

THE SPECIAL LANDSCAPE QUALITIES OF THE LOCH LOMOND AND THE TROSSACHS NATIONAL PARK

Note:

The national park has been broken up into the landscape areas of Argyll Forest, Loch Lomond, Breadalbane and the Trossachs. There is strong overlap between the Loch Lomond landscape area used here and the boundaries of the **Loch Lomond National Scenic Area** (NSA). Hence If the special qualities of the Loch Lomond NSA are required, then they equate to the qualities of the landscape area under the heading Loch Lomond.

In contrast, **The Trossachs NSA** is significantly smaller than the Trossachs landscape area used here. The qualities given under the Trossachs heading which will not apply to the NSA are those relating to Lochs Ard, Chon and Arklet, Aberfoyle, Callander, and the Lake of Menteith.

The national park overlaps with a small part of the River Earn (Comrie to St Fillans) NSA, but the special qualities of this NSA are not included here.

Summary List of the Special Qualities

1.0 General Qualities

- *A world-renowned landscape famed for its rural beauty*
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- *Water in its many forms*
- *The rich variety of woodlands*
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- *Tranquillity*
- *The easily accessible landscape splendour*

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- *Killin and the Falls of Dochart*
- *Expansive Glen Dochart*
- *Wide Strath Fillan*
- *Sinuous Glen Falloch*

5.0 The Trossachs

- *A traditional 'Gateway to the Highlands'*
- *A harmonious concentration of lochs, woods and hills*
- *Rugged Ben Venue, the centrepiece of the Trossachs*
- *Loch Katrine, the 'Queen of the Trossachs'*
- *A landscape of beautiful lochs*
- *The romance of the Trossachs*
- *The resort of Aberfoyle and the Duke's Pass*
- *The curious wooded hillocks of Aberfoyle*
- *The gateway town of Callander*
- *The tranquil Lake of Menteith*

1.0 General qualities



Photograph 1. Loch Lomond, Ben Lomond and the Arrochar Alps from Duncryne Hill

- ***A world-renowned landscape famed for its rural beauty***

This world-renowned landscape has Loch Lomond as its centre, an immense, island-studded loch that leads from the pastoral Lowlands into the heart of the mountainous Highlands, with dramatic contrasts in scenery along its length.

The loch's iconic status is reinforced by the well-known traditional song that endows it with romantic connotations. The words are perceptive in encapsulating Loch Lomond's landscape, its '*bonnie banks, bonnie braes, shady glens, hieland hills, the steep, steep side of Ben Lomond, the wild birdies, the wild flowers, the sunshine on the waters*'. This portrait underpins the 'love of the countryside' that the area engenders, so that the loch symbolises the rural beauty of Scotland, an appreciation that endures. Hence the loch and its surrounds epitomises Scotland: a distinctive and inspiring country of loch, farmland, glens and mountains.

The loch was one of the highlights of the Scottish tour of the 18th and 19th centuries, when it was the visitor's last experience of Highland scenery or, where the route started from Glasgow, the first. In the accounts, poetry and paintings of these early travellers, a huge contrast was drawn between the sombre dramatic scenery of Glencoe and Loch Lomond's Highland pastoral beauty.

'The transitional nature of the landscape itself, pastoral lake scenery on the border of the Highlands.' Andrews (1989)

Extract from the song 'Loch Lomond' (Traditional):

*By yon bonnie banks and by yon bonnie braes,
Where the sun shines bright on Loch Lomond,
Where me and my true love were ever wont to gae
On the bonnie, bonnie banks o' Loch Lomond.*

*We'll meet where we parted in yon shady glen,
On the steep, steep side o' Ben Lomond,
Where in purple hue the Hieland hills we view,
And the moon looks out frae the gloamin.*

*The wild birdies sing and the wild flowers spring.
An' in sunshine the waters are sleepin...*

Extract from 'Inversnaid', Gerard Manley Hopkins (1844-1889):

*This darksome burn, horseback brown,
His rollrock highroad roaring down,
In coop and in comb the fleece of his foam
Flutes and low to the lake falls home.*

*Degged with dew, dappled with dew
Are the groins of the braes that the brook treads through,
Wiry heathpacks, flitches of fern,
And the beadbonny ash that sits over the burn.*

- **Wild and rugged highlands contrasting with pastoral lowlands**

Mountains and large hill ranges are found across the Park, the massifs separated by sea lochs, freshwater lochs and deep, glacially scoured glens. The Arrochar Alps, the Luss Hills, the East Lomond hills, the Beinn Mhor hills, the Trossachs and the Breadalbane mountains are wild upland landscapes, all with distinctive characters. Individual, well known summits are present, including Ben Lomond, The Cobbler, Ben Vorlich, and Ben Venue.

The flat-bottomed glens that penetrate the hills are inhabited and farmed, presenting a pleasing contrast to the bare hills and summits above. Additionally, the whole area of mountains and glens, comprising great tracts of wild and rugged land, contrasts sharply with the gentle, rolling, low-lying farmlands and parklands found in the south. The uplands, with their pasture on the glen floors, their sides of rough moorland, native woodland or dark conifer plantations and their craggy hills, presents a highly textured, more desolate and generally, less populated scene than the green and fertile lowlands.

- **Water in its many forms**

Water in its many forms is rarely absent from the view. There occur deep, indented sea lochs, long inland lochs, some straight, some sinuous, lochans, rivers, burns, waterfalls and rapids; a lowland lake, and also wetlands, marshes and mires of many sizes and types. This great variety in combination with the range of landscape settings results in a diverse and beautiful landscape. As well as Loch Lomond itself, other well-known lochs are Loch Katrine, Loch Earn, Loch Voil and the Lake of Menteith.

- ***The rich variety of woodlands***

Despite vast swathes of commercial forest cover in some areas, previous woodland management has led to great woodland variety throughout the Park, with ancient broadleaved plantations, wood pasture, farmland trees and policy plantings. The woodlands define the lower and mid-glen slopes, distinguishing them from the open uplands, they enclose settlements, and they clothe loch shores and islands. The woods and the trees are important visually, bringing a tapestry of texture and colour that changes throughout the year.

'Many semi-natural broadleaved woodlands, and also parkland, hedgerow and roadside trees, have been allowed to grow relatively undisturbed since their last period of economic management well over 100 years ago.' Quelch (1997)

- ***Settlements nestled within a vast natural backdrop***

The area possesses a long and rich history of habitation, with houses and other structures, both ancient and modern, confined mainly to the lower-lying land. Nowadays human populations are low across much of the Park, and the settlements that are present are often small-scale, nestled within the backdrop of vast landforms of mountain, hill, glen and loch. This engenders a strong sense of surrounding, all-enveloping nature, even though much of the landscape has been modified by human activity over the centuries.

