

Welcome to Ballater

Ballater, renowned for its Royal connections, lies on a meander of the River Dee under the shelter of Craigendarroch. Ballater is a very attractive village that has helped put the 'Royal' into Royal Deeside. Ballater is the nearest settlement to, and was the railhead for, Balmoral Castle, which lies eight miles along the River Dee to the west.

The Old Royal Station



Ballater Paths

The countryside around Ballater offers a wide variety of paths with fine views, a rich local history and abundant wildlife. This leaflet focuses on seven mainly low-level routes that are waymarked and signposted from Station Square in the heart of the village. Distances are from Station Square.

Other Walks

Just 3 miles east of Ballater off the A93 are the Cambus o' May forest walks. Alternatively, a 6-mile drive east (along A93 then B9119) brings you to the Burn o' Vat visitor centre in the Muir of Dinnet National Nature Reserve – the starting point for several waymarked trails.

Cairngorms Paths Ballater



For information on paths, local events, facilities and accommodation:

Ballater iCentre:

t. 01339 755 306 (open all year)

e. ballater@visitscotland.com

Useful websites:

visitballater.com

visitabdn.com

deesideway.org

visitcairngorms.com

cairngorms.co.uk

If you enjoyed Ballater Paths then look out for other Community Path Leaflets to help you explore more of the Cairngorms National Park.

Cairngorms Paths

Ballater Paths

Explore Deeside



■ ■ ■ Cambus o' May Circular

Followed clockwise, this route takes you along the Deeside Way and across the historic Cambus o' May suspension bridge, before returning through attractive woodland on the opposite river bank.

Deeside Way section

Easy – wide, level firm path.

Return route through woodland

Moderate – narrow and rough in places.

Crossing the bridge includes steps and turnstile.



