

## **GLEN DOUGLAS PROJECT**

**2017- 2018**

**TAM WARD**

### **Project rationale**

The project will have two separate lines of enquiry:

1. Upland forestry walking to retrieve artefacts, sample, features or sites.
2. Upland survey on the south side of the glen on ground belonging to Luss Estates.
  1. The southern, western and eastern flanks of Tullich Hill at the western end of the glen have been ploughed for new commercial forestry. The areas of disturbance will be walked over to inspect and retrieve any archaeological finds and/or other information.
  - 2.1. The lower flanks of the southern side of the glen will be walked over and any sites surveyed and recorded.
  - 2.2. Historical research will be done to compliment the survey report.

A final report on all findings and research will be produced.

**Note: Part 2 of the Project will recommence in November 2017.**

### **The area.**

Glen Douglas runs east/west between Loch Long and Loch Lomond for c11km. An unclassified road gives access to the entire area and is north of the Douglas Water which flows from the west and discharges into Loch Lomond at Inverbeg. Two farms form the principal settlements; Doune O' Glen Douglas Farm and Tullich Farm. At the western end of the glen is an MOD armaments establishment which covers a large area on the northern flanks of Doune Hill and Cruach an t-Sidhein (mountain). Two commercial forested areas already exist on the southern flank of Beinn Bhreach. The remainder of the landscape is entirely unimproved pasture on the lower slopes of the rugged and steep mountains on both sides of the road and burn.

All aspects of the project were walked under favourable conditions.

**Forestry walking results. Completed 2017.**



**Plate 1. View from Tullich Hill south towards Doune Hill.**

Only the lower slopes of the hillside up to about 250m OD were inspected in detail, the ground above that level being extremely steep and judged unlikely to reveal any evidence. However, particular attention was paid to spring courses in the search for burnt mounds, and also to terrace areas and knolls. The ground was both furrow ploughed and pitted for trees, roads and drains were also examined.

Charcoal spread                      NN 28144 00183              230m OD

On the SW flank of Tullich Hill and behind a natural knoll charcoal fragments were seen in various exposures for about a 10m diameter of the above NGR. No concentration was seen.

Shoe buckle. Pl 2                      NN 28352 99856              190m OD              55mm by 55mm by curve of 15mm.

On the SW flank of Tullich Hill and near a drystone dyke an 18<sup>th</sup> century shoe buckle was found; the copper alloy ornate buckle was poorly preserved but traces of silver gilt survive on it.



Plate 2. 18<sup>th</sup> C shoe buckle.



Plate 3. Section of turf wall, looking east.

Corn drying kiln                      NN 27726 00340                      175m OD

On the lower SW flank of Tullich Hill there is a kiln bowl formed by steep embankments and which measures 3m internally by 1m deep. On the western side, there is a gap in the circuit which is the stoke hole. The feature lies just above an old earth head dyke and some ruinous corrugated sheep folds (given on OS maps).

Shieling hut No 1                      NS 29650 99306                      170m OD

On the lower south flank of Tullich Hill there is a building comprised of boulders, it lies in a sloping gully and measures 5m by 3m and with an additional 3m extension, entrances are indicated in both chambers on the east long side by gaps in the stones. The site is covered in moss and bracken.

Shieling hut No 2                      NS 29850 99276                      160m OD

On the lower south flank of Tullich Hill there is a building comprised of boulders, it lies on the immediate east side of a spring gully and about 20m below and within a head dyke enclosure. Measuring 6m by 3m and by 1m deep the site appears as sunken.

Bloomery                                  NS 29885 99331                      165m OD

On the lower south flank of Tullich Hill there is a deposit of ferrous slag, charcoal, burnt stone and burnt bone. The material is noted in a forestry plough furrow some 30m directly upslope from an old turf head dyke which has been truncated by the same furrow (Pl 3). The spot is sloping ground and lies between two unnamed spring courses. The presumed source of the deposit lies at the above NGR, it extends downslope for at least 6m where lumps of ferrous slag and a single sherd of post medieval (?) pottery was also found. However, the principal deposit (Pl's 4&5) containing charcoal is only 3m long by >75mm deep and is noted on the western side of the furrow, suggesting the main deposit may lie on that side in