- ***Famous through-routes***

Throughout the Park, major communication routes lead along the main glens. These long-established routes, both roads and tracks, date from many different periods. They overlie one another because they are constrained within narrow passes, so that there is a concentration of features – road and rail bridges, viaducts, ancillary buildings, lengths of track and road – often all intervisible, within short distances of each other. Some routes have associations with late medieval pilgrimages, such as to sites associated with St Fillan, and the earliest droving routes formed the basis for the early 18th century military roads leading north and westwards.

The 19th century saw the arrival of the railways. Some have since disappeared, leaving a legacy of bridges and viaducts that remain as marked features. The scenic and world-renowned West Highland Railway traverses the Park, through the contrasting scenery of inhabited villages, farmland, loch shore, glens, moorland and mountainside. The 20th century saw the creation of the West Highland Way, giving the opportunity for a slower journey from lowland to highland, deep into the Breadalbane mountains and beyond.

Overall, these routes create a strong sense of movement through the area, with the National Park being at the crossroads of cultures and human transport throughout time.

- ***Tranquillity***

It is easy to find tranquillity within the Park, to find uncrowded places where there is a predominance of natural sounds and sights, whether beside a shimmering loch, following the course of a mountain burn, walking the sheltered woodlands or climbing an open hill. This sense of peacefulness is enhanced by the small scale of human settlement within the expansive landforms, and by the general absence of large-scale development.

- ***The easily accessible landscape splendour***

The landscape splendour of the Park is easily accessible from major centres of population within the Central Belt, with some three million people within one hour's easy travel. Although the area is popularly known as 'Glasgow's playground', it is also a major draw for visitors not just from nearby Glasgow but from all over the world. It is a prime tourist destination, and an end in itself, with many not venturing further into the Highlands beyond.

'Visions of happy summer holidays, not sullied even by the sight of Glasgow's chimneys peering through a cloud of smoke...' Scottish Mountaineering Club (1901)

2.0 Argyll Forest



Photograph 2. Loch Eck from above Whistlefield

- **A remote area of high hills and deep glens**

This is a mountainous area of distinctive summits rising above forested slopes and steep-sided, glacially-carved troughs filled with sea lochs, lochs or flat-bottomed glens. The uplands are rugged and wild, especially in the north, and the whole area has a sense of remoteness and isolation, emphasised by the sometimes persistent cloud, drizzle or rain.

The high mountains and long sea lochs restrict access by road into the area, so that travel by sea has always been the easiest, preferred means of travel. This continues today with the ferries across the Firth of Clyde providing access into Holy Loch, Loch Goil and the lower reaches of Loch Long.

'All who travel by land into Cowal must follow the twisting road from Tarbert through Glen Croe. Above the skirts of the forest the brooding Cobbler (2,891 feet, 881 metres) surveys the lonely glens where Loch Goil and Loch Long bring probing fingers of the sea deeply into the high peaks of Arrochar. The distinctive shapes of the mountains here are partly due to the tough intrusive diorites amongst the quartzose mica schists...' Whittow (1977)

- **A land of forests and trees**

Extensive conifer plantings cover most of the lower hillsides, with the afforested tracts of such vast scale and density that they are a distinguishing feature of the scenery. In places broadleaved woodland clothes the lower hill slopes and glen floors, providing a lighter foreground to the dark backdrop of coniferous plantations. However, compared to the more

open-canopied Lomondside woods of broadleaf trees, this rugged hill country of afforested slopes can appear sombre, especially on a cloudy, dull day.

In the uninhabited areas the dense forests accentuate the sense of remoteness, whereas around houses and settlements the woods provide a sense of shelter and seclusion. The forests can restrict long distance views, creating a visual and perceptual barrier between the farmed glen floor and the upper, bare and open hill summits. Often the forests end abruptly at a distinctive tree-line.

Some forest types are of particular value because they are ornamental, part of formal designed landscapes, or form evergreen surroundings. Many exotic trees reach gigantic stature, with forested walks such as Puck's Glen, Black Gates and Kilmun offering the opportunity to experience steep slopes clothed with towering trees, allowing a strong sense of solitude to be found.

This distinctive forest character is clearly seen from the panorama at the William Wright Smith Gazebo, on the slopes of A'Chruach at Benmore. Benmore Garden hosts an important plant collection and its woodland policies, in recreating different geographical regions of the world, adds a great diversity of canopy, with the colours and varied forms standing out in the local scene. Seasonal colour is a keynote of the Benmore estate and the great Redwood Avenue of 1863, with 50 specimen trees over 50m (165ft), creates a prominent landmark.

Throughout the Argyll Forest, the configuration and composition of both forest and woodland display the development of forestry in Scotland: starting with early plantings in the 1820s by private landowners, through the planting of over six million trees in Strath Eachaig between 1871 and 1883; through the setting-up of Forestry Commission in 1919, to modern-day plantations. This lends a well-established, mature forest character, which imbues the area with a great sense of time depth and continuity.

Nowadays, the Argyll Forest Park, set up in 1935 and the first in Britain, seeks to combine commercial forestry with the recreation, enjoyment and scenic beauty of the extensive forests.

'The valleys are so heavily wooded with spruce and pine that they appear gloomy and sombre after the scenic sparkle of The Trossachs and Loch Lomond, although the natural woods of Strachur and Glen Branter bring some relief. The tiny farms are few and far between in this region... In the whole, however, Cowal will be remembered for its forests...' Whittow (1977)

- **Arrochar's mountainous and distinctive peaks**

A distinctive mountain group, popularly called the Arrochar Alps, fills the northern corner, and extends into the Loch Lomond area. The hills are visually striking, curiously-shaped, and rocky with craggy peaks and crests. Each is distinctive and recognisable. They are highly visible from the shores and open waters of Loch Long and Loch Lomond and offer spectacular panoramas from their summits. Their proximity to the sea means that snow seldom lies deep on the summits.

These hills are important in the history of Scottish mountaineering, principally because they provide good climbing and are easily accessible from Glasgow, whether by train or car or, in the past, by steamer to Arrochar. Although popular with climbers, nevertheless the tops

harbour a sense of remoteness and stillness, away from the busy road through Glen Croe at the head of Loch Long.

'Narnain stands very high from a panoramic point of view. From here the long stretch of Loch Lomond extends with but slight break from Inversnaid to the islands at its south-eastern extremity, forming a noble foreground for Ben Lomond and its attendant buttresses. Loch Katrine with Ben Venue, and the Lake of Monteith direct the eye to where the windings of the Forth lead down to Stirling and, shall we say, Edinburgh.