easy



moderate

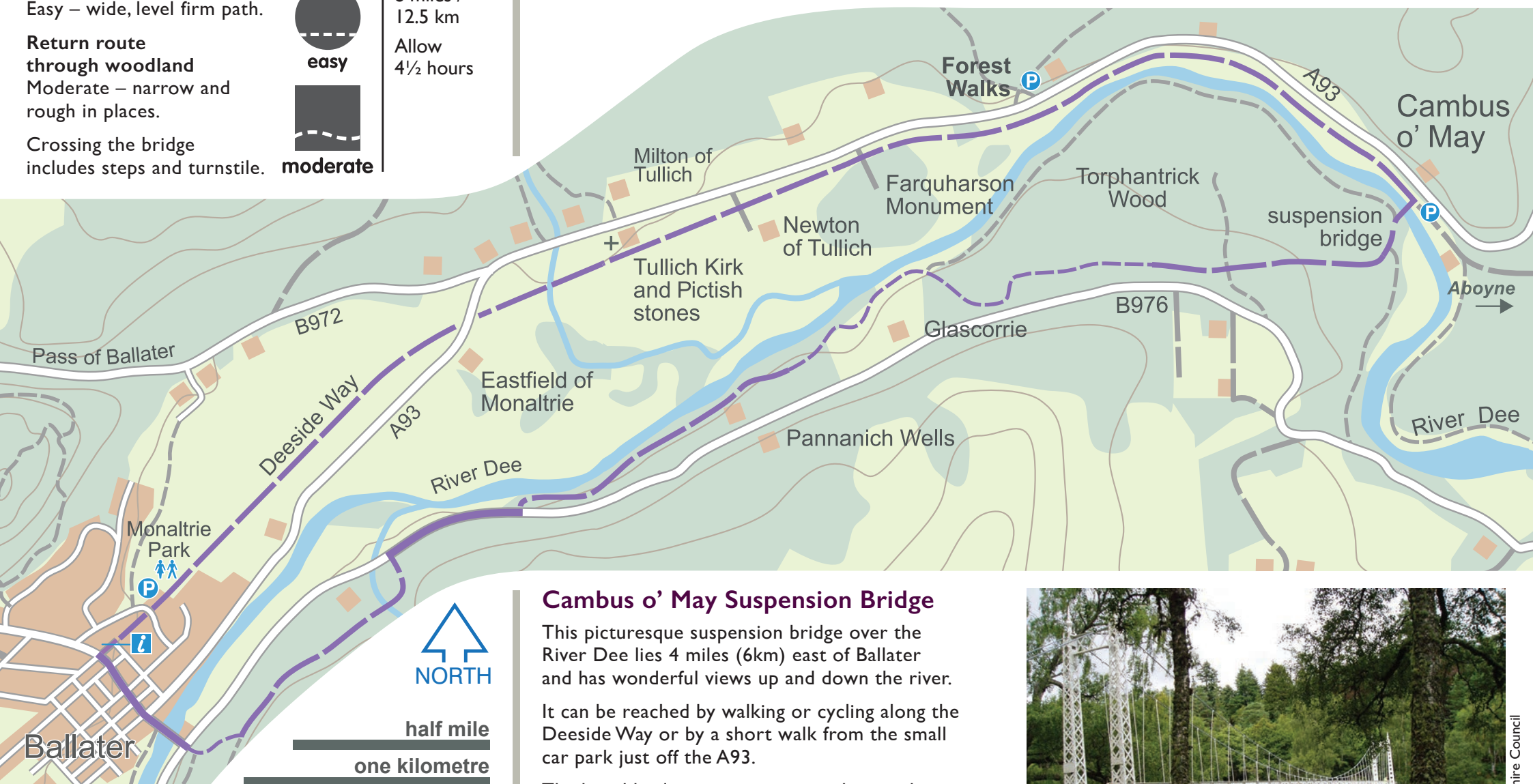
8 miles /
12.5 km

Allow
4½ hours

Deeside Way

The Deeside Way runs from Aberdeen to Ballater and is suitable for walking and cycling. Between Aboyne and Ballater it follows the line of the old Royal Deeside Railway offering fine views of the River Dee and surrounding hills.

The railway company had wanted to build the line through to Braemar but Queen Victoria was 'not amused' and said no! So it ended in Ballater, but a stretch of trackbed west of the village is a reminder of the original plan.



Cambus o' May Suspension Bridge

This picturesque suspension bridge over the River Dee lies 4 miles (6km) east of Ballater and has wonderful views up and down the river.

It can be reached by walking or cycling along the Deeside Way or by a short walk from the small car park just off the A93.

The listed bridge retains its original turnstiles at either end which can make access difficult for the disabled and those with prams or cycles. There are also steps on the right (south) bank.



Ballater Paths

The source of the River Dee is about 4,000 feet high on Braeriach, one of the highest of the Cairngorm Mountains. Famous as a great salmon river, the Dee tumbles past Ballater en route to Aberdeen giving the river a total length of 85 miles. All of the paths in this leaflet either pass close to the river or give you more distant views.

This leaflet has been developed in partnership with the Ballater Paths and Bridges Group and Ballater (Royal Deeside) Ltd – the local development trust. Please report any problems with paths or signage to info@royal-deeside.org.uk

Seven Bridges Walk

Follow this circular walk in either direction to enjoy woodland, river and mountain views, and the old railway line to Bridge of Gairn. Ballater Royal Bridge and Polhollick Bridge will take you across the River Dee.

Mostly earthy and surfaced paths with some sections of narrow rough and rocky paths, steps and bridges. A short section of road and road crossings.



5½ miles / 9 km
Allow 3¼ hours

Riverside Walk

A beautiful riverside walk along the banks of the River Dee.

Mostly wide earthy paths with some sections of narrow rough and rocky paths, one section of steep uneven path.



2¼ miles / 3.7 km
Allow 1½ hours

Craigendarroch Circular

The path contours around Craigendarroch hill beneath a canopy of ancient oaks, Scots pine and birch with lovely views of the surrounding countryside.

Mostly earthy paths with some sections of narrow rough and rocky paths.



