<sup>15</sup> Later that century businessmen were also taking interests in forests as Peter Robertson commented in 1877: 'For great part of the kind of sportsman we have now

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<sup>13</sup> E. Weston Bell, *The Scottish Deerhound with notes on its origins and characteristics*, (Edinburgh, 1892), 80-81.

<sup>14</sup> Orr, *Deer Forests*, (From: John Colquhoun, *Sporting Days*, 3.).

<sup>15</sup> See below, p.323-324.

is cotton manufacturers, coal proprietors, iron managers etc'.<sup>16</sup> He appears to have recognised entrepreneurs entering sporting estates, and this change in emphasis was attributed to the growth of urban industrialisation from the 1840s.

The formation of deer forests emerging adjacent to Blackmount in the last two decades of the nineteenth century demonstrates a continuing trend where they were considered from a landlord's point of view as economically sustainable. Black Corries Estate, formed during the 1880s, was one such example; it had several owners and tenants in subsequent decades. It is an elongated estate stretching from the head of Glencoe, near Kingshouse, to the middle of Rannoch Moor, bounded on its north by A' Cruach, and to the south by Loch Laidon. Donald Alexander Smith, Lord Strathcona, owned Black Corries during the early twentieth century; the eastern part of his estate reaching as far as Invercoe, near Glencoe Village.<sup>17</sup> Black Corries, although much smaller, was similar to Blackmount in that its primary purpose was as a commercial deer forest.

Other nearby forests included Beinn Bhreac and Corroul Forest, parts of the Corroul and Fersit Estates in southern Inverness-shire held by Sir John Stirling Maxwell. Their estate accounts show that there were

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<sup>16</sup> Willie Orr, *The Economic Impact of Deer Forests in the Scottish Highlands, 1850-1914*, *Scottish Economic and Social History*, II, 1982, 46 {Hereafter: Orr, 'Economic Impact of Deer Forests'}.

(His source is from: George Cupples, *Scotch Deer Hounds and their masters*).

<sup>17</sup> Lord Strathcona, *A biography of Donald Alexander Smith*, (1996).

improvements and provision of employment from c.1890.<sup>18</sup> The rental of Corrou Forest in 1887 was £1400 and consisted of 30,000 imperial acres; 17,000 acres was designated as deer forest ground and 13,000 for grouse shooting. The forest was recently expanded so it was estimated that 25 stags could be shot, and 700 brace of grouse was the average in a 'fair' season. Clearly, grouse shooting was more successful here in contrast to Blackmount Forest, possibly because of gentler topography.<sup>19</sup> This sport was not actively encouraged at Blackmount because it scared the deer.<sup>20</sup> The area was, however, easily exploited for its marketability as a 'sporting estate'. It consequently became drawn into contentious political debates and enquiries on landownership, a theme to which we shall now examine.

#### The background to debates, enquiries & solutions on Highland landlordism

Initially, migration and emigration are themes of relevance since they were closely connected with later criticisms of the deer forest system. Depopulation in the Breadalbane Estate took on a different pattern from that further north. The Glenorchy and Blackmount area had already been a scene significant emigration by the 1830s. Thus, this area was not a focus of concern or criticism when famine struck the Highlands from 1845.

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<sup>18</sup> Mitchell Library Archives: TD 503/9 – Corrou and Fersit Estates, Inverness-shire, 1891-1970.

<sup>19</sup> NAS, GD 112/16/9/8/8 – Letter from Alex Craig to Mr Balderston esq, Inverness, (29<sup>th</sup> July 1887); we can compare the numbers of deer shot at Corrou that year with those at Blackmount on p.339.

<sup>20</sup> *Blackmount valuation appeal, 1889-90*, 29.



However, as already discussed, the second Marquis of Breadalbane was at the forefront of a lengthy dispute with Highland drovers and cattle dealers between 1844 and 1848.<sup>21</sup> The attention it had drawn to him presumably alerted the Marquis of to the need to take careful political decisions to avoid his being specifically targeted in further controversy.

Evidence of this can be seen in that he was one of a number of Highland proprietors who planned to provide relief for destitute families on the outbreak of the potato famine in 1846. The Sutherland family, whose factor, Partrick Sellar, had imposed unpopular methods of clearances earlier that century, likewise later took measures to alleviate hardship in the 1840s.<sup>22</sup> Correspondence between Alexander Campbell of Barcaldine and the second Marquis of Breadalbane shows that they intended to aid destitute Highlanders by providing them with employment in a proposed scheme for railways through the central Highlands.<sup>23</sup> Also, since the second Marquis openly supported the Disruption of 1843, he was representing the views of many ministers and congregations who advocated a change in direction with the role of the Free Church in providing aid to poor Highlanders. These are fundamental issues of importance when considering later debates emerging on the responsibilities of landlords.

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<sup>21</sup> Refer to chapter 4, p.263-287.

<sup>22</sup> R.H.Campbell and T.M. Devine, 'The Rural Experience', 46-72, in *People and Society in Scotland*, II, (Edinburgh, 1990), 50 {Hereafter: Campbell and Devine, 'The Rural Experience'}; Richards, *Highland Clearances*, First Edition, II, 364.

<sup>23</sup> See chapter 3, p.170.

Campbell and Devine, considering the famine period's impact, both state: 'Efforts to resettle the tenantry, harsh and unfeeling as they may seem to later generations, were not always attempts to clear the land to make way for sheep, or later for deer, without concern to the welfare of the tenants.'<sup>24</sup> This approach may dispel to some extent a popular perception that all Highland landlords were wholly responsible for their tenants' unfortunate circumstances. Moreover, Fenyo's recent study of critical press coverage during the Highland famine has shown three evident themes. One was the perception of 'contempt' towards the Highland people, with ideas of idleness and laziness portrayed in their character after they had received famine relief. The others were 'sympathy' and 'romance', as aid was given to alleviate poverty whilst the Highlands were being romanticised.<sup>25</sup> Both landlords and government had to deal with overpopulated estates and tackle problems that had reached their climax by the 1840s.

James Hunter's research on the crofting system shows that it was concentrated in the north and west Highlands and islands, not the Central Highlands. Deer forests had spread into most parts of the Highlands during the 1880s, resulting in their unpopularity amongst crofters' communities because of encroachment. Political organisations such as the Highland Land League consequently decried the proliferation of sporting estates. Crofting tenants protested against forests on the basis that they wished to

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<sup>24</sup> Campbell and Devine, *The Rural Experience*, 50.

<sup>25</sup> K. Fenyo, *Contempt, Sympathy and Romance*.

settle on former sheep farms rather than see them being converted into deer forests. There were organised incidents involving large numbers of people from communities in Skye and Lewis to drive deer out of some estates there.<sup>26</sup> Thus, conflict regarding what land should be used for either as a sportsman's reserve or to provide subsistence for local communities is evident in the closing decades of the nineteenth century.

The emergence of more forests can be explained by the failing Highland sheep farming economy after the 1870s, which almost disappeared by the 1890s. As a result, landlords were making large profits from turning the vacated grazing grounds into deer forests.<sup>27</sup> Even before then sheep farming was affected by wider economic factors from the 1860s, and wool prices only recovered in the early 1870s. In the 1880s many farms became vacated and were available for let in estates because of poor wool prices, but in the previous two decades landlords demanded high rents and had difficulty in obtaining tenants. Potential tenants were worried about taking valuable sheep farms since if the market collapsed they may have remained in the possession of highly rented holdings.<sup>28</sup> What was happening specifically at Blackmount can be compared with these general trends. The proliferation of forests at the end of the nineteenth century resulted in their existence being called into question, during a period when politicians debated on Highland land reform and Home Rule.

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<sup>26</sup> Hunter, *Crofting Community*, 172-3.

<sup>27</sup> Hunter, *Crofting Community*, 181.

<sup>28</sup> Orr, *Deer Forests*, 14-15.

To tackle the debates and problems a Royal Commission on the Highlands was started in 1892 and reported by 1895; this is sometimes misinterpreted as 'the Deer Forest Commission' from historians past and present, a point noted by Ewen Cameron. Rather than offering a critical analysis of the deer forest system, the report was concerned with adapting areas of land for crofting. Cameron states: 'The commissioners made it clear that they considered deer forests to be unsuitable for cultivation on account of their sterility, excessive altitude, and remoteness'. The proposed changes were never implemented, but a Crofters' Bill was introduced in 1895.<sup>29</sup> Legislative change emerged in 1886 when crofters were given certain rights of holding and inheritance. Blackmount Forest escaped government criticism due to its geographical proximity and otherwise unprofitable use, but it was targeted for taxation to raise local revenue.

#### Land Debates: Those who challenged or defended the Highland deer forests

Political views against deer forests in the Scottish Highlands gained momentum during the second half of the nineteenth century. This was presumably due to their increase in popularity amongst the rich. What emerged was a class war over what the Highlands should represent for either landlords or their tenants. Both Alexander Robertson and Professor

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<sup>29</sup> Cameron, 'Highland Landowners', 27-45.

John Stuart Blackie stood at the forefront of the debate. The views that they held can be compared with evidence presented from Parliamentary enquiries into deer forests. Therefore, the Napier Commission of 1884 weighed up the relative advantages and disadvantages of Highland forests. As the report suggests, Blackmount Forest was one that seemed to have a justified existence as it was situated predominantly on higher ground with little agricultural value. However, land in the Highlands began to be used for other leisurely purposes, other than purely 'sporting estates' for an elite, with the increasing popularity of walking and mountaineering, especially by c.1890.

As early as 1853, Alexander Robertson made a direct challenge to the policies of Highland landlords in a pamphlet entitled: *'Barriers to National Prosperity'*.<sup>30</sup> Robertson, himself a landlord in Perthshire, was particularly aware of land management practices taking place within the larger estates of his neighbour, the second Marquis of Breadalbane. The main challenge was on his policy of evictions in recent decades, and the conversion of large areas of Breadalbane, formerly holding many sheep and cattle, to seasonal sporting purposes for killing game and deer. Robertson related these developments, especially the insecurity of tenure, to a rising ambience of apprehensiveness throughout the country.<sup>31</sup> His arguments, directed against other Highland landlords and their policies, gained popular support during

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<sup>30</sup> Alexander Robertson, *Barriers to National Prosperity*, (Edinburgh, 1853).

<sup>31</sup> His views are quoted in: Thomas Johnston, *Our Scots Noble Families*, (1909; republished Argyll, 1999), 96.

the period and Robertson's criticism of deer forests, coinciding with their continuing development, was stepped up during the 1880s.<sup>32</sup>

Thomas Johnston highlights in *Our Scots Noble Families* Robertson's particular grievances directed at the landlord's policies in the Breadalbane Estates. It was stated that both at Blackmount and at Kenmore, tenants were bound by their leases to leave their fields next to the deer forests as 'waste' in order that deer could winter on their lands, at their expense. He claimed that if tenants scared deer away with dogs or firearms they would be ejected from their holdings, even if their crops had been eaten. Robertson acknowledged that the Marquis of Breadalbane provided much employment in his estates, but criticised him for the poor wages his workers were given. He stated that some had to travel for several miles a day, and their wages barely paid their rent or supported a family.<sup>33</sup> Evidently, Robertson was concerned about the social conditions of tenants there, and linked this with the development of forests. However, recollect that in 1845 the tenants of both Inverliver and Inverkinglass, to the west of Blackmount, could claim compensation for crops being destroyed by deer; thus, this raises questions about his arguments regarding tenants' rights of pasturage.<sup>34</sup>

Robertson's date of publication for 'Barriers' coincided with a new

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<sup>32</sup> See below, p.313-314.

<sup>33</sup> Alexander Robertson, *Barriers to the National Prosperity of Scotland*, (Edinburgh, 1853). (from: *Our Scots Noble families*, 98.)

<sup>34</sup> Refer back to chapter 3, p.186-187.

political movement emerging in the same year, the National Association for the Vindication of Scottish Rights, who produced their *Address to the People of Scotland*; this mainly dealt with Scotland's unequal status in comparison with England.<sup>35</sup> Robertson's pamphlet, although not directly related, shows that social problems were being openly blamed on politicians and landlords. Both of these pamphlets may have been given wider support in the short term were it not for the onset of the Crimean War, lasting until 1856. These forms of popular protest were not uncommon from the mid-nineteenth century; this followed on from the ecclesiastical Disruption of the 1840s, which, rather ironically, the second Marquis supported.<sup>36</sup> Britain was developing then both industrially and municipally, and Scotland's urban working classes were particularly inclined towards the Liberal reforming ethos. The second Marquis, himself a prominent Liberal politician albeit of the Whig tradition, may not have anticipated that this would take place.

One individual who stood up for tenants' rights in Highland estates was W. MacCombie Smith, stating that the land laws existing in Scotland were unjust. He criticised government and landlords for apparently clearing people to make way for wild animals, rather than letting tenants put the land to better use. However, both landlords and politicians used legal powers to protect their interest in hunting for sport. Smith made interesting comments in his section on 'City Slums versus Highland Glens' that contrasts with

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<sup>35</sup> *Address to the People of Scotland and statement of grievances by the National Association for the Vindication of Scottish Rights* (Edinburgh, 1853).

<sup>36</sup> Chapter 2, p.99-102 discusses the second Marquis's involvement in the Disruption of 1843.

Fenyo's recent study of the Highland famine period:

It is hardly possible to imagine a greater contrast than between a city slum with its foul, fetid, and sunless air, overcrowded population, and festering misery, and a Highland glen, with its pure air and sunshine, its green, fertile haughs, its mountainsides and corries green with grass or purple heather, tenanted only by a few wild animals reserved for the sport of the rich, idle, and selfish. Yet, great as is the contrast, there is a close and intimate connection between them; the city slum is the natural result of depopulated land lying waste in the Highlands and elsewhere. The overcrowded city slum and the depopulated Highland glen are alike the result of iniquitous land laws which enable a few landholders to appropriate the land which belongs to the whole nation and to use it for their own selfish ends.

The idea that a rural Highland lifestyle was cleaner than a city one contrasted with earlier perceptions of filth and overcrowding also existing there before clearances took place. Smith also questioned the justification of deer forests on the basis that wealth of the rich was generated from 'the toiling millions', and so land belongs to all.<sup>37</sup> These opinions emerged when the deer forests debate had peaked, but since Blackmount was not directly targeted, as others were, its existence may have been seen as acceptable.