'Farther north the Crianlarich peaks, as well as Ben Lui and Ben Cruachan, are within touch, and Loch Etive, Loch Linnhe, and the Ardgour peaks are well seen. Mull, Jura, and the glittering Atlantic pass us on to Arran, Ailsa Craig, and the visionary Ayrshire hills, while the stretches of the Clyde near its junction with Loch Long and the smiling Gareloch... Below, Loch Long, and the Cobbler, and the Brack fill up the foreground, and it requires but the magic hour of sunset and the snowy garland of winter to complete the ravishing scene'. Scottish Mountaineering Club (1901)

- **The variety of glens**

Deep glens carve through the uplands, their floors permanent pasture and their slopes often afforested. All are generally quiet and peaceful, with built development and habitation sparse, although each has its own distinct character.

Gleann Beag and **Gleann Mor**, along with **Glen Croe**, form a circuit through the mountains of Arrochar. Each is deeply carved into the hills with rocky slopes reaching up to summits some 800m high and glen floors narrow and uneven, Gleann Beag (known popularly as Hell's Glen) especially so. Here large boulders and steep rocky crags emerge from thick forested slopes, the rocks and cliffs with distinctive shapes and overhangs above the narrow road, the weather often creating dramatic swirling patterns of mist, curling and hanging over the trees and slopes.

The farmed glens reaching into the Beinn Mhor hills offer a contrast, varying one from another, with the farmhouses and their buildings markedly contributing to their characters. **Glen Massan** is hidden, leading northwestwards from the south of Strath Eachaig. Settlement is confined to isolated farmsteads in the upper and mid-glen and it has a remote feel. Bordered by broadleaved woodlands, the River Massan carves a convoluted passage, crashing through a deep rocky channel and falls, the thundering waters and steep channel giving a powerful feeling of natural forces and energy, the rapid movement and roar dominating the senses.

By contrast **Glen Finart** offers a more pastoral scene with a broader glen floor of wet, rushy pastures. Here steep afforested glen slopes give way to riparian woodlands that mark the course of the River Finart across the glen floor, and there are also the rich Craighoyle Woods of oak and birch on rocky slopes. The broadleaved trees lighten the overall surrounding, dense coniferous greens. This is a very harmonious, welcoming place. More settled, it forms a welcome contrast with the busier stretches of Cowal coast and the long, linear shores of Loch Eck.

- ***The slender jewel of Loch Eck***

Loch Eck has been described as the jewel of the Argyll Forest Park, lying as a long, narrow, gently winding ribbon of silver, shining against its surrounding, thickly-forested slopes. It fills the glen floor, with only a very narrow margin passable to travellers. Settlement along the western shore is nowadays confined to a single isolated farmstead at Bernice, although ruins at Stuck indicate that this has not always been the case. The loch feels very tranquil, quiet and remote, even empty and wild.

Views over Loch Eck are impressive, whether from the loch shores where unobstructed by trees, or from high ground such as pass over from Glen Finart. Steep hillslopes appear to plunge directly into the water, and the series of interlocking slopes on both shores dip their toes into the loch, creating a rhythmical, scalloped shoreline of bays. This echoes the series of open, lumpy curving mountains above that stretch along the west shores from Creachan Beag in the south to Cruach Bhuidhe in the north, and along the east shores from Creag Liath to Beinn Dubhain.

- ***The dramatic pass of Rest and Be Thankful***

The dramatic mountain pass through Glen Croe forms a natural, major route leading through the mountain ranges between Lochs Long and Fyne. It provides a long uphill passage into the Western Highlands, marked by tumbling burns and waterfalls, with views back down to the distant mountains enclosing Lochs Long and Lomond. This memorable view is framed between, on the one side, the impressive series of steep, rocky hill slopes of Beinn an Lochain, Ben Donich and The Brack, and on the other, the Arrochar massif. The desolate, wild qualities of Glens Croe and Kinglas derive from their contrast with the greener, lush shores of Lomondside to the east and the ducal splendours of the Inveraray policies to the west.

The road is a route of historical and cultural significance. Originally a drove road, in the 1740s it was made into a military road by troops of the 24th Regiment, who erected a stone seat bearing the inscription 'Rest And Be Thankful' at the summit of the long upward haul. Further on is another landmark, The Butterbridge, on the military road set at the junction of Glen Croe with Glen Kinglas.

Following its completion as a Wade-Caulfield military road, it became the standard route to be followed on the 'Scottish tour', marking the 'opening-up' of the Highlands. There are many accounts by visitors who recorded the steep, bare rocky and desolate scene, the wild landscape and gloomy, melancholy images evoked. In support of this idealised image of desolation, Glen Croe is said to be the wettest spot on the western mainland.

The older military route can still be seen today, far below the newer route constructed 1937-1941. These routes provide a strong sense of departure and arrival, from Highland to Lowland and vice versa.

'If Glencoe did not exist, Glencroe would be famous. It is several miles long, lonely, sterile, and desolate. A stream rages down the hollow, fed by tributary burns that dash from the receding mountain-tops. The hill-sides are rough with boulders, as a sea-rock is rough with limpets. Showers cross the path a dozen times during the finest day. As you go along, the glen is dappled with cloud-shadows; you hear the bleating of unseen sheep, and the chances are, that, in travelling along its whole extent, opportunity will not be granted you of bidding "good-morrow" to a single soul. If you are a murderer, you could shout out your secret here, and no one be a bit the wiser. At the head of the glen the road becomes exceedingly steep; and as you pant up the incline, you hail the appearance of a stone seat bearing the welcome motto, "Rest, and be thankful." ... At this point the rough breast of a hill rises in front, dividing the road; the path to the left runs away down into the barren and solitary Hell's Glen, in haste to reach Loch Goil; the other to the right leads through bare Glen Arkinglass'. Smith (1865)

'Proceeded southwards over Glen Croe, a bleak and dreary region now made easily passable by a military road, which rises from either end of the glen by an acclivity not dangerously steep, but sufficiently laborious. In the middle, at the top of the hill, is a seat with the inscription Rest and Be Thankful...' Samuel Johnson (1773), quoted in Osborne (2005)

'And when is there a day in the year free from rain in Glen Croe? And on the hill called 'Rest and Be Thankful'? No day; no not one!'...Glen Croe... has charms for me, and I was sorry to lose sight of it.' Sarah Murray (1796), quoted in Osborne (2005)

- **The seaside architecture of Kilmun and Blairmore**

The Clyde coast resorts of Kilmun and Blairmore, extending around the tip of the Cowal peninsula, possess a distinctive 'seaside resort' architectural quality not found elsewhere in the National Park. They provide good coastal views over Loch Long, across to the far shores of the Roseneath peninsula, Helensburgh and the Clyde coast.