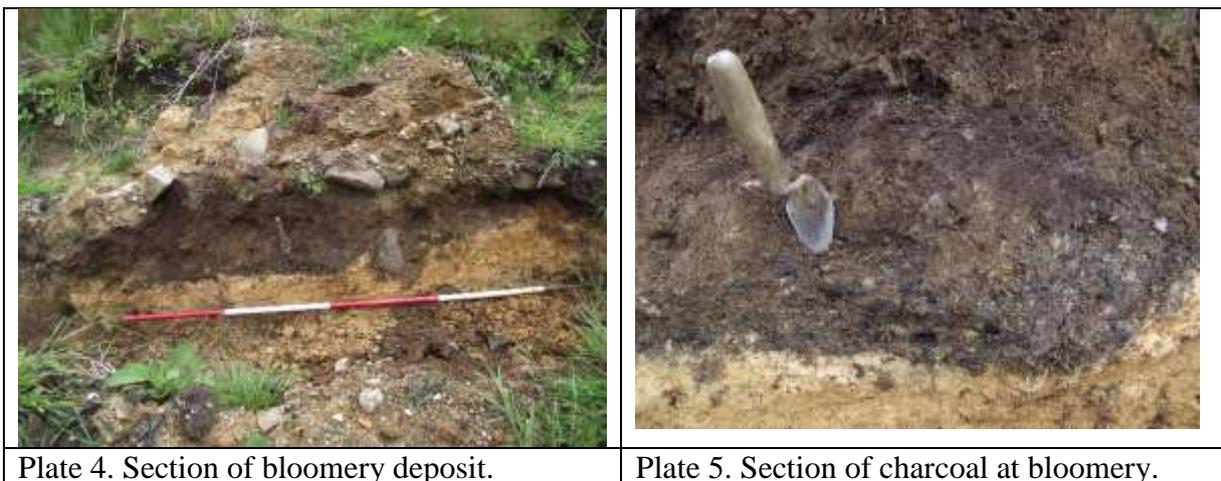
undisturbed ground. Occasional traces of the material were noted on the eastern side of the furrow. The lumps of slag and main charcoal deposit were compressed into the upper surface of the glacial till which is a cream/orange coloured clay, >100mm of soil lie above that and which contains the charcoal, and the top most layer is an organic soil of similar depth, all biologically active with root systems, principally bracken rhizome. At one point in the cleaned section a band of buried soil c100mm thick is noted to lie beneath the till, presumably having been covered during a hill creep episode, it has no bearing on the bloomery deposit. The sides of the furrow were trowelled clean and samples on the slag and charcoal were retrieved from the cleaned surfaces, no further removal of the deposits was attempted. The tiny flecks of burnt bone were not recovered but noted as were the few burnt stones (reddened by heat).

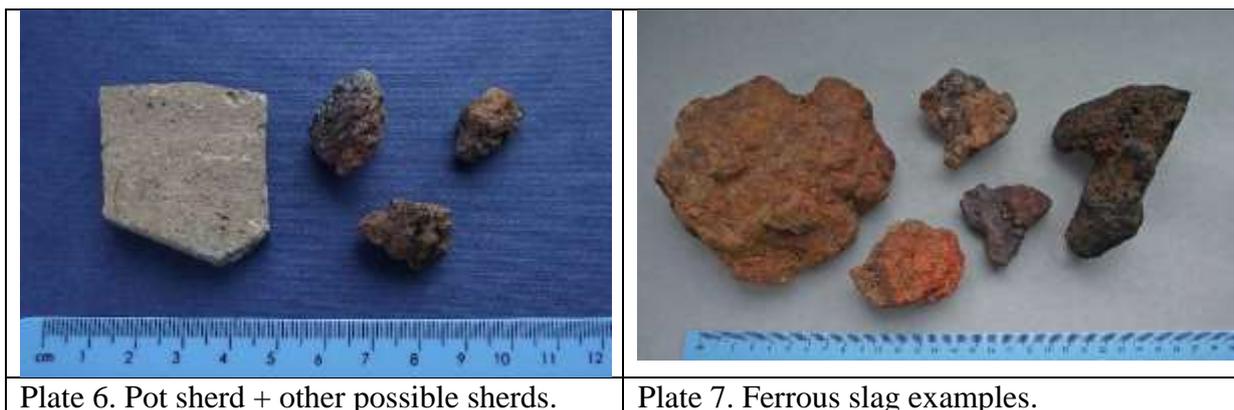
The site is interpreted as that of a bloomery and it is likely that the plough has merely truncated the eastern edge of the main site/deposit. A similar site was recently discovered under the same conditions at Millbrae Plantation near Kilcreggan (Ward & McIntyre 2016) and a bloomery is recorded on the east side of Loch Lomond at Wester Salloch in Rowardennan Forest National Memorial Park, visible on the heritage trail there.

From a 1 litre soil sample, 14 grams of charcoal of 2mm and above was wet sieved, the 0.3mm flot is not weighed as it contains grit. The small quantity of residue consisted of quartz and schist chips and a few pieces of slag, burnt stone was not observed.

Four main samples of slag were taken (Pl 7), one has encrusted red clay which may have been baked as part of a crucible or pottery, two exhibit rounded faces and may represent the base of a bowl-shaped crucible. The slag varies in appearance from dull red oxide to a lustrous black surface, gas cavities are apparent.

The single pot sherd (Pl 6) found is judged to be post medieval in date, possibly Iron Age, certainly it is kiln fired. This sherd may not be associated with the bloomery deposit as it lay near to the old turf head dyke and a nearby building interpreted as a shieling hut (No 2 above). Three other fragments of baked clay (Pl 6) may have been pottery or associated with a hearth for smelting, they contain quartz as tempering.