Forests were already being perceived as unpopular earlier that century. Robertson, in a lecture to the Highland Economic Society, in

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<sup>37</sup> W. MacCombie Smith, *Men or Deer? In the Scottish Glens or facts about the deer forests*, (Inverness, 1893), 5-7. {Hereafter: Smith, *Men or Deer?*}



March 1867, expressed his moral arguments against deer forests since they had further proliferated. He referred to a debate that had recently emerged, between the Duke of Argyll and Professor Leone Levi, after an enquiry on Highland social conditions, by adding his political and economic opinions towards it:

Maugre (in spite of) the sinister predictions of our would-be social philosophers, I anticipate a glorious future for the Highlands; and it would indeed be an evil day - even for Britain - to see the grand north country converted into one great hunting field. This however shall not be. ... Viewed, then, as a question in Social Science, OUR DEER FORESTS can be shown to be very injurious to the interests of the nation; and the result of the enquiry should, if I am at all successful, show that all lovers of their country should agitate for their entire suppression.<sup>38</sup>

Robertson believed that poaching game at night was lawful and encouraged his audience to be involved in such activity. He did not recognise the legality of the Night Poaching Act of 1828, demonstrating that his views were out of step in respect to Scots law. Nevertheless, we have already demonstrated that successive Campbell landlords in the Breadalbane Estates themselves had particular control of Highland land laws since the eighteenth century; recollect that the second Marquis of Breadalbane, after court intervention, removed the old drovers' stance from Inveroran to Bridge of Orchy during the 1840s.<sup>39</sup>

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<sup>38</sup> Alexander Robertson, *Our Deer Forests: An inaugural lecture delivered to members of the Highland Economic Society*, (London, 1867), 12. {Hereafter, 'Robertson, *Our Deer Forests*'}

<sup>39</sup> Refer back to chapter 4, p.263-287.

Alexander Robertson likewise challenged individuals who stated that mountainous land could only be used as deer forests. He argued, on the basis of reports he had heard from shepherds, that deer were less likely to survive inclement weather in this environment; but that black-faced sheep were better adapted. Robertson was aware that Blackmount Forest was managed in a fashion allowing both deer and sheep to co-exist there, as portions of land were 'adapted for grazing purposes'. He specifically stated that sheep from Clashgour Farm in Blackmount Forest were 'the finest ever seen' at the Falkirk Tryst.<sup>40</sup> Robertson's comments on the land use adopted there gives the impression that it was suited for deer and sheep. Their co-existence in some of the post-1850 forests was not unusual, but since Blackmount existed amongst a few forests before then it had an established reputation as being ideal for both. Indeed, Smith has stated that it was rare for deer forests to have been exclusively inhabited by deer alone.<sup>41</sup> Thus, Robertson, in forming his arguments against deer forests found it challenging to criticise all of them collectively since some catered for other types of grazing land use.

Another critic of deer forests was Professor John Stuart Blackie who developed a sentimental affinity with Highlanders resulting in his involvement with their political agitation. Originally a Glaswegian, Blackie

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<sup>40</sup> Robertson, *Our Deer Forests*, 16-17.

<sup>41</sup> Smith, 'Changing deer numbers', 89.

had become Professor of Humanity at Aberdeen University in 1841, and later Professor of Greek at Edinburgh by 1852; in 1882 he was instrumental in founding the chair of Celtic at Edinburgh University.<sup>42</sup> Blackie was an influential critic whose writings often decried social injustices, and later attributed deer forests to this category. He was well travelled, having visited many areas both at home and abroad; Professor Blackie was also a regular keen hill walker in the Scottish Highlands, and his accounted excursions there predate the inaugural meets of the Scottish Mountaineering Club, as discussed later. Incidents with landlords and their employees in the estates there possibly inspired his dislike of Highland proprietorship, and especially deer forests, but his opinion of individual landlords was varied.

In September 1867, when Professor Blackie was on an excursion at Kingshouse, a gamekeeper there asked Campbell of Monzie to prosecute him for ascending Buachaille Etive Mor. Blackie was told of this, by a banker at Fort William, three days after the trip.<sup>43</sup> Monzie had not followed the gamekeeper's advice and, instead invited the Professor into his house:

He received me with great frankness of old Highland hospitality, gave me a splendid dinner of venison tripe and full bosomed grouse, with a magnum of most excellent claret, capped with a tumbler of brandy and water...He took me through all his various and strange museums, introduced me to his magnificent deer

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<sup>42</sup> Donaldson and Morpeth, *Dictionary*, 22.

<sup>43</sup> Ian Mitchell, *Scotland's Mountains before the Mountaineers*, (originally published in 1988; current edition, Edinburgh), 59; From: *The letters of John Stuart Blackie to his wife*, (Edinburgh and London, 1909), 164.

hounds, and mingled deer-stalking and good fellowship with pious scraps of Gospel and Revival hymns in a manner quite original and refreshing...I should not have missed the acquaintance of this man for £100; he is full of natural vigour and nobleness, but like a wild horse has never been accustomed to the rein, and is not quite understood by the quiet jogging people of whom the respectability of this world is mainly made up...He gave me a head of deer horn, and told his keeper to send you a haunch of venison.<sup>44</sup>

If this was Blackie's genuine opinion of Monzie, and his lifestyle, then it contradicted a later view of him, or other landlords, as described below. In one respect, Monzie may have wanted to keep on good terms with his influential guest. In another, Blackie was possibly relieved that his host had not attempted to incriminate him for climbing the Buachaille. Interestingly, Blackie's observation on Monzie's religious following can be explained by this landlord's support of the 1843 Disruption, similar to the second Marquis.

Five years after his visit to Glencoe, Professor Blackie, in the introduction to his book on Scottish poetry, appeared to criticise the attitude of landlords and their employees there. He encouraged free access during a period when a trespass law was being implemented, and referred to his earlier experiences on Buachaille Etive Mor:

You never saw a Ben rising bolt upright with a more distinct emphasis; and yet it

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<sup>44</sup> *The letters of John Stuart Blackie to his wife*, (Edinburgh and London, 1909), 169-170.

is by no means difficult to climb, if you assail it, as I did, from the west side, and you are not deterred from your purpose by a threatened action of damages from any gentlemen who may assert that the wild mountains in this part of the world belong to him exclusively, and to his gamekeeper. I have been threatened more than once by these gentlemen during my wanderings; but I have given them the answer simply, as I advise you to do, by walking straightforward, even though it should lead to jumping a dyke, as a distinguished professor of Botany is celebrated to have done in Glen Tilt<sup>45</sup>

These incidents led to a series of influential political statements by Blackie, used to defame Highland landlords and to open a debate. He was convinced of their lack of powers to prosecute hill walkers and scientists on Highland estates. Also, the Trespass (Scotland) Act implemented during the 1865 had the intention of prosecuting individuals who encamped on private land; this is a policy Blackie is likely to have decried, and to justify his protest he criticised what he saw as anachronistic landlordism practices and powers.

Eventually both Robertson and Blackie began to question the laws that protected deer forests, and to challenge their existence. Collectively, they raised issues which underlie this thesis, towards our attempts at understanding what the land should be used for. In a landlord's view it was for them alone, but these two individuals attempted to question the legality of this. By the 1880s, Professor Blackie stated that deer forests represented 'the penultimate stage in the Highlanders' misfortune attributed to the

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<sup>45</sup> John Stuart Blackie, 'A talk with the tourists', introduction of: *Lays of the Highlands and Islands*, (London, 1872), xxii.

failings of the forty-five'.<sup>46</sup> Thus the existence of 'sporting estates' was, he considered, based on the outcome of history. His strengthening of previous opinion could possibly be attributed to the higher number of forests coming into formation by that time. Blackie emphasised a clear dichotomy existing between those having an interest in sporting pursuits and the many others who opposed this activity. He identified sportsmen as representing a former state in human civilization, and not the interests of people during his time.

Although, Blackmount Forest was not specifically mentioned in Alexander Robertson's debates that questioned land use, after the Highlands were transformed during the later nineteenth century, all estates were targeted for the way that history had emerged in the Highlands. In 1888, he wrote a pamphlet called *Our Land Laws and the Deer Forests* where he criticised Highland landlordism in relation to recent political events. His observations were particularly directed at the 'laws of entail', when land was usually passed from father to son, or the nearest male heir amongst the family elite, and the fact that most land in the Highlands was held by a privileged few. He hinted that the Crofters' Commission had not gone far enough in counterbalancing the injustices relating to their rights of holding. He also believed that Highland destitution was primarily attributed to absentee landlords leaving their factors to manage their estates. Robertson stated that 'feudalism' had reached the Highlands relatively late, but when it had done so it became more entrenched there, than anywhere else. His

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<sup>46</sup> John Stuart Blackie, *The Scottish Highlanders and the Land Laws*, (London, 1885), 82.

ultimate aim was to give historical, political, and philosophical justification for a recently used phrase: 'The land for the people'.<sup>47</sup>

Deer forests formed the later part of his discussion, presumably because they had only recently come to dominate many areas in the north. Robertson stated he was not vehemently against their existence per se, but their proliferation since mid-century:

Deer Forests in Scotland are of very recent date, and have only within the last thirty years or so grown to become a public nuisance. It was the Prince Consort who was the means of raising them into fashion; but there is no reason for supposing that he was thereby doing what he did out of any hostility to, or want of sympathy with, the highland people, to whom, in a historical manner, the country belonged.

Robertson called into question the 'Game Law', and how animals were exclusively protected under this legislation. Deer forests had recently become a contentious issue due to a legal case that had emerged between Walter Winans, an American shooting tenant in Invernesshire, and Mr Murdoch of Kintail; this concerned the arbitrary treatment that Winans had imposed on his subtenants and resulted in litigation.<sup>48</sup>

W. MacCombie Smith, also criticised deer forests since many more

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<sup>47</sup> Alexander Robertson, *Our Land Laws and the Deer Forests*, (Glasgow, 1888), 8-41.

<sup>48</sup> *ibid*, 52,55.

had come into formation in the later nineteenth century; by then they were taking up much of the Highlands, particularly with those emerging after 1883. Again, Blackmount was not specifically mentioned, but others such as Glen Tilt and Glen Taner were highlighted because landlords there had imposed access restrictions to walkers. Smith was concerned about the effects forests had on Highland depopulation: 'there are many districts in Scotland, once thickly populated, where there are at the present time nothing but gamekeepers' and shepherds' cottages at long intervals, with an occasional shooting lodge'.<sup>49</sup> He had possibly overlooked the fact that forest formation was generally a two-phase process, emerging after a failure in sheep farming in areas where depopulation had already taken place; but in some estates clearance did not take place, or was not stepped up, until they were converted to forests.

On the other side, some individuals favoured the Highland deer forests, but published evidence of their opinions is particularly difficult to trace. Probably the closest to a justification for their existence is from the Napier Commission, but they took a more pragmatic approach. Writers such as William Scrope and John Colquhoun looked upon them in a positive sense, but this was presumably since a market existed for their books. Scrope produced a popular guide from 1839 entitled *The Art of Deer Stalking*, which was republished several times. Most of the publications however dated from the later nineteenth century during the 'Victorian

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<sup>49</sup> W. MacCombie Smith, *Men or Deer?*



heyday' when forests were more popularly used by the rich. Some of these books were only produced on a limited basis, so they are likely to have been expensive and serving an elite audience who took an interest, or direct participation in Highland sports. Colquhoun's publication in 1878 stated: 'Perhaps as fine deer as any in the kingdom are those of the Blackmount'.<sup>50</sup> This kind of advertisement reaffirmed the Forest's established reputation as discussed in chapter 3.

Also, we can find comments on its apparent fame and natural beauty in tourist guidebooks. George Anderson, in his *Guide to the Highlands* appreciated the scenery at Blackmount on his tour north in 1863:

Half way the shores of Loch Toille or Tulla are rather picturesque, being garnished with some fine specimens of Scotch pine. Its margin forms a pleasant site for a shooting lodge of the Marquis of Breadalbane, whose adjacent forest on the Black Mount is distinguished for its stock of deer.<sup>51</sup>

His comments show that the area was particularly noted for its scenery, and the mention of high deer numbers gives us a clearer understanding of what Blackmount Forest had served to exist for since 1820. Consider Malcolm Ferguson's similar observations in 1899 on a tour north via Tyndrum:

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<sup>50</sup> John Colquhoun, *The moor and the loch: containing minute instructions in all Highland sports*, (Edinburgh & London, 1878), 53.

<sup>51</sup> George Anderson, *Guide to the Highlands*, (1863), 'Glasgow to Fort William by Loch Lomond', 42.

Here the Glencoe road branches off the Oban road to the north leading up through the famous Black Mount deer forest, which forms part of the Breadalbane estate, passing Inveroran Hotel, situated on the banks of Loch Tulla. On the opposite shore of the lake is seen a handsome shooting lodge, which with the deer forest was for many years occupied by the late Lord Dudley, at a yearly rent of £5000.<sup>52</sup>

Both writers appreciated the setting at Blackmount, with its shooting base to cater for sportsmen; thus it was popularly known amongst travellers.

Some writers gave advice on what various Highland forests could offer to sportsmen, and described the locations, geography and local stories in relation to deer stalking. Robert Hall also popularised deer forests in his book, *The Highland Sportsman*.<sup>53</sup> Thomas Speedy's *Sport in the Highlands with Rod and Gun* was a guide to the wide range of game activities available to sportsmen and fishermen.<sup>54</sup> Speedy's guide, along with some of the other books, was re-published several times, showing their popular demand. Most were illustrated with line drawings of deer and game, some by Landseer, gaining a popular appeal towards those with an interest in art. We see the emergence of romantic perceptions of the region's natural beauty through his portrayals of Highland scenes, for example with 'Monarch of the Glen'. Landseer's involvement in both illustrating books on deer forests and visiting Blackmount shows his important place in elevating its

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<sup>52</sup> Malcolm Ferguson, *Tourists Guide to Killin, Loch Tay and the land of Famed Breadalbane from Aberfeldy to Oban*, (Dundee, 1899), 80.

<sup>53</sup> Robert Hall, *The Highland Sportsman: A Compendious sporting guide to the Highlands of Scotland*, 1882).

<sup>54</sup> Thomas Speedy, *Sport in the Highlands with Rod and Gun*, (Edinburgh & London, 1886).

reputation from the mid-nineteenth century onwards.

Although, published after our period of study, Blackmount attracted acclaim in 1907, when Alma Graham, Marchioness of Breadalbane, the wife of the last Earl to own it had written *The High Tops of Black Mount*.<sup>55</sup> This book was an insight into why the area was admired for its qualities of natural beauty as a sporting estate, and the detail in which she recollected her experiences there, with the numerous photographs taken, give it a memorable place in Scottish local history. The Marchioness held a particular fondness to her employees who resided there, as shown in her book. The *High Tops* was republished in 1935 by her executors who felt that it would generate acclaim to not just those with interests in sport, but also outdoor people such as mountaineers. It was popularly accepted during a time when deer forests were still generally being criticised. This book has given Blackmount an enduring recognition as one of the most well known areas in Scotland for its association with hunting.

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<sup>55</sup> Marchioness of Breadalbane, *High Tops*.

Challenges regarding parliamentary enquiries, valuation and taxation.

Highland proprietors were affected by the policies of Gladstone's Liberal government during the 1880s, and owners of deer forests were directly targeted. The political motives for legislative change were possibly based on awareness of latent tensions throughout the Highlands. Issues such as Home Rule, and the formation of the Highland Land League, coupled with debates on Irish landlordism, show that rural areas had become a focus of reform. The Liberals were defeated by 1886, so land reform was again placed low in the list of priorities of the newly elected Conservative government. In comparing both political organisations it appears that the Liberals had wanted to avert land agitation developing from Highland communities, but that the Conservatives were protecting the interests of landowners, many of whom held Highland sporting estates.