Principal villas, hotels and public buildings along the shore face seawards and are set back, lining the landward side of the coastal road. The predominant style of house is the 19th century Clydeside villa, set in a streetscape ornamented with designed features that enhance the buildings. Many of these are of a recognisable pattern-book style – the boundary walls and ornamental iron railings; quartz rusticated arches; gate piers and gates; garden grounds, including exotic planting of palms and other ornamentals; terraced gardens; and garden features such as fountains. There are also a number of focal public buildings.

The numerous piers and jetties emphasise the history and past importance of sea-borne traffic, principally holidaying city dwellers. Piers can be found at Strone, Kilmun (c. 1828) and Blairmore (1855), with a ticket office and waiting rooms at the latter. There are also private stone and concrete jetties associated with villas, as at Dunselma and Strone.

3.0 Loch Lomond



Photograph 3. The wooded shores of Loch Lomond at Millarochy Bay

- ***Immensity of loch and landscape***

Loch Lomond is a truly vast, capacious area of freshwater, the largest expanse in Britain, covering an area of 70 square kilometres and 36 kilometres in length. It is surrounded by mountains and high hill ranges along its northern half, with Ben Lomond soaring to 974 metres, dominating the western skyline, and the Arrochar Alps to the northwest reaching 1011 metres on the summit of Ben Ime.

These vast waters and high summits make for a landscape and sense of space that is expansive and large-scale. By comparison, within these naturally majestic surroundings, individual human and man-made elements appear small and modest. They are often barely discernable against the larger, rolling backdrop, and the substantial, horizontal and bulky landmass. When man-made features are clearly seen, as at Inveruglass where the Sloy power station with the hydro-electric pipeline descends the steep slopes, the overwhelming broadness of the hill slopes can make such a large-scale engineering installation appear modest in scale. At the same time, piers and jetties along the shore-edge attest the long use of the Loch for industry and recreation.

- ***Two lochs in one***

Loch Lomond has a remarkable geographic position, being the one loch that sits astride the Highland Boundary Fault and hence comprising characteristics both lowland and highland:

The Lowland 'Lake'

From the south the loch has the character of a southern, lowland lake, settled and prosperous. It appears broad and shallow, with gently shelving banks. Its shores abound

with rolling farmland and farmsteads, with designed landscapes surrounding country mansions together with their attached policies, and estate villages. Neat and ordered, the rectilinear enclosed fields are bounded by shelter belts and copses.

The loch itself bears the evidence of human use: as well as numerous piers and jetties, there is notably a rare timber crannog in the water near Balmaha, the remains of a medieval church on the island of Inchcailloch, and other ruins and deserted settlements on the islands and shores of the loch.

The Highland Loch

In the north, Loch Lomond fills a great, deep glacial trough surrounded by steeply sloping hillsides with only a narrow lochside margin. The loch is fjord-like, being narrow, linear, and deep (153m). In some views it appears as a broad and mighty river snaking through interlocking mountain ranges to reach its northern head at Ardlui.

Settlement in this northern tract is sparse and low density, lying along the main road that hugs the western shore. The east shore north of Rowardennan is largely uninhabited. What farmland there is, at the head of the loch and along the pass to Arrochar, is characterised by enclosed pasture, although many of the drystone dykes are now relict. The ruinous remains of settlements and field systems that can be seen along most of glens leading down to the loch show that these areas were once more settled than they are now, adding to the sense of time-depth and local character.

The loch 'partakes of the two geological worlds to either side of the [Highland Boundary] fault; the northern part is a typical Scottish loch lodged in the Highlands, narrow and deeply shelving and ice-scoured, while the southern part is an altogether gentler lake, where you can paddle in places, and yacht clubs have a chance of making a profit...

'Although its place in Scottish mythology is assured, it is truly anomalous. It is wide and irregular and dotted with islands at its southern end, narrow and straight to the north.' Fortey (1996)

- ***A multitude of beautiful islands***

The southern loch has numerous islands of various shapes and sizes, and this island-studded scene is one of the most distinctive, well-known images of Loch Lomond. In contrast, the northern half is nearly island-free, with only a few small, round islets.

The linear spread of islands parallel to the south shore and across the widest section of the loch emphasises the horizontality of both loch and shoreline in views from the south, such as from Duncryne Hill. The islands are made up of small hillocks, knolls and hummocks, a form that contrasts with the surrounding mountain ranges, especially those to north and west. This makes the islands strongly appealing, inviting and tantalisingly accessible. Additionally, they are mostly tree-covered which provides a sense of unity with the wooded loch shores and a sense of seclusion when visited, a quality which in earlier times must have added to their attractiveness for settlement, defence and religious retreat.

As well as their contribution to the overall scene, the islands are in themselves highly distinctive, each varying in character. Some are inhabited, and many have a long history of habitation, with important remains still visible.

- **Distinctive mountain groups**

Loch Lomond and its immediate surrounds are enclosed by hills and mountains on three sides which provide an impressive backdrop to views across the loch and grand panoramas from their summits. The three major mountain groups are each distinctive in their own way, adding to the variety of scene around the shores.

North of Tarbert the loch is over-shadowed on its west side by the **Arrochar Alps**. These are large in scale and highly irregular in form, with craggy peaks rising from broad rocky ridges and slopes. They are cut by U-shaped valleys and deeply incised glens. Large forestry plantations cover the lower slopes, especially the distinctive conical hill of Cruach Tairbeirt that lies directly on Loch Lomond's shores, and heads the Arrochar-Tarbert corridor.

Enclosing Loch Lomond to the west are the **Luss Hills** ranging from Glen Fruin in the south to Tarbert. This is a large upland hinterland of rounded conical hills and smooth, sweeping slopes dissected by broad U-shaped valleys.

To the east are the **East Lomond Uplands** with their steep, craggy slopes. The ridges lie parallel to the loch, interrupted by peaks and dissected by steep valleys. South of Ben Lomond the uplands become less dramatic in form, the hill sides dropping more gently to the loch shores until they eventually form a series of foothills to merge with the moorlands and pasture lowlands of the southern loch shores. The outlier of Conic Hill is striking with its whaleback ridge.

- **Ben Lomond, widely known, popularly frequented**

Ben Lomond, the most southerly Munro at 974m (3195ft) towers over Loch Lomond's eastern shores. With its distinctive sloping ridge suddenly giving way to its steep, summit slopes, it is a distinctive landmark visible from as far away as Edinburgh.

Sometimes known as 'Glasgow's Hill', it is easily accessible from the city, attracting some 30,000 visitors a year to its summit. Its popularity and qualities are widely expressed in poetry, painting and travelogues of climbers and visitors. Its summit offers a superb viewpoint with views extending across much of the Southern Highlands and the Central Lowlands.