Charcoal spread. NS 29903 99380 175m OD

On the lower south flank of Tullich Hill there is a superficial deposit of charcoal and burnt stone, noted on tree divots some 4m on the east side of a spring course. The location was not sampled and there was no trace of a mound to suggest a burnt mound was the reason, however, it is known that burnt mound ‘activity’ resulting in deposits of charcoal and burnt stones often indicates an undeveloped site where heating of water took place. The findings here may simply represent a fire place.

#### **Discussion of forestry walk over results.**

Although the survey area ran for almost 4km along the southern flank of Tullich Hill, much of the peat in the ploughed ground at the eastern end was not cut through, the slopes were also generally very steep, therefore these two factors discriminated against finds being made. An estimate of efficiency of the work is put at c75% given that the steepest upper slopes of the plantation were not walked, although occasional random finds can be made anywhere, e.g. the buckle, the principle of such an undertaking is to discover sites, rather than just objects. The spots where charcoal was noted may represent fire places. Nevertheless, the discovery of a bloomery adds to the growing number of such sites in the west of Scotland. Where old turf head dykes were encountered, these are not recorded here as they are all given on OS maps.

**UPLAND SURVEY** **recommence November 2017**

#### **Map evidence**

**The 1st Ed OS 6” to the mile map Dumbartonshire (1860-65) [Sheets VII & VIII]** only gives five place names for the glen, they are from west to east – Creagan Sithe, Tullich, Invergroin, Doune and Inbhir an Teachain and all on the southern side of the glen.

The original Tullich on the west is no longer given on the modern 1:25,000 OS map; Explorer 364, Loch Lomond North, the original site now lies within the MOD installation, but Tullich Farm is now given beside the cottage still named Invergroin, Doune remains the same and the last place is now given as Inveruchitan, however, the last place is now abandoned.

Clearly since the 1<sup>st</sup> Ed OS map little has changed regarding settlement sites, nevertheless before that time several other locations were occupied and are given;

**Timothy Pont, manuscript map Gare Loch and Loch Long;** shows only Gorton at west end and no valley is given, east end cut off.

**Ditto Pont 17 Loch Lomond,** gives Glen Douglas but no place names.

### **Blaeu map**

Levinia Vice Comitatus, The Province of Lennox called the Shyre of Dum Barton. 1662 J. Blaeu. Nothing is given of Glen Douglas.

**Robert & James Gordon (1636-1652) manuscript map of Lennox** gives Glen Douglas but nothing more.

**William Edgar 1745. “The making of the King’s Road twixt Dumbarton and Inverary”.**

As the name implies the map shows the military road running up Loch Lomond to Arrochar and up the Rest and be Thankful. It also shows the drove road down Loch Goil to Loch Long to the point where cattle were swam across the loch to Portincaple and then down Gairloch.

Glen Douglas shows several settlements and are from west to east on the north of the river; Tullich, the only site shown with trees, Goil-Churan, Inver Grein, and up the spring named “String” is the place “Ashmore” (a shieling?), Gartanfarn, Croitnein, and Nether Inveruglas.

On the south side of the river; Con-glen, Craigfadd, Doun and Inveruitachan, Corry Chenugan (?) and Inverbeg are given.

### **Roy’s Map 1747**

Surprisingly few sites are depicted on Roy’s map, Tulloch is given where the modern Tullich is, but Roy’s shows a few buildings on both sides of the burn. Down is given for the modern Doune and here there are also clusters of buildings on each side of the burn with seven rigs depicted on the south side where the modern farm now is. The location of the modern Inveruchitan has seven rigs curving slightly but the place is named Corrynugan by Roy who shows a cluster of buildings and more rig, but nearer the tributary burn to the east. On the other side of this tributary Roy shows Grays or Crays as a community, and which has no modern reference. Further down the main burn is Douglas on Roy’s map with a cluster of four buildings and then nothing until the main road is reached at modern Inverbeg, really out of the glen.

Except for modern Tullich [Tulloch] and Doune [Down] where settlements are both sides of the river, all other given settlements are south of the river.

**Herman Moll (1745) The Shire of Lennox or Dumbarton,** gives nothing at all, not even Glen Douglas.

**John Thomson Atlas 1832, Dumbartonshire;** gives Glen Douglas, Tullich, Invergrain and Doune, and the track past Doune to Luss.

### **Acknowledgments.**

NCAS are grateful to Luss Estates and to Estate Factor Mr Iain Wilkinson for permission to study the area.

The following members of NCAS engaged in the fieldwork: Jacquie Dryden, Sue Floyd, Alasdair Jamieson, Sandra Kelly, Alistair McIntyre, Tam Ward organised the project and produced the report.

### **References**

Ward T & McIntyre A 2016. *The excavation of early 19<sup>th</sup> century cottages at Millbrae and the survey and excavation of various pre-historic sites at Rosneath Peninsula, Argyll.*  
[www.spanglefish.com/northclydearchaeologicalsociety.com](http://www.spanglefish.com/northclydearchaeologicalsociety.com)