Government taxation on Blackmount Forest by the later nineteenth century became an especially significant problem for the Campbells of Breadalbane. Willie Orr has described the implications of this legislative change on Highland forests generally by mid-century. The sporting values of those leased out were assessed for local taxation but un-let forests were exempt from it. Blackmount became un-let in 1886, but legislation was adapted that year to incorporate the grazing value of forests in this

category.<sup>56</sup> By 1886, The Sporting Land Rating Act stipulated that un-let forests were to be assessed for rates on the basis of their sporting value in order that revenue for local areas could be increased.<sup>57</sup> The changes in government legislation show that they were not going to let landlords avoid taxation, and the deer forests were considered an advantageous target for increasing local revenue and keeping taxes low. Blackmount Forest thus became directly affected and when its value was assessed, it was costly.<sup>58</sup>

When we consider the extent of his estates it is little surprise that the Breadalbane landlord was investigated for taxation. In 1874, the gross annual rental for the Campbell of Breadalbane's lands in Argyllshire, then covering 179,225 acres, was £21,165. Trustees connected with the first Marquis of Breadalbane also held smaller proportions of land there.<sup>59</sup> A survey of landowners in the British Isles in 1883 shows that estates held by the Campbells of Breadalbane amounted to nearly half a million acres, making them then the second largest landed family in Scotland.<sup>60</sup> Their territorial, political and economic control of the region was long established, and was recognised by William Marshall in the later eighteenth century. However, the main point to emphasise here is that this was sustained throughout the nineteenth century, thus partially explaining why they were

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<sup>56</sup> Orr, *Deer Forests*, 102; he states that in 1855 the Earl (Marquis) of Breadalbane had to consult Queen's counsel's opinion on the subject of un-let deer forests. The Forest was un-let in 1886 because of recent neglect by the late Lord Dudley's subtenants, see p. 333-337.

<sup>57</sup> Orr, *Deer Forests*, 104.

<sup>58</sup> See below, p.339-347.

<sup>59</sup> Thomas Johnston, *Our Scots Noble Families*, (Argyll, 1999), 92; (From the rental return of 1874).

<sup>60</sup> Robertson, 'Scottish Grand Junction Railway', 189.

targeted for taxation during the 1880s.

In 1886, crofters in the Highlands were given security of tenure and inheritance rights by a Crofters' Act. This emerged from the parliamentary enquiry or Napier Commission that had examined their social conditions, and indicated in 1884 that the recent proliferation of deer forests had become a contentious political issue, but the legislation that emerged did not abolish them.<sup>61</sup> The report's section on forests, discussed their social, economic and environmental effects. For example there was enquiry regarding potential damage done by deer on crofters' lands; another theme focused on the relative worth of forests and sheep farms in terms of employment provision. The commissioners assessed the recent economic climate, where sheep farming had considerably declined, and stated that were it not for the existence of forests, proprietors would have had little other use for their land.<sup>62</sup> Therefore, an economy based on deer forests, even if they were considered unpopular, was necessary in many areas. The ultimate aim of the report was to strike a compromise so that forests would not continue to proliferate, or interfere with crofters' livelihoods, in the way they had recently done.

Much of the investigation centred on the use of crofters' lands in the Highlands, and the effects adjacent forests had on them. Blackmount and

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<sup>61</sup> Donaldson & Morpeth, *Dictionary*, 50; Orr, *Deer Forests*, 62.

<sup>62</sup> *Napier Commission*, 91.

several other existing forests were not directly mentioned, presumably because they were not in the 'crofting zone'. Also, since Blackmount Forest was on predominantly higher ground, with areas for grazing, it escaped the general criticism expressed at that time especially since it existed from 1820, emerging in a different pattern to the post 1850 forests. The commissioners had suggested that land below 1000 feet in the eastern Highlands should be prohibited from deer forest use; but in the west this was difficult to assess because of the more undulating mountain landscape.<sup>63</sup> The report concluded that proposed changes in legislation on forests would not significantly affect existing ones as considerable expenses were already incurred on them.<sup>64</sup> Presumably the government would have been obliged otherwise to compensate landlords of established sporting estates.

At this stage it is now appropriate to focus directly on the social and economic structure of Blackmount from c.1860-1890. Within this context we can examine how it was affected by the political history of the Highlands during those decades, and assess its marketability as a 'sporting estate', in comparison with the numerous other deer forests throughout the region. This concluding section highlights problems existing in commercial letting and evidence of demand amongst tenants in securing leases at a period when deer forests had become particularly fashionable amongst the rich.

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<sup>63</sup> *Napier Commission*, 94.

<sup>64</sup> *Napier Commission*, 96.

Leases of Blackmount by tenants from 1860s to 1880s

Forest letting did not take place to any great extent before the second Marquis of Breadalbane died in 1862, other than part of it being leased in the previous year. We have already discussed some of the shooting lets given prior to then in parts of the Argyllshire estates including Glenorchy, Tyndrum and Dalmally.<sup>65</sup> Wholesale commercial letting of Blackmount only emerged during the second half of the nineteenth century, before then it appeared that the landlord held it for his own pleasure and for his aristocratic, political and artistic guests. As the evidence below suggests, an emerging crisis in estate finances, brought on by problems in identifying a legitimate successor to the Breadalbane estates resulted in Blackmount Forest being let out wholesale for the first time. Its creation and development from 1820-1862 had spanned most of the Second Marquis's adult life, and the expenditure he put into it was funded by estate income generated from other parts of his estates. After his death it becomes apparent that trustees saw no alternative but to lease the Forest out wholesale in order to settle estate debts.

In 1861, shortly before his death, we see an interesting development when part of the Forest was leased out for £400. Edward Greaves, was given shooting rights to kill up to 20 harts in a designated area of ground from Barravurich to Loch Ba and Loch Laidon. Peter Robertson discussed

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<sup>65</sup> See chapter 3, p.216-217.



the marches, and other matters, in correspondence with Mr Wyllie. The Marquis prohibited Greaves from shooting hinds there during the winter. Robertson agreed with this policy, as he was aware that deer could easily be moved over to the Strowan Estate. He was concerned that dogs should not be set on deer, as this generally scared them away, unless they were already wounded. However, if deer driven were up to the corries it was not considered to be a problem. Robertson and Robert MacNaughton inspected the dwelling at Barravurich and agreed that structural repairs were needed there.<sup>66</sup> Clearly, the estate was obliged to provide adequate accommodation to tenants who leased this part of the Forest. This let indicates that financial problems may have already existed shortly before the Marquis' death.

The wholesale leasing of Blackmount Forest was arranged by estate trustees a year after the second Marquis of Breadalbane's death in 1862. His heir was a cousin, John Alexander Campbell, sixth Earl of Breadalbane, who faced challenges from members of the family and other claimants over his right of succession in the earldom, and he did not succeed until 1867.<sup>67</sup> This, with possible financial problems, likely influenced the letting of Blackmount Forest, therefore suggesting that the Campbells of Breadalbane may have conformed to a commercialised pattern representative of the

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<sup>66</sup> NAS, GD 112/16/12/5 – Copy, Letter by Peter Robertson, Forest Lodge to Mr Wyllie, (14<sup>th</sup> May 1861).

<sup>67</sup> Scots Peerage, II, *Campbell of Breadalbane*, 212; The second Marquis of Breadalbane (formerly Lord Glenorchy) died on 8<sup>th</sup> November at Lausanne in Switzerland. He was succeeded by his cousin, John Alexander Gavin, sixth earl of Breadalbane and Holland. The succession was contested by another branch of the Campbell family for several years.

newer forests. Fortunately, improvements from the 30 previous years had made the area attractive to sporting tenants. A continuation of leases, from the 1860s to 1880s, shows that Blackmount Forest was being exploited commercially, like most other Highland estates.<sup>68</sup> It had been itself already adapted to follow trends typically present in nineteenth-century commercial sporting estates, whether or not it may have influenced the development of others in the longer term.

Estate correspondence in 1863, confirms that a financial crisis then existed within the Breadalbane Estates, showing its property assets being valued by Dowells and Lyon Auctioneers and Appraisers in Edinburgh. Valuations of furniture were made at all of the 15 shooting lodges in the Breadalbane estates; the contents within Forest House at Blackmount itself amounted to £720. Household linen amounting to £68 and wine at £74 was deducted from the valuation there. The contents of other nearby bases, Glenkinglass Iron House, and Ardmaddy Castle were valued at £150 and £223 respectively; both were part of Blackmount Forest since c.1840. The nearby Craig House in Glen Orchy, near Dalmally, amounted to £79. These, with inventories of other shooting lodges in Perthshire, totalled over £2317.<sup>69</sup> This shows that Blackmount Forest was not the only estate asset

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<sup>68</sup> Appendix 7 shows the names of individuals who leased Blackmount and the rentals between 1863-85.

<sup>69</sup> NAS, GD 112/22/52/7 – Abstract of the inventories and valuations of the household furniture at the different shooting lodges on the Breadalbane Estates and at Langton Castle, Berwickshire which belonged to the late John Campbell the most noble the Marquis of Breadalbane, taken January 1863.

valued then, nor was it the only shooting area of the Breadalbane Estates.<sup>70</sup> The use of trustees shows a sign of the need to pay creditors for estate debts, and death duties after the second Marquis's death.

Correspondence in the Breadalbane Muniments concerning events in and around Blackmount over the next 20 years is relatively scarce, since it was by then no longer managed by the proprietor. Some exists between Davidson and Syme, Breadalbane's legal agents, the factor, and Lord Dudley when the Forest came under the latter's management from 1863. The lack of evidence during Dudley's time at Blackmount could be explained by the fact that estate business was probably managed by his estate trustees, and would require more research. Negotiations regarding valuation of property, forest stock, and arrangements for existing employees were also made then.<sup>71</sup> The initial lease in 1863, amounting to £3,500, included entitlement to the sheep grazing for Clashgour and Glenketland farms, but did not include costs such as employees' wages and local taxation. Research by Orr also shows that Lord Dudley then tenanted another Highland forest, that at Reay in Sutherland.<sup>72</sup> He may have later terminated this lease allowing him to focus his priorities on Blackmount thereafter.

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<sup>70</sup> Some of the shooting lets in Argyllshire have already been discussed in chapter 3, p?, but those in the Perthshire part of the Breadalbane Estate have not been examined.

<sup>71</sup> NAS, GD 112/16/14/8 – This correspondence, from 1863-4, set arrangements of lease to Lord Dudley.

<sup>72</sup> Orr, *Deer Forests*, 32-33; (From NAS, GD 112/16/9).

An unpublished scrapbook on the various activities at Blackmount contains contributions dating from 1863 to the early 1870s. Inside the main cover is a sketch of Peter Robertson, and mentions that he was still head forester. Throughout the book are portraits and photos of Forest employees and tenants, including Lord Dudley himself. Several of the images depict an Italian individual who provided musical entertainment.<sup>73</sup> It appears that Forest House became a magnet for aristocratic circles after Lord Dudley took lease of Blackmount. He was recognised for being a very wealthy individual 'and had plenty of money to throw away'.<sup>74</sup> This explains why he paid such a large sum to lease the Forest and its dwellings. Arrangements of this nature likely caused some consternation amongst employees and small tenants. After an estate was commercially leased the sporting tenants often adapted it to suit their own personal needs and wishes, not all of which were economically motivated.

After Blackmount Forest was transferred to Lord Dudley, Mr Lawes, Dudley's agent, and James Wyllie arranged valuation of possessions within dwellings and of stock there. Lord Dudley agreed that a local person should be consulted in order to assess the value of the Blackmount sheep, and Mr Lawes stressed that it had to be individuals familiar with Highland stock.<sup>75</sup> The valuation amounted to £2,544 (Appendix 8), mostly from the sheep

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<sup>73</sup> From a private scrapbook on Blackmount dating from 1863-1870, the ownership of Mr Robin Fleming.

<sup>74</sup> *Blackmount valuation appeal, 1888-89*, 10.

<sup>75</sup> NAS, GD 112/16/14/8/11 – Copy, letters I.B. Lawes Esq to Mr Wyllie, Bolfracks, April and May 1863.

stocks at Glenketland and Clashgour farms; the rest comprised cattle bought at Taymouth, forest dogs and an inventory of items in various dwellings. Even perishable items at the Forest House were valued for their remaining quantity; 210 gallons of beer for example was valued at £21.<sup>76</sup> Therefore Blackmount became managed directly by Lord Dudley, initially for the next ten years. In this arrangement he was responsible for employing individuals to maintain it, and as evidence below suggests the existing personnel had been allowed to remain there.

Legal representatives of Lord Dudley and the deceased second Marquis of Breadalbane clarified valuations of possessions and stock at Blackmount. Lord Dudley was three months late in paying, prompting James Wyllie in writing to him directly regarding this:

You will excuse me for troubling you but I am under the necessity of reminding your lordship that the sheep stocks delivered to you on the farms of Clashgour and Glenkinlass, dairy cows from Taymouth, dogs and sundry other articles sold to you are still unpaid. They were due at Martinmas (11<sup>th</sup> November last) and the trustees of the late Marquis of Breadalbane, who are pressing me to get all executory matters settled up, will in no doubt claim interest on the amount since that time.<sup>77</sup>

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<sup>76</sup> NAS, GD 112/16/14/8/10 – Rt hon Earl of Dudley to executors of the late Marquis of Breadalbane, (1863).

<sup>77</sup> NAS, GD 112/16/14/8/11 – Copy, Letter Mr Wyllie to Lord Dudley, (3<sup>rd</sup> February 1864).

Interest of £31 had indeed been applied as shown in the final valuation.<sup>78</sup> Wyllie's request for remittance shows the important role he had in managing rearrangements of the Forest during that time.

Another issue requiring clarification when Dudley initially leased the Forest concerned existing employees working there. Peter Robertson had been informed that Lord Dudley was not likely to change employment arrangements with the foresters and shepherds until he had become better acquainted with how Blackmount was managed. These employees had been anxious to know what was likely to happen, especially if their jobs were to continue; but they were advised not to look for alternative employment, hinting that their situation would not change.<sup>79</sup> Peter Robertson's wages had increased to £54 by 1863; we can compare this with the £40 he was paid in 1844.<sup>80</sup> Although his terms of employment had changed after Lord Dudley took the Forest, but the exact nature of this is undetermined. Robertson eventually obtained the tenancy of Craig Farm, near Dalmally, and worked there as a farmer where he remained until his death.<sup>81</sup>

Peter Robertson described some of the reasons why he retired as a forester at Blackmount after working there since the 1820s:

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<sup>78</sup> NAS, GD 112/16/14/8/10 – Rt hon earl of Dudley to executors of the late Marquis of Breadalbane, 1863, see appendix 8.

<sup>79</sup> NAS, GD 112/16/14/8/11 – Copy, letters I.B. Lawes Esq to Mr Wyllie, Bolfracks, April and May 1863.

<sup>80</sup> Orr, *Deer Forests*, 127; (From: NAS, GD 112/14/5).

<sup>81</sup> Orr, *Deer Forests*, 127.