'Possibly without exception Ben Lomond possesses the proud distinction of being one of the most widely known and most popularly frequented of our Scottish mountains. Its name transcends in familiarity that of any of its Highland compeers, and it occupies a geographical situation peculiarly favourable for receiving a very wide and constant recognition... He has afforded pleasure to thousands of tourists. He has formed the theme of the poet as he has the subject of the painter. The preacher has found him a fit emblem for illustration. The climber has recorded his rambles in diaries and journals; and like all claimants to fame and popularity he has not escaped the facile pen of the humorist.'

Scottish Mountaineering Club (1894)

*Vales, lakes, woods, mountains, islands, rocks, and sea,
Huge hills that heaped in crowded order stand,
Stretched o'er the northern and the western land;
Vast lumpy groups, while Ben, who often shrouds
His loftier summits in a veil of clouds,
High o'er the rest displays superior state,
In proud pre-eminence sublimely great.*

Scottish Mountaineering Club (1894)

- **Banks of broadleaved woodland**

Broadleaved woodlands clothe most of Loch Lomond's banks, growing alongside the open water and on the lower and middle hill slopes up to about 500m. The upper tree-line is often clearly visible along the loch's length, accentuating the loch's linearity. Woods on the upper slopes can be stunted and more scattered, giving an appearance of trees hanging on to less accessible rock outcrops and gullies.

The substantial woodlands around the shores and on the islands create a distinct sense of place and a luxuriant sense of growth, fertility and shelter in comparison with the high, rugged mountain tops and rough, uneven, steep and often deeply fissured hill slopes.

Frequently, woodlands or groups of trees fill the promontories jutting out into the water, emphasising the sinuous loch shore, and contributing to low-lying watery views receding into the distance. Woodlands structure the landscape further by framing near and distant views to opposite shores and high mountain tops. Such views and images are widely appreciated and popularly used on postcards and in literature.

The Lomond woodlands provide a seasonally changing canopy of varying textures and colours, and the moss-rich oak woods found along these damp, humid shores are renowned for their carpets of wild hyacinth (otherwise known as bluebells or *Brog na Cuthaig*, Cuckoo's Shoe).

As well as being beautiful places to visit and enjoy, the woods also are of great historical interest, having been intensively managed in the past for wood, charcoal and tannin.

- **Peaceful side glens**

Peaceful countryside is readily accessible along the glens that lead down to Loch Lomond. **Glen Luss**, deeply enfolded and set into the surrounding hills, leads deep into the interior of the Luss Hills. From within there are surprising long distance views out onto Loch Lomond and the glen retains a distinct pastoral, sheltered character with a feeling of remoteness. The estate style of the village of Luss at the base of the glen, and of the farms and cottages within the glen, lend a distinctive uniformity of style.

In contrast to this, is **Glen Douglas** where long distance views out over Loch Lomond are lacking. The glen is enclosed by rough slopes with a few stock farms set regularly along the way, the cattle enlivening the scene which otherwise could appear desolate. The glen floor is broader and flatter than that of Glen Luss, and there is a confined sense of passing through and between mountain ranges, whereas in Glen Luss the sense is of constantly climbing upwards into the interior of the highlands, the road clinging onto the steep slopes.

4.0 Breadalbane



Photograph 4. Glen Dochart from Bovain Farm

- ***Steep mountains and long glens***

Breadalbane is a great tract of hills and mountains rising steeply and dramatically from the glen floors: Ben Lui, Cruach Ardrain, Ben More, Ben Vorlich, Ben Ledi, and others. These form the Southern Highlands – the southernmost extent of the Grampian mountains. The hills dominate the scene, with human activity constrained.

The bare upper hillsides and summits appear untouched, remote and wild, rising above the long glens where farming, forestry and infrastructure are found. Flat land is scarce, but where it does occur, it is settled and intensively used.

- ***Crossroads within remote mountain ranges***

Although Breadalbane's mountains form formidable ranges, the glens provide natural communication routes east to west, and north to south, the area having long been a crossroads of many ways and routes, ancient and modern. This gives an overwhelming sense of the passage of people and cultures over time.

The experience of movement, constrained at the base of such large mountains, acutely emphasises the remoteness and silence of the high summits. There is a strong feeling of travelling through constrained passes, of a limited choice of direction along the way.

- ***A landscape of distinctive glens and straths***

Each glen or strath has its own distinctive character, although the following tend to be common to all:

- A sparsity of settlement, with dispersed and secluded farms and a scattering of Highland villages straddling the main roads.
- Many ruins found in now uninhabited areas, indicating the region was once more populous.
- Farmed glen floors, adding a living, working feel to the glens.
- Broadleaved woodland and trees along rivers and burns, contributing to the pastoral scene.
- Considerable tree cover on the lower slopes, often of dense, impenetrable commercial forestry.
- Higher slopes of open, rocky moorland, the craggy summits standing proud on the skyline.
- Uninhabited side glens with fast flowing burns and waterfalls and a rugged terrain of crags, screes and boulders, used for grazing and often containing ancient shielings.
- Landmarks natural and man-made, ancient and modern, contributing to the individual sense of place.

- ***The narrow Strathyre and Loch Lubnaig ribbon***

The Gaelic name of Loch Lubnaig translates as 'crooked loch', aptly describing its distinctive, curving shape. It is nestled between the steep hill flanks of Ben Ledi and Ben Vorlich, their summits unseen from within the strath itself. The narrowness of the strath, its north-south orientation, its heavily afforested slopes and over-shadowed road, altogether mean that the strath can appear dark, sombre and constricted. The rocky, mountainous slopes of Ben Ledi dominate the view from the main road, the loch itself glimpsed only between stands of broadleaved trees and shore-line woodland.

The settlement of Strathyre is a distinctive village, domestic in scale with houses forming a formal street-line and some Victorian gabled houses interspersed and set back behind the main frontage. The village invites exploration, for further westward lies the older settlement of Strathyre, a quiet, secluded area that typifies the rural qualities of the strath away from the bustle of the main road.

The elongated, ribbon-like forms of loch, strath and settlement form a unified character which relates well to the flow of movement along the contemporary, major transport route. But there are dramatic changes when entering or leaving the strath: at the junction with Balquhiddy, distant views to the mountains beyond offers a strong feeling of relief from the tightly constrained route; and at the southern end, Loch Lubnaig issues into the Garbh Uisge, a river which tumbles in spectacular manner through the narrow and enclosed Pass of Leny, over the Falls of Leny, and with a sense of relief as the glen finally opens out into Callander.