2¼ miles / 3.5 km
Allow 2 hours

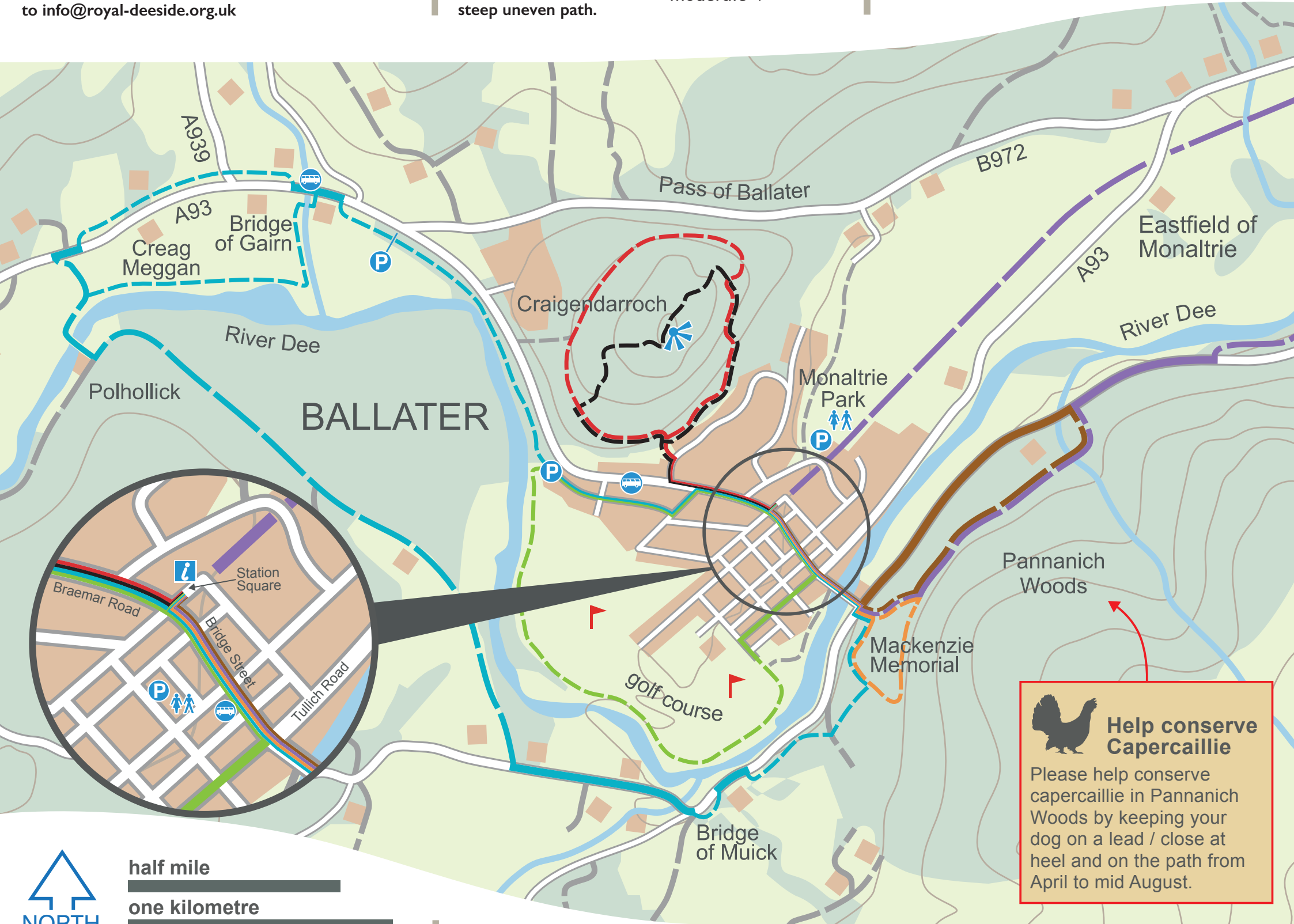
Craigendarroch Summit

The steep climb to the top of Craigendarroch, 'rocky hill of the oaks', is worth it for the rewarding views to Lochnagar and the village below.

Mostly narrow, earthy paths, steep and rocky.




2 miles / 3.2 km
Allow 2 hours





Help conserve Capercaillie

Please help conserve capercaillie in Pannanich Woods by keeping your dog on a lead / close at heel and on the path from April to mid August.



half mile
one kilometre

- road
- track
- path
- toilets
- car park
- bus stop
- viewpoint

SCOTTISH OUTDOOR ACCESS CODE

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Pannanich Woods Circular

A loop through woodland past the site of a historic Canadian loggers' camp.

Mostly wide forest track and pavement, with short section of moderate slope with firm earth path that can be muddy after heavy rain.



2 miles / 3.2 km
Allow 1¼ hours

Mackenzie Memorial Walk

A short loop through woodland, passing old curling and skating ponds and the Mackenzie memorial.

Mostly wide firm stone path and forest track with one short section of narrow, rough, earth path.



1½ miles / 2.3 km
Allow 1 hour

Cambus o' May Circular

Follow the Deeside Way out to the Cambus o' May suspension bridge (details overleaf).



The Mackenzie Memorial

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