As I said before, men will go after wounded deer with their rifles, firing now and then, and disturbing a great many deer, when dogs could in a few minutes bring one to bay... but there are very few of the right old sportsmen these days. It is too often driving and slaughtering instead of deer stalking, when our old sportsmen would have given the animal every justice in defending himself...If John Bull can only get his pleasure of the venison, that is all he wants, and it will be well if all our deer forests be not soon spoiled by such a thing...That is what put me to be a farmer, that I could not be looking upon their way of sport after being in management of a forest for fifty-six years, and in quite a different way from what we have now.<sup>82</sup>

Robertson was dismayed with the way that circumstances at Blackmount had changed since 1863, preferring the earlier sporting techniques by using dogs. It is unclear exactly when tensions emerged between Robertson and his employers, but this was probably during the 1870s when the commercialised emphasis on deer forests had reached its peak. His mention of 'John Bull' indicates that English sportsmen, who had come to dominate estates in Scotland were less involved in the established deer stalking practices with which he was familiar. The English sporting technique of driving deer was being widely adopted after it was popularised by Prince Albert, the husband of Queen Victoria.

Lord Dudley's lease of the Forest was increased to £5,000 in 1873.<sup>83</sup>

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<sup>82</sup> George Cupples, *Scotch Deer Hounds and their Masters*, 77-78, (Edinburgh, 1894); from a letter by Peter Robertson just before his death in a letter dated at Craig Farm, Glen Orchy on 17<sup>th</sup> February 1877.

<sup>83</sup> Orr, *Deer Forests*, 33; (From: NAS, GD 112/16/9).

This was a renewal of the former lease, it having lasted ten years; the increase may have been prompted by the demand for highland sporting estates at that time. The general rise in popularity of wholesale forest lets throughout the Highlands brought prices up, and reports during the period indicated that proprietors could take advantage of the market. Take Hugh Snowie's comment in 1872 for example when he stated: 'the demand for shootings in the north is so great this year that there are no places on the market although higher rents are given year after year.'<sup>84</sup> With conditions such as these, landlords were exploiting the situation and competing with each other over what they could offer as wholesale rentals. The decline in the sheep farming economy was another factor that resulted in the rise of deer forests, and increased rentals in the north. The grazings at Blackmount were cleared when Dudley's lease was renewed in 1873, and by then the rental had increased from £3500 to £5000.<sup>85</sup> This augmentation had followed the very pattern that Snowie was stating due to increased demands by the rich for deer forest lets. Evidently, Lord Dudley was quite prepared and able to pay the higher cost, and was particularly keen to retain possession of Blackmount Forest for a sustained period.

The Breadalbane Estates benefited financially from a general growth in demand for wholesale lets of deer forests. Orr shows that the increased rentals resulted in a general pattern whereby many more Highland landlords,

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<sup>84</sup> Orr, *Deer Forests*, 33 (From D.G.F. MacDonald, *Cattle, Sheep and Deer*, (London, 1872), 707.)

<sup>85</sup> See Appendix 7.



especially throughout Inverness-shire, were converting their sheep grazing lands to deer forests. The economic situation, caused by poor profitability from grazing then, suggests that there was no immediate alternative to Highland proprietors, and forest letting was regarded as an attractive option for most of them. The boom generated much revenue for the Campbells of Breadalbane, but became in a sense a poisoned chalice due to the taxation legislation following in later decades.

Detailed evidence of how Blackmount was managed during the 1870s seems to be scarce, as correspondence regarding this was presumably conducted via legal representatives of both the leaser and the proprietor. In 1877 the lease was renewed for a ten-year period with its rent settled at £4500. This slight decrease may have come about since one of the stipulated terms was that Lord Dudley was to pay for the costs of providing water to the Forest House without expecting reimbursement for it. He also showed an interest in taking Achallader Farm for £1000 if Lord Breadalbane agreed, but it is unclear if this was actually arranged.<sup>86</sup> Lord Dudley died around 1878 as Blackmount was sublet from the following year. After his death it was taken into the management of Lady Dudley and trustees of Lord Dudley who continued to lease it directly from the Earl of Breadalbane until 1886.

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<sup>86</sup> NAS, GD 112/16/9/6/10 – Lease of Blackmount by Lord Dudley, signed with Lord Breadalbane at Taymouth, 1877.

Between 1879 and 1885 Blackmount was sub-let to various tenants including Mr Gibbs, Mr Cooper and Count Karolyi.<sup>87</sup> In 1881, it was sub-let to Sir Henry Alsopp; but two differing rentals are given that year, £3,300 and £4,000.<sup>88</sup> That year Blackmount was said, 'to have offered the finest shooting and stalking in the Highlands'.<sup>89</sup> But the sport it offered was confined to deer stalking, as grouse shooting was not so common there since it was unsuitable in that type of undulating terrain; presumably, this reduced the rental value of the Forest. A similar description of Blackmount was made seven years later when the landowner appealed against its valuation: 'The forest is admitted to be one of the finest in Scotland'.<sup>90</sup> These statements confirm that it was a well-known sportsmen's retreat; however, because of this the deer were eventually becoming reduced in numbers and quality. In 1886, Blackmount came back into the proprietor's direct management and remained un-let for the next two decades due to events now described.

One negative aspect of leasing Blackmount Forest is seen when Lord Dudley's subtenants were causing damage to its dwellings and their contents. This was considered to be a matter of great concern for Lord Breadalbane, who, in correspondence with A. H. Ballingall, said that Lord

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<sup>87</sup> NAS, GD 112/16/9/4/5: 'Blackmount valuation appeal, 1889-90', 22.

<sup>88</sup> Francis Groome, *Ordnance Gazetteer of Scotland*, I, 163, (London, 1890s new edition); Willie Orr, 'The Economic impact of Deer Forests in the Scottish Highlands', 44-59, in: *Scottish Economic and Social History*, II, (1982), 46; Orr used his sources from NAS: GD 112/16/9.

<sup>89</sup> Francis Groome, *Ordnance Gazetteer*, I, 163, (London, 1890s new edition).

<sup>90</sup> NAS, GD 112/16/9/4/17: 'Blackmount valuation appeal, 1888-89'.

Dudley's trustees should be prosecuted 'for breach of contract' unless they paid for the damages immediately. All of the doors at Forest Lodge had nails driven into them; also, dining room furniture and china at the Iron House at Glenkinglass had been smashed up.<sup>91</sup> In May 1886, Archibald MacIntyre inspected what items and furnishings were either missing or broken in Forest dwellings, and his estimate of these 'deficiencies' amounted to £52. Buildings affected included the dairy, byre, kennels and the keeper's house; Forest House was the most damaged with various rooms listed, used by the lady's maids', cook, valet, butler and the house-keepers. Likewise, the dwellings of Clashgour Farm, Baa Cottage, Alltchaorunn Cottage, Glenceitlein, Barravurich Farm and Glenkinglass Iron Lodge were also affected by misuse.<sup>92</sup>

This suggests that there had been either a lack of concern for the Forest dwellings from the tenant, and sub-tenants, or from those they employed there. Poor management, and successively different individuals being directly involved there are likely factors. There were also problems in providing witnesses to these damages; Lord Breadalbane told Mr Ballingall of Perth, one of his agents, that he could find someone who was employed in the Forest from the beginning of Dudley's tenancy. James MacDonald was possibly one individual who could provide evidence, but had only become stalker at Blackmount several years after Lord Dudley had taken

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<sup>91</sup> NAS, GD 112/16/9/6/10 – Copy, Letter from Lord Breadalbane to A.H.Ballingall, esq, Perth, 1886.

<sup>92</sup> NAS, GD 112/16/9/8/2 – List of deficiencies on houses in Black Mount Forest as inspected by Archibald MacIntyre in May 1886.

lease of it. Before then, MacDonald had been employed by a tenant who rented the shootings at Craig Farm in Glenorchy; thus he would only be able to provide 'hearsay' evidence on the basis of what others had said or seen."<sup>93</sup> These recent events show that tensions had clearly existed between some employees and subtenants.

The landlord may have been partially responsible for the inadequate care of dwellings within Blackmount whilst it had been leased out between 1863-1885, by not having proper checks made on the various tenants there. Thereafter, the seventh Earl of Breadalbane no longer leased it out, and took steps to return it to normality. In 1885 he was conferred a U.K. marquise, a title he held until his death in 1922.<sup>94</sup> His terminating leases at Blackmount in the following year may be unrelated, but it is possible that his feeling was it would be best to take the Forest for himself so that he could host aristocratic friends in promoting himself as the new Marquis. Over £5000 was spent on improvements for dwellings and towards other miscellaneous expenses at Blackmount between 1886-1888; most were on improvements and repairs to the Forest House.<sup>95</sup> Such high spending can be possibly explained by the neglect the area had received in recent years, but it may also have been so that he could impress his close circle of friends and let the Forest out again in future if required.

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<sup>93</sup> *ibid.*

<sup>94</sup> Donaldson & Morpeth, *Dictionary*, 26.

<sup>95</sup> NAS, GD 112/16/9/7/17 – Blackmount Deer Forest and Lodge – Statement and expenditure for upkeep of deer forest and lodge etc for the period 26<sup>th</sup> May 1886 to 31<sup>st</sup> December 1886.

Wholesale letting of Blackmount Forest also had its drawbacks for the landlord due to the actions of some tenants, which resulted in reductions in deer numbers. Taking the circumstances for Mr Cooper's lease for example, between 1882 and 1885 he took the forest only for the shooting season. The annual rental amounted to £3000, generating substantial income for the Earl of Breadalbane.<sup>96</sup> However, it is not known whether the landlord himself was responsible for paying employees, nor do we have details of the cost involved in managing the Forest at that time. Although this lease was for the stag season only, Mr Cooper had complete control of deer management within it, and he adopted a practice whereby deer were driven in considerable numbers out of Blackmount Forest. In his later appeal, Lord Breadalbane complained that this practice resulted in poor numbers there for several years. This kind of sporting style was not uncommon in the period, and was encouraged by the American sportsman, Walter Winans, in the Inverness-shire estates he rented further north. Deer driving as a means of killing deer was decried by Alexander Robertson.<sup>97</sup> Evidently, his criticisms emerged during the period when this technique was considered popular amongst sportsmen.

A fundamental change in estate policy is seen by terminating the use of dogs in Blackmount by the 1880s, in favour of better technology. Thirty years prior to then up to sixty deerhounds were kept in the kennels there,

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<sup>96</sup> See Appendix 7.

<sup>97</sup> Alexander Robertson, *Our Land Laws and the Deer Forests*, (Glasgow, 1888), 62; Davis, *Monarchs of the Glen*, 189.

including crossbreeds between them and collies who were very good at tracking a wounded deer. Deerhounds ceased to be used in assisting sportsmen for stalking at Blackmount in 1887. The introduction of breech loading rifles, and explosive bullets, had made the use of dogs a rare occurrence; when used, collies took the place of deerhounds. Comparison with most other forests then shows that dogs were no longer used for sporting purposes. Only in the Forest of Glenfiddich were deerhounds still being used to any extent, and the spokesman there was of the opinion that they disturbed deer less than any other breed of dog. However, Lord Breadalbane had stated in 1891:

Since I took the forest (Blackmount) into my own hands I have entirely given up the use of deerhounds, as I believe they not only tend to disturb a forest, but also encourage wild shooting on the part of the gentleman, who know that a slightly wounded stag can always be got by the aid of hounds.

These comments show his realisation of the cruelty in hunting for deer that had formerly existed at Blackmount. He mentioned that several years ago hounds were slipped at unwounded deer, who were shot when brought to bay.<sup>98</sup> But his motives for terminating the practice were probably more related to the fact that deer were widely scattered by this former sporting technique, and the criticisms that it attracted from Robertson as mentioned above.

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<sup>98</sup> E. Weston Bell, *The Scottish Deerhound with notes on its origins and characteristics*, (Edinburgh, 1892), 72-77.

The Marquis likewise realised the damage that deer driving had done to both his reputation and deer numbers at Blackmount. He took considerable steps to ensure that they would increase in population again, as the recent practice of driving by sub-tenants there had effectively reduced its value and status resulting in a rental reduction. In 1887, he made arrangements regarding future deer management with both his lawyer and one of the neighbouring tenants who held lands that marched with Blackmount to the north. Mr Thistlethwayte had the tenancy of various portions of land, including Black Corries, belonging to four different landlords, namely Miss MacDonald, Mr MacAlpine Leny, Mr Burns MacDonald and Lady Beresford. The latter two were respective proprietors in parts of Black Corries Estate that year.<sup>99</sup> The way in which these estates to the north of Blackmount were let was complex, and it appears that Mr Thistlethwayte's method of managing them was considered a matter of concern for his neighbour.

The Marquis and Mr Thistlethwayte agreed on six conditions in order to avoid any disputes regarding shooting and deerstalking in the vicinity. No more than 15 stags and 15 hinds were to be shot annually by Thistlethwayte and this was only to be allowed between mid-August and mid October. Deer driving was no longer permitted and both parties agreed with each other, 'to act in a sportsman like and neighbourly manner in all

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<sup>99</sup> NAS, GD 112/16/9/6/8 – Key to Ordnance Survey map of Blackmount Forest, (1887).

matters connected with the shooting or deerstalking on their respective properties'. Also, fences between the properties were not to be erected unless the other party agreed to this.<sup>100</sup> Presumably, these terms were related to recent problems existing at Blackmount, especially with the practice of driving deer. The restrictions to a fixed shooting season may have been a novel idea, and is one that exists to the present day in all of the Highland estates where deer culling takes place. Thus, these local arrangements may have influenced how other estates were managed thereafter.

The Marquis of Breadalbane disputed the way in which Blackmount was valued by the government after he had terminated its lease. Two appeals were made, in 1888-89, and 1889-90 at the valuation appeal court in Oban.<sup>101</sup> In his latter appeal the landlord succeeded in having Blackmount's valuation partially reduced but this created some media attention, which the landlord had wanted to avoid. Mr Maxtone, the assessor, had recently fixed the value for Blackmount at £2580, on a basis that 100 deer were shot at the value of £25 per head, and 40 cattle grazed at £2 per beast. In 1887, Mr Young W.S., in writing to Mr Murray, the landlord's agent at Aberfeldy, said that the Marquis wished to settle his dispute with the assessor 'amicably' to deter further publicity. However it was admitted that if an appeal were lodged it would attract attention, especially if it came to involve the Court

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<sup>100</sup> NAS, GD 112/16/9/6/1 – Copy, draft agreement between the Marquis of Breadalbane and Thistlethwayte, (1887).

<sup>101</sup> NAS, GD 112/16/9/4/17 – 'Blackmount valuation appeal, 1888-89'; NAS, GD 112/16/9/4/5 – 'Blackmount valuation appeal, 1889-90'.



of Session. Mr Young was concerned about the recently decreased value of Blackmount Forest and the implications of a legal challenge.<sup>102</sup> The Marquis nevertheless went ahead and challenged the assessor's decision regarding the new valuations imposed by the authorities.