- ***Beautiful Balquhiddy***

The Glen of Balquhiddy has changing qualities along its twelve mile length, from the broad lower glen with the meandering River Balvag, through the Braes of Balquhiddy alongside

Loch Voil, then into the remote, craggy upper glen with its strong sense of wildness. From a broad, relatively well settled strath it becomes a narrow, incised and sparsely populated glen. In the middle, the broad expanse of Loch Voil and its attendant Loch Doine fill most of the glen floor, contributing to the exceptional views looking both up and down the glen.

While Balquhider shares qualities in common with the other major Breadalbane glens, it surpasses them for solitude, remoteness and tranquility. These qualities are not confined to the higher hill slopes and summits but can readily be found along the glen and loch shore, owing to it being the only glen that is not also a principal transport corridor.

Overall, Balquhider possesses a jewel-like quality. It is a highly coloured mosaic of cultural and natural elements that come together to form a memorable and lasting visual impression: a working landscape of farm and forestry, with features of past use still visible; the estate village of Balquhider, with its church and burial ground; rocks, often weathered into curious shapes, scattering the hillsides; beautiful woodlands and wood pasture; lochs, rapids, waterfalls, rocky burns and rivers; and magnificent uplands.

The variation, intricacy and combinations of features in Balquhider makes the richest and most varied of all these Breadalbane glens. With its long history of habitation, and much visited by artists and poets for its scenery, it is its quality as the living, working Highlands that endures. It is this memorable quality which Wordsworth expressed in the poem *The Solitary Reaper* that he was inspired to write from his memories of Balquhider. The glen has many important associations with the archetypal Scottish hero immortalised by Sir Walter Scott, Rob Roy MacGregor, who is buried at Balquhider.

*Behold her, single in the field,
Yon solitary Highland Lass!
Reaping and singing by herself;
Stop here, or gently pass!
Alone she cuts and binds the grain,
And sings a melancholy strain;
O listen! for the Vale profound
Is overflowing with the sound.*

Extract from 'The Solitary Reaper' by William Wordsworth
written after a visit to Balquhider in 1803

- **Wide and straight Loch Earn**

Surrounded by high mountains, with Ben Vorlich in particular towering above the loch, the waters of Loch Earn fill the floor of the western end of Strath Earn. The loch is straight and wide, with only a narrow strip of level ground between the loch and the hill slopes, excepting the occasional alluvial fans which push out into the loch, providing space for pasture and farms.

With plentiful native woods of oak, birch and alder along the shore and on the lower slopes, this large loch can in turn be peaceful, with the woods and hills reflected in mirror-calm waters, or stormy, with the wind howling down the loch, raising white horses and foam-flecked waves. The back road along the southern shore meanders in and out of the woods, and provides a quiet contrast to the trunk roads that normally traverse these Breadalbane glens.

Locheearnhead is nestled at the foot of Glen Ogle at the loch's eastern end. From the south shores of Loch Earn, the village in its setting presents a classic scene against the backdrop

of the huge Breadalbane mountains. Edinample Castle policies on this south shore consolidate the rural qualities of Loch Earn at this, its western end.

St Fillans presents a similar scene at the eastern end. Overlooking the loch and the river, it stands at the extreme eastern edge of the park and at the edge of the River Earn National Scenic Area, and is the start of the transition to the Perthshire lowlands. Rocky St Fillans Hill, rising straight from the flat glen floor surmounted by Dundurn hill-fort, is a site of great historical significance and a grand viewpoint, both looking westwards into the National Park and eastwards into the National Scenic Area.

- ***The rocky pass of Glen Ogle***

Glen Ogle, a rugged pass through the mountains linking Lochearnhead with Glen Dochart, is a major thoroughfare where a busy trunk road clings to the eastern slopes, a relict railway line the western slopes (now the route of the Rob Roy Way) and an old military road the glen floor. It is memorable for the spectacular, old railway viaduct, high up on the west side, and also for the impressive rockfalls that the railway passed through.

However the glen possesses a desolate air, with its name derived from the Gaelic *Gleann-eagal* 'The Valley of Dread.' This is emphasised by deserted townships that lie to both sides of the road near the southern foot of the glen and by its looming, steep rocky slopes marked with runnels, crags and irregular rocky ridgelines.

The rock outcrops, however, are nowadays the heartland of sport climbing in Scotland. From the glen, the mountain of Ben Vorlich provides a grand prospect to the south, and fine views of the mountains to the north can be had when descending into Glen Dochart.

'The Khyber Pass of the North.' Queen Victoria

'A close, gloomy defile... Hundreds of runnels streak its cliffs, which look to have been shattered by shock of earthquake'. Groome (1882-5)

- ***Killin and the Falls of Dochart***

Killin and the Falls of Dochart form a highlight within Breadalbane, memorable places with a strong identity in a spectacular mountain setting. The River Dochart rushes out of Glen Dochart in a series of spectacular waterfalls. The water gathers speed and falls more steeply as it heads towards Loch Tay, to become a very broad, rocky, series of rapids at Killin where it is crossed by the Bridge of Dochart, unusual with seven-spans, four main arches and seven culverts. The Falls of Dochart present high drama – the all enveloping sounds, sights, feel of the spray and smell of the waters make the falls an open-air, enveloping spectacle.

Killin is dominated by the sight and the sound of the falls, a roaring backdrop to human activity. Its traditional, stone buildings and its bridge are low, small, domestic in scale and strongly horizontal in form. In contrast, the mountain backdrop soars vertically skyward, while the river and falls plunge dramatically down.

Inchbuie or Innes Bhuidhe, an island in the river, contains the Clan McNab burial ground surrounded by verdant riverside plantings. Nearby features, such as the prehistoric stone circle and medieval castle, stand witness to an even older past and long history of human presence in this area.

- **Expansive Glen Dochart**

Glen Dochart is broad and wide with an open, expansive feel. The main road flanks the southern slopes, which are characterised by dense forestry plantations alternating with steep slopes leading directly to the summit of Ben More. The River Dochart meanders across a level flood plain, a landscape of enclosed pastures, traditional farms at the base of the hills, and rough slopes of moorland, woods and crags rising to the northern hills.

The glen's Highland pastoral scenery is of notable quality, having been lauded since the 18th century. Highlights are the two enclosed and intimate lochs of Dochart and Iubhair, the former famous for the ruins of Castle Dochart on its small island. These lochs formed picturesque highlights of the 18-19th century 'Highland Tour.'

Although the landscape has changed significantly in recent years, particularly through commercial afforestation, the continual presence of fields, rough grassland, native trees and woods, intimate lochs and the sinuous river means that the glen maintains a rich pastoral quality.

'We saw a small lake before us after the vale had made a bending to the left... the afternoon breezes had died away, and the water was in perfect stillness. One grove-like island, with a ruin that stood upon it overshadowed by the trees, was reflected on the water. This building, which, on that beautiful evening, seemed to be wrapped up in religious quiet, we were informed had been raised for defence by some Highland chieftain. All traces of strength, or war, or danger are passed away, and in the mood in which we were we could only look upon it as a place of retirement and peace. The lake is called Loch Dochart.' Dorothy Wordsworth (1803)

- **Wide Strath Fillan**

Strath Fillan is the extension of Glen Dochart northwestwards, the river also changing its name from Dochart to Fillan. It shares many of the characteristics of Glen Dochart, although its southern slopes are less steep and the river and its pastoral flood plain are mainly hidden from view from the road.

The river tightly meanders across the strath floor, forming a series of gravel-shored islets, while riparian trees and regenerating stands of native woodland further divide up the strath, creating quiet, secluded areas. Most of the floodplain is farmed, with smooth green fields, contrasting with the hill slopes above of rough hummocky moorland or dense forestry plantation.

The old mines at Tyndrum, highly visible on the slopes of Sron nan Colan, stand out barren within the surrounding woodlands, and are witness to the economic activity of the past. The strath has strong associations with the 8th century St Fillan, who retired to the area, and later with Robert the Bruce. The ruined priory of St Fillan and the nearby St Fillan's Holy Pool in the River Dochart were once important places of pilgrimage.

Common to all routes through the strath, whether modern road, railway or path, or older military road, drove road or pilgrimage way, are distinctive views to the high summits of Beinn More and Stob Binnein to the south. Glimpses are also obtained of Ben Lui at the head of the Glen Cononish, with its spectacular eastern cliffs retaining their snows until well into the summer. The flat-bottomed Glen Cononish leads into the heart of high mountains

and at its eastern end is found the ancient Caledonian pinewood of Coille Coire Chuilc, a dark canopy of rounded crowns and orange bark.

'The waters of the river Fillan... were famous for their curative powers, especially in cases of insanity. The patient was walked twice round a neighbouring cairn on which he would have to place a small amount of money as an offering. He was then immersed three times [in St Fillan's Holy Pool], bound hand and foot, and confined for a night in a ruined chapel nearby. If he was found loose the following morning he was pronounced cured, but if still bound, incurable. The prescription was enough to unbalance any sane person.' Andrews (1989)

- **Sinuuous Glen Falloch**

The floor of Glen Falloch, wherein lies the river, road, railway and West Highland Way, is narrow and winding, tightly constrained by its surrounding slopes, with views outwards restricted by numerous trees and woods.

The picturesque Falls of Falloch and the conical hill of Dun Falloch are focal features within the glen, although the former are largely obscured by trees. It is only from the summit of Dun Falloch, or the other higher slopes of the glen, that the memorable quality of Glen Falloch can be experienced, that is a feeling of spaciousness brought about by the expansive open hillsides. The ridges and rocky summits that surround the glen are visually dominant, although no one summit or hill is especially distinctive in form. They form a stark backcloth contrasting with the pockets of native woodland on the lower slopes, and along the burns draining the steep, rough hillsides.

The northern end of the glen contains the southernmost remnant of native Caledonian pinewood, dark trees with rounded crowns scattering the hillside. The nearby Allt Criche wood pastures also present a fine prospect – of pollarded trees spilling downslope, with a hummocky appearance which complements the rounded, hummocky landform. Regenerating woodland alongside the railway line is also a distinguishing feature, marking its route across the landscape.

'One mile north of the confluence of the Dubh Eas and the Falloch is a circular hill-top called the Dun, but more usually known as the Round Hill. Three sides are precipitous and the summit is over 1300 feet above sea-level. On the west the slopes are not steep, but, to a host occupying it, the height would be a well-nigh impregnable position as well as an admirable observation-post. Not only does it command a view of Glen Falloch, upper and lower, but none could use the track way by Ghleann nan Caorunn to or from Dalmally without attracting the attention of watchers on the Round Hill... the hill does not show any signs of added fortification...' Lacaille (1929) [Note: this refers to the hill Creag an Dùin north of the road rather, than the smaller hill Dùn Falloch south of the road]

5.0 The Trossachs



Photograph 5. Leny House policies north of Callander

Note: The Trossachs National Scenic Area is significantly smaller than the landscape area this section refers to. The special qualities that will not apply to the NSA are those relating to Lochs Ard, Chon and Arklet, Aberfoyle, Callander, and the Lake of Menteith.

- **A traditional ‘Gateway to the Highlands’**

The Trossachs occupies a small area that defines the transition from the settled pastoral Lowlands to the rugged Highlands. From the south, after travelling through a gentle landscape of fields and farms it offers the first hint of the wilder lands to the north and west and is sometimes called ‘the Highlands in Miniature’. It is generally regarded as a very attractive and comforting landscape, and occasionally spectacular.

As with Loch Lomond and its surrounds, the area is at once the ‘Gateway to the Highlands’ and also a goal, beyond which many will choose not to venture, instead sampling this inviting Scottish idyll where views can vary from the expansive to the intimate: from a large loch with the mountains beyond, to a mere glimpse of a loch or a hill through a gap in the woods, through to a moss-covered crag amongst the trees. The summit of Ben Venue is a particularly good place for grand panoramic views, northward to the Highlands, southward to the Lowlands.

‘Although the terrain is extremely broken, the tree cover and quiet water bring a gentleness to the rugged landscape. Compared with the adjacent lowlands, the area is wild and rugged, yet compared with the northern Highlands, its small scale and dense tree cover reduce its grandeur, though contributing to variety and beauty. For many people the scenery... epitomises the landscape of Scotland. ‘ Leney (1973)

- ***A harmonious concentration of lochs, woods and hills***

The beauty of the Trossachs lies in the tight concentration and harmonious blending of the three elements of loch, woodland and open hill. Broadleaved woodland frames the lochs, being particularly attractive around Loch Achray and the eastern end of Loch Katrine, and frames the open hillsides, particularly those of the dominant Ben Venue.

The change from water to woodland, and woodland to open hillside is sometimes transitional, broken and intricate, as in Loch Katrine's relationship with Ben Venue or in the wood pastures of Glen Finglass; and sometimes the change can be abrupt, as in upper Gleann Riabhach's plantations. Frequently the three elements come together to give a horizontal banding to the glens, from loch through trees to the open hill.

- ***Rugged Ben Venue, the centrepiece of the Trossachs***

From many approaches the alpine-like profile of the upper open slopes of Ben Venue stand out, suggesting a mountain of greater stature and challenge than its actual height of 729m. It is, nevertheless, the centrepiece of the Trossachs and guards the narrow entrance to the beauty of Loch Katrine and the expanse of the Highlands beyond.