One way of the landlord being given a reduction involved giving details of deer numbers shot in previous seasons. Orr has suggested that there were inaccuracies in the appeals made by him during 1888 and 1889. The assessor for valuations stated that at least 100 stags might be shot in the Forest; it is known that up to 120 stags were killed in previous leases to Lord Dudley. In 1884 to 1885, 100 stags were shot; however, the head stalker at Blackmount stated that only an average of 79 deer were shot in the three seasons from 1886 to 1888, with the limit latterly reduced to 88.<sup>103</sup> Orr possibly may have misinterpreted Breadalbane's appeals, as it is known that deer numbers had reduced because of the way in which they had recently come to be shot both within, and the neighbourhood around, Blackmount. It is also likely that the landlord had wanted to underestimate the numbers there since more deer being registered as shot would increase the valuation.

Another debated issue was the actual value assigned to each stag's head, and readjustment of this depended on proving that deer in some estates were poorer in quality. In September 1888 several proprietors,

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<sup>102</sup> NAS, GD 112/16/9/6/2 – Copy, letter from Mr Young W.S. to Mr G.G. Murray, (27<sup>th</sup> July 1887).

<sup>103</sup> Orr, *Deer Forests*, 105. (From GD 112: Valuation Appeal; and correspondence to Balligall, 1885)

whose deer forests were un-let, met at Fort William and agreed that unless the assessor valued £15 per stag they should appeal to the commissioners of supply, and, if necessary, the Court of Session. In the previous year, Mrs Stewart of Dalness in Glen Etive had appealed against the assessor's valuation of £25 per stag and had the figure reduced to £15. It appears the assessors had taken middle ground in this dispute by reducing the value per stag to £20, but Mr MacKenzie at Fort William recommended to an official in the Breadalbane estates that £15 was a more reasonable figure.<sup>104</sup> This shows that the Marquis of Breadalbane was not alone in contesting the judgement of local county assessors.

Orr has already conducted detailed research on the Blackmount valuation case, particularly on the preliminary appeal. The assessors then stated that Lord Dudley had previously rented the Forest at £4500 and sub-let it from between £3000 to £3500. The landlord argued that the rental was £3000, and since running costs of £1800 were paid by sub-tenants the net rental and valuation should have been £1200; but the assessor replied that this £1800 was not backed by evidence. Marquis Breadalbane explained the former high figure of £4500 was because of Lord Dudley's plan to incorporate the farms of Clashgour and Glenketland into the Forest. Orr has been unable to explain why landlords such as Breadalbane went to great lengths to have their valuations reduced, and states that it was possibly due

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<sup>104</sup> NAS, GD 112/16/9/6/4 – Letter regarding valuation of deer forests from J.M. Mackenzie at Fort William to Mr Dunn Esq, Breadalbane Estate Office, Kenmore, (1<sup>st</sup> September 1888).

to a fear of rate rises.<sup>105</sup> It is obvious that the landlord was aware that his deer forest would be targeted as a means of raising local revenue, and the increasing costs of running this part of his estates had possibly become more burdensome due to decreasing disposable income.

During 1889, evidence was presented to an appeal panel concerning Blackmount's valuation in comparison with other deer forests. Nigel Banks Mackenzie, a solicitor and estate agent in Fort William, had factored several estates in southern Inverness-shire and northern Argyllshire. These included the smaller estates at Dalness in Glen Etive and Achnacone in Glencoe. He was thus an appropriate choice to give a precognition on behalf of the Marquis of Breadalbane. Mackenzie claimed that his knowledge of deer values in both counties was extensive, and he argued that since the sheep farming industry had become unprofitable there was much competition between landlords for the letting of deer forests. Certain ones, he believed, depended on lower rents since the quality of deer found within them was poorer than in other areas.

Mackenzie placed Blackmount within this category and claimed to know much about the area. His comments with regard to deer quality there appeared to contradict with reports on them in earlier decades.<sup>106</sup> He described the Forest's area and geographical context and likewise compared

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<sup>105</sup> Orr, *Deer Forests*, 106.

<sup>106</sup> See below, p.345 describing why comments on deer quality had changed in recent years.

its value with others which Mackenzie regarded as being more profitable:

It is very inaccessible and the greater part thereof is also very difficult ground to shoot stags, bracing as it does either high steep mountains or boggy moorland. A great deal of the pasture is of very inferior quality so much so that when in the hands of practical sheep farmers before it was forested it could hardly be made to pay. The stags, although fairly numerous, are neither heavy nor with fine heads as compared with the other leading forests. It is situated in a very wet district, the rainfall being about 80 inches per annum.<sup>107</sup>

His precognition stated that this forest was not as profitable as others, but could not depend on sheep farming as an alternative economy. Clearly, Mackenzie had emphasised Blackmount's farming inferiority so that its value as a deer forest could be reduced.

The true extent of Mackenzie's particular knowledge of Blackmount could be called into question when we consider that shortly before the appeal was heard he inspected Blackmount Forest with Colin McGilp, the local ground officer.<sup>108</sup> On 5<sup>th</sup> September 1889, a week before the hearing, he wrote to Breadalbane's legal agents: 'I go over the Black Mount tomorrow, with one of the ground officers, so as to be even more familiar with it than I am at present'.<sup>109</sup> There also appear to be contradictory

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<sup>107</sup> NAS, GD 112/16/9/6/12- Black Mount Appeal, Precognition of Mr Nigel Banks Mackenzie esq. (1889).

<sup>108</sup> NAS, GD 112/16/9/7/34 – Letter from William Dunn at Blackmount to Davidson and Syme, Edinburgh.

<sup>109</sup> NAS, GD 112/16/9/7/37 – Letter from Mr Mackenzie to Davidson and Syme, (5<sup>th</sup> September 1889).

statements in comparison with the landlord regarding the Forest's quality. Mr Crole, advocate standing on behalf of the Marquis, stated during the hearing that his was one of the finest forests in Scotland.<sup>110</sup> There is little doubt however that evidence, albeit exaggerated, presented by Mackenzie would work favourably towards reducing the Blackmount valuation. He compared the few forests existing in Argyllshire with the Inverness-shire ones further north, which he regarded as easier to let, and stated that the Blackmount stags should be valued at £15 a head.<sup>111</sup>

An important part of this appeal depended on finding other appropriate witnesses to defend the Marquis of Breadalbane. His factor, William Dunn suggested that Mr Greaves in Glen Etive could be contacted to give evidence, as well as Mr Bulloch at Meggernie Castle, who owned a deer forest on the Isle of Rum.<sup>112</sup> Dunn was also concerned that James MacDonald, being a potentially important witness, should be kept away from Mr Murray Maxtone, the assessor. During the first appeal in 1888-89 Colin MacGilp, the Blackmount ground officer, presented evidence to the court, but he was not able to appear at the final appeal in the following year.<sup>113</sup> Donald McIntyre had been a stalker at Blackmount for 26 years and had held his current position as head stalker, for the last three. He presented

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<sup>110</sup> NAS, GD 112/16/9/4/17 – '*Blackmount valuation appeal, 1888-89*', 9.

<sup>111</sup> NAS, GD 112/16/9/6/12- Black Mount Appeal, Precognition of Mr Nigel Banks Mackenzie esq. (1889).

<sup>112</sup> NAS, GD 112/16/9/7/43 - Letter from William Dunn at Blackmount to Davidson and Syme, Edinburgh.

<sup>113</sup> NAS, GD 112/16/9/4/17 – '*Blackmount Valuation appeal, 1888-89*', 10-12.

some compelling evidence on the number of deer shot between 1886-1888 as noted in his game book. McIntyre stated that the quality of the deer in Blackmount had declined; they now had smaller heads and less weight."<sup>14</sup>

In corroborating McIntyre's comments with Nigel Banks Mackenzie's we can see that the general decline in deer quality at Blackmount was a recent phenomenon. Although it is not clear, or for how long, if these circumstances were due to environmental reasons or poor management practices. We have already discussed that the landlord had retaken possession of the Forest because the recent practice of deer driving reduced deer numbers. Perhaps prior tenants had shot particularly for the heaviest deer during their sport. Mackenzie had noted that the stags there, although healthy in numbers, were of a poorer quality in comparison with elsewhere. Rather than this being because of its geography, as Mackenzie had suggested, this was more likely attributed to large numbers of deer that were individually smaller in size than witnessed in other forests. Possible changes in the local climate is another theory, but this would require further detailed research of documented history at that time.

Lord Breadalbane asked the Lands Valuation Appeal Court to contest the high value of £2,580 put on Blackmount Estate for 1888-89. This appeal, made on the basis of changing circumstances there, featured in the Edinburgh press by January 1889:

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<sup>14</sup> NAS, GD 112/16/9/4/5 – '*Blackmount Valuation appeal, 1889-90*', 18-19.

The first appeal was in regard to the valuation to be put on the Black Mount Deer forest, Argyllshire, the property of Lord Breadalbane. Mr Low explained to their lordships that the forest used to be let, but it was now in the hands of the proprietor. The only basis of valuation was to put a certain value on the stags killed in the forest and their number...He contended that the assessor's valuation should be upheld.

The commissioners of the appeal court reduced the assessors' valuation, of £2580, to £1,580 on a value of £15 per stag.<sup>115</sup> However the matter now depended on the final decision of the local authority in Argyllshire.

The appeal proceedings commenced at Oban on 12<sup>th</sup> September 1889, but were adjourned until the twentieth day of that month. Murdoch Gillean MacLean of Lochbuie chaired a committee of the Commissioners of Supply for Argyllshire. Mr Crole, Advocate, represented the appellant, the Marquis of Breadalbane. The committee acknowledged that Blackmount should not be valued as highly as other areas had been. The assessor's valuation of £2580 was reduced to £1900 at £20 per stag; their calculations were complicated by the fact that deer numbers killed at Blackmount had fluctuated in recent years. The committee decided that un-let forests should not be valued any less, if not also under sheep, and that forests in Argyllshire should not be valued any higher than £20 per stag. Both parties, the assessor and representatives of the Marquis, were not satisfied with the

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<sup>115</sup> NAS, GD 112/16/9/5/3 – Copy correspondence with reference to Blackmount assessment.

committee's decision but later accepted the case as final.<sup>116</sup> However as this episode was drawing to the close, another relating to leisure began to emerge, maintaining relevance to the present.

Early mountaineering in the Scottish Highlands became popular in the late nineteenth century through organisations such as the Cairngorm Club and the Alpine Club. This pastime became more organised, especially through middle-class associations such as the Scottish Mountaineering Club (SMC), formed in 1889. This pursuit was aided by the recent expansion of railways through the north and west Highlands. The West Highland Line, running from Glasgow to Fort William, via Loch Lomond, Crianlarich, Bridge of Orchy and Rannoch opened up rapid communication for intrepid city dwellers in search of climbing and exploring the Scottish hills. Prior to then, other than the 'trespass' incident by Professor Blackie, in 1867, there is little evidence that tourism, in the form of pedestrian excursions or pastimes such as angling, directly affected the Glen Etive area in the earlier nineteenth century. It was not until the formation of climbing organisations such as the Scottish Mountaineering Club, (SMC), were Highland forests encroached for leisure purposes. Thereafter, these pursuits imposed further environmental pressure on the land there. This stage in its history is an appropriate ending for the thesis, as this external challenge has been the most significant one faced by Blackmount Estate since then.

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<sup>116</sup> NAS, GD 112/16/9/6/13 – Case for the Marquess of Breadalbane against valuation of the Blackmount Deer Forest, Davidson & Syme, (1889).



Although access of this nature caused friction between landlords and walkers in previous decades, it seems that when the SMC arranged meets in the west and central Highlands, they did so on respectable terms with the Marquis of Breadalbane. Both parties were aware that issues of access and stalking restrictions had to be respected, and the best way of doing so was to maintain an amicable relationship. Francis Dewar, a member of the SMC, wrote an article in 1892 entitled, 'Stob Coir Albannaich and Glas Bheinn Mhor' giving a description of these hills in Blackmount Estate. He discussed the potential disturbances to deer possibly caused unintentionally by visitors to the area. Deer may have dwelt in a certain part of the forest all summer, and stalkers would have a good idea of their whereabouts. All it took to upset them was the 'solitary hill man' or 'gregarious tourist' who was capable of scaring a whole herd of deer from this area into another forest, and they might not return for weeks.<sup>117</sup> This indicated potential problems emerging on the Scottish hills between the interests of landlords and outdoor enthusiasts, although not a new problem.

In 1901, Duncan Darroch of Torridon in Ross-shire contributed an article to the SMC called, 'Deer and deer forests' where he stated that most landowners would tolerate mountaineering on their lands, but that seasonal access restriction were needed in certain areas, eg in upper corries.<sup>118</sup> The

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<sup>117</sup> *Scottish Mountaineering Club Journal*, II, (1892), 301.

<sup>118</sup> *SMCJ*, VI, 139.

SMC kept on good terms with some landlords, including the Marquis of Breadalbane, by appointing them as honorary presidents.<sup>119</sup> Presumably, landowners were obliged to consider the interests of others, especially after the comments made about them from McCombie Smith. There was possibly a growing realisation that the middle classes could use powers to overthrow landownership if they were not given some sway in their recreational wishes. Forty years later, the working classes 'invaded' the Scottish hills during the great industrial depression, and many chose to ignore the archaic, but necessary, regulations imposed by landlords. Interesting as it is, and relevant to deer forests, this is a subject beyond the chronology of discussion in this thesis.

The quest for understanding why and how Blackmount emerged originally as a hunting reserve and later sporting estate is now complete. This chapter has drawn together elements of both its popular recognition by some and criticism by others. Favouring one or the other is particularly difficult when we consider that its existence was necessary to regulate ownership of land, but that those who held it did so exclusively for themselves and select elite contemporaries. Nevertheless, this academic study of Blackmount gives modern historians an insight into the detailed workings of a Highland deer forest.

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<sup>119</sup> *SMCJ*, VI, 142-143.

## Conclusion

Considering Blackmount in the second half of the nineteenth century has involved a range of social, political and economic factors. Several of these are not directly related to the scenarios developing elsewhere in the Highlands, for example population displacement. It was influenced by wider society in the Highlands, but was by no means unsuccessful as a typical Victorian 'sporting estate'. This is clearly seen when wholesale commercial leasing of Blackmount followed an unbroken pattern from 1863-1886. Although there is no direct evidence for its impact on the development of other forests, its early existence may have set a precedent for some that followed. This was certainly the case on at least one occasion, as Ronald McColl, forester at Blackmount from the 1860s, used his experience from apprenticeship gained there to set up Laggan Deer Forest on Mull during the 1890s, and had been employed in several other forests prior to then.<sup>120</sup> Since Blackmount was one of the largest forests in Scotland, numerous employees had worked there and several are likely to have applied the experiences they gained there to other estates.

The general growth of the deer forest system elsewhere resulted in Blackmount becoming criticised to some extent by academics, and assessed for taxation by local government. However, as a cautionary note, this may

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<sup>120</sup> From an obituary in a Mull newspaper after Ronald MacColl's death during the twentieth century. This information was kindly provided from Mr John Maughan in Mull, descendant of Ronald MacColl.

not have taken place had other Highland 'sporting estates' not proliferated in the fashion they did during the latter half of the nineteenth century. Blackmount Forest may be regarded as a paradigm, for others that developed elsewhere, especially those that utilised areas of mountainous land when socio-economic and political conditions deterred other types of land use. Hunting had been a way of life amongst landlords, tenants and poachers for centuries. The gradual move towards its commercial benefits was a policy adopted by the Campbells of Breadalbane, who were already powerful heritable landlords since the medieval period, and influenced much of the Highland history we now know.