- ***Loch Katrine, the 'Queen of the Trossachs'***

Loch Katrine is perceived as the Queen of the Trossachs. Dominated by Ben Venue, it offers the viewer both intimate close vistas of inlet and dense woodland, hinting at its depth, and yet also the chance of further travel beyond the comfort of the Trossachs and into the openness of the glens beyond. Its popularity now owes much to the presence of the last steam driven passenger vessel operating in Britain, fittingly named the Steam Ship *Sir Walter Scott*.

Together with Loch Arklet, it also offers a blend of beauty and utility, the latter arising from the structures associated with the 19th century waterworks, designed to supply water to the city of Glasgow.

In his poem *Lady of the Lake* which refers to Loch Katrine, Sir Walter Scott wrote:

*'So wondrous wild, the whole might seem
The scenery of a fairy dream...*

*'Where, gleaming with the setting sun,
One burnished sheet of living gold,
Loch Katrine lay beneath him roll'd
In all her length far winding lay,
With promontory, creek and bay,
And islands that, empurpled bright,
Floated amid a livelier light,
And mountains, that like giants stand,
To sentinel enchanted land.'*

- ***A landscape of beautiful lochs***

The lochs are essential components of the overall blend, yet each loch has its own distinct character. Only Loch Achray can make claim to being a natural entity, with the others all

shaped to varying degrees by water supply infrastructure. Yet the Victorian infrastructure possesses great historical and aesthetic interest in its own right.

- **Lochs Achray and Venachar** offer a soft blend of tranquillity and openness as they shelter within their lush frames of broadleaved woodland. The building and terraces on the north shores of Loch Achray, once the Trossachs Hotel, provides an eye-catching prospect when rounding Achray Toll at the head of the Duke's Pass.
- **Glen Finglas Reservoir**, hidden behind the tight and wooded entrance to the glen and separated by a higher relief than the other lochs, exudes peacefulness and isolation belying its accessibility and artificial nature.
- **Loch Drunkie** hides within coniferous plantations with only hints of a broadleaved woodland frame softening its edges. However, its interlocking fingers of land and its surrounds of gently sloping woodlands, grassland and marsh blend to form a sheltered, tranquil place, constantly enticing the viewer to discover the next turn of path or track.
- **Loch Ard, Loch Chon and Loch Arklet**, each different in appearance, line the route to Inversnaid, charting progress through to a more remote and highland area. **Loch Ard** mostly surrounded by thick woodlands and with a highly indented shore has a sheltered and enclosed feel. Its northern shore is lined with Victorian villas and houses, pointing to its popularity as a resort since the 19th century, and its shores are dotted with boathouses and jetties, built for the peaceful pastimes of fishing and boating.

The smaller **Loch Chon**, its surrounding slopes heavily afforested and with few buildings, feels more remote. Remoteness increases significantly once **Loch Arklet** is reached, which is at the centre of an open, rugged moorland landscape. The landform can be clearly seen, with slopes falling steeply down to the very edge of the loch, and the open shores reflected in the deep waters. There are dramatic views to the craggy hills above and to the summits of the Arrochar Alps beyond. However, the clearly visible remains of old settlements indicate that the area has not always been so wild and uninhabited.

- ***The romance of the Trossachs***

Many writers, poets and artists have been drawn to the romantic shores of Katrine, including William and Dorothy Wordsworth, Samuel Coleridge, James Hogg and John Ruskin. But it was the publishing of Sir Walter Scott's romantic poem *Lady of the Lake* in 1810 and his novel *Rob Roy* in 1817 that brought fame and popularity to the scenery of the area, establishing the Trossachs as a major tourist attraction, perhaps the epitome of the romantic highland landscape.

In *Rob Roy*, Scott wrote of the tales of Rob Roy MacGregor and the 'children of the mist', referring to his followers of the Clan MacGregor who lived amidst the wild hills. Rob Roy was born in Glen Gyle at the western end of Loch Katrine and is buried nearby at Balquhider. Queen Victoria visited the area on many occasions and had a holiday house built overlooking Loch Katrine.

- ***The resort of Aberfoyle and the Duke's Pass***

The village of Aberfoyle, once important for its slate quarries, quickly developed into the southern gateway of The Trossachs following the publication of Walter Scott's *The Lady of the Lake*. In the 1880s it became a popular Victorian watering-hole, even with its own branch railway. Today, its distinct Victorian architecture remains a feature of the village.

The Duke's Pass is the direct route from Aberfoyle into The Trossachs and is now part of the Trossachs Trail, a scenic route for motorists. Taking the motorist over the hills in a series of sweeping curves, and with spectacular views of the lochs, woods and hills beyond, it provides anticipation of the Highland landscape to come. Named after Rob Roy's arch rival, the Duke of Montrose, it follows the route once followed by Rob Roy's cattle drovers and, after the construction of the road in 1886, by the horse-drawn carriages of 19th century tourists.

- ***The curious wooded hillocks of Aberfoyle***

Achray Forest extends to the south-west of Aberfoyle. The coniferous forest plantations clothe, and largely obscure, a series of parallel ridges (the Highland Boundary Fault). These forested areas form an important backcloth for a series of broadleaf wooded hillocks that are intriguing, and arrest the attention on the approach into Aberfoyle. The knolls of Doon Hill and Fairy Knowe have given rise to traditional, local fairy tales, which lends a further air of mystery and anticipation to the scene.

- ***The gateway town of Callander***

Callander is the town guarding this gateway to the Highlands. It is linear in form, with a well-ordered plan and traditional built forms at its centre. Set astride the Highland Boundary Fault it benefits from a dramatic, natural setting with high ranges to the north and lower farmed landscapes extending southeastward.

The south-facing hill slopes to the north of Callander are laid out with the ornamental policies of Leny Park, forming a gradual and verdant transition from the built and managed townscape to the surrounding countryside. These areas of soft green parkland ornamented with trees, extend against a backdrop of rough moorland and distant uplands.

- ***The tranquil Lake of Menteith***

The Lake of Menteith is a complete contrast to the long and narrow lochs of the Trossachs in their rugged Highland glens. With its gently shelving and curving shores, its wooded islands and its ruined abbey, it presents a peaceful and tranquil prospect.

Surrounded by farmland and woodland, the mix of fields, trees and water epitomises the best of the lowland scene on the southern fringes of the Park. This is enhanced by the important history associated with the lake and its surrounds, whether the prehistoric Peace Stone, the Roman camp and fort on the southwestern shore, or Inchmahome Priory and its association with Mary Queen of Scots. Additional value comes from the lake's rich wildlife of birds and plants.

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