In some respects, deer forests generally nurtured romantic perceptions of the 'Monarch of the Glen' and went some way to reshape our modern views of Highland identity, and what much of the region now collectively represents. Disregarding our political views on them, commercial 'sporting estates' are a part of modern history, developing as a historical legacy or a by-product of wealth and aristocracy. From many landlords' points of view, they developed out of economic necessity, after slumps in grazing profitability from sheep farming in the later nineteenth century. Since Blackmount had, amongst others, existed earlier its existence was not singly criticised or questioned until many more forests emerged further north. Using Blackmount Forest as an area for study has been a particularly fascinating one in our understanding of why rather desolate, but formerly populous, areas now exist throughout many glens of the Scottish Highlands.

## Conclusion

This thesis has examined the history of Blackmount in five chapters, which mainly deal with the subject in chronological phases. In taking this approach it has been possible to identify key stages evident from the late medieval period; however, with the exception of chapter 1, most of the discussion deals with the nineteenth century. The area's former use as the Forest of Corrie Ba, recognisable from c.1600 to the mid-eighteenth century, highlights the compelling question of why it fell into disuse. This was primarily due to the rise in sheep farming, when its profitability was significant. A redevelopment of the earlier forest at Blackmount in 1820 emerged from wider social, political and economic issues arising from the Napoleonic Wars.

Within the next 30 years Blackmount Forest was expanded and improved with the intention that it would function as a sporting estate to gain recognition amongst a wider audience, which it successfully did. Lord Glenorchy, later the second Marquis, had directed significant expenditure to improvements and employing personnel in order to allow the Forest to succeed. Inevitably, during this period, various problems emerged, and chapter 4 has been dedicated to that theme. Its commercial potential was not fully exploited until the later nineteenth century, and by then forests had proliferated elsewhere, thus raising some degree of competition and more demand for forest lets. However, this resulted in Blackmount becoming criticised amongst the others.

The area was naturally suited for hunting purposes for centuries, but the Campbells of Breadalbane, like other landlords, had the privilege of imposing restrictions on the practice by designating forests for their own use. Blackmount Forest emerged as a model deer forest, but not primarily for commercial reasons as is often suggested by economic historians. It symbolised part of a feudal ethos still existing amongst the Scottish aristocracy in that they had exclusive, but not undisputed, rights to retain their lands for sporting purposes. The Campbells of Breadalbane were a powerful family with aristocratic connections in the British establishment. Thus, they may have been adapting and using Blackmount for prestige purposes as a hunting ground in earlier periods, but carrying this activity forward as a sporting estate in the nineteenth century.

It has been necessary initially to review research on the area's early social and political development, with detailed insight into its economic structure by c.1815, as no studies have examined these themes combined. The Campbells of Breadalbane were one of the most powerful and successful landed families in the central Highlands by c.1500. Their ideology was based upon controlling communications, having close involvement with the crown and imposing both political and legal powers on the region. They maintained peripheral parts of their estates, such as Corrie Ba, by designating them as forests for use exclusively by the aristocracy, sometimes under the auspices of the crown. Forests existed for prestige and control, but they began to decline due to economic pressures when sheep farming priorities took their place in the later eighteenth century. Revenue in the Breadalbane estates was created

in other ways, particularly in Upper Glenorchy, then recognised for its grazing potential for commercial gain; its woodland was likewise being exploited. However Blackmount, like other areas, suffered from a recession emerging after the Napoleonic Wars terminated.

The economic activities existing in Upper Glenorchy during the eighteenth century had resulted in it becoming densely populated. By the early nineteenth century the local population gradually declined, due to migration and emigration, and this allowed the landlord to amalgamate settlements into single farms, and former settlements such as Drumliart and Blaraven were abandoned altogether. Remaining tenants on local farms were faced with competitive bidding to secure leases. Between 1820-1830, Duncan Campbell of Rockhill, factor for Lord Glenorchy, was closely involved in setting up Blackmount Forest, and it expanded in stages as tenants' leases were terminated. Initially, the landlord's determination to develop the area for sporting activities alone resulted in social upheaval, but he was later forced to make compromises, especially when considering the losses sustained in using it for grazing activities. It is clear that improvements were initially only being made on a sporadic basis whilst Lord Glenorchy waited to see how Blackmount functioned before committing more expenditure on it. He had more flexibility in this respect after inheriting the Breadalbane estates from his father in 1832.

This landlord, as well as showing a fanatical dedication towards developing and maintaining Blackmount for himself, held many other interests during his life. Lord Glenorchy received a rigorous education at

Eton, and later at Glasgow University, before engaging in a British political career, as a Liberal, exposing him to leading members of the aristocracy and establishment. This attracted many contemporaries, particularly aristocratic ones to Blackmount. After becoming the second Marquis he later became rector of Glasgow University and was instrumental in supporting the Disruption of 1843. His interest in geology affected how his estate was managed by the experimental mineral trials being conducted, following on from the ethos of commercial exploitation adopted from his ancestors.

The second Marquis, successfully oversaw Blackmount's early formation, development and established reputation for forty years. A compelling theme in chapter 2 is the attempt to identify if it had been Lord Glenorchy's long-term vision that Blackmount Forest would either continue to serve the family purely for pleasure, or if it were his intention that it would eventually become commercially exploited. In hindsight it is unlikely that its wholesale leasing would have emerged in 1863 if the Marquis had arranged for an undisputed successor before his death. It was inevitable, however, given the financial crisis emerging in the Breadalbane Estates, that its trustees would offer lucrative areas for lease to the highest bidder, as in other estates. In this respect Blackmount was exploited commercially as a shooting range for the rich, even before many other forests had come into existence.

The area was considered ideal to be reformed anew as a deer forest in 1820, because of its barren nature; however, managing it involved employing foresters and watchers to count deer and be on the lookout for



poachers. Likewise, a sustained watch on trespassing livestock from adjacent farms shows the lengths the landlord went to in his endeavours to increase deer numbers locally. Losses were incurred in forming, developing and managing the Forest, compensated by finances from estate projects elsewhere. The Argyllshire factor was closely involved in managing Blackmount from its inception. However, the events of 1834 resulted not just from alleged malpractices over estate finances, but the numerous responsibilities, and the large area covered, had apparently overwhelmed Campbell of Rockhill, who administered the area almost as a landlord himself. The legal case that followed shows the lengths the Marquis would go to in defending his actions in suspending his factor.

A new phase began in 1834 when Lord Glenorchy became the second Marquis of Breadalbane, and the Perthshire factor, James Wyllie, also took over management of the Glenorchy area in the Argyllshire estates. From then until 1863, the year after the Marquis's death, Blackmount reached a period of maturity in that it had become a fully functioning deer forest with improvements, including the construction of dwellings, especially Forest Lodge. This represented an outlying base for sporting activities from the headquarters at Taymouth. Peter Robertson, emerging as head forester at Blackmount from the 1830s, had a particularly interesting career there. His training and use of dogs as an aid to bring deer to bay was a popular method amongst those involved with stalking. Robertson provides us with very detailed correspondence on forest business and local deer numbers. No research to date has examined this aspect of the area's history until now. The fact that deer were encouraged to populate the area in great numbers by the 1850s

shows that estate policy was directed at environmental manipulation to bolster the Forest's status.

The ability to maintain sheep stocks in the area without interfering with forest activities shows that both could co-exist only after stringent management practices were put in place. The landlord was often absent from Blackmount, so Sir Alexander Campbell stood in his place by managing it on the ground. Numerous personnel were involved both temporarily and permanently there during the 1840s showing that it was then a focus of the landlord's priorities. He wanted the area to become more popularised amongst the aristocracy as seen by the invitation to Sir Edwin Landseer to paint two works locally; these became Victorian icons, thus creating fame for Blackmount thereafter. Its established reputation was further emphasised by the dignitaries and politicians who frequently visited it for sport during the 1850s. These stages represent particularly successful ones in the area's history as a deer forest, but paradoxically it became the subject of a range of local and wider challenges.

The Campbells of Breadalbane claimed ownership of deer dwelling in Blackmount Forest, but were often defiantly ignored by the poachers from surrounding areas. To counter this problem the landowner employed foresters and watchers to police its marches, and the fact that many of the incidents took place in the Kingshouse locality indicates it was the most difficult area to manage. Campbell of Monzie's dispute with the Marquis emerged under similar circumstances, resulting in marches being debated in Glen Etive. Furthermore, a dispute, initiated

by the landlord against Highland drovers on their use of local stances, shows that he used his political power to attempt winning the legal debate regardless of its cost. The very fact that Blackmount existed as a forest resulted in it becoming targeted by those with other social and economic interests.

The Marquis successfully sidelined these challenges, but he was probably aware that his endeavours to maintain Blackmount Forest could be overthrown by potential opponents. Whilst it was beginning to gain fame amongst his peers, its sustained success, crucial to the landlord, was being interrupted mainly by challenges external to those that already existed within the Forest itself. Chapter 4 deals collectively with the legal problems that the landlord faced, showing the negative result of Blackmount's development. The final chapter, however, shows that since it had become wholly commercial, Blackmount was targeted alongside other deer forests as a motivating factor of Highland depopulation. On the contrary, many had already left the area before the Forest was formed. Thus, in this respect its existence was not typically related to the other deer forests that emerged when sheep farming declined in the 1870s.

The death of the second Marquis in 1862 represented a significant change in Blackmount's history. This event opens up a pivotal question, on the Forest's purpose all along. Since being gifted the area in 1819, as one of the wildest areas of his extensive estates, the second Marquis appears to have cherished the idea of possessing it. When he died, this represented the end of an era, as no other individual could perceive its management with the vision he held. However, why no contingency

plans were put in place to plan for a successor to the Breadalbane estates remains an enigma. No longer was the Forest managed by an ancient family, but became purely a commercial commodity almost overnight. Its wholesale leasing emerged out of the succession crisis and financial problems existing within the Breadalbane Estates, but it may have been estate policy to eventually do this anyway. Blackmount Forest did not become managed directly by the Breadalbane family again until 1885.

There are several unanswered questions on Blackmount's history from 1863-c.1880. But Peter Robertson's resignation and retirement in the 1870s gives the impression that the way in which Blackmount became managed resulted in it being detached from its original purpose. Lord Dudley's long lease of it was undoubtedly financially beneficial for the Breadalbane Estates, but when it was being sublet after his death its management had deteriorated and the quality of deer there had reduced. Other forests emerging locally also put pressure on how Blackmount functioned after the 1880s. When it came back into the landlord's direct management in 1885, he was faced with a costly assessment for its value, which he dealt with by arguing that Blackmount's wholesale leasing had been detrimental to its actual value. The eighth Marquis was successful in having the value partially reduced in an appeal court.

Coupled with this, since more forests had been emerging in the Highlands they were becoming criticised by social theorists, especially Professor Blackie and Alexander Robertson, who equated depopulation with the increasing number of forests coming into formation. The Napier Commission fell short of initiating land reform; rather it attempted to

make some compromises between crofters and proprietors of commercial deer forests, as long as the latter did not further proliferate. The eighth Earl felt that he was unfairly treated when the government assessed forests for taxation. He was willing to compromise, however, when the Scottish Mountaineering Club were using Blackmount as one of the first areas where they conducted their meets. Outdoor pursuits on the mountains by the middle classes were in their infancy, but they would eventually pose new challenges to the new landowners at Blackmount since it was relatively accessible. Its geographical situation allowed development to emerge relatively early, with adequate communications already in place since the mid-eighteenth century. It is one of the most southern Highland estates, and being accessible to the main cities of Scotland, allowed migration patterns to be more fluid, but also attracted challenges from people who came to visit the area.

It has not been possible to identify all aspects of Blackmount's history during the nineteenth century. The approach taken has attempted to pose the question of why it originated and existed in its function as a deer forest. Likewise, I have addressed the question of whether it was influential in comparison to the development of other 'sporting estates', and when it became exploited wholesale for commercial purposes. One particularly advantageous theme has been the ability to understand its social history on a local level, made possible by the abundant range of correspondence in the National Archives of Scotland, Edinburgh. This has enabled us to judge the stages required, from a landlord's point of view, in managing a forest. Likewise, we can see latent tensions voiced by his factors and tenants involved in running it. As a landlord who was

often absent from his estates, he depended on trust and loyalty from his employees especially those residing at Blackmount. It has also been possible to understand the landlords' motives for adapting the estate in the way they did.

Although the Forest of Corrie Ba may have, amongst others, existed as a remnant from the medieval period, we can more clearly identify it as a feature of early modern Scottish history. The area, as a forest, faced a period of recession because of the boom in sheep farming, but after Blackmount Forest came into formation in 1820 there are indications that it was Lord Glenorchy's and his successors' intentions to keep it running indefinitely. This is seen in the dedication with which they undertook in its management by employing foresters, and later improving it. Also, the fact that they used the courts to justify its existence shows their aims in retaining it. Throughout the nineteenth century Blackmount developed into a forest that may have set a precedent for others. This is seen in the formation of the adjacent forest managed by Campbell of Monzie in Glen Etive, and at Blackcorries in Rannoch. Some of the Blackmount foresters gained apprenticeship before moving on to manage new ones. The Forest of Atholl, and the forests in Deeside, especially around Balmoral, likewise set blueprints for others that were formed later. A greater number of Highland forests emerged primarily for let after 1880 when landlords saw the economic advantages they could generate.

Blackmount, because of its natural geographical location and mountainous nature, was an ideal location for a forest; thus from this

view its formation was a typical model. The Campbells of Breadalbane, like their ancestors, had modified the landscape to serve their exclusive wishes. The second Marquis had shown it was possible to manage and successfully maintain a deer forest on the periphery of his extensive estates. It was possible for this family to do so because of the political power and aristocratic position they held. Blackmount was one of the most influential forests during the nineteenth century, since it had existed from 1820, well before most others in the Highlands.

On a more personal note, I have attempted to examine this history from the widest range of sources in the time available. However, this has only been partially possible to achieve, and further evidence from the tenants' and other landlords' points of view would have provided a fuller picture. More research could possibly compensate for any gaps and an unintentional bias that may exist in the evidence I have now presented. Nevertheless, no studies until this time have identified Blackmount's comparatively early development and social history to the extent that has been done here. This research has been particularly appealing due to the numerous and varied documentary sources that exist on Breadalbane, and those especially referring to Blackmount Forest. Finally, since this area is now viewed as one of the most scenic and popularly recognised mountain landscapes in the Scottish Highlands, conducting a historical study on it has been a fascinating experience.

## Appendix 1/1

### Rentals of upper Glenorchy, 1727-28

<u>Merkland</u>	<u>Names of farms and feus</u>	<u>£</u>	<u>s</u>	<u>d</u>
7	Achallader and Barravurich	308		
4	Auchinscallen (Auch)	342	13	4
2	Breaklet	55	10	
3	Drumliart	106	13	4
3	Clashgower and Letterdochart	139	16	8
	Blaraven	13	6	8
	The Grasings of Corrichibae	100	<sup>1</sup>	

## Appendix 1/2

### Joseph Robson's valuation of upper Glenorchy farms, 1801

Auch	£600
Barravurich and Carrip	£380
Achallader and Beinn an Dothaidh	£240
Blaraven and Ardvrecknish	£290
Clashgour	£240
Glen Ceitlein	£280
Drumliart	£130
Inveroran	£26
Inverveich	£120 <sup>2</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> NAS: GD 112/38/28/1, Rental of Breadalbane and Glenorchy, 1727-1728.

<sup>2</sup> NAS: GD 112/16/13/5/11- Valuation of Glenorchy farms by Joseph Robson, (14<sup>th</sup> September 1801).



### Appendix 1/3

#### State of Argyllshire rents and Turner's valuation, 1803

<u>Name of Farm</u>	<u>Present Rent</u>	<u>Turner's Valuation</u>	<u>Highest offer of rent expected</u>
Achallader	£83 8s	£325	£430 10s
Barravurich	£116 4s 2d	£487	£510
Blaraven	£86 10s	£345	£350
Inveroran	£13 4s		£26
Drumliart	£47 18s 2d	£160	£220 10s
Clashgour	£66 19s 4d	£300	£340 10s
Glenketland	£50 15s 2d	£450	£500 <sup>3</sup>

### Appendix 1/4

#### Rentals in Upper Glenorchy and Glenetive in 1825-6

<u>Farm</u>	<u>Tenant</u>	<u>Rent</u>
Auchalader	Archibald McDiarmid	£230
Baravurich & c	Thomas Walters	£350
Auch & c	Donald Stewart	£660
Inveroran & Derrydarroch	John Fletcher	£40
Drumliart & Craigarve	Donald Campbell	£160
Clashgour & Letterdochart	Duncan Buchanan	£315
King's House	Donald Campbell	£60
Orchy salmon fishing	James McNicoll	£75
Half of Glenketland	Peter Campbell	£150
Kinlochative	Ewan Buchanan	£30
Gualachuline	Nicol MacIntyre	£20 <sup>4</sup>

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<sup>3</sup> NAS: GD 112/16/5/1/7 – 1803, State of Argyllshire rents and Turner's valuation.

<sup>4</sup> NAS: GD 112/9/3/4/9 – Glenorchy rental for 1825-6

Appendix 2/1

Report by Peter Robertson, on Blackmount deer numbers,

(February 1836)

<u>Bounds and marches examined by foresters</u>	<u>Numbers of deer seen</u>	<u>O.S. map grid reference</u>
Alltchaorunn	169	NN 200510
Fionn Ghleann	135	NN 229509
Sron na Creise	94	NN 237522
Cam Ghleann and Blackrock	65	NN 249515
Coireach a Ba (but below road)	250	NN 240475
Beinn Toaig	118	NN 263454
Plantation (of Ardvrecknish)	79	NN 284429
Barravourich wood	25	NN 352457
Larigs (Glenorchy)	28	NN 244339
Inverveagh	25	NN 288390
Drumliart	50	NN 265415
Doire Darach	2	NN 287417
Total 1040 <sup>5</sup>		

(Note: the names represented here are as they are spelt in modern 1:50,000 Ordnance Survey maps; Grid references are added to indicate the locations)

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<sup>5</sup> For 'Cam Ghleann' and 'Blackrock' the grid reference has been taken from 'Cam Gleann'. For 'Coireach a Ba', the deer were observed below the road due to the severity of the snow, therefore further east from the place name location. For 'Plantation', it is assumed that Robertson meant 'Ardvrecknish', but the exact location of the plantation is unknown. Likewise for 'Barravourich wood', he possibly meant 'Crannach woods'. For 'Larigs', he presumably means 'Larig Hill' in Glenorchy. Source: NAS, GD 112/16/10/4/2 – Copy, Report by Peter Robertson to Mr Wyllie, Lochtulla lodge, (2<sup>nd</sup> February 1836)

## Appendix 2/2

### Report by Peter Robertson, forester, on Blackmount deer numbers, (January 1843).

North side, Glenketland march to Kingshouse	698
Badentoig and Melbegs	459
Dalness	225
Barravurich and Leidbeg	120
From the Lodge to the east end of Loch Tulla	209
Bentoig and Blaraven	93
Drumliart and Inverveich	609
Larigs and Catnish	150
Glenkinlass	80
Total	2643 <sup>6</sup>

## Appendix 2/3

### Report by Peter Robertson, forester, on Blackmount deer numbers, (February 1844).

Corriechalan and Corrieusachan	342
Finglen and Benmacaskak	282
Camglen and Blackrock	194
Bencorach and Badentoig	389
Leitbeg and Barravurich	224
Mellebegs, Bentoig and plantation	201
Drumliart and Inverveich	731
Catnish and Larigs	150

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<sup>6</sup> NAS, GD 112/74/182/1 - Report by Peter Robertson, Drumliart, to Mr Wyllie, (19<sup>th</sup> January 1843).

Ardmaddy, Kinlochative and Corrienacaimb	154
Coleter	22
Dalness	87
Total	2667 <sup>7</sup>

### Appendix 2/4

#### Report by Peter Robertson, forester, on Blackmount deer numbers, (January 1845)

Corrichaolan	237	Inverveigh & Corrieoran	319
Corrichsachan	116	Barravourich, Leitbeg & wood	180
Benmacascaig	180	Larigs and Catnish	57
Finglen	118	Corrichchaorach & Corrichacaimh	151
Camaglen and Blackrock	128	Ardmaddy and Inverusachan	51
Badentoig and Bencorach	360	Kinlochative	40
Craignaherrie & Lecnabronan	28	Bennanaighean	28
Mellbegs	65	Dirmasior	17
Bentoig	161	Drumliart	409
		Total	
2661 <sup>8</sup>			

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<sup>7</sup> NAS, GD 112/18/3/8/3 - Report by Peter Robertson, Drumliart, to Sir Alexander Campbell, (13<sup>th</sup> February 1844).

<sup>8</sup> NAS, GD 112/74/182/5 - Report by Peter Robertson, Drumliart, (27<sup>th</sup> January 1845).

## Appendix 2/5

### Report by Blackmount employees on deer numbers in December, 1854

<u>Name of observer</u>	<u>Locations where deer counted</u>	<u>Numbers</u>
Hugh Leitch	Craig and Catnish	264
Duncan McIntyre	Inveryusachan, Kenlochative and Coiletter	486
James McNicol	Between Eagle Hill and Corrie Challader	331
William McLaren	Larigs and Glenstrae	116
Archibald McIntyre	Bensie, Glenfuagh and Craigantiler	446
Alexander McPherson	Leitmor, Leitbeg, Melbegs to plantation	318
John Cameron	Inveruchan, Narrachan, face of Aucharn	477
Ewan Campbell	Lochliuddan, Blackrock, Camglen, Corriebaugh	668
(name not given)	Deer counted on south side of Achalader	188
Allan McNicol	Larigdochart and Corrychaorach	107
Allan McIntyre	Corrieveckar, Inverveich and Coricoran	627
Donald Duff	Glenkitland, Coriechaoline, Corrieusachan	
	Benmacaskaig, Finaglen	102
	Total	5051 <sup>9</sup>

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<sup>9</sup> NAS, GD 112/74/188 – Lists of counting deer at Blackmount, (28<sup>th</sup> December 1854).

### Appendix 3/1

#### Yearly servants' wages, Blackmount forest (1843 to 1844)

<u>Servant</u>	<u>Description of obligations/ expenses</u>	<u>Wages / grants</u>
John McGibbon	With wife to manage Lochtulla Lodge allowance for meal and servant girl	£35
	Expenses carting deer to Tyndrum	£4 3 8
Peter Robertson	Head forester, meal and clothing expenses	£39 13 11
	Travelling and incidental expenses	£1 15 8
	Game license for commission	£4 2 4
Peter Cameron year)	Assistant forester to Robertson	£6 (half
	Board, milk and lodging	£7    "
Colin MacAndrew year)	Assistant forester to Robertson	£6 (half
	Board, milk and lodging	£7    "
Duncan McColl	Forester, and meal allowance	£18 13 11
Archibald Campbell	Forester,       "       "	£16 13 11
Duncan McIntyre	Forester,       "       "	£27
Duncan McGregor	Forester,       "       "	£27
Allan McNicoll	Forester,       "       "	£25
Donald Duff	Forester,       "       "	£25
	A present to assist in educating his children	£2
Archibald MacIntyre	Watcher on the north-east march of Forest	£28 10 2
Archibald McDonald	Watcher at Larigs, Glenorchy	£5 10
Duncan McCallum	Larigs, Glenorchy, and William Campbell	£6 5 <sup>10</sup>

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<sup>10</sup> The actual locations resided by some of the foresters are unknown but they are certainly within the Blackmount bounds. Peter Robertson is known to have lived at Drumliart, but possibly moved to Loch Tulla later. It is likely that Archibald MacIntyre resided at Blackrock Cottage, or Kings House. NAS GD 112 GD 112/14/5/1 - Factory Account between the Marquis of Breadalbane and James F. Wyllie,

### Appendix 3/2: Other expenditure for Blackmount forest 1843 to 1844

<u>Individuals paid</u>	<u>Description of Expense Incurred</u>	<u>Discharge</u>
Duncan McGregor	Board of foresters during Hind shootings	£1 2 1
John Crerar	Assisting during the forest season	£1 13 6
Donald McVean	“ “ “	£ 7 4
Road labourers	Bridle track repairs through Glenkinglass	£12 1 3
Janet Cameron	Years' wages for taking charge of Barravurich House, to August 1843	£2 10
Bell Clark	Dairymaid at the forest, year's wages, Including the board of a herd boy	£14
Augus Cameron	Herd at forest, year's wages	£1 10
Sundry employees	Winning and storing hay at Forest House, Caitnish and other places	£19 4 6
Joseph Carmichael	Inverouran, whisky for employees winning and storing of hay at Forest House	£ 10 6
McGibbon workers	Making peats for the Forest House, pumping water and others	£8 19
R. & I. MacKay	For shoes to Duncan McGregor, shepherd at Gorton and Duncan Cameron, shepherd at Cairrip for protecting game, 1844	£1
Cuthbertson & Tweedie	Freight and carriage of iron bedsteads for the Forest House, 1843	£1 16 10
Dr Sinclair, Glenorchy	Medicines and attendance on Archibald Campbell and others, 1844	£4 2

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From Martinmas 1843 to Martinmas 1844.

<u>Individuals paid</u>	<u>Description of Expense incurred</u>	<u>Discharge</u>
Duncan McIntyre	For potatoes for the kennel dogs, 1844	£1 17 4
I.Brydie Garbel	Shore dues on coats for the Forest House	£1 7 9
Malcolm Christie	Kingshouse, for whisky to workmen at Bridge of Bah, 1844	£1
Donald Brown	Killin, for coke and coal for Forest House	£41 19
Alexander Wood & Company	Glasgow, for a steelyard weighing machine, 1844	£8 5 6
Duncan McLennan	Killin, sundries for Aultcharine Cottage	£ 11 19
Mrs Currie	Dumbarton, for carriage of parcels etc., To the Forest House, 1844	£ 15 6
Donald Black	Glenorchy, for dairy utensils, 1844	£ 12
Duncan Dewar	Dalmally, furnishings for Forest House	£13 9 8
Archibald Fletcher	Tyndrum, carriage of deer etc., to Tyndrum	£6 3 6
John Cameron	Barravurich, carriage as above	£ 5 6
D & C Stewart	Ballachulish, for coals, 1843 and 1844	£8 17
Joseph Carmichael	Whisky for the Forest House and labourers Oats for the stable, and carriage of deer Oatmeal from Tyndrum store for forest dogs	£12 16 2 £44 11
Finlay McNab and others	Tolls and other charges, carting hay oats etc., from Taymouth to the Forest House	£1 7 6
Total Expenditure		£513 8



### Discharge Extraordinary – The Forest House

<u>Individuals paid</u>	<u>Description of Expense incurred</u>	<u>Discharge</u>
Carpenters, painters	Internal carpentry and papering, making and fitting doors on slaughter house, July to Nov	£25 4 6
Peter McAlpin	Boating painters and luggage from Kenmore to Killin, 1844	£ 7 6
Hugh McNab	Carriage of wood from Killin	£1 7
Duncan McCallum Merchant	Killin, spades for workmen farming the new garden	£ 10 6
Thomas Falconer Plumber	Perth, for fitting up water closet, for a door to slaughter house, and other plumber work	£8 1 9
James Pringle	Perth, on account of brushes, paint, etc.,	£1 18 7 <sup>11</sup>

### Appendix 3/3

#### Factory accounts for Blackmount Forest, 1863

<u>Servant</u>	<u>Description of obligations/ expenses</u>	<u>Wages / grants</u>
Peter Robertson	Wages including meal and allowance for clothes, and allowance in lieu of potatoes half year to Whitsunday, 1863	£26 18 4
	Ditto, travelling and incidental expenses, half year to ditto	£27 14 4
Alexander McLeish	Assistant forester: wages half year to ditto	£8 10
Peter Robertson	Board of ditto, half year to ditto	£6
John Robertson	Kennel lad: wages, allowance of meal and allowance in lieu of milk, half year to ditto	£13 19 2

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<sup>11</sup> NAS GD 112/14/5/1 – Perthshire Factory Accounts, 1844, Ordinary and Extraordinary discharges on the Breadalbane Estates, Game Forest and the Forest House

Peter Dewar	Forester, Gorstan: ditto, ditto, half year to	£15 9 2
Duncan Macpherson	Forester, Glenketland: ditto, ditto, half year to ditto	£16 2 7
Alan MacIntyre	Forester, Bridge of Urchay: wages and allowance of meal, half year to ditto	£14 9 2
Archibald MacIntyre	Forester, Clashgour: ditto, half year to ditto	£17 10
Allan McNicoll	Forester, Clashgour: ditto, half year to ditto	£12 10
Duncan McLaren	Forester, Altachorine: ditto, half year to ditto	£15
Donald MacIntyre	Forester, Kinlochetive: ditto, half year to	£13 10
Hugh Campbell	Forester, Kingshouse: ditto, half year to ditto	£16
John Cameron	Forester Ardmaddy, wages and allowance of meal, half year to ditto	£10 12 7
Colin Cameron	Ciiflon: carting deer from the forest to head of Loch Lomond, Dec 1852 and Jan 1863	£1 16
John McCallum	Smith, Clifton, ditto ditto ditto, Jan 1863	£ 14
Total wages		£189 17 <sup>12</sup>

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<sup>12</sup> GD 112/14/5/15 – Breadalbane Factory Accounts, 1863, The Forest.

# Appendix 4

## List, by Peter Robertson, of harts shot at Blackmount in 1857.

Month	day	no		Stones	lb
Augt	13	1	Peter Robertson at Corrievicker	13	10
Sept	4	1	By Peter Robertson at Benshee	14	"
"	12	1	By Lord Powerscourt at Corriecharoch Pass	14	1
"	"	1	By " " Stalking at Benshee	9	3
"	14	1	By Marquis of Breadalbane at Stroneforsair Pass	14	13
		1	" " "	13	10
		1	" " "	15	10
		1	" " "	12	6
		1	" " "	8	"
	14	1	By Lord Cook	10	7
	15	1	By Lord Powerscourt at Barravurich Stalking	14	8
	16	1	By Earl Spencer at Drumleart Stalking	10	1
		1	By Lord Powerscourt at Barravurich Stalking	11	1
		1	" " "	10	1
		1	" " "	11	3
	18	1	By Lord Powerscourt at Stroneguish Pass	14	
		1	" " "	14	11
		1	" " "	14	6
		1	By Earl Spencer at Stroneguish Pass	13	
		1	By " " "	13	7
	19	1	By Marquis of Breadalbane at Corriechalone Pass	18	1
		1	" " "	13	7
		1	" " "	14	
		1	" " "	9	10
		1	By the Revd George Prothero "	14	6
	21	1	By Marquis of Breadalbane at Corrienacaim Pass	13	1
		1	" " "	13	7
		1	" " "	17	8
Sept	22	1	By Marquis of Breadalbane at Corriechaorach Pass	14	7
				12	6
				13	10
				14	9
				12	8
	23	1	By Lord Elcho at Benshee Stalking	12	5
		1	By Mr Blythe at Barravurich Stalking	11	8
	25	1	By Lord Elcho at Barravurich Stalking	13	9
	26	1	By " " "	13	6
	28	1	By " " at Benshee "	15	10
		1	By " " "	12	13
		1	By Marquis of Breadalbane at Drumleart Stalking	14	10
		1	By " " "	13	12
		1	By " " "	10	11
	29	1	By Lord Loughburgh at Inverveich Stalking	14	4
		1	By Lord Ossulston at Druimleart Stalking	15	6

30	1	By William Russell Esq at Stroneforsan Pass	12	10
	1	“ “ “	12	6
	1	By Lord Elcho “ “	13	8
	1	By Marquis of Breadalbane “ “	14	2
	1	By Lady Harriot St Clair “ “	13	8
October 1	1	By Lord Ward at Drumleart Stalking	8	4
	1	By Captain Balie at Barravurich Stalking	15	6
	1	By Lord Ossulston at Catnish Wood Stalking	14	3
October 3	1	By Marquis of Breadalbane at Camaglen Pass	15	6
	1	By “ “ “	13	10
	1	By Lord Ossulston at “ “	15	5
	1	By Lord Elcho at “ “	15	12
	1	By “ “ “	14	10
	1	By “ “ “	13	12
5	1	By Marquiss of Breadalbane at Larigdochart Pass	16	7
6	1	By Lord Osulston at Benshee Stalking	16	10
	1	By Lord Longburgh at Inverveich Stalking	11	6
8	1	By Lord Ossulston at Larigdochart Pass	13	8
	1	By Lord Ossulston “ “	13	6
	1	By Lord Gifford at “ “	13	8
	1	By William Russell esq “ “	13	10
	1	By Marquiss of Breadalbane “ “	17	8
9	1	By Marquiss of Breadalbane “ “	16	10
	1	By “ “ “	13	4
	1	By “ “ “	16	8
	1	By Lord Gifford at “	13	3
	1	By Lord Ossulston at “	16	12
	1	By William Russell esq “ “	13	7
10	1	By William Russell esq at Inverveich Stalking	13	12
	1	By Lord Gifford at Benshee Stalking	13	9
	1	By Marquis of Breadalbane at Drumleart Stalking	14	6
	1		15	8
	1		15	3
	1		12	8
October 12	1	By Marquis of Breadalbane at Bentoig Pass	13	11
	1	By “ “ “	14	6
	1	By “ “ “	13	10
	1	By “ “ “	13	12
	1	By Lord Gifford at Craignaherrie Stalking	18	4
Oct 14	1	By Marquis of Breadalbane at Lochdochart	11	4
	1	By William Russell at Benshee Stalking	11	2
Total: 85 harts <sup>13</sup>				

<sup>13</sup> GD 112/14/12/9/27 - List, by Peter Robertson, harts shot at Blackmount, 1857, (17<sup>th</sup> October 1857).

## Appendix 5

### Forest: A tabular return of all the Forest Establishment including foresters, shepherds & c (2<sup>nd</sup> July 1849)

No	Stations of foresters	Names	Year wages	Holding			
				Cows	Calves	Mares	Foals
	Foals						
1	Forest Lodge	Peter Robertson	£40	4	4	1	1
2	" "	Colin McAndrew	£14	"	"	"	"
3	Old Lodge	?? McGibbon and wife	£35	"	"	"	"
4	Bridge of Urchy	Archibald Campbell	£18	3	3	1	1
5	Aultachorine	Donald Duff	£25	"	"	"	"
		allowance for school	£2	3	3	1	1
6	Kingshouse	Duncan McGregor	£27	3	3	1	"
7	Kinlochative	Duncan McIntyre	£27	3	3	1	1
8	Clashgour	Allan McNicol	£25	4	4	1	1
9	"	Archibald McIntyre	£27	3	3	1	1
10	"	Duncan McColl	£14	2	2	1	"
11	Barravurich	Donald McDonald	£29	"	"	"	"
12	Dairy	?? Dewar	"	"	"	"	"
13		including wages & board	£20 6 8	"	"	"	"
14	Derrynasoir	James McNicol	£12	3	3	1	1
15	Glenketland	Hugh Campbell	£14	"	"	"	"

No	Stations of Shepherds	Names	Wages	Meal	Cows	Calves	Mares	Foals
1	Caim	Duncan Cameron	£12	6 ½	2	2	"	"
2	Gorstain	Peter Ferguson	£12	6 ½	2	2	"	"
3	Achalander	John Campbell	£14	6 ½	"	"	"	"
4	"	John Cameron	£12	6 ½	"	"	"	"
5	"	John McGregor	£12	6 ½	"	"	"	"
6	"	Robert McNaughton						
7	Larigs	William McLaren	£12	6 ½	2	2	1	1
8	Caitnish	Hugh Leitch	£12	6 ½	2	2	1	1
9	Derrynasoir	Alexander Campbell	£13	6 ½				
10	Acharne	Duncan McCallum	£12	6 ½	3	3	1	1
11	"	Archibald McDonald	£12	6 ½				
12	Ardmaddy	William Campbell	£12	6 ½	3	3	1	1
13	Inveryusachan	Andrew McLarin	£10	6 ½	2	2		
14	Glen Kitland	Peter Crerar	£12	6 ½	3	3	1	1 <sup>14</sup>

<sup>14</sup> NAS, GD 112/74/207 – List, by Duncan Dewar, of foresters and shepherds at Blackmount, (2nd July 1849). (The spellings are as they appear in document; quantities of meal given to shepherds are in bolls)

## Appendix 6

### Grass Mail of the Bridge of Orchy Drove Stance in 1860

#### Listing drovers and costs for their sheep and cattle from May to October.

<u>Date</u>	<u>Name and location of drover</u>	<u>Sheep</u>	<u>Cattle</u>	<u>Cost: £</u>	<u>sh</u>	<u>d</u>
May 19 <sup>th</sup>	Mr Dunn, Balemore		21		2	
" 27 <sup>th</sup>	Abram Dickson, Lochbroom		40		4	
" 30 <sup>th</sup>	Angus McKenzie, Ardnamurchan		20		2	
June 1 <sup>st</sup>	John MacPherson, Badenoch		15		1	6
" 2 <sup>nd</sup>	Mr Alexander, Morvin	500			10	
" 9 <sup>th</sup>	Mrs Scot, Hawick		80		8	
" 14 <sup>th</sup>	George Cameron, Lochaber		60		6	
" "	John Cameron, Lochaber		70		7	
" "	Mr Alexander McFarlane, Gartmore		60		6	
" 15 <sup>th</sup>	Mr Mathieson, (Location not given)		70		7	
" "	John Cameron, Lochaber		160		16	
" "	Donald Cameron, Lochaber		50		5	
" "	Mr Donald Cameron, Lochaber		150		15	
Aug 1 <sup>st</sup>	Hugh McPherson, Lochaber		60		6	
" 4 <sup>th</sup>	D. Cameron, Lochaber		50		5	
" "	Mr A. Mc Farlane, Gartmore		40		4	
" "	Mr D. Cameron, Lochaber		60		6	
" "	Mr John Cameron, Lochaber		80		8	
" 14 <sup>th</sup>	Mr Phineash McDonald, Lochaber	170			3	6
" 15 <sup>th</sup>	Mr McIntyre, Auchnadarach	70			1	6
" 16 <sup>th</sup>	Mr William Anderson, Glen Coe	100			2	
" 17 <sup>th</sup>	Alex Campbell, Esqr of Monzie	1000			1	
" 18 <sup>th</sup>	Mr McDonald, Lochaber	400			8	
" "	Norman Campbell, Skye		11		1	
" "	Mr McMillan, Ar?oulan		150		3	

Date	Name and location of drover	Sheep	Cattle	Cost: £	sh	d
" 20 <sup>th</sup>	Mrs Scot of Roxburey Shire		430	8	6	
" 22 <sup>nd</sup>	Mrs Scot of Roxburey Shire		200	4		
" "	John Kennedy, Lochaber, for one horse				6	
" 23 <sup>rd</sup>	Mr Duncan Buchanan, Caolasnacoan		75	1	6	
" 24 <sup>th</sup>	Mr Hale, Apin		100	2		
Aug 24 <sup>th</sup>	Mrs Scot, Roxburghshire	300		6		
" 27 <sup>th</sup>	Mr John Mitchell	600		12		
" "	Mr Alexander Morvin	100		2		
" 30 <sup>th</sup>	Mr Thomson, Fassifearn	500		10		
" 31 <sup>st</sup>	Mr McNaught	650		13		
Sept 1 <sup>st</sup>	Mr Thomson Fassifearn	800		16		
" "	Mr D. Cameron, Lochaber		55	5	6	
" 3 <sup>rd</sup>	Mr Glen, Glasgow	600		12		
" "	Mr A. McFarlane, Gartmore		100	10		
" "	Mr D. Cameron, Lochaber		180	18		
" "	Mr Bartmore		60	6		
" "	Mr McIntyre, Lismore		100	10		
" "	Mr D. Cameron, Lochaber		40	4		
" "	Mr Neilson, Thornyhall	900		18		
" "	Mr Wright, England	1,000		1		
" 22 <sup>nd</sup>	Mr Andrew Williamson	400		8		
" 24 <sup>th</sup>	Lord Morton	400		8		
" 25 <sup>th</sup>	Mr Kennedy	300		6		
" "	Mr Cunningham, Moidart	75		1	6	
" "	Mr McCall, Lochaber	600		12		
" "	Mr McNaught	1400		4	8	
" "	Mr Gibbons, England	775		15	6	
" "	Mr Hunter	800		16		
" "	Mr McGregor	825		16	6	
" "	Mr Cunningham, Moidart	80		1	6	
" "	Mr McNiven, Morvin		20	2		

Date	Name and location of drover	Sheep	Cattle	Cost: £	sh	d
" "	Mr Glen, Glasgow	600			12	
" "	Mr Dick, Moidart	170			3	
" "	Alexander Campbell, Esq. of Monzie	1000		1		
" "	Mr McCormick, Glenetive	500			10	
" "	Mr Kilpatrick, Apin	200			4	
Oct 1 <sup>st</sup>	Hugh McPherson, Lochaber		60		6	
" "	Mr Witherspoon, Kintire		50		5	
Oct 1 <sup>st</sup>	Mr Cameron, Lochaber		200	1		
Oct 2 <sup>nd</sup>	Mr Donald Cameron, Lochaber		100		10	
" "	Alexander McFarlane, Gartmore		100		10	
" "	John McCrae		50		5	
" "	Norman Campbell, Skye		50		5	
" "	Peter Lamont		40		4	
" 3 <sup>rd</sup>	Mr McMillen, Letterfinlay	450			9	
" 23 <sup>rd</sup>	Mr Dalgleish, Ardnamurchan		40		4	
" "	Mr Caldeir	500			10	
" 31 <sup>st</sup>	Mr Mathieson, Skye		15		1	6
" "	Mr Cameron, Lochaber		50		5	
" "	Alexander McFarlane, Gartmore		60		6	
" "	Donald Cameron, Lochaber		90		9	
" "	John Cameron, Lochaber		25		2	6

Total: £30 11s 11d <sup>15</sup>

(Note: Names in this list are spelt as they appear in the document dating to 1860.)

<sup>15</sup> NAS: GD 112/74/216/11- Grass Mail of the Bridge of Orchy, (May to October, 1860).



## Appendix 7: Leases of Blackmount Estate c.1860-1880

<u>Year</u>	<u>Tenant</u>	<u>Conditions of Lease</u>	<u>Rental</u>
1863	Lord Dudley	Included the grazings of Clashgour and Glenketland	£3500
1873	Lord Dudley	Clearance of stock	£5000
1879	Count Karolyi	Sublet from Lady Dudley	£2000
1880	Anthony Gibbs	As above	£3250
1881	Sir Henry Alsopp	As above	£3300
1881	Sir Henry Alsopp	As above	£4000
1882-1885	Mr Cooper	As above Stag season only	£3000 <sup>16</sup>

## Appendix 8: Valuation of items and stock in Blackmount Forest, 1863

Rt. Hon., earl of Dudley to executors of the late Marquis of Breadalbane.

To value of sheep stocks Glenketland and Clashgour	£2241 7 4
Boat at Lochetive	£5
Ale at Forest House 210 gallons @ 2/.	£21
Coals at Forest House £12 charcoal, fir roots £5	£17
Fishing net at Forest	£10
Gardeners tools at Forest	£1 18
Cattle purchased at sale at Taymouth	£89 10
Furnishings in Foresters Hall, Blackmount	£7 8 2
Furnishings in Bah Cottage	£1 5
Furnishings in Altachorine	£5 12
Dogs in Forest Kennels	£100
Smearing materials at Clashgour and Glenketland	£9 16
Share of expenses of valuers and Oversman at delivery of sheep stock	£4 2 9
3 months interest at 5 percent interest	£31 3
	£2544 14 3 <sup>17</sup>

<sup>16</sup> Willie Orr, 'The Economic impact of Deer Forests in the Scottish Highlands', 44-59, in: *Scottish Economic and Social History*, II, (1982), 46; Orr used his sources from NAS: GD 112/16/9.

<sup>17</sup> NAS: GD 112/16/14/8/10 – Rt hon Earl of Dudley to executors of the late Marquis of Breadalbane, (1863).

## Appendix 9:

### Blackmount as in Valuation Roll for 1887-88

(Blackmount is situated in two parishes, so the values in both were given)

#### Glenorchy and Inshail

Deer forest, shootings and grazings - £1,860

Fishings and house of Ardvrecknish - £90

Total £1,950

#### Ardchattan and Muckairn

Deer forest and lodge, shootings and grazings - £720

Glenorchy as above

£1950

Total £2,670<sup>18</sup>

Total Valuation

£4,620

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<sup>18</sup> NAS, GD 112/16/9/5/4 – Blackmount as in Valuation Roll for 1887-88.

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